



# EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall, 2015

## A Southwest Museum Update—Preserving a National Treasure

Chris Morris, Field Director of the LA Office of National Trust, will join us Tuesday, October 20 at 7:00 PM at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock, 2225 Colorado Boulevard, for an informational presentation and Q&A on their current work on the Southwest Museum site, National Treasure. The Trust team has been quite busy over the summer and Chris will share some preliminary results from their extensive stakeholder interview process and an initial breakdown and some mapping of their online survey responses, as well as their next steps for conducting a market analysis, forming a steering committee, and planning an upcoming series of public events to activate the Southwest Museum building and grounds. As usual all are welcome to this meeting of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society and light refreshments will be provided.

The historic Southwest Museum has long been considered an iconic structure and a local landmark in northeast Los Angeles, even though it's future has been in flux for well over a decade. Both the Denver and the San Francisco Field Offices of the National Trust for Historic

Preservation followed its plight for years, monitoring the conversations and conflicts surrounding both the buildings and the collection. But a multi-year legal battle over proposed expansion plans in Griffith Park left little room for negotiations or productive conversations between the owner and key stakeholders.

The resolution of the lawsuits in May of 2014, accompanied by a series of events and conversations around the history and future of this important site, suggested that the time might be right for the National Trust to offer assistance as a neutral party and facilitator. Based on their long history working on thorny preservation issues, challenging reuse projects, and the stewardship of their own collection of historic sites across the country, the National Trust designated the Southwest Museum Site—which includes the historic museum building, over 12 acres of grounds, and the Casa de Adobe—as one of their National Treasures in January of 2014. It is one of only about 60 such properties in the country where the Trust is deeply engaged in defining sustainable, long-term solutions for nationally-significant, threatened historic properties and sites.

### A SOUTHWEST MUSEUM UPDATE PRESERVING A NATIONAL TREASURE



**Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society**

**Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock  
2225 Colorado**

**Tuesday, October 20, 7:00**

**Free and Open to All**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG](http://EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG)**

## President's Message

### Members and Friends

#### It was the event of the season !

It was our most successful Ice Cream Social ever!  
Thanks to our local business supporters for donating raffle prizes:

**Trader Joe's**

**Oinkster**

**Galco's Soda Pop Shoppe**

**Street Food cinema**

**Tritch Hardware**

**Colombo's**

**Colorado Wine Co**

**Dave's Chillin' and Grillin'**

**Diane Baldwin**

**David Mc Nutt**

**The Green Bean**

**ERVHS and Frank Parrello**

Also:

Sir Michael's for the PA system

Katie Taylor for balloons and leadership

Karen Heyl for time, effort, and baking skills

The Eagle Rock High School Key Club for Ice Cream Service

Decorating/Set up/Breakdown/Sweat & Tears: Eric & Karen, David, Fred & Donna, Cory & Sarah, Frank, Katie and Claire Taylor

#### We congratulate the 2015 Emma awardees.

Their contributions to our community will be detailed on pages 2 & 3.

#### SurveyLA is Coming – Get Listed or Get Lost

The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society has been researching the history of Eagle Rock for over 50 years, but many important resources remain hidden. If they are not identified in this survey, they will be more vulnerable to demolition and inappropriate development.

If you have a favorite or unknown treasure in mind, please send us a photograph, your comments and the address.

#### Change

As you will see from the box on this page, I am slipping away from the presidency after fourteen years. I am not, as you will also see, slipping altogether away. Under Frank's capable leadership, we hope to broaden the board and share more responsibility. I will continue to edit this newsletter for the nonce.

Deep thanks are due to all who have made these years so exciting and productive and who continue to

lead our Society forward and enhance our collection and service to the public. Thanks to our loyal members old and new. I hope we can continue to take joy and inspiration from our history together.

#### 2015-2017 Leadership Candidates

President: Frank Parrello

Vice President: Eric Warren

Secretary: David Dellinger

Treasurer: Katie Taylor

#### Come join the board

Our Board of directors is considering how we can go forward and improve our organization and services. We welcome new members with new ideas and strengths to add to the mix. The ever-popular biennial election is coming up in October.

#### Thanks to all members who have renewed for this year

We can now accept memberships and renewals on our website via PayPal. Start that digital cash flowing. Our treasurer will soon send notices to those who have not renewed for 2015. We need your support.

**-Eric Warren**

#### The objectives of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

- to preserve, clarify through research and to perpetuate the history of Eagle Rock Valley
- to make this history available to students, researchers, libraries and all interested persons
- to preserve and protect our local landmarks, especially the Eagle Rock

Membership is open to all who would further these objectives

Public Archive Hours 10 to 12 every Saturday  
at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock  
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA 90041  
for information call 323-257-1357

This journal is published quarterly by  
The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society  
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Frank Parrello

Visit our website at:  
[eaglerockhistory.org](http://eaglerockhistory.org)

## Mrs. C.W. Young (Emma) Award -2015 Honorees

**M**rs. C.W. Young, known as Emma to her friends, was a pioneer clubwomen, historian, and educator. For more than 50 years, she urged Californians to preserve their heritage. Mrs. Young was an active member of the 20th Century Women's Club, and founded the club's History and Landmarks section. Upon her death in 1961, the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society was founded to continue her work. Our Award honors her legacy.



### Eagle Rock City Hall Rehabilitation

This past year the building went through a major rehabilitation that preserved its historic character and made the space more usable to the public. Interior and exterior trim was painted in period contrasting colors. The community rooms in the basement and on the second floor were upgraded with new flooring and carpeting and the front door was restored. The exterior landscaping was transformed into a demonstration of drought-tolerant garden design.

The project is especially noteworthy for the exemplary work by the city in preserving this historic building. The award was presented to **Councilmember Jose Huizar** for his leadership in this effort.



### Montessori Geodesic Dome

Most people see Eagle Rock history in its pre-WWII historic buildings but today we are recognizing two of our post war landmarks. In 1978, a 39-foot high geodesic dome structure was built from a kit by the school owner and her husband to be used as the Eagle Rock Montessori School. Recently the school owners thought about putting the building to use again but it was in such poor shape that they were considering tearing it down. It has now been restored with the help of architect and school parent McShane Murnane.

The owners are hoping to open our local dome to students again at the beginning of next year. The Historical Society presented this award to **Ute de Lara** for building and restoring this modern Eagle Rock landmark.

## Our Town, Our History

### Northeast Los Angeles Newspaper Project

A collaboration of Highland Park Heritage Trust, Occidental College Library Special Collections and ERVHS, our objective is to digitize and make available our fine collection of local newspapers and photographs.

A pilot program to catalog, determine costs and digitize a sampling of the newspapers was funded by a grant from the John Randolph and Dora Haynes Foundation. We are seeking foundation funding to carry forward this work. Without the support of our colleagues at the Occidental College Library, this effort would not have been possible. We previously presented an award to Librarian Robert Kieft. Today we honor two other members of the Occidental team: **Dale Stieber and Anne Mar.**



### Cindy's Sign Restoration

The Cindy's sign is a local example of Googie architecture designed to catch the eye of drivers along the roadside. The style fit the needs of the new California "car culture" and the dreams of the even newer space age. Googie began in Southern California, and although it spread (in numerous forms) across the nation, its heart always remained in its birthplace.

Today, the familiar geometric shapes, boomerang arches, tapered columns, cantilevers, parabolas and curved domes are being bulldozed at an alarming rate. We are thankful to the owners' of Cindy's for saving this iconic example in Eagle Rock and presented the award to **Monique King.**



### Eckert House Rehabilitation

This house was built in 1906 for Fred and Edith Eckert. Fred came to Eagle Rock to work for Mr. Gates, who owned a large strawberry ranch. Later he would be the Eagle Rock Water Company's supervisor for many years. As their home was the only one with a telephone it became a social center of the neighborhood. Edith would help found "The Friendly Club" which later became the Women's Twentieth Century Club.

The current owners used the historic photograph in the rehabilitation of the house, which included rebuilding the front porch, returning the home's historic charm. The award was presented to **Virginia Escamilla and Hugo Albuja.**

## Eagle Rock's Freeway Revolt (Part 2)

**"A freeway that would cut Eagle Rock in two would kill this community as a lovely residential suburb."**

### Organized Opposition

In response to the state's careless, insensitive freeway routing preferences, a group of Eagle Rock residents very early on in the planning stages proposed the freeway be placed as far up into the northern hillside as possible. Running the 134 freeway in the hills would be the least obtrusive and require the least amount of homes to be demolished to accommodate the regional automobile corridor. The Chamber of Commerce conducted polls asking Eagle Rock residents which route they favored; a route as far north as possible proved popular.

### "North Eagle Rock Homeowner's Association" Opposes Hill Drive Route

Naturally, suggestions of pushing the freeway against the hills did not sit well with residents along Hill Drive and the streets north of it. A group of residents formed the "North Eagle Rock Homeowner's Association," opposing any route in the immediate vicinity of Hill Drive.

### "Northeast Skyway League" Wants Freeway to go Around Eagle Rock, Not Through It

In 1960, a group of residents formally organized the "Northeast Skyway League" to fully advocate for routing the 134 Freeway as far north into the

hills as possible. (This route was further north than that constructed.)

### State Highway Engineers Favor Las Flores Route

By 1960 the state highway engineers formally favored routing the 134 freeway along Las Flores, which was planned to have two access points for on- and off-ramps. The engineers claimed this route would provide the best service, be the cheapest to construct, and afford the most benefits to the community. This route would require nearly 400 homes to be removed to build the freeway. The Skyway League's route, by comparison, would only require the removal of 12 homes and the organization insisted no on- or off-ramps were necessary in Eagle Rock because Colorado Boulevard could provide all the access people need. Although the organization lacked the backing of professional engineers, it was supported by the Chamber of Commerce, Assembly member Collier, and Eagle Rock's city council representative, John C. Holland.

The complete article by Severin Martinez can be viewed below further excerpts will appear here.

<https://walkeaglerock.wordpress.com/2015/03/23/eagle-rocks-freeway-revolt/>







at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock  
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA, 90041

**A SOUTHWEST MUSEUM UPDATE  
PRESERVING A NATIONAL TREASURE  
Tuesday, OCTOBER 20, 2015, 7:00**

**WHERE DID THE WATER GO ?  
AN UNDERGROUND HISTORY  
TUESDAY, FEB. 16, 2016, 7:00**

**TO BE ANNOUNCED  
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?  
TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2016, 7:00**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category:

☐ Individual \$20 ☐ Business \$35 ☐ **New**  
☐ Family \$25 ☐ Life \$300 ☐ **Renewal**

Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS ?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Archives ☐ Newsletter ☐ Oral history  
☐ Meetings ☐ Fundraising ☐ E-mail me  
☐ Publicity ☐ Displays to help

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to : **ERVHS**  
**c/o Center for the Arts**  
**2225 Colorado Blvd.**  
**Eagle Rock, CA 90041**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**The Member's Corner**

**David Greene**



David grew up in southeastern Connecticut and came to L.A. for graduate school at CalArts. After stops in Manhattan and Silver Lake, David and his wife Rachel bought a house in Eagle Rock in 2001 near the "Happy Camp" mystery house (refer to the ERVHS website for a visual!).

In a previous life, David was an art critic for The New Yorker, and one of the founding writers of Dwell magazine. Currently he is a TV writer/director (mostly comedies and documentaries), but lately a full-time dad to a Dahlia Heights 3rd-grader. "She's funnier and more interesting than anything I ever made for TV." He is also President of the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council.

Why stay in Eagle Rock? Right now what keeps David here is the ERNC, which has done a lot of good for Eagle Rock since he joined in 2012. What do you love about Eagle Rock? "The people. I've made some very good friends here, and practically every week I run into someone I know from a past chapter."

David believes the ERVHS is a very valuable resource for our "city that does a terrible job of remembering its best people, buildings, and ideas" and has been a member for several years now. Thank you David for all you do for Eagle Rock and being part of history in the making!

Katie Taylor