



# LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY NEWS



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Early 1900s bungalows in the Jefferson Park neighborhood are full of character. Learn how you can protect your neighborhood's character at our L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference on Saturday, October 15. Photo courtesy City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources.

## L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference Looks to the Future

by *Laura Dominguez*

This fall, the Conservancy and the Los Angeles Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources (OHR) will co-sponsor the 2016 L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference. The day-long forum is open to anyone interested in learning more about neighborhood conservation, including Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs), mansionization and teardowns, public policy, and community advocacy.

The Conservancy and OHR are pleased to present the 2016 conference in partnership with the West Adams Heritage Association. The event will take place on **Saturday, October 15** at the historic St. John's Cathedral in University Park (514 W. Adams Boulevard). Doors will open at 8:30 a.m., and the program will end at 4:30 p.m.

### Growing Up with Character

The theme of this year's conference is "Growing Up with Character," a reflection of widespread efforts to conserve community heritage and livability within the context of Los Angeles' ongoing physical transformation. From tree-lined streets of historic homes, to clusters of older duplexes and bungalow courts, to "background buildings" in industrial neighborhoods, residents face increasing development pressures. New policies aimed at curbing the teardown trend and promoting neighborhood character are on the horizon, and residents are more engaged than ever (see page 3).

If you are wondering how to protect the great qualities that drew you to your neighborhood in the first place, the conference is a wonderful opportunity to connect with other Angelenos

*Please see CONFERENCE on page 6*

## Tour the Homes of View Park on November 6

by *Sarah Lann*

Mark your calendar for the Conservancy's special fall tour on **Sunday, November 6**. We'll visit View Park, a lovely historic neighborhood between La Brea Avenue and Crenshaw Boulevard.

View Park lies just outside the city in unincorporated Los Angeles County. It retains much of its historic appearance and was developed over a long period, from the early 1920s to 1970.

Thanks to the efforts of the View Park Conservancy, a grassroots advocacy group mentored in large part by the Conservancy, View Park was recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The roughly 1,800 homes in this predominantly African American residential area make it the largest National Historic District in the country with black ethnic heritage at its epicenter.

The November 6 tour will give you rare access to several private homes, including the first house in unincorporated L.A. County to gain historic landmark status. The tour will be part of a weekend's worth of festivities celebrating View Park's National Register designation and its impact on Greater Los Angeles' history.

View Park's history is synonymous with that of many areas in Los Angeles County affected by discriminatory covenants and policies that kept segregation firmly in place for many years. Developed in the 1920s as an upper-class neighborhood in the same vein as

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Los Angeles Conservancy  
523 W. Sixth Street, Suite 826  
Los Angeles, California 90014  
(213) 623-2489 Fax: (213) 623-3909  
laconservancy.org

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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Major funding for the Los Angeles Conservancy's programs is provided by the LaFetra Foundation and the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation.

## New Schedule for Preservation Awards

### 2017 Applications Due November 4, 2016

If you have a project in mind for next year's Preservation Awards, start planning now! For many years, applications have been due in late January for that year's awards. Starting this year, they will be due in early November for the next year's awards.

**Applications for our 2017 Preservation Awards are due on Friday, November 4, 2016.** The awards jury will meet in January and we will announce the recipients in February.

We will also hold our annual Preservation Awards Luncheon on a different day next year—Wednesday, not Thursday. **Please mark your calendars for the 2017 Preservation Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, May 3, 2017.**

We encourage a range of applications that illustrate the many ways, and reasons, that we preserve historic places. People, buildings, landscapes, educational programs, local preservation plans, grassroots advocacy efforts—all could qualify for an award.

To be eligible, a project must be complete at the time of application submission, be located in Los Angeles County, and meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (or Cultural Landscapes).

The 2017 application will be available the week of September 12 at *laconservancy.org/awards*. Good luck!

## Manuel Huerta and Adrienne Kisson Leave Conservancy Staff

Two staff members recently left the Conservancy staff. We appreciate their years of hard work and wish them well in their future endeavors.

**Manuel Huerta** left the Conservancy in July after three and a half years as our advocacy department's community outreach coordinator. He was responsible for managing the Conservancy's outreach to Latina/o communities, and he contributed to the Conservancy's ongoing campaign to preserve the historic Wyvernwood Garden Apartments in Boyle Heights. Manuel also oversaw projects to document historic resources related to the 1970 Chicano Moratorium and along the historic core of Central Avenue.

After nearly ten years in our development department, **Adrienne Kisson** left the Conservancy in August. She managed our Cornerstone membership program and planned our largest fundraising events, including our Preservation Awards Luncheon and annual benefit. Adrienne also secured grant funding for the Conservancy's programs and operations. She is most proud of earning grants for our communications technology initiative. These projects have made a huge impact in strengthening our communications, streamlining operations, and positioning the Conservancy to meet future needs. Thank you, Manuel and Adrienne, for your lasting contributions to the Conservancy!

## Martha Tapper Gruft (1947 – 2016)

The Conservancy is saddened by the loss of longtime volunteer Martha Gruft, who passed away on July 2. A dedicated volunteer since 1990, Martha was one of our busiest supporters, generously giving her time to special events, tours, seminars, benefits, and committees. She served on the Last Remaining Seats Committee for many years.

Martha's sense of humor and adventure, and her willingness to help with any volunteer task, earned her special recognition from the Conservancy and endeared her to many other volunteers.

Martha had a special interest in the film industry and Los Angeles history, and she was involved with numerous preservation organizations. It was entirely fitting that her memorial service took place at the historic Hollywood Forever Cemetery.



# Issue Spotlight: Curbing the Mansionization Trend

by Adrian Scott Fine

Throughout Greater Los Angeles, older and historic neighborhoods are losing their unique sense of place through needless demolition and incompatible new development. The location and land values of these communities make them increasingly vulnerable. Though not a new phenomenon, the teardown and mansionization trend is critical to address because of its wide reach and broad implications for generations of Angelenos.

The Conservancy is working closely with residents, neighborhood groups, and the City of Los Angeles to conserve the city's neighborhood character through several ambitious policy proposals, including amendments to the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance (BMO) and the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO).

The City of Los Angeles first passed the BMO in 2008 and the BHO in 2011 to establish regulations for single-family residential properties. The ordinance sought to limit the size and height of single-family homes. Yet a few provisions, including exemptions and design bonuses, actually encouraged the out-of-scale homes it was designed to prevent.

The Conservancy is advocating for sound policies and planning that allow all neighborhoods to adapt for new growth without sacrificing character. We have pressed for a simple and straightforward fix to the amended BMO/BHO.

At a July 14 meeting of the City Planning Commission, commissioners took some important steps to further strengthen the amended BMO/BHO. We had four key concerns that the Planning Commission addressed.

## 1) Exemptions for Attached, Front-loaded Garages

We have advocated removing a provision that exempts the square footage of an attached garage—up to 400 square feet—from a home's overall square footage. This issue has been raised repeatedly as a loophole that leads to incompatible design in older neighborhoods.

More than any other design element, attached garages severely alter the pattern, feel, setting, and overall character of an older



More than any other design element, bulky, front-loaded, attached garages severely alter the overall character of an older neighborhood. A loophole in the Baseline Mansionization Ordinance has led to many incompatible designs appearing in older and historic neighborhoods. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine/L.A. Conservancy.

neighborhood. Most of the city's older neighborhoods have detached garages at the rear, which provides an important buffer by separating adjacent properties by long driveways.

The design of many new houses focuses most often on the garage, not the house itself. At the front of the property and immediately off the street, a front-loaded garage often adds significant bulk, eliminates the buffer of a long driveway, and fails to blend in with existing houses in a 70- to 100-year-old neighborhood.

An amendment was made at the July 14 City Planning Commission meeting that counts a portion of the attached garage toward the overall square footage of a home. The amendment is not perfect, but it does get us closer. We will continue to press further for all of the square footage to be counted when constructing a garage at the front of a house.

## 2) Maximum Residential Floor Area

The current BMO/BHO allow a home's residential floor area (RFA) to equal up to fifty percent of the lot size. In response to public comments on July 14, City staff recommends reducing this amount to forty-five percent.

## 3) Autonomy of Zoning Administrator

Another provision of the current BMO/BHO gives the City Zoning Administrator independent authority to increase the RFA of a new house by up to ten percent without a public hearing.

In response to public comments on the latest amendments, City staff now recommends that the ordinances prohibit the Zoning Administrator from waiving a public hearing when deciding whether to grant certain increases. Specifically, this restriction applies to increases of up to ten percent RFA, and up to twenty percent for yard, area, building line, and height specifications.

## 4) Exemptions for Covered Areas

Porches, patios, and breezeways can impair the character of a neighborhood by adding bulk to a property. The current BMO/BHO exempt these types of elements from the overall RFA of a home. In response to public comments on the latest amendments, City staff now recommends that the ordinances fully eliminate this exemption.

## Next Steps

The City Council's Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee will now consider the proposed amendments to the Baseline Mansionization and Hillside Ordinances. At press time, the date of this meeting had not been set.

With a few additional tweaks and improvements, we hope that an amended BMO/BHO will be adopted by PLUM and then the full City Council, as the strengthened ordinances will help protect the unique character of L.A.'s older neighborhoods.

## Thank You, 2016 Last Remaining Seats Volunteers!

- |                    |   |
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## Last Remaining Seats: A 30th to Remember

by Sarah Lann

In honor of the 30th annual Last Remaining Seats, the Conservancy hosted nine film screenings over four weeks in June. The series had the second-highest attendance in the history of the program, with more than 13,000 tickets sold. We had the help of 120 volunteers who worked one or more screenings. The newly instituted LRS Committee Teams programmed front-of-house events and décor for each film, which were wildly effective and valuable.

An ambitious lineup of new programming to celebrate this milestone was especially successful. This diverse range of activities included backstage tours of theatres, tours of site locations from the film *Safety Last!*, panel discussions with film archivists from major studios, Q&A sessions about the theatres following the films, and bar trivia at Clifton's. These educational and social opportunities were very popular and well received, and they provided patrons with a deeper way to engage with the series and the Conservancy.

We extend our deepest thanks to the many volunteers (listed at left) who helped run the series, as well as our 2016 sponsors. Series Star Sponsors: Hollywood Foreign Press Association; Walter J. and Holly O. Thomson Foundation. Series Supporting Sponsors: Shangri-La Construction; Webcor Builders. Series Sponsors: Delijani Family; Grand Central Market; JPMorgan Chase & Co.; NBCUniversal; Paramount Pictures; Trina Turk and Mr. Turk; The Theatre at Ace Hotel; Roy Allen White. Evening Sponsors: Clifton's; Cole's, Originators of the French Dip; Linda and Jerry Bruckheimer; Hugh Hefner; Cathy and Steve Needleman. Media Sponsors: KLCS; *Los Angeles Downtown News*; Laemmle Theatres. Community Partners: Downtown Center Business Improvement District; Historic Core Business Improvement District. Major funding for the Conservancy's educational programs is provided by the LaFetra Foundation and the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation. Thank you!



Props from *To Kill a Mockingbird* were on display in the lobby of the Million Dollar Theatre, courtesy of NBCUniversal Archives & Collections. Photo by Douglas Hill.



Movie fans were excited to see some of their favorite classic films on the big screen. Photo by Stephen Russo.



Among the new activities we offered at Last Remaining Seats this year, the Q&A sessions after the film screenings were among the best attended. Hundreds of people stayed to learn more about Broadway's historic theatres. Photo by Barry Schwartz.



Conservancy President and CEO Linda Dishman with *Top Gun* screening sponsors Linda and Jerry Bruckheimer. Jerry Bruckheimer, the producer of *Top Gun*, introduced the 8 p.m. opening night screening of this 1980s classic. Photo by Stephen Russo.

## Summer Youth Programming: From NOMA to HOLA

by Rebecca Duran-Perez

In July, the Southern California chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects (SoCalNOMA) invited the Conservancy's director of education, Sarah Lann, to participate in their Project Pipeline Architecture and Engineering Summer Camp. NOMA describes Project Pipeline as "an educational summer camp that provides an opportunity to teach and engage African-American youth about the process and impact of architectural design."

Sarah led a workshop on adaptive reuse with a group of around fifty campers, aged ten to fifteen. They met in an optimal setting—the lobby of the renovated Vision Theatre, a historic Art Deco gem in Leimert Park. This collaborative lesson let campers explore the concept of adaptive reuse in action: they were asked to demonstrate unique new purposes for a folding chair. The results were truly impressive! The students then worked in groups to brainstorm ideas for adaptively reusing existing buildings.

July also marked our eighth annual Adventures in Architecture summer program in partnership with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), a nonprofit community center for underserved youth in the Westlake/Lafayette Park neighborhood.

Eleven students aged ten to thirteen learned about their community, architecture, and the Conservancy via the concepts of preservation, adaptive reuse, and architectural styles.

Our adventurers explored their own neighborhood, with visits to Southwestern Law School/Bullocks Wilshire, MacArthur Park, American Cement Building, First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, and the Park Plaza Hotel. They also took a detour downtown to the new SkySpace Observation Deck atop the US Bank Building. Students engaged in active discussions and hands-on activities, such as creating their own model buildings. We appreciate the remarkable work and support of the many people who helped make this summer's Adventures in Architecture class another success.



HOLA students could see all the sites they had visited in their neighborhood from the SkySpace Observation Deck in downtown Los Angeles. Photo by Bruce Scottow/L.A. Conservancy.

## Fall Benefit October 22 at Eclectic Beverly Hills Estate

by Liz Leshin

In addition to membership, benefit events provide the Conservancy with a large share of our operating funds. Our 2016 fall benefit will take place on **Saturday, October 22** at the Liliore Green-Raines Estate, an elegant 1940 Georgian Colonial home in Beverly Hills, designed and built by James F. Dickason.

The lovely home was built for the daughter of oil tycoon Burton Green, one of the original developers of Beverly Hills (he is, in fact, credited with naming the city). One of the home's prominent owners was media mogul Merv Griffin.

The home's architecture is an interesting blend of styles and influences. The current owners reflect that spirit, taking a fresh and cheeky approach to décor, mixing paintings by modernist masters with vintage-style wallpaper and assorted chandeliers. The estate features extensive grounds with exquisite gardens, an original Adirondack cabin with amazing city views, and a natural spring.

Tickets for the benefit start at \$450 for a three-hour cocktail party; sponsors at higher levels will also enjoy an al fresco dinner in the impressive rose garden. For details and tickets or sponsorships for this extraordinary event, visit [laconservancy.org/benefit](http://laconservancy.org/benefit).



This lovely entryway reflects the home's eclectic style of architecture and design. Photo courtesy of the homeowner.

## Thank You, Summer Interns!

Once again, we benefitted this summer from the hard work of two wonderful interns from the Getty Multicultural Internship Program.

Our advocacy intern, **Samuel Mori**, researched and developed online content related to Los Angeles' older and historic neighborhoods. His work will contribute to our ongoing neighborhood outreach efforts, including the upcoming L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference (see cover story). Sam recently received his bachelor's degree in history and Asian studies from Swarthmore College. He plans to work and travel before attending graduate school.

**Rebecca Duran-Perez**, our education intern, graduated from California State University, Los Angeles in June with a bachelor's degree in history. She has worked as an instructor and teacher's assistant at various institutions, including the Los Angeles Unified School District. She aspires to earn her teaching credential in social science and a master's degree in history. This summer, Rebecca helped teach our Adventures in Architecture class (details at left); assisted with the research, writing, and creation of our Student Walking Tours; and investigated resources for our November 6 tour of View Park (see page 1).

Thank you Sam and Rebecca for all of your contributions this summer!



Interns Rebecca Duran-Perez and Samuel Mori. Photo by Jessica Hodgdon/L.A. Conservancy.

**FALL TOUR***continued from page 1*

Brentwood or Carthay Circle, View Park was restricted to white residents. After the Supreme Court declared racially restrictive neighborhood covenants illegal in 1948, the area became more integrated. By the end of the 1960s, View Park was predominantly composed of affluent black homeowners.

Because of View Park's long period of development, you'll see significant homes in a range of architectural styles. 1930s Spanish Colonial Revival residences share the block with postwar Ranch-style homes. Examples of Minimal Traditional, Storybook, and Streamline Moderne architecture can be found, as well.

As change comes to View Park in the form of nearby development and a soon-to-be-completed Metro station, the neighborhood's hard-won designation will serve as a vital reminder that these places are worth preserving.

The tour of View Park costs \$35 for Conservancy members and \$45 for the general public. Reservations will be available **Wednesday, September 14** at [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org). We hope to see you in View Park!



One of the homes we will visit on the tour is the 1928 Spanish Colonial Revival-style James Doumakes Residence. This private home was the first house in unincorporated L.A. County to gain landmark status. Photo courtesy deasy/penner&partners.

**CONFERENCE** *continued from page 1*

who are organizing around similar issues. The program includes presentations by experts in the field, interactive workshops, and dialogue with neighborhood advocates.

We will kick off the conference with a keynote presentation (special guest to be announced). Participants will then attend one of three morning sessions examining neighborhood conservation tools, design topics in HPOZs, and advocacy strategies. Guests will then choose from one of four brief "power sessions" designed to introduce timely issues and generate new questions. Topics include small lot subdivisions, character corridors, and a brief primer on local architectural styles.

During the lunch hour, guests will enjoy OHR's biennial HPOZ Awards Ceremony, honoring exemplary projects and community leaders in Los Angeles' historic neighborhoods.

After lunch, participants will attend one of three afternoon sessions, highlighting neighborhood conservation tools (a repeat of the morning's session) and community outreach for HPOZs. We will also present an interactive mock HPOZ board meeting.

After a brief closing program, guests will end the day with one of four walking tours of nearby neighborhoods: University Park HPOZ, North University Park Specific Plan, Adams-Normandie HPOZ, or the proposed 27th and 28th Street HPOZ.

**A Site Steeped in History**

We are thrilled to return this year to University Park, where we held our 2007 HPOZ Conference. Developed as one of Los Angeles' first suburbs in the 1880s, University Park is home to one of the most intact collections of early twentieth century and prewar archi-



Our 2016 conference will include more sessions than ever before, so you can learn about the latest in neighborhood conservation. 2014 L.A. Historic Neighborhoods Conference image by Barry Schwartz.

ture in the city. The neighborhood forms the residential backbone of nearby University of Southern California and Exposition Park. Its homes have a range of architectural styles, including Queen Anne, Italianate, Craftsman, and Period Revival.

Guests will also have a chance to explore the conference's historic venue, St. John's Cathedral. Completed in 1925, the church is one of Los Angeles' most monumental examples of Romanesque Revival architecture. Architects Walter and Francis Pierpont Davis modeled their design on ecclesiastical buildings in Northern Italy, as well as the eleventh-century Basilica di San Pietro in Tuscania. St. John's Cathedral is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, in the California Register of Historical Resources, and as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.



This year's conference will take place at the historic St. John's Cathedral in University Park. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine/L.A. Conservancy.

**Show Your Pride with #LAsStoryhood**

Help us generate excitement for the conference ahead of time! Every neighborhood is distinct in some way. Before the conference, tag photos of your neighborhood on Instagram and Twitter with **#LAsStoryhood**.

To see session descriptions and register for the 2016 conference, please visit [laconservancy.org/neighborhoods](http://laconservancy.org/neighborhoods). Be sure to register by **October 7** to take advantage of our \$25 rate, which includes conference materials, morning refreshments, and lunch. After October 7, tickets will be \$30. A small number will also be available for purchase at the door for \$35.

Questions about the conference? Please contact Laura Dominguez at [ldominguez@laconservancy.org](mailto:ldominguez@laconservancy.org) or (213) 430-4211. We look forward to seeing you October 15!

# MAY 27 / JULY 27

## 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

### MEMBER PROFILE: KEITH NAKATA

by Liz Leshin

As a location scout for the film industry, Keith Nakata has more opportunity than most to see the diverse range of our region's historic architecture.



A member since 1989, Keith is also involved in his Neighborhood Council, where he has served on the Planning and Use committee for nine years. He understands the important role community members play in preservation, noting, "You need eyes and ears in the community."

In 2013, he learned of the Port of Los Angeles' plan to demolish older buildings on Terminal Island. Terminal Island tells multiple stories of Los Angeles: it served as a major World War I and II shipbuilding center, as the birthplace of the worldwide tuna canning industry, and as a once-vibrant Japanese-American fishing village.

"I was able to add public comment about public uses for these buildings, and in the process I was able to see how effective the Conservancy was," says Keith. He noted the skill of Conservancy staff in navigating government bureaucracy to reach successful agreements.

This year, Keith and another Conservancy member, Steven Luftman, nominated the former Lytton Savings building for Historic-Cultural Monument designation. At press time, the nomination was under consideration by L.A.'s Cultural Heritage Commission.

### Leonard Hill (1947 – 2016)

Lifetime Cornerstone Member Leonard Hill passed away June 7 at age 68. A passionate preservationist, Hill joined the Conservancy in 1986 and served two terms on our board of directors. He was instrumental in the fight to preserve the former Cathedral of St. Vibiana.

A native Angeleno, Len built a distinguished career in entertainment as a writer, producer, network executive, and entrepreneur, before entering real estate development in the late 1990s. With Yuval Bar-Zemer, he founded Linear City Development to revitalize underused properties, particularly in downtown L.A.'s Arts District.

Len hosted our 2011 benefit at the magnificent historic home he had painstakingly restored. He also introduced Diane Keaton to the Conservancy, agreeing to give her a tour of his home if she joined the organization. Len was a powerful force for preservation, and we miss him greatly.



## CONSERVANCY WALKING TOURS

Tours cost \$10 for Conservancy members and youth 17 or younger; \$15 for the general public.

Most tours require reservations. We accept walk-ins on some tours, subject to availability.

For details and reservations, visit [laconservancy.org/tours](http://laconservancy.org/tours). Questions? Contact us at [info@laconservancy.org](mailto:info@laconservancy.org) or (213) 623-2489.

### WALKING TOURS

Angelino Heights

Art Deco

Broadway Historic Theatre &  
Commercial District

Historic Downtown

Millennium Biltmore Hotel

Modern Skyline

Past Meets Present: Reinventing  
Downtown's Old Financial District

Union Station

Youth, family, and group tours available by special arrangement. For details, visit [laconservancy.org/tours](http://laconservancy.org/tours) or contact us at [info@laconservancy.org](mailto:info@laconservancy.org) or (213) 623-2489.



### Los Angeles Conservancy

523 West Sixth Street, Suite 826  
Los Angeles, California 90014  
[laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org)

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**New schedule for Preservation Awards! See page 2 for details.**

## UPCOMING EVENTS



Photo from Conservancy archives.

### L.A. HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS CONFERENCE

Saturday, October 15

Learn about the latest topics and tools in neighborhood conservation at this day-long forum, co-hosted by the Conservancy and the City of L.A. Details on page 1.



Photo courtesy of the homeowner.

### FALL BENEFIT: ECLECTIC STYLE IN BEVERLY HILLS

Saturday, October 22

Support the Conservancy and attend our annual benefit event. Enjoy a fun and fascinating evening exploring a 1940 Georgian Colonial estate built for the daughter of an oil tycoon. Details on page 5.

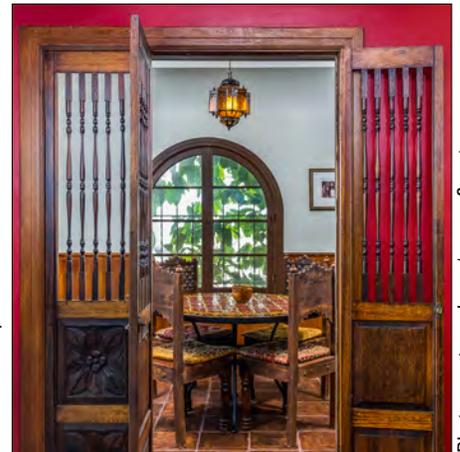


Photo courtesy deasy/penner&partners.

### FALL TOUR: THE HOMES OF VIEW PARK

Sunday, November 6

See inside several beautiful homes in this historic neighborhood, which was recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Details on page 1.