



## The Glendale Historical Society

# TGHS QUARTERLY

Volume 15, Number 2

April, 1994



Brilliant sunshine reveals long-hidden details of the Alex Theatre at The Community Open House on January 2, 1994. (Photo by S. McKay)

## CELEBRATIONS MARK RE-OPENING OF ALEX THEATRE

The Glendale Historical Society was well represented at two major events celebrating the re-opening of the Alex Theatre. TGHS volunteers, co-ordinated by Andrea Humberger, helped decorate beforehand and then staffed the New Year's Gala Grand Opening as ushers, coat checkers, and ticket takers. Many thanks to TGHS members Peter Weber, Merry and Dan Franzen, Diana Gottshall, Irene Maben, Doris McKently, Jean Kohler, Sid Gordon, and Suzanne McKay.

TGHS also played a major role at the Community Open House and official dedication of the Alex on January 2 which was co-sponsored by the Glendale Redevelopment Agency and the Historic Preservation Commission. TGHS provided the docent script, which was co-written by Andrea Humberger of TGHS and Peyton Hall of the John Ash Group. TGHS also provided all the docents and volunteers for the event, and hosted a table to distribute TGHS literature and answer questions. The event was attended by over 3,000 people and was a wonderful success. Many thanks to TGHS volunteers Merry and Dan Franzen, Terry Richman, Dan Leimeter, Andrea Humberger, Doris McKently, Phyllis Kenney, Suzanne McKay, Peter Weber, Jean Kohler, and Sara Bisbey.

Andrea Humberger

## Earthquake Aftershock Knocks Goode House Off Its Foundation

On Saturday February 12 the Goode House, a designated landmark in Glendale which is currently owned by the City of Glendale pending its restoration, fell off its foundation as a result of an aftershock of the Northridge Earthquake. The Goode House has long been recognized as being in a serious state of disrepair and threatened by potential damage from earthquakes and strong winds. During the 1988 debate over a proposed senior housing project for the Goode House the Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission was quoted as saying that the house was held together by "the termites holding hands."

A plan to install temporary cribbing underneath the house to provide additional support pending restoration was moving through City Hall when the house fell. This plan had already been through hearings before the Housing Authority, Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission. After the wait of four months for both the approvals and contract details to be worked out between the City Attorney and the contractor, a minor aftershock from the earthquake finally was too much for the house.

The Goode House is currently thought to be salvageable. However, the cost to restore the house will now include the added cost of raising the house off the ground. TGHS will continue to closely watch the developments of future efforts to restore the house.

David Smith

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## Bilingual Doctors' House Docents Being Sought

The Glendale Historical Society is seeking bilingual volunteers to be docents at The Doctors' House. Particularily needed are docents who speak Armenian, Spanish and Asian languages. Men and women who are fluent in a foreign language and have some time to help make the Doctors' House more meaningful to all potential visitors are asked to call Isabelle Meyer at (818) 242-4290.

William Shepherd

## In Memoriam: Paul Shipton

Paul Shipton, who helped make The Glendale Historical Society's dream for the Alex Theatre a reality, passed away in November, just one month before the grand opening of the Alex as a performing arts center. When Paul first heard of the Alex and its unique history, he became fascinated with the idea of telling its story in the form of a multi-media musical. In 1989 he joined the Alex Theatre Revitalization Project, a TGHS committee. With Paul on board, the Revitalization Project was able to carry out its goal of producing a major show on the Alex stage to demonstrate its potential as a performing arts venue and galvanize public awareness and support for preserving the landmark theatre. Donating his vast talents, Paul became the primary creative force behind "Alexander Then and Now", the musical extravaganza presented in September of 1990. He wrote, staged, choreographed, and directed the show.

A native of Canada and a Glendale resident for eight years, Paul had an impressive career in the performing arts which began in classical and commercial dance on Broadway and in national touring companies. A New York-trained dancer, Paul appeared in TV shows, films, and over 30 musical productions. He worked as a Hollywood choreographer and director of large cast revues which toured Europe and Asia and performed at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and the Hollywood Bowl. In addition to choreographing and directing, Paul taught dance at the American School of Dance, Los Angeles Dance Center, Lichine School of Ballet, and U.C. Irvine. His celebrity students included Mary Tyler Moore, Jane Fonda, and Ann Jilian. Paul also coached the principal dancers of the USSR Moiseyev Dance Company in rock and disco styles.

The Glendale Historical Society donated a tree to the city's 1994 Arbor Day program in memory of Paul. Those of us who worked closely with him on the Alex Extravaganza will pay tribute to Paul at the tree planting later this year. TGHS salutes Paul Shipton for all he did to contribute to the bright future of the Alex Theatre as Glendale's performing arts center.

Andrea Humberger



## Preservation Issues: Update

**Goode House:** The City's Department of Community Development and Housing is working with the Crippled Children Society to develop the Goode House site as affordable housing for handicapped adults. The project plans have been approved by Glendale's Design Review Board, and the Glendale Fire Department has approved retention of a wood shingle roof for the Goode House. The plans have been submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation for comment as required by law as part of the environmental review process because federal funds are being used for the project. Once the environmental review process is complete, the project will go to the Glendale Historic Preservation Commission for review. In the meantime, a stabilization plan was approved by the Historic Preservation Commission and City Council in December. Unfortunately, before the City finalized the stabilization contract with Larry Winans, the preservation consultant and contractor of the project, the house fell off its foundation during an earthquake aftershock. A separate article in this newsletter gives the details of this event.

**Taylor House:** The 1873 Taylor House was purchased last summer by the Fleitas family, which has hired Glendale architect Ted Osborn of Lane Osborn to design the rehabilitation and an addition to the house for use as a residence. TGHS

representatives have reviewed the plans and find the addition to be very appropriate. The project was approved in February by the Design Review Board and then went to the Historic Preservation Commission and the City Council. The non-historic rear addition to the house has been removed, and rehabilitation of the house and construction of the addition are about to begin.

**Earthquake Damage:** Many designated city landmarks were damaged in the January 17 earthquake, including Casa Adobe de San Rafael, Brand Library, and the Glendale Hotel. It appears that all are repairable, and repairs are underway. The Planning Division sent letters to the owners of all designated buildings making them aware of funding options and the importance of repairing the buildings appropriately. Over 40 other Glendale buildings were severely damaged in the earthquake. TGHS will monitor those considered to be architecturally or historically significant and advocate against demolition and for rehabilitation.

Andrea Humberger



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## Our Neighbors in Historic Preservation

The Glendale Historical Society is one of many Southern California organizations dedicated to promoting local history and historic sites. The following nearby groups may be of interest to our members:

**Altadena Heritage:** P.O. Box 218, Altadena CA 91103. (818) 397-1785

**Burbank Historical Society:** 1015 W. Olive, Burbank, CA 91506. (818) 841-6333

**Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society:** 5345 Hillmont Ave., L.A., CA 90041

**Highland Park Heritage Trust:** P.O. Box 42894, Highland Park, CA 90050

**Historical Society of Southern California:** The Lummis House, 200 E. Avenue 43, L.A., CA 90031. (213) 222-0456

**Hollywood Heritage:** P.O. Box 2586, Hollywood, CA 90028. (213) 874-4005

**Little Landers Historical Society:** P.O. Box 203, Tujunga, CA 91043. (818) 352-3420

**Los Angeles Conservancy:** 727 W. Seventh St., Suite 955, Los Angeles, CA 90017. (213) 623-CITY

**Pasadena Heritage:** 80 W. Dayton St., Pasadena, CA 91105. (818) 793-0617

**Pasadena Historical Society:** 470 W. Walnut, Pasadena, CA 91103. (818) 577-1660

**San Marino Historical Society:** P.O. Box 80222, San Marino, CA 91118. (818) 568-0119

## Committees on the Move

### AWARDS COMMITTEE

*Chair: Andrea Humberger*  
*(818) 243-3859*

The awards jury met in March to make recommendations to the TGHS Board for the annual TGHS awards for leadership, service and contributions to the celebration and preservation of Glendale's heritage. This year's presentations and festivities were held on Saturday, May 14 in celebration of Preservation Week. Full details about the awards will appear in the next TGHS newsletter.



Darlene and Ted Tiffany enjoy Valentines Day dinner at The Doctors' House served by docents Isabelle Meyer and Merry Franzen.

### DOCTORS' HOUSE DOCENT GUILD

*Coordinator: Isabelle Meyer*  
*(818) 242-4290*

The First Annual Valentine's Day Dinner at The Doctor's House was held on February 14, 1994. Lucky winners Mr. and Mrs. Ted Tiffany, long time members of TGHS, were served a romantic, candlelit dinner served by Doctors' House docents Merry Franzen and Isabelle Meyer. The Tiffanys enjoyed the three course dinner donated by Duet Restaurant of Glendale. TGHS provided coffee and Godiva chocolates for desert.

The Tiffanys won their dinner by having their ticket selected at the February 6, 1994 drawing held at The Doctors' House. The drawing was designed as a fund raiser, and 150 tickets were sold to members, their families and their friends. Unfortunately, publicity sent to newspapers and radio stations suffered because of the attention being given to the recent earthquake and its aftermath. Nevertheless, we grossed \$750 from ticket sales. Some of the proceeds were spent on decorations for The Doctor's House which can be used in

future years for other Valentine's Day affairs. The net profit from this new fund raiser was \$450.

We appreciate the support and enthusiasm of everyone who purchased one or more tickets for the raffle. Special thanks to Merry and Isabelle, and to Duet. Since the evening was such a success, we plan to have another Valentine's Day dinner next year. You will therefore have another chance to share an exclusive date with a loved one next February 14.

The docent program continues to run smoothly, thanks to the dedication of our docents. We are especially excited to see our most recent docent training graduates, Maria Whittaker, Dave Smith, Art Fisher, and Bill Shepherd, in action. They are a welcome addition to our group.

On February 25, four of our docents guided 120 students from R.D. White Elementary School through the house, and we continue to have a steady flow of visitors during our regular Sunday tours. The visiting children sent a big thank you card to the docents. Good job, docents!

For those of you who might be wondering about earthquake damage to The Doctors' House, please be assured the House came through this natural disaster with only a single saucer being broken (and repaired). It is very obvious that complying with modern city building codes during restoration paid off. We are very grateful to have not suffered any losses, and we will continue to do all we can to make and keep our museum safe. We have secured the furnishings against future quakes, as detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Please come and see the changing displays and enjoy a chat with our docents any time. The House is open on Sundays 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### LANDMARK DESIGNATION

*Chair: David Smith*  
*(818) 507-1999*

The Landmark Designations Committee goal is to nominate buildings to the local landmark list and to the National Register of Historic Places. The committee held its first meeting in February and is planning to meet again in the near future. Persons interested in learning about the history of individual buildings and becoming involved with the research and documentation processes should contact the committee chair.

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

*Chair: Phyllis Kenney*  
*(818) 507-6531*

Attendance at our regular monthly meetings has increased tremendously in the past six months. This increase is mostly due to our members' presence. Thanks to each of you for your support. A special thanks to Caroline Beniasians and Jean Felkel for greeting everyone at our February meeting since I could not be there.



## Committees on the Move

We are asking each of you to make an extra effort to speak to guests or new members during our meetings and social events. This helps us all to get to know one another better and to effectively pursue our common goals. You can help expand our membership by letting our guests know that we are a friendly, energetic group which welcomes anyone who is interested in the study and preservation of Glendale's history.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION

*Chair: William Shepherd*  
(818) 241-8086

Start-up of this committee has been delayed. Our new target for getting this committee functioning is Spring - Summer. Persons interested in working on this committee to help preserve neighborhood integrity and promote protection of historical sites within individual neighborhoods are asked to call William Shepherd at the above number.

### NELL SHIPMAN COMMITTEE

*Chair: Terry Richman*  
(818) 241-5621

Committee members met on February 22 and decided to feature Shipman's 1917 - 1920 residence at The Doctors' House at a special fall exhibit in the House. Through the actress/writer/director/producer's autobiography and our conversations with her son Barry, we know of several incidents that occurred in the House: her first meeting with an eventual Academy Award winning cinematographer and a producer to form her own film production company; the formal Victorian style dinners her mother prepared; her brush with death during the 1918 flu epidemic.

We hope to showcase these and other facets of her life using props, photographs and 1920s clothing, with the docents enhancing the usual tour information with facts of Shipman's life and times.

We recently learned that *McCall's* magazine featured Shipman in a color cover portrait when it serialized her novel, *Get the Woman*. The Boise State University library has a Nell Shipman collection and we can obtain a copy of the *McCall's* photo through them, along with other archival materials. We will possibly run a 30 minute video of Shipman's accomplishments (produced also at B.S.U.) in the display room.

Though the committee will be focusing solely on this project until after the exhibit, we will later consider showing her films (at the Alex?) and/or co-sponsoring the one woman play, *The Nell Shipman Story*.

### PRESERVATION ADVOCACY

*Chair: Andrea Humberger*  
(818) 243-3859

The Preservation Advocacy Committee continues to monitor preservation issues in Glendale, attend and speak on behalf of TGHS at public hearings, provide input to the City on projects impacting vintage and historic buildings, and attend the monthly meetings of the City's Historic Preservation Commission. We are currently participating in the public process on many projects, including the Goode House, the Taylor House, and Blocks 29 and 30 in the Redevelopment Area. (This is the two-block area bounded by Brand, Louise, Broadway and Harvard.) Please contact the committee chair regarding these or any other issues.

### SPEAKERS BUREAU

*Chair: David Smith*  
(818) 507-1999

The Speakers Bureau members are in the process of taking new slides to be used in updating the *Historic Buildings in Glendale* slide program. Along with new slides the committee will prepare a revised script. The committee has also discussed the need to develop two shows, a twenty minute and a forty-five minute presentation, to fit the time allotments of the different service clubs and organizations. If you are interested in becoming involved with the photography, script writing or presentation phases of this project, please contact the committee chair.

### TOURS

*Chair: Art Fisher*  
(818) 246-7059

Our committee's original goal was to have a spring 1994 tour of Glendale churches and a fall 1994 tour of downtown Glendale. Unfortunately, the Northridge earthquake interrupted the planning for these tours. A revised tour schedule will be announced shortly. If you are interested in becoming involved with the planning for these tours, please contact the committee chair.

### YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

*Chair: Caroline Beniasians*  
(818) 353-7749

The Youth Involvement Committee is working to get this committee in full operation. Caroline Beniasians is looking for some volunteers to assist her in her committee's efforts. Please contact her if you'd like to participate in this new and much-needed area of activity.

## Spotlight on Service: Isabelle Meyer



By Andrea Humberger

Isabelle Meyer was born and grew up in Basel, Switzerland. The summer before her senior year in high school, she went to a summer program for foreign students in England. There she met Larry Meyer, whom she married a few years later. They settled in Southern California. After twelve years as a stay-at-home mom of two daughters, Isabelle went back to college and earned a BA degree and a multiple subject teaching credential. She now teaches Literacy and English at El Monte Adult School. Isabelle has been active with the Southern California Swiss Club for 15 years, serving as president for three years. She is very active with disaster preparedness in Glenoaks Canyon, where she lives, and for two local schools.

Isabelle and Larry joined TGHS in 1979 when efforts to save The Doctors' House began. Isabelle was active in the early fundraising efforts for The Doctors' House restoration while Larry was a founding member of the TGHS Board of Directors. Isabelle became a Doctors' House docent in 1987. In addition to Sunday tours, Isabelle gave weekday tours and organized a field trip to The Doctors' House for Glenoaks Elementary School students which included a Victorian picnic and games. Isabelle has conducted the docent training program for the past four years. In 1992 she and her daughters were models for the TGHS vintage fashion show.

As Coordinator of the Docent Guild since

## Earthquake Retrofitting at The Doctors' House

Although The Doctors' House suffered no damage during the January earthquake, we have taken precautions to protect the furnishings from future earthquakes.

After the earthquake, a thorough room-by-room inspection was made by Glenn and Marie Luft, Dick Montgomery and Isabelle Meyer. With careful planning and work, we found ways to secure furniture and fragile items without causing permanent damage to these valuable antiques. For three days during May, Glenn, Marie and Isabelle used L-brackets, Velcro strips and Quake-Hold putty to affix all breakable items to the walls and other surfaces. A record of all safety measures taken is on hand to help the House Brilliant Committee work more easily around secured items when cleaning the house.

Not only will these recent efforts pay off the next time the earth shakes, but will reduce the chance of losses due to theft or breakage. The Docent Guild and the Historical Society appreciate the expertise given so generously by the Lufts, who were instrumental in the original restoration of The Doctors' House and who continue to be supportive by donating their time and talents.

Isabelle Meyer  
Docent Co-ordinator

last December, Isabelle arranges staffing at The Doctors' House for regular Sunday and weekday tours. Also since December, she has organized several new and successful programs at the House such as the innovative Valentines Day fund-raiser. Since March she has served on the TGHS Board of Directors.

We salute Isabelle for her abundance of energy, profusion of new ideas, and enthusiastic leadership. We appreciate her bringing these qualities to both The Doctors' House Docent Guild and the Board of Directors. We wish her good luck in her new roles.



## Membership Update

Welcome to the following new members who have recently joined our organization:

### Individual and family members

Paul R. Ayers Family  
Robert G. Beer  
Irene Blore  
Russell Cinque  
Victoria Gorjian  
Jarrod Hettler  
Dave Keitel  
Mort Loveman  
Al L. Martini III  
Laura Mohr and Tomasz Lebecki  
Carl and Gail Nelson  
Joseph Rosen  
Meyer and Beth Siegel  
Lorene and George Simon  
Mrs. Dale Stenzel

A special thank you to members who have recently renewed at the Small Business, Sustaining or Corporate levels:

### Small Business Members

Zaven Khatchaturian, DDS  
U.D.I. Investment Co.

### Renewing Sustaining Members

Bruce and Valerie Merritt

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

### *Public Meetings: When and Where*

#### **Glendale Redevelopment Agency/ Glendale City Council**

Every Tuesday, 1:30 and 2:00 p.m.  
613 E. Broadway  
City Hall - Council Chambers

#### **Historic Preservation Commission**

First Monday of the month, 2:00 p.m.  
633 E. Broadway  
Municipal Services Building Room, 105

#### **Environmental and Planning Board**

Thursdays, 3:00 p.m.  
633 E. Broadway  
Municipal Services Building, Room 106

## Membership Information

The Glendale Historical Society is a non-profit tax exempt organization. Membership is open to men and women of all ages who are interested in the preservation and appreciation of the heritage of Glendale. Dues are for one year.

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Name

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Address

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City, State, and Zip Code

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Telephone

- Individual \$20
- Family/Dual \$35
- Senior/Student Individual \$10
- Sustaining \$50
- Small Business \$35
- Corporate \$100
- Non-Profit Organization \$25

Please make your check payable to:  
**The Glendale Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202**

Please indicate any committees or areas of interest:

- The Doctors' House
- Landmark Designation
- Membership
- Neighborhood Preservation
- Nell Shipman
- Preservation Advocacy
- Tours
- Youth Involvement

**The Glendale Historical Society  
Officers and Directors**

**Officers:**

David L. Smith - *President*  
William Shepherd - *Vice President*  
Dan Cabrera - *Secretary*  
Richard Montgomery - *Treasurer*

**Directors:**

Caroline Beniasians  
Frances Doll  
Margaret Hammond  
Phyllis Kenney  
Doyle Kutch  
Isabelle Meyer  
Richard Montgomery  
William Shepherd  
David L. Smith

**EDITORIAL DEADLINES**

TGHS QUARTERLY is published  
January, April, July and October by The Glendale  
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The editorial deadline for submissions to  
the October edition is August 31, and for the  
January 1995 issue the deadline is November 30.

The editors welcome letters and articles  
relevant to Glendale heritage from members or  
other interested parties. Please mail to: The  
Editors, The Glendale Historical Society, P.O.  
Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202.

The Co-Editors thank the committee  
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*TGHS Telephone: (818)242-7447*

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