



November/December 2011

Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 14, 2011, 6:30 p.m.

671 West Cypress Avenue

Redlands Area Historical Society's annual Holiday Party will be held at the residence of Jerry and Maureen Fairchild, on the corner of Center Street and Cypress Avenue in Redlands. Local builder D. M. Donald built the home in 1901 for the Holsten family, who lived in the house until 1928. It was purchased in 1967 by the current owners.

This 2800 square-foot residence retains many original features, such as the white fir woodwork downstairs and three sets of double pocket doors. One significant change to the property was done in 2006 when the Fairchilds added a wonderful reproduction carriage house on the southwest corner of their lot. Though only five years old, it perfectly echoes the beautiful features of the main house constructed 110 years ago.

Please join us on December 14th for a festive evening.



Auerbacher Home Nominated for National Register

The following is the text of the staff report given for the Auerbacher Home's nomination:

Located in the City of Redlands, the 2300 square-foot Auerbacher Home embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Mid-Century Modern style and is representative of the work of Master Architect Richard Neutra. Nominated to the National Register by its owner, the Auerbacher Home was designed in 1951 and constructed in 1952. The Home is situated on a steep lot on a narrow, twisted road that curves around rugged hills and looks upon the immediate landscaping as well as the San Bernardino Valley and Mountains beyond. The house promotes an open-air, outdoor lifestyle.

The Auerbacher Home's Mid-century Modernism is represented by post and beam construction, a flat roof, smooth, unornamented wall surfaces with no detailing at doors or windows, and an asymmetrical façade with windows that are flush to the exterior walls. Interior walls appear to float, and walls cantilever past each other. Windows wrap around corners and floor to ceiling glass opens entire spaces to the outdoors to blur interior and exterior spaces. The Home precisely exhibits the characteristics of Mid-Century Modern Architecture.

The Auerbacher Home expresses a shift from one phase of Neutra's career to another. The Architect's early designs exhibit a "machine" aesthetic that tended towards antiseptic surfaces and manufactured materials. With the Auerbacher Home Neutra tempered this earlier aesthetic with warm stained redwood sheathing, light birch paneling, and tubular steel columns painted brown to match wood, in direct contrast to his earlier tendency to paint wood to look like metal. This combination of natural materials and sleek modern represents a distinct phase of Neutra's career.

Still occupied by its original owner, the Auerbacher Home exhibits near-perfect Historical Integrity. Staff recommends the State Historical Resources Commission determine the Auerbacher Home eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C at the state level of significance because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of Mid-Century Modern Architecture, and because it represents a distinct phase in the development of Master Architect Richard Neutra's career. Staff further recommends the State Historic Preservation officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

Jay Correia, State Historian III, October 4, 2011

A Letter from your President...

We have decided to add an extra newsletter this year so that we can properly highlight the many events that have taken place in the past two months. The Redlands Area Historical Society (the Society) has just successfully finished “Redlands History Tour Month” which was a fundraiser for the Society that featured four historic tours in Redlands. In addition, “Historic Preservation Week” took place from October 22nd to October 29th which was cosponsored with the Redlands Conservancy and the Kimberly-Shirk Association. The week of activities featured eleven events and was an opportunity to celebrate Redlands rich history and to host the California State Historic Resources Commissioners for their Quarterly Board of Director’s Meeting.

I had the pleasure to be a guest at the October 28th State Historic Commissions, quarterly Board of Director’s Meeting which was held at the Casa Loma Room at the University of Redlands. At the meeting I was asked to represent the membership and receive a very impressive resolution. The official State resolution recognized the work that the Society performs throughout the Redlands area educating the community and promoting awareness of the abundant historical resources in our community. In addition, the Redlands Conservancy and Kimberly-Shirk Association also received recognition for the good work that they do in our community. What an honor!

I will look forward to seeing our members at the Annual Christmas Open House, which will be held at the Fairchild Residence on Wednesday, December 14th or in the New Year at a General Membership Meeting. Some of our featured programs will include a presentation from Larry Burgess on the history of the Heritage Room and Bill Hatfield will speak on the history of Hatfield Buick as they will soon celebrate their 100 year anniversary in the City of Redlands. Our General Membership Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at the A.K. Smiley Public Library. Also know that in 2012 we will have another series of historic neighborhood walking tours that will raise money to further the Society’s continued efforts to promote preservation and educate the community about the many historical resources that are found throughout our community.

As the year draws to a close I would like wish all of our members a wonderful holiday season and hope that the new year that will bring much happiness to you and your entire family.

Bill Blankenship

ORDER YOUR DVD VIDEO

All of our monthly programs and Heritage Awards ceremonies are dutifully recorded each month by Ger and Linda Brassfield of **Blue Eagle Video**. We are sure you will want to order a keepsake video of Tom Atchley’s September program on the History of Packing Houses in Redlands. Videos are \$20 each.

Newsletter Deadline

All RAHS members are encouraged to submit articles for the *Redlands Chronicles* to Marie Reynolds at sccmarie@yahoo.com by the 1st of each month.

Historic Preservation Week Deemed a Success

Redlands' first Historic Week successfully concluded with a walking tour of downtown Redlands on Saturday, October 28. The tour was led by Tom Atchley with 25 persons attending. The week was jammed packed with tour, speakers, receptions and the Fall meeting of the State Historical Resources Commission.

Historic Preservation week began on Saturday, October 21 with our annual tour of Hillside Memorial Park with over 50 persons participating. Several of the participants had attended all of the walking tours that the Historical Society sponsored during the month of October. The tours were sponsored by the Society as fund raising activities. Over \$2,000 were raised with the four walking tours. Many thanks to Tom Atchley for leading all of them.

Three panelists participated in our historic preservation panel discussing "Historic Preservation – Is it Worth It?" Local preservationist and dentist, Terry Vines represented the development community shared his many experiences in preserving significant historic buildings in Redlands. Dr. Vines recounted how his first building on Vine Street helped his practice grow by 300% his first year there. David Leonard, president of the Old Riverside Foundation (ORF), shared his organization's experience in advocating for historic preservation in the downtown area of Riverside. Mr. Leonard's group is totally volunteer and operates out of an historic residence in downtown Riverside. ORF operates an architectural surplus supply business which helps fund their organization. He mentioned how difficult it has been to maintain a healthy respect for historic structures even though the city has an adopted historic preservation ordinance, and a certified local historic preservation commission. The final speaker was Ginger Elliott, representing the Claremont Heritage Foundation (CHF). Ms. Elliott was the executive director of CHF for 25 years. She explained that Claremont does not have a historic preservation ordinance per se, but that they have worked diligently to have strict architectural controls through zoning and a specific plan for the Claremont Village. CHF contracts with the city to provide professional services to the city when city staff is unable to handle the research necessary for certain projects.

The panel discussion was held in the historic Mitten Building in downtown under the sponsorship of Leon and Margie Armantrout.

Tuesday evening the Society's Old House Group held their monthly meeting at the Kimberly Crest mansion. After touring the home the group met in the Garden Room and heard the Kimberly-Shirk representative discuss the future plans that the association has for the home. Our thanks to the Kimberly-Shirk Association and its Docent Auxiliary for arranging for the tours and opening the facility during the evening for the Old House Group.

Wednesday evening the State Historic Preservation officer, Milford Wayne Donaldson spoke at a meeting of the Redlands Forum. The meeting was held at the ESRI conference hall and was attended by over 200 persons. Mr. Donaldson is a familiar face in Redlands as he has been the architect for the expansion of the A.K. Smiley Public Library and other historic facilities in town. The topic of his talk was the relationship of historic preservation and sustainability.

The State Historical Resources Commission came to town on Thursday and held a workshop at the Burrage Mansion. After the workshop the Commission were taken on a field trip of our city by Drs. Larry Burgess and Nathan Gonzales. The Commission held their Fall meeting in the Casa Loma Room at the University of Redlands on Friday morning. The Commission reviewed the nomination of 12 structures to the State and National Register of Historic Places. Two of the nominations are of particular interest. The Wigwam Motel in Rialto was nominated as contributing property to the U.S. Highway 66 multiple property submission. More locally, the Mary Jane Auerbacher home designed by notable architect, Richard Neutra was nominated and accepted by the Commission to the National Register.

The State Commission presented Certificates of Commendation to the Historical Society, the Redlands Conservancy, and the Kimberly-Shirk Association for hosting the Commission in Redlands.

- by Ron Running