



LOS ANGELES

# CONSERVANCY

# news

A W A R E N E S S  
A S S I S T A N C E  
A C T I O N

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The UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel-Air, despite a family bequest to remain in UCLA's possession in perpetuity, will be sold to the highest bidder. No protections are in place to prevent the destruction of the garden once the sale is complete. Photo by Christine Caldwell.

## UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden for Sale with No Protection

by *Adrian Scott Fine*

Since we first reported on this issue in the March/April 2012 *Conservancy News*, the UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel-Air has come closer to destruction, likely in the near future. UCLA placed the garden on the market in April 2012, for a minimum bid of \$5.7 million and with no preservation protections in place. Bids on the garden and adjacent residence are due May 22, making it critical that concerned citizens contact UCLA as soon as possible to urge them to halt the sale and reject bids.

Historic preservation takes both reactive and proactive efforts. Many owners take great pains to make sure their historic properties survive for future generations. Yet the plight of the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden illustrates that even the best intentions—including those planned years prior—can fail without sufficient safeguards.

Constructed between 1959 and 1961, the 1.5-acre hillside garden is among the largest and most significant private residential Japanese-style gardens built in the U.S. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon G. Guiberson commissioned it after traveling to Japan; they requested a garden inspired by those of Kyoto. It is associated with two of the most prominent designers of Japanese gardens, Nagao Sakurai and Koichi Kawana. As the first major Japanese garden built in Southern California following World War II, it has come to symbolize for many the renewed appreciation for Japanese culture and early efforts to heal relations after years of anti-Japanese sentiment.

*Please see UCLA GARDEN on page 6*

## Barry Building Update

by *Marcello Vavala*

Despite their designation as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCMs), the Barry Building (Milton Caughey, 1951) and Coral Tree Median in Brentwood remain targeted for demolition and alteration.

The final environmental impact report (EIR) for the Green Hollow Square project calls for the demolition of the Barry Building (HCM #887) at 11973 San Vicente Boulevard. It also specifies the removal of some coral trees from the Coral Tree Median (HCM #148) in front of the project site to create a crossing midway through the block.

The Conservancy and our Modern Committee strongly believe that the Barry Building can and should be adaptively reused as part of the project. We also object to the unnecessary removal of the coral trees, which would compromise the uninterrupted, linear nature of the median.

In the coming weeks, the City Planning Commission and the Planning and Land Use Management Committee will each vote on a specific recommendation before the final EIR goes to the full City Council for certification. After the EIR is certified, very little, if anything, can be done to change the project.

It is vital that concerned residents contact Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, in whose district the project is located. He must hear from residents that reusing the Barry Building is the only acceptable alternative, and that the Coral Tree Median deserves preservation as a historic landscape. For details, visit [laconservancy.org/issues](http://laconservancy.org/issues). Thank you!

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The Los Angeles Conservancy is a nonprofit membership organization that works through education and advocacy to recognize, preserve, and revitalize the historic architectural and cultural resources of Los Angeles County.

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## June 9 Annual Meeting Celebrates Paul Williams

Please join Conservancy board, staff, and fellow members for our annual meeting on **Saturday, June 9, from 2 – 4 p.m. at the Founder’s Church of Religious Science**. We will review the past year in preservation, present our Volunteer Recognition Awards, and introduce the newly elected members of the Board of Directors. We will also have a special program by **Karen Hudson**, author of the books *Paul R. Williams: Classic Hollywood Style* (Rizzoli International Publications, 2012), *Paul R. Williams, Architect* (Rizzoli International Publications, 2000), and *The Will and the Way: Paul R. Williams, Architect* (Rizzoli International Publications, 1994).



The 1960 Founder’s Church of Religious Science. Photo from Conservancy Archives.

The Founder’s Church of Religious Science (1960), also known as the Center for Spiritual Living, was one of the few religious structures designed by renowned architect Paul R. Williams. Featuring a Near Eastern flavor, the building has a circular plan and is topped by a shallow metal dome, with smooth wall surfaces and a concrete-block brise soleil surrounding the sanctuary. The designated landmark (Historic-Cultural Monument #727) is located at 550 South Berendo Street in Koreatown.

Hudson, Williams’s granddaughter, will discuss the six-decade-long career of the prolific architect, the first African American Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Her newest book focuses on some of Williams’s most glamorous houses in Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Bel-Air, and the Hollywood Hills. The book explores Williams’s work with celebrities, industry leaders, and members of high society, for whom he created unique residences for luxury living and world-class entertaining. Hudson will sign copies of the book after the meeting.

The annual meeting is free and open to the public. Reservations are recommended but not required; you can mark the enclosed ballot or contact the Conservancy at (213) 623-2489 or [info@laconservancy.org](mailto:info@laconservancy.org). For details, directions, and parking information, visit [founderschurch.org](http://founderschurch.org) (“Find Us”) or [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org), or contact the Conservancy. We hope to see you there!

## Lainna Fader Joins Conservancy Staff as Membership Assistant

We are happy to welcome **Lainna Fader** as the Conservancy’s new membership assistant. Formerly director of development at Cinefamily, a nonprofit cinematheque, Lainna has a great background in development that will serve her well in managing memberships and planning events. A native of Los Angeles, Lainna graduated from Occidental College with a bachelor’s degree in politics and a concentration in Russian studies. Her parents are longtime members of the Conservancy, and Lainna, a writer, became involved last year when doing research for an article on the Wiltern Theatre’s 80th anniversary for *L.A. Weekly*. In addition to her freelance writing for various outlets, including *Time* magazine and KPCC radio’s *Off-Ramp*, Lainna served as the associate publisher and film editor at *L.A. Record*, a quarterly music/arts magazine. Please join us in welcoming Lainna to the Conservancy staff.



# Preservation Issues in the News

by Flora Chou, Adrian Scott Fine, and Marcello Vavala

For more information about these and other preservation issues, please visit [laconservancy.org/issues](http://laconservancy.org/issues).

## Historic Schools

Construction projects at historic schools appear to be on the rise, with a trend toward renovating, upgrading, and modernizing K-12 school campuses.

While some projects involve preservation, others call for the alteration or demolition of historic school buildings. In addition to Leuzinger High School in Lawndale (see Jan/Feb 2012), demolition of historic school buildings has been proposed for Hawthorne Elementary School in the Beverly Hills Unified School District, Jordan High School in Watts within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and Theodore Roosevelt School within the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD).

With Spanish Colonial Revival-style buildings from the 1920s, Hawthorne Elementary was identified as a historic resource in Beverly Hills' first historic resources survey in 1985-86. The proposed project would demolish some of the buildings on campus while making alterations to others.

At Jordan High School, LAUSD proposed to demolish two of five contributing structures in a National Register-eligible historic district. Originally built in the 1920s, the campus was seismically retrofitted and



The Moore House (Lloyd Wright, 1959) is one of Lloyd Wright's most significant postwar residential designs. Photo by Rachel Ambrose.

renovated into the PWA Moderne style in 1935 following the 1933 Long Beach earthquake. Two charter schools currently share the Jordan High School campus, and the proposed project seeks to add permanent classrooms and expand open space on site.

The 1935 Classical Moderne Theodore Roosevelt School is proposed for demolition and replacement by LBUSD. Long Beach Heritage is pressing for consideration of preservation alternatives.

While different from each other, and from the master planning process at colleges and universities, historic K-12 schools are increasingly vulnerable as even more post-war suburban schools come of age and many school districts are accessing bond funding.

## Moore House

The final environmental impact report (EIR) for the project that would demolish the Moore House (Lloyd Wright, 1959) was released in December 2011 and approved by the Palos Verdes Estates Planning Commission on December 20. The EIR failed to include a single bona fide preservation alternative that would retain the home's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and meet most of the project objectives, despite the Conservancy's prior comments and those of nearly 300 concerned individuals requesting such an alternative.

The Conservancy's comments on the EIR reemphasized our belief that the Moore House can and should be adapted to meet the

owners' needs for increased space, amenities, and energy efficiency. Our comments also refuted the findings presented in both a structural engineering report and an energy performance assessment as inconclusive and failing to provide sufficient evidence that preserving the Moore House is infeasible.

In order to exhaust all administrative avenues, the Conservancy filed an appeal of the decision to certify the EIR. The appeal was scheduled to go before the Palos Verdes Estates City Council on April 24. For the latest news, please visit [laconservancy.org/issues](http://laconservancy.org/issues).

## L.A. County Ordinance

On February 14, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 to begin preparation of a preservation program for the County government covering unincorporated territory. Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Mike Antonovich jointly introduced the motion for the County, which has never had a formal preservation program.

The motion directs Regional Planning staff to research and draft a historic preservation ordinance, including provisions for historic resource surveys and the Mills Act property tax abatement program. The projected timeline calls for a draft ordinance and research to be presented before the Board of Supervisors this summer. The Conservancy applauds this important step and is providing technical assistance to Regional Planning staff to facilitate the creation of an effective ordinance tailored to the County's needs.



Jordan High School, which contains a National Register-eligible historic district, faces demolition of some of the campus's historic buildings. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine / Los Angeles Conservancy.

# 2012 Preservation Awards

For detailed project descriptions, visit [laconservancy.org/awards](http://laconservancy.org/awards)

Congratulations to the recipients of the Conservancy's 31st Annual Preservation Awards! As always, these projects reflect a range of outstanding efforts to preserve and revitalize the historic places that make Greater Los Angeles unique.

We will present the awards at a luncheon on **Thursday, May 10**, at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. Our deepest thanks to **City National Bank**, the luncheon's presenting sponsor for the twelfth consecutive year!

The luncheon is a great opportunity to network with preservation, community, and business leaders while supporting the work of the Conservancy. It has gained a reputation as one of the most interesting and inspirational awards shows in town. Tickets are \$125, and table sponsorships are available. For details, visit [laconservancy.org/awards](http://laconservancy.org/awards).



Thom Miller, City National Bank Executive Vice President, with 2011-2012 Conservancy Board President Charmaine Atherton at the 2011 Preservation Awards Luncheon.

## President's Award

### Fiftieth Anniversary of the City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance and Commission

Los Angeles was one of the first large cities in the U.S. to adopt an ordinance to protect historic places—in 1962, predating similar laws in New York City, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, and San Francisco. The ordinance enabled the designation of local landmarks (Historic-Cultural Monuments) and created what is now the Cultural Heritage Commission.

As with much of the preservation movement in Los Angeles, the creation of the city's Cultural Heritage Ordinance stemmed from grassroots activism. In this case, it started in 1958 with a few members of the Historic Building Committee of the Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

Celebrating its fiftieth year in 2012, the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance has led to the recognition—and protection—of more than a thousand Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The Cultural Heritage Commission plays a key role in local preservation policy, fostering safeguards and incentives to preserve individual landmarks and historic districts (Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, or HPOZs).

For its pioneering role in Los Angeles preservation, the President of the Conservancy honors the Cultural Heritage Ordinance and Commission on their fiftieth anniversary.

## 2012 Jury

Many thanks to the members of our independent jury, who had the difficult task of selecting this year's recipients from a strong pool of applicants.

**David W. Cocke, S.E., CHAIR**

President, Structural Focus

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Curator, El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

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Principal, MGDEnvironmental Design

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Members of the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board (now Commission) in the 1970s, with then-mayor Tom Bradley (second from right) at City Hall. Photo courtesy Robert W. Winter (pictured, far left).

## 36th Street Apartments

157-159 E. 36th Street, Los Angeles, 90011

This single-family residence was built circa 1898 in one of South Los Angeles' earliest neighborhoods. More than a century later, it was transformed into permanent housing and supportive services for 18- to 24-year-olds who were homeless or transitioning out of foster care. The project team overcame severe financing challenges, reversed decades of deferred maintenance, and enhanced seismic safety while preserving historic features. Local youth helped with the project, gaining invaluable job training and experience. Two of the youth who worked on the apartments now live there, in a safe and inspiring environment.



Courtesy ICF International

## Catalina Casino

1 Casino Way, Avalon, 90704

This 1929 landmark dominates the Avalon landscape, exemplifying the style and romance of Catalina Island. Designed by Walter Webber and Sumner A. Spaulding, the circular building blends Mediterranean Revival and Art Deco elements with an elegance that belies its massive construction. A private owner showed a strong commitment to the Casino's preservation by commissioning a full-scale exterior restoration. The project team repaired decades of façade damage from water, wind, and salt air, bringing materials and equipment to the island by barge. This great effort returned the Casino's original luster after eighty years.



Courtesy Spectra Company

## First Congregational Church of Los Angeles Tower

540 S. Commonwealth Avenue, Los Angeles, 90020

The soaring tower of this 1932 church was originally topped on each corner by a three-ton pinnacle. When the 1994 Northridge earthquake struck, three of the pinnacles cracked and shifted. All four were removed, and the damaged balustrade was sandwiched in plywood. The tower stayed that way for over a decade, until a bequest from a congregant's estate enabled repairs. Unsure if the damaged tower could support the original pinnacles, the team fabricated new ones from lighter-weight material, using molds made from the originals.



Jose Reyes

## Lincoln Park Gateway

3501 Valley Boulevard, Los Angeles, 90031

This elegant gateway to Lincoln Park was built in 1933 to create work for the unemployed during the Great Depression. The Lincoln Heights landmark suffered from decades of deferred maintenance and vandalism, until community efforts led to its repair. The project team replaced missing sections of the structure and carefully repaired damage from skateboards, graffiti, and aggressive plant growth. Built during the Great Depression and restored during the current recession, all with public funds, the gateway stands as a testament to Angelenos' commitment to their cultural heritage, even during the toughest of times.



Courtesy ICF International

## Linde + Robinson Laboratory at Caltech

California Institute of Technology, 1200 E. California Boulevard, Pasadena, 91125

Built in 1932, the Henry M. Robinson Laboratory of Astrophysics housed Caltech's astronomers and astrophysicists for nearly eighty years. This unique building now houses the Linde Center for Global Environmental Science, devoted to studying and solving the world's complex environmental problems. The project itself served as a case study, becoming the first LEED Platinum-certified renovation of a historic lab building. The team not only preserved historic features, it found brilliant new uses for them—uniting a focus on the future with respect for the past.



David Wakely

## Village Green Historic Structures Report

Village Green: 5300 Rodeo Road, Los Angeles, 90016

Completed in 1942 as Baldwin Hills Village, the Village Green garden apartment community spans nearly seventy acres and houses around 1,400 residents. The owners association commissioned a Historic Structures Report that documents the site's history, physical characteristics, and existing conditions, and prioritizes preservation recommendations. The project took significant outreach and education among the property owners. In return, it gave residents a clear roadmap for preservation, paved the way for lower property taxes through the Mills Act, and created a model for other historic garden apartment communities.



Adrian Scott Fine / L.A. Conservancy

## HPOZ CONFERENCE

On **Saturday, May 19**, the Conservancy will partner with the Los Angeles Department of City Planning and Office of Historic Resources to present the 10th Annual HPOZ Conference.

The conference is a great opportunity for residents, board members, and anyone interested in Los Angeles historic districts (Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, or HPOZs) to gather for a day of educational workshops and networking.

Session topics include design review, the nuts and bolts of preparing a preservation project, architectural styles, and practical application of restoration principles. Attendees will have a choice of walking tours showcasing Hollywood HPOZs, including nearby Hollywood Grove.

The conference will take place at the **Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International** in Hollywood (Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #329). Originally called Chateau Elysee, this Chateausque landmark opened in 1928 as a residential hotel catering to the Hollywood elite.

Conference registration is \$20 before May 13 (\$25 after) and includes refreshments and lunch. To register, visit [laconservancy.org/neighborhoods](http://laconservancy.org/neighborhoods).



Church of Scientology Celebrity Centre International. Photo by Marcello Vavala / Los Angeles Conservancy.

## UCLA GARDEN continued from page 1

UCLA acquired the garden in 1964 through a bequest by Edward Carter, an alumnus and former Chair of the Board of Regents. The garden was later named after Edward's wife, Hannah. Through an initial agreement that was later reaffirmed with amendments in 1982 and 1999, UCLA agreed to maintain the garden "in perpetuity"—meaning, forever.

Anticipating the need for funds to maintain and operate the garden in the future, Carter provided for an endowment by allowing the sale of his 1938 residence next to the garden. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the residence would be used to support the garden. The residence is also currently listed for sale, at \$9 million.

Despite Carter's proactive efforts to ensure the long-term preservation of the garden, UCLA announced plans to sell it in November 2011. As it turns out, the university had gone to court in 2010—unbeknownst to the Edward and Hannah Carter family, garden conservation organizations, or the Conservancy. Claiming a change in circumstances, UCLA persuaded the Superior Court to allow the removal of the "in perpetuity" requirement from the Carter bequest.

Public outcry intensified when UCLA began removing objects and artifacts from the garden in January 2012. The Coalition to Save the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden was formed, including members of the Carter family, the Conservancy, The Garden Conservancy, the California Garden and Landscape History Society, the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the California Preservation Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Society of Landscape Architects, and other organizations. At press time, more than 2,000 people had signed an online petition urging UCLA to call off the sale.

The site of the garden is zoned for agricultural use and could conceivably be redeveloped for a single-family residence, destroying this unique cultural landscape. To date, UCLA has refused to place any protective covenants or requirements calling for the garden to be maintained or preserved as part of the sale. The university is also legally obligated to accept the highest bid, regardless of the bidder's intention for the site.

While UCLA does not dispute the garden's significance, it does claim that it is a financial drain and that it does not support its core academic programs. The university also cites challenges with public parking and access to the site. UCLA Chancellor Gene Block has publicly stated, "Simply put, we are selling the garden because it is in the best interests of the university."

The Coalition counters this notion, pressing UCLA to honor the donors' intent and terms of the original agreement. Without any protections in place as part of the sale, UCLA's actions endanger the garden and severely limit its likelihood for survival.

The Conservancy and other Coalition members would like to work with UCLA to find a mutually agreeable solution. Viable alternatives exist that can address UCLA's concerns without placing the garden at risk, including a public-private partnership that the Coalition has put forward.

If you are concerned about the future of the garden, please reach out to Chancellor Gene Block and the University of California Regents and urge them to halt the garden's sale, including rejecting any bids that may be submitted. For talking points and updates, please visit our website at [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org). Thank you!



Serene landscape at the UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden. Photo by Judy M. Horton.

# JANUARY 27 / MARCH 28 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Los Angeles Conservancy would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of our new Supporting members, and the new and renewing members of our Sustaining, Benefactor, and Cornerstone groups.

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Los Angeles Conservancy  
Attn: Membership  
523 West Sixth Street, Suite 826  
Los Angeles, CA 90014  
(213) 623-2489 ■ fax: (213) 623-3909

## Thank You to Millard Sheets Tour Volunteers!

We would like express a heartfelt thank-you to the eighty-six Conservancy volunteers who braved the cold and rain on March 18 to help with our Pacific Standard Time tour, Millard

Sheets: A Legacy of Art and Architecture. These committed volunteers guided more than 500 tourgoers through five sites in Pomona and Claremont. Special thanks to Modern Committee Chair Regina O'Brien and ModCom members who donated their time to help plan the tour and a panel discussion afterward, which drew more than 200 people.



Volunteer docent Jane Brokis describes the remarkable design of the former Millard Sheets studio in Claremont. Photo by Larry Underhill.

## CONSERVANCY WALKING TOURS

Walking tours begin at 10 a.m. except where noted. Tours are \$5 for Conservancy members and children twelve and under; \$10 for the general public. Walk-ins are accepted on most tours. Pre-payment is required on Angelino Heights, Biltmore Hotel, and Broadway.

For details and reservations, visit [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org). Questions? Call the Conservancy office at (213) 623-2489.

### WEEKLY TOURS

#### Art Deco

Every Saturday

#### Biltmore Hotel

Every Sunday, 2 p.m.

#### Broadway: Historic Theatre & Commercial District

Every Saturday

#### Historic Downtown

Every Saturday

### BI-WEEKLY AND MONTHLY TOURS

#### Angelino Heights

First Saturday

#### Downtown Renaissance: Spring & Main

Second and Fourth Saturdays

#### Downtown's Modern Skyline

First and Third Saturdays, 2 p.m.

#### Union Station

Third Saturday

Youth, family, and group tours by arrangement; call the number above for information.



## Los Angeles Conservancy

523 West Sixth Street, Suite 826

Los Angeles, California 90014

[laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org)

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## May Is National Preservation Month!

### UPCOMING EVENTS



First Congregational Church (Jose Reyes)

#### 31ST ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS LUNCHEON

Thursday, May 10

Millennium Biltmore Hotel

Join us as we honor outstanding achievement in the field of historic preservation across Los Angeles County. See page 4 for details.



Courtesy Jerry Murbach and MGM

#### LAST REMAINING SEATS

May 30 - June 30

Broadway's Historic Theatres  
and Wilshire's Saban Theatre

Celebrate the 26th season of classic films in historic theatres! This year's films include *Paper Moon*, *The Wizard of Oz* (pictured), and *Robin Hood!* Visit [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org) for details.



Conservancy Archives

#### ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 9

2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Founder's Church

Meet with Conservancy board, staff, and fellow members at the Founder's Church of Religious Science designed by Paul R. Williams. See page 2 or insert for details.