



The Mount Washington Association

Serving the Mount Washington community since 1955.

May 2005

www.mtwashington.org

Southwest Museum Survey Results

At the Friends of the Southwest Museum meeting on March 30 a status report on the discussions with the Autry Museum related to the future of the Southwest Museum was presented.

Over 25 of the 75 member organizations of the Friends coalition were represented, mostly from the northeast LA area. These included local community and neighborhood organizations, neighborhood councils, the local arts organizations, other community services organizations such as Northeast Trees and The Audubon Center, and key city organizations such as the Hillside Federation.

Attendees were provided with a survey to complete, and 64 responses have been received thus far. Some highlights of the survey results:

- Over 85% of respondents indicated that they found the presentation informative or highly informative.
- The respondents use the museum. Only 10% had not visited the museum in the last 12 months.
- The respondents were overwhelming (98%) in favor of keeping exhibits and the collection on view. Over 90% of respondents indicated that they were not supportive of converting the Museum site to any non-museum purpose.
- Among other, additional uses proposed for the Museum facilities, the most popular ideas were event rentals and adding a restaurant.
- Finally, there was overwhelming support (92%) for taking legal action against the Autry if they try to move the Southwest Museum from Mount Washington.

President's Message

Natalie Seaman

In the last couple of months I have had the opportunity to work closely with the folks that have been representing the Friends of the Southwest Museum coalition in discussions with the Autry. In working to put together the presentation for the community meeting, I have had a chance to reacquaint myself with the history of the

Museum and with the man, Charles Lummis, who was the inspiration for this amazing facility.

This was **the first museum in the City of Los Angeles**, opening its doors in 1914. It was meant to be on the prominent Mount Washington site – “to see and be seen” was Lummis’s goal. The collection provides a picture

into a vanished way of life, both of the indigenous people that the artifacts represent and of the community of Los Angeles, whose citizens founded the museum and the collection.

It is amazing to me that we are fighting to hang on to this museum. How could this city possibly allow this treasure of history, archeology and architecture to be lost? I fully understand that the Autry is saving the collection – but this is just a part of the whole. The South-

west Museum is a comprehensive experience that requires the Northeast Los Angeles site, the unmatched collection of native Indian artifacts, and that beautiful building – both a landmark and panoramic experience – that gives all Angelinos a historical sense of place.

This is what is in my heart regarding this museum, and it was great to hear others at the community meeting share what the museum meant to them: the magnet school students with the opportunity to use the museum as an inspiration for study, the academics citing the value of the library, the community folks that love the events at the Casa de Adobe – each one of us has our own experiences of the museum.

Elsewhere on these pages are articles that provide details on the community meeting and follow-up steps we will need to take to save our vision of the museum. Meanwhile, my thanks go out the Friends and specifically to Nicole Possert, Nancy Smith, Carol Jacques, Mark Kenyon and Eliot Secular for all the hard work and time they have spent working to preserve the museum.

Calling All Artists: T-shirt Design Contest

Susan Phifer

The Mount Washington Association is sponsoring a T-shirt design contest to celebrate its 50th year of service to the community. T-shirts will be silk-screened with the winning design and sold through pre-orders and at the

General Membership Meeting
 Monday, May 16, 2005, 7:30 PM
 Carlin G. Smith Recreation Center
 511 W. Avenue 46

Meet Detective Gilbert Escontrias

Gilbert Escontrias, Detective II in the Los Angeles Police Department, will speak at our May general membership meeting. Detective Escontrias is currently assigned to Burglary Special Section, investigating cases of fraud and theft, scams, and crimes affecting the elderly. He regularly trains in the retail industry and at community meetings and is currently working on a task force for hillside burglaries. Don't miss his very informative and interactive presentation.

We'll also be discussing the latest developments affecting the Southwest Museum, and of course refreshments will be served. We look forward to seeing you there.

Association's Summer Fun Meeting to be held at the Southwest Museum on July 17, 2005.

Contest dates: Design must be submitted by 8:00 PM on June 24, 2005. All submittals should be brought to

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Susan Phifer, 4061
Glenalbyn Drive,
(323) 222-2424 by
the closing date.

Judging will take
place the following
Sunday, June 26,
2005 at a time and
location to be
announced.

Theme: 50 Years on
Mt Washington.

Design: should
encompass both
sides of the T-shirt
and should include:

1. A graphic design
not to exceed 10
inches wide by 12
inches high to be
printed in UP TO 6
COLORS on one side
of the shirt, and

2. A textual
element/design IN
ONE COLOR ONLY
for the other side.

The text – "Mt.
Washington
Association 50th
Anniversary," (or
alternately "Fiftieth
Anniversary") – must
be included on the
shirt, but not
necessarily all
together. (For
example, "Mt.
Washington
Association" could be
incorporated into a 6-
color design, and
"Fiftieth Anniversary"
printed in one color
on the reverse.)

Submittal: Camera-
ready art (e.g. 600 dpi
laser print) at 100% of
final size. Submittal
should include the
designer's name and
contact phone
number and address

on a separate sheet of paper.

Prizes and recognition:

1st place - Winning Artist will receive a gift certificate for dinner for four at Café Beaujolais in Eagle Rock. Winner will also be profiled in the Mount Washington Association Newsletter and have his or her work exhibited in a one-person show at our Summer Fun Meeting in the Courtyard of the Southwest Museum, July 17th, 2005.

2nd place – Runner up will be awarded a gift certificate for dinner for two at Café Beaujolais in Eagle Rock.

All artists submitting a design to the contest will have their design entries exhibited at the Summer Fun Meeting.

For questions and submittal contact:

Susan Phifer

4061 Glenalbyn Drive, Los Angeles, 90065

(323) 222-2424

sphifer@dslextreme.com

Note: Design entries become the property of the Mount Washington Association for purposes of T-shirt reproduction and related promotion, but remain the property of the artist for other purposes. Original art will be returned to the Artist.

Public Safety

Cheri Uno

Northeast Crime Report – From Capt. Morris 'Mo' Smith

We are starting the year off right by keeping crime down. The Part 1 Crimes (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assaults, burglary, GTA, BTFA, personal theft) are down by 10% from this time last year. The first four on that list, "violent crimes", are down by 11.5%. And the really good news is that arrests are up 8.8%.

To get all the crime stats, go to www.lapdonline.org and click on the "community police" area. You can then go to your neighborhood – Mount Washington – to get all the crime stats and other LAPD information regarding your area.

Diversion Robberies Update

Some of these criminals have been arrested but there are several more still out there. Don't let your guard down. If you have elderly neighbors and/or relatives, call frequently to check up on them. They need this information about not letting strangers into their yards and houses. Older people can be trusting when people don't fit what they perceive as threatening – persons with guns or knives.

KPCC 89.3 – Talk With The LAPD Chief

On the third Wednesday of each month at 2PM, the program "Talk of the City" has a talk with the LAPD Chief program. You can call in and get current information concerning LAPD issues directly from Chief Bratton. This is a good way to stay informed about general all city LAPD issues.

Basic Car Meeting

The Semi-Annual Basic Car Meeting will be held at the LAPD Historical Museum at 6045 York Blvd., Los Angeles, 90042, on May 18th at 6:30 PM. Capt. Morris Smith (NE Commanding Officer), Officer Colenzo (NE graffiti specialist), Jeanne (Kim) Munzo (NE Neighborhood Prosecutor), Officer Bellemonte (Central Traffic), Officer Carraso (NE Community Relations Office), representatives from City Council Districts 1, 13 and 14, and all the Senior Lead Officers covering the eastern portion of the NE Division will be there to answer your questions. This is a great opportunity to meet your Captain and Senior Lead Officers. This is a public meeting open to all!

Fire, Fire, Fire - Think About Prevention!

Yes, the fire season is back with us despite all the rain. In fact, all the rain has made the fire danger greater. Let's get 100% clearance of vacant property done early. Call the fire department if you have a lot in your area that is not getting cleared by the deadline. Maybe if we get it reported early it will be cleared earlier.

Draft Minutes of the March General Membership Meeting

Ed Raspa

The Mount Washington Association met on March 21, 2005 at the Carlin G. Smith Recreation Center located at 511 West Avenue 46 in Los Angeles, California.

President Natalie Seaman called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

President Seaman introduced Program VP Maria Gray who, along with Bill Rumble, Grayson Cook, and Chet Hood, read selections from the works of Jack Smith.

President Seaman introduced Nicole Possert, representing the Friends of the Southwest Museum Coalition, and Director Ann Walnum, both of whom outlined the history of the Southwest Museum and the recent action of the Autry National Center to abandon the Mount Washington campus of the museum.

Motion (Sekular): The Mount Washington Association demands that the Board of the Autry National Center makes a firm commitment to take responsibility for the continued maintenance and operation of the Southwest Museum's Mount Washington facilities, in perpetuity, as a condition of being allowed to develop new facilities on lands owned by the City of Los Angeles in Griffith Park virtually free of charge and in recognition of the enormous investment of public funds invested in the construction of the Gold Line's Southwest Museum station.

Further, the Autry National Center must commit to a thorough programmatic study to determine how the Casa de Adobe and Southwest Museum may continue to be operated in a manner consistent with its founders' vision, as a

MOUNT WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Fax _____

Please check one: New membership Renew membership

Please circle Membership Category and Contribution Level below:

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Basic: | Single \$15 | Family/Couple \$25 | Senior \$12 | Associate \$15 |
| Supporting: | \$35 | | | |
| Business/Professional: | \$50 | | | |
| Benefactor: | \$100 | | | |
| Patron: | \$250 | | | |

All renewals due at start of calendar year.
Your cancelled check is your receipt. Please make check payable to :
MOUNT WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION

Your name and address shall be kept confidential and shall not be given to other organizations.

- *Membership (Single, Family or Senior) is open to adults who either reside or own property on Mount Washington. Membership includes the right to vote and hold office.*
- *Associate membership is open to any adult who resides outside of the Mount Washington community. Associate members may not vote or hold office.*

reflection of the cultural, historical, and artistic heritage of the Southwest, of California, and of the City of Los Angeles.

Having assumed possession of the Southwest Museum's assets and priceless collection, the Autry National Center must officially recognize its moral responsibility to maintain and revitalize the Museum's historic Mount Washington home so that it will play as integral a role in the future cultural and economic development of Los Angeles' Northeast community as it has in the past. Motion carried by voice vote.

The draft minutes of the January 2005 membership meeting were approved as published in the March newsletter.

Director and Beautification chair Lynnette Kampe reminded the membership that the Denise and Jack Smith Walk would take place on the Sunday (April 3rd) following Easter. She also reminded them of the work of the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers and Native Plants and encouraged the membership to take advantage of these and other beautification opportunities.

Member and ASNC Board Member Jerry Schneider encouraged the membership to become involved in land use issues and offered to train any volunteers himself.

Since there was no new business, President Seaman adjourned the meeting without objection at 9:00 PM.

Earth Day in Rainbow Canyon

Lynnette Kampe

Nature lovers of all ages celebrated Earth Day at lower Rainbow Canyon Park on Saturday, April 23rd, from 10 AM to noon. Programs included a demonstration of pruning for fire safety given by myself, a naturalist walk led by botanist Julian Donahue, and a reading circle for children with Grayson Cook. About twenty visitors enjoyed the peace and beauty of the park and sampled local native currents, iced mint tea, and homemade cookies.

Come see this local treasure! Poppies, blue-eyed grass, white sage, bush sunflower and monkey flowers are blooming. Birds are most active in early morning and near sunset.

To reach the park, take Figueroa to Avenue 45 and go uphill 2½ blocks. You can park on Avenue 45 below Glenalbyn or on Avenue 44 below Glenmuir. The park's approximate address is 220 West Avenue 45, 90065.

Friends of Southwest Museum

Ann Walnum

The reaction to news of the Autry National Center's planned construction in Griffith Park (on city land rented for \$1 per year) brought 250 people to Ramona Hall on Wednesday, March 30. A PowerPoint presentation prepared by Natalie Seaman and narrated by Nicole Possert reviewed the Autry-commissioned building

rehab study and economic study for the Southwest Museum on Mount Washington, together with the Friends-commissioned peer review of those studies by ConsultEcon.

What you can do

The Friends of the Southwest Museum Coalition has a great roster of 75 organizations working on this issue.... but we also want and need to keep all the individuals that belong to these organizations involved – that means you! Show your individual support by:

Signing the Petition. This will show that many, many people care about keeping the Southwest Museum in Mount Washington (NOT Griffith Park) as a public museum destination for Los Angeles. Hard copies of the petition are available from Ann Walnum for you and your friends/family/neighbors to sign. An electronic petition will soon be available on the Friends website.

Visiting the new website for needed actions and updates. The site will be launched around May 7th: www.friendsofthesouthwestmuseum.com.

Joining the Autry National Center through the Coalition's affiliate membership program, which links your membership to the needs of the Mt. Washington facilities. The website will have the appropriate information on how to do this – or call Ann for a form today.

The studies focused on what percentage of museum operations costs can be met by earned income, i.e., admission charges, sales, and membership. (Endowments, grants, and large donations cover the rest.) 30%-50% is considered a reasonable standard. The Autry report projected an earned income rate of 37.6%. ConsultEcon explained that this projection was too low, citing higher attendance figures reached in the early 1990's, and stated that a 67% rate was possible. The peer review also noted that the earned income rate at the Autry's current Griffith Park site is about 25%!

The ConsultEcon report concludes firmly:

“The statement that the project is not ‘economically feasible’ is an assertion that is only made in the Autry National Center cover letter, but not supported by the work of the Rehabilitation report.”

In the absence of concrete information from the Autry regarding promised public meetings and museum uses, rumored plans for the Southwest Museum building include conversion to a charter school, a research facility, condos for visiting researchers, or a restaurant. The conservation work now in progress is a process of cleaning, sanitizing, packing, and inventorying artifacts for shipment to Griffith Park.

On March 30, Councilman Ed Reyes used the phrase “cultural piracy” to describe the Autry's takeover of Las

Angeles's first museum. Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa promised active intervention to ensure that the Griffith Park building plans are not approved until fair and adequate plans for the Southwest Museum on Mount Washington are secure.

The resolution that had been passed previously by the Mount Washington Association and the Mount Washington Homeowners' Alliance was affirmed by those in attendance at the Ramona Hall meeting. It is now being circulated as a petition. The primary message of the petition is a demand that the Board of the Autry provide binding plans in perpetuity to maintain the Southwest Museum and Casa de Adobe as museums at their current sites.

The final minutes of the gathering included impassioned audience commentary, lively fund-raising, and a scramble for museum membership.

Green On Green

Lynnette Kampe

How to prune trees?

To prune well, be clear about what your goal is: to provide clearance, develop a healthy structure, allow air circulation, remove a dead or broken branch?

Understand that the tree will try to continue to grow, and think in terms of directing growth rather than stopping it. If you are going to prune, learn more about it; minimize your effort and preserve the health and beauty of the tree. Most garden books have good material on pruning. I will bring some handouts to the next meeting.

Since we're all doing pruning for fire clearance here's a start. Except for removing too much, it's hard to harm a tree by making a good cut. Cut just outside the ridged bump of bark at the base of the branch, which is called the "branch collar." Respecting the branch collar speeds healing. No stub cuts and no flush cuts.

When using a saw, avoid bark tearing by making a slight cut on the underside of the branch and then proceeding with your cut from above. For heavier branches, make initial cuts further out to reduce weight. Learn to recognize potential hazards and reduce them with smaller cuts now rather than larger cuts later.

Generally no more than 25% of the leaves should be removed in any year, less for a mature tree. Do not remove more than is needed. You can't put it back on; once it's cut you have to haul it away.

Excessive pruning can permanently destroy the structure of the tree and create an eyesore in the process. The value of the tree and the environmental benefits it provides are greatly reduced by poor pruning. A good pruning job should be hard to notice.

What's topping?

Topping is an ill-advised practice that cuts branches along a line without regard to the branch structure. It promotes hazardous conditions, requires more frequent maintenance, and may cause the decline of the tree.

Sometimes ground-level pruning and a fresh start with a new tree are needed. "Crown reduction" or "directional pruning" may provide the desired result while limiting damage to the tree.

When should a professional be hired?

For trees in the first 5 years of life, knowledgeable homeowners are usually able to do their own pruning. Once branches have become so large that a falling branch would cause damage, it is best to seek the assistance of a tree care professional. A non-professional generally should not do any pruning that requires a ladder or climbing, or is near power lines. Call the DWP if line clearance is needed.

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) website can help you find a certified arborist in this area or look for companies that work with a certified arborist. Ask your neighbors for recommendations and get several quotes. Let the tree care providers know that you want your tree pruned to ISA standards and check their references.

More questions?

Send them to me via the MWA or email to: lynnette@pacbell.net. I'll try to answer all questions personally, and I'll pick questions of general interest for more detailed responses in future columns.

Museums of the Arroyo Day

Ann Walnum

Reach a greater appreciation for our Arroyo culture. Be shuttled from museum to museum. Enjoy! All free, except for bottled water.

There are five participating museums:

The Gamble House, at 4 Westmoreland Place in Pasadena, is an internationally recognized National Historic Landmark in the style of the American Arts and Crafts movement. Built in 1908, the Gamble House is the most complete and best-preserved example of the work of renowned Pasadena architects Charles and Henry Green.

Heritage Square Museum is at 3800 Homer Street in Los Angeles. Established in 1969, this living history museum reflects the settlement and development of Southern California from 1850 to 1950. Through guided tours, changing exhibits, and special events, Heritage Square Museum takes its guests back in time to eras where electricity was a novelty, a trip to the beach was often a full-weekend activity, and manners were distinctly different from those of today.

The Lummis Home and Garden, at 200 East Avenue 43 in Los Angeles, is a turn-of-the-century home built over a 12-year period with stones from the arroyo by Charles Lummis, early activist, author, and civic booster. Lummis founded the Southwest Museum and was the first city editor of the fledgling Los Angeles Times.

The Pasadena Museum of History is at 470 W. Walnut Street in Pasadena. A museum and research

library/archives focusing on the history of Pasadena and the San Gabriel Valley, the museum is on the grounds of one of the few remaining grand homes on Pasadena's former "Millionaires' Row". The 1905 Beaux Arts Fenyes Mansion is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Southwest Museum of the American Indian is at 234 Museum Drive in Los Angeles. The Southwest Museum holds one of the nation's most important museum, library, and archive collections related to the American

Indian.

In addition, the Southwest Museum has extensive holdings of pre-Hispanic, Spanish colonial, Latino, and Western American art and artifacts. For nearly one hundred years it has supported research, publications, exhibitions, and other educational activities to advance the public's understanding and appreciation of the Americas, with particular emphasis on the western United States and Mesoamerica.

Coming up...

- May 4 *Naturalist/Volunteer Registration and Orientation.* Call Lynnette for details: (323) 221-1782.
- May 15 *Habitat Restoration* in Elyria Canyon. Meet at the Red Barn and help remove poison hemlock and other non-native plants. 9 AM to noon.
- May 16 *MWA general membership meeting* in Carlin G. Smith Recreation Center at 7:30 PM.
- May 18 LAPD Semi-Annual Basic Car Meeting at the LAPD Historical Museum at 6045 York Blvd. 6:30 PM.
- May 21 *Elyria Canyon Seed Collection.* Collect local native seed for propagation and planting in Rainbow Canyon. Meet at Red Barn. 9 AM to noon.
- May 22 *Museums of the Arroyo Day.* 11 AM to 5 PM. For details call (213) 740-8687 or visit the web site at www.museumsofthearroyo.com.
- May 23 *Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council General Meeting* in Ramona Hall at 7 PM.
- June 18 *Rainbow Canyon Habitat Restoration.* 9 to noon. Yucca elephantipes attack!
- June 24 *Deadline* for submitting designs to the Mount Washington Association 50th anniversary T-shirt contest.