

San Clemente Historical Society

"Forward with the Dream"

WHAT'S HAPPENING July 1, 2020



Happy
Fourth
of
July!



The Board of Director's met for a Zoom Board Meeting on June 15. Many of our activities have been put on hold but we had a productive meeting, nevertheless. Some of the issues discussed will be covered in articles below. Anyone interested in participating in our meetings or getting involved with any of the committees is welcome to contact Larry Culbertson at larryculbertson3@gmail.com.

Miramar Theater Project

Work has begun in earnest on the Miramar Event Center and Restaurants. On Monday, June 29, the dismantling of the Bowling Center began. Three decades of neglect left the building with severe termite and mold damage. The developer is saving as much of the building as possible. The bowstring trusses that gave the building its distinctive curved roof are being carefully removed and will be reused. The six original wood bowling alleys have been salvaged and will be used to make tabletops.



Below is a reprint of an article by Tom Marshall published in the San Clemente Times on June 25, 2020. Thank you, Tom!

An Inside Look at the Miramar Project

San Clemente's largest historic preservation project in years has begun. The long-awaited restoration of the Miramar Theater and bowling alley complex in North Beach got underway in earnest this spring. The attached photos show the fire and water damaged lobby, a wall mural, and the seats inside the theater.



Opened in 1938 to much fanfare The San Clemente Theater, as it was originally named, was praised as one of the finest movie palaces of its day in all of Southern California according to news accounts at the time. It could seat 750 people.

Early day blockbusters such as Casablanca and The Wizard of Oz played there during their first run. Reconstruction crews quickly found it will take more than the powers of the Mighty Oz to rebuild the landmark. Our February tour inside the two buildings was hardly a stroll down the Yellow Brick Road. For nearly thirty years the site has been home to pigeons and homeless and rats. Oh, my! We felt like burning our clothes afterward. The stench was overpowering even though we wore face masks.

The San Clemente Bowling Center was opened in 1947 and is in even worse shape. The plan was to add a basement under the bowling alley to support ten to twelve restaurants and an outdoor food court on the ground level. But as workers began drilling into the current foundation it became obvious that the damage was so severe the foundation could no longer support the building. "The materials are too rotted, and the building would not be safe," explained Jonathan Lightfoot, city preservation official.

The city and the site's owners, Landmark Foodhall LLC, announced earlier this month that the building would have to be demolished. This, of course, raised alarms at the Historical Society. "When we heard the bowling alley was going to be destroyed we were afraid the project would not qualify as preservation," said Larry Culbertson, Historical Society President. Those initial fears were lessened during meetings last week between the Historical Society board, city planners and the project principals. "Yes, the foundation will have to be replaced and the building dismantled, but it will be rebuilt using as much of the original building materials as possible," said project architect Daniel Conrardy. Many of the original ornate roof struts or beams are in good shape and will be used. Surprisingly, even some wood from the bowling lanes can be repurposed as table

counter tops or the bar in the food court.

Meanwhile over at the theater things look better despite damage from a 2005 fire that gutted some of the lobby. "There's a lot of mold, some asbestos and water damage, but we can handle that," promised Conrardy. The inside mold has already been removed.

At one time or another the property housed several different businesses including a Texaco gas station and an Orange Julius.

The theater, which was renamed the Miramar in 1970 and closed for good in 1992, will become an events center. Because of the setback and Coronavirus shutdown the reopening date has been pushed into sometime next year.

Both the theater and the bowling alley are on the city's Designated Historic Structures List. The developers hope to get the theater placed on the prestigious National Register of Historic Places. The bowling alley portion has previously rolled a gutter ball and been rejected by the national register. Stay tuned for further developments.

Outings are Coming!

Your Historical Society is planning Field Trips! We are planning to carpool travel to historic sites in Orange County. The proposal is to meet up in San Clemente and travel to the historic destination. After a guided tour, we will have lunch at a local restaurant. Then, time permitting, we will visit any additional points of interest before returning to San Clemente. Our first destination is Santa Ana with tours of the courthouse, Waffle House, and historic library archives. Lunch is either at a historic local delicatessen or historic Mexican cafe. Other tours being planned include Old Town Orange, the Bradford House in Placentia, and the Red Car Museum in Seal Beach. We are open to your suggestions.



Walking Tours of historic downtown San Clemente will resume on 1st Sundays when conditions permit. For additional information; please, contact Jim Hamilton. jimehamiltonschs@gmail.com

Community Contribution Program

Only 12 households have signed up for this, but we took in \$88 in the past 3 months. Please sign up for the program, it is easy and costs you nothing.

Did you know that if you shop at Ralphs Supermarkets in San Clemente you can direct a portion of your bill be donated to The San Clemente Historical Society? It will cost you nothing. As a participant in Ralphs Community Contributions Program, the supermarket chain will automatically contribute a portion of your check out amount to the S.C.H.S. If you do not have a Ralphs Rewards Card, go the Ralphs website, and click on "Create Account." Follow the easy steps to create your account.

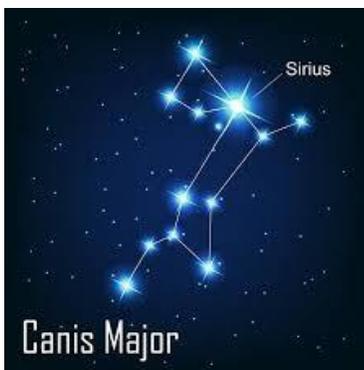
To register in the Ralphs Community Contributions Program, just log into www.ralphs.com. Click on "Sign In." Enter your email address and password. Click on "Welcome Valued Customer" (In the top right-hand corner.) Click on "My Account." Scroll to the bottom of your account. Link your card to the Historical Society by clicking on "Community Rewards" and typing in San Clemente Historical Society. Then press "Search." If you have forgotten your Ralphs Rewards Card number, you can use your phone number.

Once enrolled, your contributions will be automatically made by Ralphs. You do not have to tell the checkout person to do so. You can check on the contributions you have made by accessing your account online at www.ralphs.com.

Ralphs assures us that all of your information will kept confidential. They will never sell, trade or rent their customers' personal information to outside companies. It will not even be shared with us.

The money raised will be used entirely for our worthy programs of protecting San Clemente's historical and cultural heritage. No money can be used for administrative, political, or legal purposes.

The Dog Days of Summer are A'comin'



According to Wikipedia, the **dog days** or **dog days of summer** are the hot, humid, airless days of summer. They begin around the day when the star Sirius (the Dog Star) appears to rise just before the sun, in late July. They last for 30 to 60 days. In Greek and Roman times, they were connected with heat, drought, sudden thunderstorms, lethargy, fever, mad dogs and bad luck. San Clemente, and the world, have suffered quite enough with this horrific pandemic. Let's hope nothing else befalls us, especially mad dogs!

**That's all for now, see you next month.
Please Stay Healthy!**

