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The 1918 YWCA Harbor Area and South Bay in its early days. Photo courtesy YWCA Harbor Area and South Bay/Los Angeles Department of City Planning.

Progress at the Port

by Adrian Scott Fine

Having a threatened building or site placed on an endangered list can sometimes gain the attention of decision makers and hopefully lead to a second look at preservation. Shining the spotlight on a particular site can be effective, especially for historic places that may not be well known to the general public.

That is what the Conservancy had hoped for in June when the National Trust for Historic Preservation placed Terminal Island at the Port of Los Angeles on its 2012 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. While we cannot report that Terminal Island's remaining historic buildings are now in safe hands and demolition is no longer a real threat, there has been progress since the site garnered national endangered status.

One area that has improved is the Port's Terminal Island Land Use Plan. Intended as a framework for future growth and development, the plan was approved by the Board of Harbor Commissioners in January 2012. Shortly after the National Trust announcement, Port representatives stated that one particularly problematic recommendation in the plan—the proposed roadway realignment of Barracuda Street through the remaining historic canneries—was in error and no longer on the table.

This is welcome news, as only three former canneries remain on Terminal Island today: Star-Kist, Chicken of the Sea, and Pan-Pacific. Although none still operate as canneries, the buildings help tell the story

Please see PROGRESS AT THE PORT on page 4

Statewide Festival Celebrates Architect Julia Morgan

by Annie Laskey and Sarah Weber

Julia Morgan (1872 – 1957) wasn't just California's first licensed female architect; she was one of the region's most influential architects, period. Her life and work are showcased this fall by Landmarks California, a statewide effort to foster appreciation for historic and cultural preservation. The Julia Morgan 2012 Festival runs from October 1 through November 16, with organizations from all over the state participating through exhibitions, seminars, performances, and tours. The Conservancy is proud to partner in this exciting program with an event on **Sunday, November 11**, at the Morgan-designed YWCA of the Harbor Area and South Bay, a charming 1918 Craftsman-like clubhouse in San Pedro.

Designer, Engineer, Trailblazer

Morgan was born in San Francisco and raised in nearby Oakland; her mother was an heiress, and her father hailed from a well-connected East Coast family. At a time when few women sought professional careers, she graduated from the University of California, Berkeley in 1894 with a degree in civil engineering. Eight years later, she became the first woman to earn a certificate in architecture from the prestigious L'École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1904, Morgan became the first woman granted a license to practice architecture in California, which she did for the next forty years.

Please see JULIA MORGAN on page 6

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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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Preservation Advocacy Fund: Preservation in Action

Conservancy members generously provide about one-third of the organization's annual revenue—thank you! An additional one-third comes from philanthropic support above and beyond annual membership dues, including donations to the Preservation Advocacy Fund.

The Preservation Advocacy Fund was established in 1996 in the wake of one of our most controversial, costly, and ultimately successful preservation battles: halting the demolition of the 1876 former Cathedral of Saint Vibiana and preserving its landmark status. Since then, the fund has become a crucial resource to sustain the Conservancy's advocacy efforts.

As mentioned in the September/October Conservancy *News*, our executive director, Linda Dishman, is celebrating her twentieth anniversary as the organization's leader. In recognition of this milestone, **we have set a goal of raising a record \$100,000** for the Preservation Advocacy Fund. As of press time, **we are 85% there!**

Please consider making a donation to the fund by **December 31** in honor of Linda's anniversary and her continued stewardship of the Conservancy. Your donation of any amount will make a difference. Donate online at laconservancy.org. Thank you!



Conservancy Receives Modern Architecture Grant from Getty Foundation

On the heels of its groundbreaking arts initiative, Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980, the Getty recently announced a similar program highlighting the region's unparalleled collection of modern architecture. Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in



L.A. will take place from April through July 2013, and the Conservancy is thrilled to announce our participation thanks to a generous grant from the Getty Foundation.

The program builds on the Getty's longstanding interest in the study and conservation of modern architecture. Sixteen museums and other arts organizations in and around Los Angeles are organizing exhibitions and public programs on various topics, including the J. Paul Getty Museum's *Overdrive: L.A. Constructs the Future, 1940-1990*, co-organized by the Getty Research Institute. Much of the related programming will be concentrated between mid-May and mid-June.

The Conservancy's contribution, *Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A., 1940-1990*, is based on our 2005 initiative, *Curating the City: Wilshire Blvd.*, also funded by the Getty Foundation. A varied slate of public programming will include tours, panel discussions, youth activities, and a dedicated section of our website. Together, these efforts will highlight the significance and influence of modern architecture in Greater Los Angeles.

Please see *GETTY GRANT* on page 5

Preservation Issues in the News

by Flora Chou, Adrian Scott Fine, and Marcello Vavala

Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement

Plans are moving forward for the replacement of the historic Sixth Street Viaduct. The 1932 bridge's fate was sealed when, despite years of concerted effort by many, no solution was found to halt or reverse the alkali-silica reaction that is slowly weakening the concrete structure.

In November 2011, the Los Angeles City Council voted to replace the bridge with a new, wider, realigned, cable-stayed suspension bridge at a cost of \$401 million. In April 2012, Mayor Villaraigosa announced a design competition for the new bridge, citing the importance of building a bridge that symbolizes Los Angeles. In September, the City publicly unveiled three designs competing for the final selection, followed by a series of community forums to gather feedback.

The Conservancy is pressing for a design that is both bold and inspiring while also contextual, fitting in with the city's collection of historic bridges nearby, rather than a stand-alone bridge that divorces itself from the others. The final selection was slated for October (at press time). The winning design will be refined throughout 2013 with construction planned to start in 2015.

Chez Jay

Following a tremendous outpouring of public support, in October the Santa Monica Landmarks Commission unanimously landmarked Chez Jay, the storied eatery at 1657



Jay Fiondella in front of Chez Jay during its early years. Photo courtesy Jay Fiondella Family Trust.

Ocean Avenue. Chez Jay opened in 1959 as a nautical-themed steak house and bar on a small scale, with room for only about ten tables. It quickly became a popular spot for celebrities, as longtime owner Jay Fiondella banned cameras and autograph seekers.

In 1999, the Santa Monica Redevelopment Agency purchased Chez Jay and adjacent land for use in its Civic Center Specific Plan and Palisades Garden Walk. The plan is now under way, with the park scheduled to open in December 2013. The restaurant operates under a lease agreement with the City, currently on a month-to-month basis. The redevelopment plans for the nearby park call for "pavilion-like structures" that include both indoor and outdoor spaces.

While beloved by longtime patrons, Chez Jay does not offer outdoor seating or take-out service that would accommodate plans for the park. The City is asking interested parties, including the current operators, to respond to a Request for Proposals for how best to remodel or reconstruct the restaurant to address these issues. The City seeks to select a tenant and negotiate a lease by the end of 2012.

Fortunately, because Chez Jay is now a city landmark, the Landmarks Commission would need to approve any future changes to the building. This allows the City to make sure any modifications are sensitive to the building's architecture, respect its cultural significance, and retain its eligibility as a local landmark.

First Street Store Building

A neighborhood icon of unincorporated East Los Angeles, the First Street Store Building faces an uncertain future. It was purchased earlier this year by charter school operator Alliance College-Ready Public Schools, which plans to build a high school on the site and a middle school on the adjacent property.

Located at 3640 East First Street, the building housed the eponymous department store from 1924 to 2007. Plans for the building's historically significant 1974 redesign were prepared by Raymond A. Stockdale, AIA, following a project concept and theme



The First Street Store Building. Photo courtesy Irma Beserra Núñez.

designed by muralist and fine artist Don Juan (Johnny D. González).

The remodel incorporates mission-inspired architectural elements and an integrated mural of eighteen ceramic tile panels celebrating Chicano history. The mural, titled "A Story of Our Struggle," was designed by González in collaboration with local artists David Botello and Robert Arenivar. Mexican artist Joel Suro Oliveros created and installed the ceramic tiles.

Though the high school project has not yet been submitted, the environmental review prepared for the middle school project would have allowed for the demolition of the entire First Street Store Building, rather than just the rear corner needed to accommodate the proposed new construction.

Community residents formed the Save the First Street Store Building Coalition and appealed the certification of the project. Numerous individuals and groups testified at the August 29 appeal hearing before the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission. Although the Commission did not grant the appeal, it removed the problematic provision, eliminating the threat of the building's demolition through the middle school project.

PROGRESS AT THE PORT*continued from page 1*

of how Terminal Island came to produce nearly eighty percent of the United States' tuna supply.

One of the facilities, the former Chicken of the Sea Cannery, might get a new lease on life. On August 31, the Port issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for its reuse. The complex spans nearly nine acres and includes fourteen buildings, seven of which are historic and date to the 1950s. Originally called Van Camp Seafood Company, the firm marketed canned tuna on a mass scale to the American consumer, especially the housewife, as an affordable substitute for chicken—"Chicken of the Sea."

This facility was the last operational cannery at the Port and the last full-scale tuna canning plant based in the United States. Now it has the potential to be the first of the historic canneries to be reactivated and reopened for a new industrial use that retains the historic buildings while supporting commercial fishing. We are encouraged that the RFP calls for the preservation of all historic buildings at the Chicken of the Sea complex.

We can also report progress at another site on Terminal Island, the Canner's Steam Plant. This simple industrial facility was built in 1951 with efficiency in mind. It served as a single source for generating steam to cook and can tuna at five canneries throughout Fish Harbor.

The Port previously had announced plans to demolish the building but now states that demolition is no longer under

Please see PORT on right



Van Camp workers at Terminal Island. The company changed its name to Chicken of the Sea in 1997. Photo courtesy San Pedro Bay Historical Society.

Say HOLA to the Next Generation of Preservationists

This past summer marked the fourth year of the Conservancy's participation in the Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA) summer program. The program, which targets underserved, inner-city youth from the Rampart community near Lafayette Park, provides classes in academics, the arts, and athletics.

The Conservancy's class, Adventures in Architecture, hosts walking field trips for the kids, aged 11-13, to historic buildings and landscapes within their neighborhood.

This summer's program included visits to five sites: the

former Bullocks Wilshire department store, the Art Deco masterpiece now part of Southwestern Law School; First Congregational Church, a 2012 Conservancy Preservation Award recipient; the Felipe de Neve Branch Library, home to a former (and potentially future) Shakespeare Garden; the Park Plaza Hotel, once the city's largest Elks Club Lodge and now a popular event venue and filming site; and the newly expanded Lafayette Park Recreation Center, the first LEED-certified building owned by the City of Los Angeles.

These buildings, some given new life through the process of adaptive reuse, were chosen for their variety of historic preservation treatments: preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or reconstruction.

Each lesson plan included slide show presentations; engaging, behind-the-scenes tours; and a variety of hands-on activities—all geared to introduce the kids to the rich architectural history within their neighborhood and the importance of sustaining their community's built environment.

Our work with HOLA is a great way to help cultivate the next generation of preservationists. Special thanks to the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation and the Simon-Strauss Foundation for their support of Adventures in Architecture. Thank you for making this work possible through your membership support!



The 2012 HOLA Adventures in Architecture summer group at Southwestern Law School/Bullocks Wilshire. Photo by Sarah Weber/L.A. Conservancy.

PORT *continued from left*

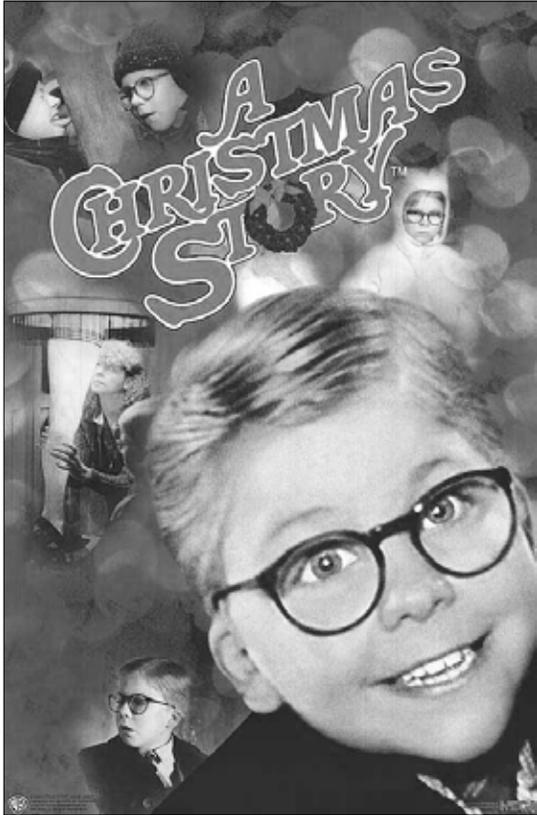
consideration. Yet no plan exists for the building's reuse, and it suffers from deferred maintenance, as do other historic buildings on Terminal Island.

On a broader scale, the Port is also holding public meetings on the update of its overall Master Plan (beyond Terminal Island). The tone and direction set in the new Master Plan will determine growth and development for Terminal Island and all of the Port through 2030.

While we can report progress, Terminal Island remains endangered in other ways, such as a plan that calls for the demolition of historic buildings at the Southwest Marine Shipyard. For background, ongoing updates, and opportunities to support our preservation efforts on Terminal Island, please visit laconservancy.org/issues.

A Christmas Story comes to the Orpheum Theatre December 2

Join us on **Sunday, December 2 at 2 p.m.** for the Conservancy's seventh annual Holiday Film Matinee. This year, we present the Warner Bros. holiday favorite, *A Christmas Story*, at the magnificent Orpheum Theatre on Broadway. This heartwarming 1983 movie has already earned its place as a holiday classic. Though it now appears on TV often during the holidays, like any film, it's far better on the big screen.



A Christmas Story poster. Courtesy Warner Bros.

man completed a multimillion-dollar rehabilitation in 2001. It now serves as a popular event and filming venue, and was featured in the 2011 Academy Award-winning film, *The Artist*.

Tickets for this special event are \$10 for Conservancy members, \$5 for children 12 and under, and \$15 for the general public. For details and tickets, visit laconservancy.org.

Hope to see you there!

GETTY GRANT continued from page 2

The Curating the City model will again treat the metropolitan area as a living museum. This iteration will examine the innovative and experimental buildings, landscapes, and architects that influenced the way Angelenos lived, worked, and played over five decades.

Our participation in this important initiative will help increase awareness of modern architecture and its unique preservation issues, as well as connect it to the historical development and unprecedented growth of Los Angeles County in the second half of the twentieth century.

Stay tuned for more details about the plans and programs that will take place in the spring and early summer of 2013. For more information on the overall initiative, visit getty.edu/foundation/funding/access/current/modarch_fact_sheet.html.

It's December 1940 in Hohman, Indiana, and nine-year-old Ralphie is hoping to find the one present—the only present—he asked for, waiting under the Christmas tree. But the odds seem stacked against him: his mother told him she wouldn't buy it; his teacher advised against it; even Santa himself said he wouldn't come through!

The period film features Peter Billingsley as the frustrated Ralphie, Melinda Dillon as his slightly daffy mother, and Darren McGavin as the “Old Man,” Ralphie's stern and crusty father. Despite one rough-and-tumble obstacle after another, young Ralphie is fearless in his mission. But will he get the present he wants? Come to the Orpheum Theatre and find out!

The Orpheum opened in 1926 as the fourth and final house in Los Angeles operated by the Orpheum vaudeville circuit. Designed by G. Albert Lansburgh, the lush interior evokes the gilded and formal French Renaissance style of the sixteenth century. Owner Steve Needle-

Volunteer Profile: ANN HOBBS

by Bruce Scottow

“It isn't about reciting facts and figures; it's about transporting people back in time and place.”

— Ann Hobbs

It's no wonder that Conservancy volunteer Ann Hobbs loves giving walking tours. Ann cites her role as a walking



tour docent as her most rewarding experience with the Conservancy—and that's saying something. In addition to leading both our Art Deco and Broadway tours, Ann works at our special tours and other events, and she was recently elected as recorder for the Last Remaining Seats sub-committee.

Ann's background piqued her early interest in downtown Los Angeles. Her father worked on Pacific Electric's Red Cars, and her uncle worked at the Terminal Annex (Post Office) next to Union Station. It was at that same station where her mother, arriving in Los Angeles as a new bride, first met her husband's waiting family in 1944.

Despite growing up in the San Fernando Valley, Ann was no stranger to downtown Los Angeles. Her childhood memories include riding on Angels Flight with her family, her first glimpse of the dazzling Lalique glass at the Oviatt Building, the fantasy of Clifton's Cafeteria, and the magnificent theatres on Broadway.

One day during a Broadway tour, Ann's group heard an elderly man loudly singing the 1940s radio jingle, “Eastern Columbia, Broadway at Ninth.” Said Ann, “Now that's what I call transporting people back in time and place!”

JULIA MORGAN *continued from page 1*

A consummate professional, Morgan was a discerning designer and a careful engineer; she was also a woman working in what was then almost exclusively a man's profession. She had a sharp skill for understanding the needs of her clients and delivering what they wanted with scrupulous attention to detail, as well as a strong respect for the natural environment.

Her work ranged in scope from simple clubhouses, such as the YWCA in San Pedro, to the world-famous Hearst Castle (1919 – 1947). She was comfortable working in styles ranging from Beaux-Arts to Craftsman to Period Revival, as well as for many different types of clients, from educational institutions to wealthy patrons. Many of Morgan's buildings still stand today and retain both their beauty and functionality, demonstrating her ability to design buildings that worked.

Morgan and the YWCA

As a woman striving to succeed in a man's field, Morgan relied on many women's organizations for support over the years. Indeed, she began her professional career during a time of significant women's activism and progressive reform. Her affinity for women's organizations—and theirs for her—led to hundreds of commissions over the years, such as Mills College and the Berkeley Women's City Club.

Morgan had a special relationship with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), for whom she designed over thirty buildings. One of her first was Asilomar (1913), a spectacular rustic conference center in Pacific Grove, California. A major patron of the YWCA was Phoebe Apperson Hearst (mother of William Randolph Hearst), with whom Morgan developed a close working relationship and personal friendship.

The Conservancy will take a closer look at Morgan's association with the organization the afternoon of **Sunday, November 11**, at the 1918 YWCA of the Harbor Area and South Bay. Conceived during World War I by the YWCA's War Work Council as a Hostess House for "women friends and relatives of the army and navy," the San Pedro facility ultimately opened as a Girls' Hospitality

House, providing food, shelter, and recreation facilities for young women working in the area. In 1921, local citizens purchased the building and incorporated it as an official branch of the YWCA. It still serves as a YWCA today. During its ninety-year history, the building has housed countless resources for women, including educational courses, child care, health and fitness information, and support for battered women.

In contrast with her higher-profile designs, this building's board-and-batten design is more typical of Morgan's unobtrusive style. Craftsman influences appear in its simple design, wide eaves, and gently pitched roof—giving the impression of a low, wide building anchored firmly to the earth.

The building has undergone several renovations, including a west-wing remodel supervised by Morgan in the 1920s. Despite further renovations and "upgrades" in the mid-twentieth century, the building retains much of its original integrity. It was designated as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #186 in 1978.

See for Yourself!

Please join us on **Sunday, November 11 from 2-4 p.m.** (doors open at 1:30 p.m.) at the YWCA Harbor Area and South Bay in San Pedro. An expert panel will discuss Julia Morgan's life, her legacy as an architect, her relationship with the YWCA, and the significance of the San Pedro branch. We'll then enjoy a semi-guided tour of the facility and a reception with light refreshments.

Panelists will include Christy Johnson McAvoy, founding principal of Historic Resources Group, who will discuss Morgan and her relationship with women's organiza-



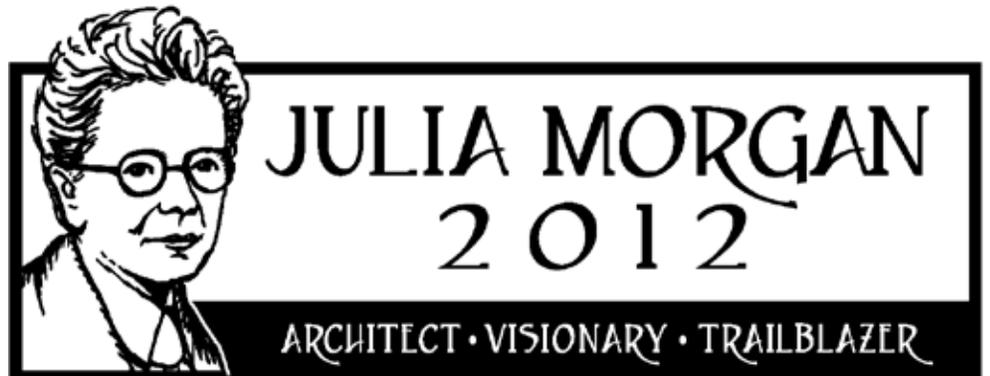
Julia Morgan in 1926. Courtesy Special Collections, Cal Poly.

tions, specifically the YWCA. Helene Pizzini, former executive director of the YWCA Harbor Area and South Bay, will explain how the building functions to meet the needs of women in the community today.

Admission is just \$10 for members of the Conservancy or the South Harbor YWCA, and \$15 for non-members. Space is limited; **reservations are required**. Visit laconservancy.org for reservations. If you have questions, please contact the Conservancy office at (213) 623-2489 or info@laconservancy.org.

Special thanks to Peg Yorkin for sponsoring the event.

To find out about the other Julia Morgan events happening around the state, visit juliamorgan2012.org.



AUGUST 1 / SEPTEMBER 20 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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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Your membership provides the Conservancy with crucial operating funds, as well as strength in numbers to maintain a powerful voice for preservation.

Join or renew at laconservancy.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Conservancy was founded in what year?

- 1963
- 1978
- 1985

Which building's proposed demolition sparked the formation of the Conservancy?

- Ambassador Hotel
- Bunker Hill Victorian houses
- Los Angeles Central Library

Answers: 1. (b) 2. (c)

Share Your Passion for Preservation: Give a Gift Membership for the Holidays

As a Conservancy member, you no doubt have entertained a friend, colleague, or family member with a story about your favorite Los Angeles building. Why not share your passion for local architecture and history even more deeply by giving a Conservancy gift membership this holiday season?

Each gift membership comes with a full year of benefits, including *Conservancy News* and special discounts and advance notice for special tours and events. If you purchase a gift membership by **December 31**, we will invite both you and your gift recipient to a special walking tour of Union Station, to take place in winter 2013.

Membership is the most important way to help the Conservancy protect and revitalize Greater L.A.'s historic resources. Your membership—and any gift membership you purchase—adds to the strength in numbers that is crucial to influencing preservation decisions.

To purchase gift memberships, please visit laconservancy.org or call (213) 430-4201.

Thank you, and happy holidays from all of us at the Conservancy!



New members touring Union Station in 2009. Photo from Conservancy archives.

**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. Questions? Call the Conservancy office at (213) 623-2489.

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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

Modern Skyline

First and Third Saturdays, 2 p.m.

Union Station

Third Saturday

Youth, family, and group tours by arrangement; call (213) 623-2489 for information.



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A CHRISTMAS STORY

Sunday, December 2
Matinee Screening
Orpheum Theatre

Celebrate the holiday season with a special screening of *A Christmas Story*—a great way for the whole family to enjoy the spectacular Orpheum Theatre. See page 5 for details.



Tom Davies

**PRESERVATION
ADVOCACY FUND**
Philanthropy for Action

Help us meet our year-end goal! Support the Conservancy beyond membership and make a donation that directly supports our advocacy efforts. See page 2 for details.



Larry Underhill

THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT
Order a gift membership for your friend or loved one

Drawing a blank on that perfect holiday gift? A Conservancy gift membership is your solution! It's an educational, thoughtful, and inspiring present that lasts all year! See page 7 for details.