

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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In 1942, Japanese Americans on Terminal Island were the first in the nation to be forcibly removed from their homes for internment in World War II. Photo from Herald-Examiner Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.

Terminal Island: One of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places

by Conservancy staff

For most Angelenos, Terminal Island at the Port of Los Angeles is little known, today an altered landscape of acres of cargo containers and towering cranes. Yet its surprisingly rich and varied history, national significance, and vulnerability to demolition have landed Los Angeles' Terminal Island on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2012 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. This highly selective annual list spotlights important examples of the nation's architectural, cultural, and natural heritage that are at risk of destruction or irreparable damage.

"Terminal Island presents an incredible opportunity to transform a vital piece of America's industrial past for new uses, while also preserving an important part of our nation's cultural history," said Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "We look forward to working with our partners to ensure that Terminal Island continues to thrive as a center of commerce in Los Angeles, and that its role in American history is preserved for future generations."

The Los Angeles Conservancy is partnering with the National Trust to preserve the historic sites of Terminal Island, an effort the Conservancy has pursued since 2006.

Originally known as Rattlesnake Island, Terminal Island gained its new name when the Los Angeles Terminal Railway purchased it in the late nineteenth century. The island was then a rural beach haven for artists and writers and housed the resort town of Brighton Beach.

Please see TERMINAL ISLAND on page 6

Barry Building Gains Key Support

by Marcello Vavala

Efforts to preserve Brentwood's 1951 Barry Building were bolstered in May, when Los Angeles City Councilmember Bill Rosendahl publicly supported the building's preservation. He wrote in support of a development alternative that incorporates the historic building into a proposed mixed-use project, stating, "the preservation alternative [in the environmental impact report] is preferable because it alone can achieve both the goal of creating a unique shopping center and protecting an historically-designated landmark by integrating the Barry Building. That is why I continue to support the preservation alternative."

This type of support is welcome news as the final environmental impact report (EIR) for the Green Hollow Square project proceeds through the certification process this summer. The Los Angeles City Planning Commission is tentatively scheduled to review the project at its August 9 meeting, where commissioners will receive public testimony and vote to recommend either the EIR's preferred project or one of the alternatives.

The City Council's Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee will next make a 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.

Despite their official designation as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments

Please see BARRY BUILDING on page 4

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Los Angeles Conservancy

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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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Conservancy News is published bi-monthly.

L.A.'s Track Record with America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places

In addition to Terminal Island (see cover story), the National Trust for Historic Preservation has named six Los Angeles-area sites over the years to its prestigious list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. Inclusion on the list brought valuable attention to these issues, and all six remain standing today. Here's a brief recap.

Century Plaza Hotel (1966, listed 2009) Renowned architect Minoru Yamasaki designed the hotel as the centerpiece of Century City, and it has been a prominent and beloved gathering place ever since. Threatened with demolition in 2008, the hotel building is now planned as the heart of a new mixed-use project.

Ennis House (1925, listed 2005) This residence was the last and largest "textile block" home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in Los Angeles. After suffering severe earthquake and storm damage, it was stabilized by the Ennis House Foundation. Business executive Ron Burkle purchased the home in 2011 and plans to continue its restoration.

Santa Anita Racetrack (1934, listed 2000) In addition to its architectural significance (shaped by noted architect Gordon Kaufmann) and its associations with racing history, Santa Anita was the largest Assembly Center for Japanese Americans before their internment in World War II (many of whom came from Terminal Island).

Former Cathedral of St. Vibiana (1876, listed 1997) In a defining moment in Conservancy history, supporters fought vigorously to prevent demolition of the city's first cathedral by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The landmark now thrives as a popular event venue.

World's Oldest Remaining McDonald's (1953, listed 1994) This Downey restaurant was to be replaced with a new, modern version. Intense public outcry and national attention kept the building standing until McDonald's Corporation recognized the potential of such a historic location. They even opened a museum on site!

South Pasadena/El Sereno (listed 1989-93) This charming community of historic homes was set for destruction to make way for the 710 freeway expansion. Persistence by locals and partner groups led to a 1999 federal injunction that prohibited the California Department of Transportation from continuing work on the freeway.

Welcome, Conservancy Summer Interns!

We are excited to welcome **Reed McNab** and **Jorge Padilla** as this summer's interns from the Getty Foundation's Multicultural Undergraduate Internship Program. Both Reed and Jorge grew up in Los Angeles and have a passion for its history and architecture.

A recent graduate of Brown University with a degree in performance studies, Reed is working on educational programs including Last Remaining Seats and our Adventures in Architecture program with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA). Her previous internship with Pasadena Heritage will serve her well as she conducts research for our walking tour program and a special event this fall on architect Julia Morgan. Reed has also interned for Gensler, working on interior design sustainability standards.





As advocacy intern, Jorge will focus his time on broad-based Conservancy issues such as historic schools and garden apartments. A rising senior at UC Santa Cruz, Jorge has conducted ethnographic research on the geographic placement of minority communities in Los Angeles as part of his double major in history and Latin American-Latino studies. He also served as the internal representative of the Salvadoran Student Union UC Santa Cruz Chapter.

Please join us in welcoming Reed and Jorge to the Conservancy.

Preservation Issues in the News

by Flora Chou, Adrian Scott Fine, and Marcello Vavala

Moore House Demolished

Despite several years of intensive advocacy and significant public outcry, the Moore House (Lloyd Wright, 1959) in Palos Verdes Estates (PVE) was demolished on April 25. The demolition occurred less than a day after the PVE City Council denied the Conservancy's appeal of the City's earlier decision to allow the home's demolition.

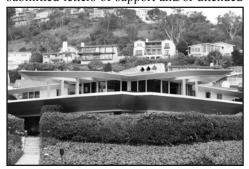
The Moore House was a unique, irreplaceable, and extraordinarily significant modernist residence, designed by Lloyd Wright, renowned architect and son of Frank Lloyd Wright.

The environmental impact report (EIR) for the replacement project did not evaluate a single sincere preservation alternative that would have maintained the Moore House's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.

When the EIR for this project failed to provide a reasonable preservation alternative, the Conservancy commissioned our own. It provided for a sensitive addition to the Moore House, a standard approach to increasing the size of an existing home. We met with the owner to present this alternative, yet it was disregarded by both the owner and the City.

With no protections in place for its historic resources, the City of Palos Verdes Estates can continue to erase its architectural heritage, one demolition at a time. If you live in PVE, please let your elected officials know that you care about your city's tangible history and want it preserved for future generations.

Thank you to the hundreds of people who submitted letters of support and/or attended



The Moore House before demolition. Photo by Rachel Ambrose.



UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden. Photo by Judy Horton.

hearings on this issue. While ultimately unsuccessful, this effort helped to raise awareness of the critical need for preservation protections at the local level.

Hannah Carter Japanese Garden Bids Extended

In response to a lawsuit filed by the children of the late Hannah Carter, UCLA extended the period for submitting bids to purchase the historic UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden and adjacent Carter family home in Bel-Air. Sealed bids will now be accepted until August 15.

Built between 1959 and 1961, the garden is one of the largest and most significant private residential Japanese-style gardens built in the U.S. The university placed it on the market in March without any safeguards to ensure its preservation and protection for the future

The Coalition to Save the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden, which includes the Conservancy, continues its efforts as public opposition to the sale intensifies. At press time, more than 3,200 people had signed an online petition urging UCLA to call off the sale. Coalition members are still urging university officials to meet and explore ways to seek a win-win solution.

In January 2012, a *Los Angeles Times* editorial stated, "the university and preservationists should aggressively work together to identify potential buyers who are interested in maintaining the garden and allowing some

public access." This has not happened to date, as the university has ignored repeated requests to meet.

Historic Post Office Closures

The U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) plan to close and relocate services has generated nationwide controversy, due in part to the many historic buildings jeopardized by the plan.

As many as 4,400 post offices across the country are being considered for closure. In June, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named "Historic Post Office Buildings" to its 2012 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

The state of California and the Venice Main Post Office are playing a key role in this larger issue. Residents and community groups in Venice have mounted one of the strongest efforts anywhere to oppose the sale and closure of their historic 1939 post office.

Despite community protests and ongoing rallies, lawsuits, and direct appeals, the USPS has relocated services to a nearby facility. The Venice effort illustrates fundamental flaws in the USPS' process for disposing of historic properties and adhering to federal laws intended to protect historic resources. What takes place in Venice could set a serious, negative precedent for how the USPS addresses other historic postal facilities throughout California and the nation.

For updates on these and other issues, please visit the Advocacy Issues section of our website at *laconservancy.org/issues*.



Venice Post Office. Photo by Greg Szimonisz.

BARRY BUILDING

continued from page 1

(HCMs), the Barry Building and nearby Coral Tree Median remain targeted for demolition and alteration, respectively.

The Conservancy strongly believes that Alternative 4, the preservation alternative identified in the EIR, should be the preferred project, as it would preserve and adaptively reuse the Barry Building as part of the Green Hollow Square project. We also object to the unnecessary removal of coral trees, which would compromise the uninterrupted, linear nature of the median.

At its June meeting, the city's Cultural Heritage Commission reviewed the Green Hollow Square project and heard from project supporters and opponents. The Commission has since submitted a letter to the Department of City Planning formally opposing the demolition and supporting the preservation alternative.

We thank Councilmember Bill Rosendahl for his strong support for preserving the Barry Building and Coral Tree Median, which sends a clear message about the importance of protecting Los Angeles' designated landmarks.

If you would like to help, please (1) contact Councilmember Rosendahl to thank him for his support and (2) plan to attend the August 9 meeting of the Planning Commission. It is vital that members of the public speak out about the importance of the Barry Building and voice their support for its preservation.

For details, instructions, and updates, please visit our website at *laconservancy*. *org/issues*. Thank you!



Barry Building. Photo by Ty Miller.

Thank You, Volunteers!



Among our hundreds of dedicated volunteers, those pictured above were recognized for their special contributions at the Conservancy's annual meeting on June 9. On the staircase (I-r): Nina Haro and Bob Brennan (25 years of service), Sarah Farris-Gilbert (ModCom website), Laurene Harding Rivas (15 years of service; Millard Sheets tour), Cheryll Dudley Roberts (Millard Sheets tour), Jim Camp (easement program), Alice Allen (25 years of service), Michael Rich (UCLA Faculty Center advocacy), Regina O'Brien (Millard Sheets tour). Below staircase (I-r): David Saffer (25 years of service), Jason Foo (Millard Sheets tour). Not pictured: Michael Palumbo and Mark Wojan (15 years of service). Photo by Larry Underhill.

Student Advocate Update: Victoria Williams



Photo by Gary Leonard.

Back in 2010, we profiled **Victoria Williams**, then a member of the Conservancy's Student Advocate after-school program at the John F. Kennedy High School Architecture and Digital Arts Magnet in Granada Hills. Victoria was part of a team of students who completed successful landmark applications, volunteered on Conservancy tours, and met with practicing professionals to learn more about the field of historic preservation. "I never knew that such an opportunity would influence my perspective of architecture and design," says Victoria. "I learned that it is important not only to create art, but to preserve it."

We are happy to report that Victoria's experience inspired her to stay connected to the field. Now an accounting student at Santa Monica City College, Victoria also works as a research assistant at the

environmental consulting firm ICF International. There, she works on projects including the preservation components of the U.S. Energy Department's Weatherization Assistance Program, which helps low-income families make their homes more energy efficient. "Working at ICF has provided me with the opportunity to grow in knowledge, experience, and understanding in the historic preservation field," says Victoria. "For a nineteen-year-old, this is a privilege beyond compare."

We are proud of Victoria's achievements and continue our work to cultivate the next generation of preservationists. "Thanks to my former architecture teacher Aaron Kahlenberg and the L.A. Conservancy," she says, "the seed of historic preservation was planted, watered, and continues to grow."

Keep up the good work, Victoria!

Summer Evening Tours Start July 18

Although the Conservancy's signature walking tours usually take place on weekends, for six weeks each summer we also hold tours on Wednesday evenings. As part of this year's evening tour series, we will again offer our City Hall tour—this is the only time of the year that the Conservancy tours this iconic building! We will also offer slightly shorter versions of three of our standard Saturday tours (Art Deco, Modern Skyline, and Union Station).

These special tours will take place on Wednesday evenings from July 18 through August 22. Tours start at 5:30 p.m. and last approximately 1-3/4 hours.

The **Art Deco** tour explores the architecture and history of buildings from the Jazz Age, a period of tremendous growth in L.A. and exuberant design around the world. *July 25*

The City Hall tour is a rare chance for a docent-led tour of Los Angeles' great 1928 civic building, including a visit to the observation deck near the top of the iconic tower. *July 18;* August 8 & 22

The **Modern Skyline** tour highlights the architecture, public spaces, and art of the Central Business District and Bunker Hill, where old and new combine to tell the story of downtown L.A. *August 1*

The **Union Station** tour explores the last great train station built in America, from its early beginnings and unique architecture to its success today as a busy transit hub. *August 15*

Tours cost \$5 for Conservancy members and children 12 and under; \$10 for the general public; **online reservations required**. Space is limited, so reserve now! Visit *laconservancy. org/tours*.



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|-----------|----------------|
| July 18 | City Hall |
| July 25 | Art Deco |
| August 1 | Modern Skyline |
| August 8 | City Hall |
| August 15 | Union Station |
| August 22 | City Hall |
| | |

SCHEDULE

Council Chamber, Los Angeles City Hall. Photo by Mel Weinstein.

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To subscribe to any or all of these lists, just click on the "Sign Up for E-News" button on our website at *laconservancy.org*. To hear from our volunteer Historic Theatres Committee, send an e-mail directly to *lachistorictheatres@gmail.com*.

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Volunteer Profile

by Bruce Scottow

STEPHANIE KINGSNORTH, AIA, LEED AP

President, Board of Directors

"My parents never bought new houses," says **Stephanie Kingsnorth**, the Conser-vancy's new president of the board.



Since her early childhood in England, Michigan, and Wisconsin, each home Stephanie's parents purchased came with a long history—and a fair amount of restoration and renovation work, too. Those seeds of preservation and sustainability grew as Stephanie entered the architecture and preservation profession, earning degrees from the University of California at Berkeley and University of Washington.

A Principal at Pfeiffer Partners Architects since 2008, Stephanie has over sixteen years of experience in the preservation and renewal of historic buildings throughout the United States.

She has been involved with the Conservancy since 1990, when she completed a high school project on architects Greene & Greene. She has participated extensively in Conservancy issues and most recently served as our vice president for advocacy.

With projects across the country and a non-stop schedule, Stephanie does her best to pursue her passions for travel, cooking, running, and swimming—and of course, enjoying her family.

The Conservancy is honored and proud to welcome Stephanie as our new president.

TERMINAL ISLAND continued from page 1

Within forty years, Terminal Island had become a world-class industrial hub, a major shipbuilding center, and a vibrant community of nearly 3,000 Japanese and Japanese-American residents.

The invention of tuna canning in the early 1900s coincided with the arrival of Japanese fishermen from nearby White Point, and an industry was born. With some clever promotion, enterprising brands including Star-Kist (see map, #9) and Chicken of the Sea (#7) introduced canned tuna to American housewives as an affordable substitute for chicken, making it a household staple.

With both husbands and wives working for the canneries, Terminal Island became a true company town. The bustling commercial district on Tuna Street (#5) housed thriving Japanese businesses, and the community kept the traditions of their homeland alive with popular festivals.

The island later starred in one of the darkest chapters of U.S. history after the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. Given their close proximity to a U.S. Naval facility, the Japanese and Japanese-American residents of Terminal Island were the first in the nation to be forcibly removed from their homes in 1942 for internment in World War II.

Immediately after the forced evacuation of the residents, the Navy demolished their homes and most other structures in the village. After the war, many former residents returned to find very little of their fishing village and once-thriving community. Only two original buildings stand today, on Tuna Street.

The tuna industry reached its peak after the war. By the 1950s, the tuna canned on Terminal Island accounted for eighty percent of the twelve million cases produced annually in the U.S.; several of the cannery facilities remain. In 1957, the image of a tuna was added to the official seal of Los Angeles County.

Terminal Island also contains the last vestige of San Pedro's once-mighty ship-building history. What is now known as the Southwest Marine complex (#1 on map) played a critical role in both World Wars as a major shipbuilding center. As Southwestern Shipbuilding, the yard set world records for



Historic view of Terminal Island showing Van Camp Seafood Co. (which became Chicken of the Sea) and French Sardine Co. (Star-Kist). Photo courtesy San Pedro Bay Historical Society.

rapid production of merchant marine vessels in World War I; as Bethlehem Shipyard, it produced destroyers in World War II. During World War II, it was one of the only shipyards in the area to be organized under the progressive CIO union, which, unlike its AFL counterpart, extended membership to African-American workers.

Terminal Island has also gained Hollywood acclaim as a popular filming location, from 1949's *Criss Cross* to *Spider-Man, Charlie's Angels, 24, True Blood, Entourage*, and many other productions.

Pattern of Destruction

While the Port of Los Angeles is a good steward of many historic resources, it has established a pattern of needlessly demolishing historic buildings at Terminal Island. Of the island's roughly 2,000 acres, only approximately sixty-five (three percent) now contain historic resources. Around a dozen sites exist, some of which contain more than one building. You can learn about each place in detail on our website.

The most pressing threat to these sites is the Port's Terminal Island Land Use Plan, intended to guide growth and development there through 2030. It sets into motion a dangerous framework for the future.

The plan specifies land uses, such as cargo storage, that severely limit reuse opportunities for historic buildings. The plan also realigns roadways directly through several historic sites (see map).

In addition to the land use plan, the Port is actively seeking demolition of portions of the Al Larson Boat Shop Complex (#3 on map) and, until recently, sought to demolish Canner's Steam Plant (#6). Other historic sites are threatened from ongoing neglect due to long-term vacancy.

While the Conservancy fully supports

planning and looking to the future, we are very concerned that the preservation of remaining historic buildings at Terminal Island remains a low priority.

The Conservancy and the National Trust for Historic Preservation want to work with the Port to make sure the land use plan and a soon-to-be updated Port master plan save the historic buildings and promote their reuse, while ensuring public access and attracting new tenants to the historic Port.

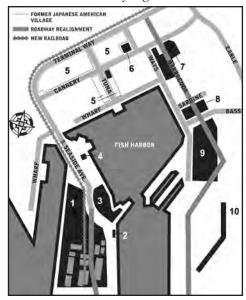
Historic preservation is not reserved exclusively for grand, beautiful structures. The industrial buildings that fostered the nation's development also deserve preservation and revitalization.

Despite their current disrepair and altered surroundings, these buildings can continue to help tell the important story of Terminal Island—honoring its roots while helping it thrive as a center of commerce at one of the busiest ports in the world.

How You Can Help

If you would like to support preservation at Terminal Island, please subscribe to our Preservation Action Alert e-mails if you haven't already ("Sign Up for E-News" at *laconservancy.org*). We will let you know when and how you can make a difference.

For much more information, please visit the new section of our website devoted to this issue at *laconservancy.org*.



This map illustrates how the Terminal Island Land Use Plan calls for the realignment of Barracuda Street and S. Seaside Avenue straight through historic resources. #1 is the Southwest Marine complex, #7 is the Chicken of the Sea Cannery, #8 is the Pan-Pacific Fisheries Cannery, and #9 is the Star-Kist Tuna Cannery. For much more detail, visit laconservancy.org.

MARCH 29 / JUNE 4 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

Donors Celebrate Opening of Last Remaining Seats

The twenty-sixth season of Last Remaining Seats kicked off May 30 with a packed screening of the 1973 classic *Paper Moon* at the Los

Angeles Theatre in downtown Los Angeles. Director **Peter Bogdanovich** introduced the film, regaling the audience with personal anecdotes and spot-on impressions of Hollywood legends.

Last Remaining Seats sponsors, as well

as Conservancy Cornerstone and Benefactor members, were invited to a pre-show cocktail reception at Seven Grand. Many thanks to VIP Reception Sponsor Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Evening Sponsors Linda and Jerry Bruckheimer and Paramount Pictures, and reception host 213 Downtown LA Nightlife.



Board Member and Evening Sponsor Linda Bruckheimer with Executive Director Linda Dishman. Photo by Stephen Russo.

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.

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

Modern Skyline

First and Third Saturdays, 2 p.m.

Union Station

Third Saturday

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Summer Evening Walking Tours
July 18 – August 22

Enjoy downtown Los Angeles at sunset on one of our special evening walking tours, including rare, limited tours of City Hall (pictured). See page 5 for details.

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