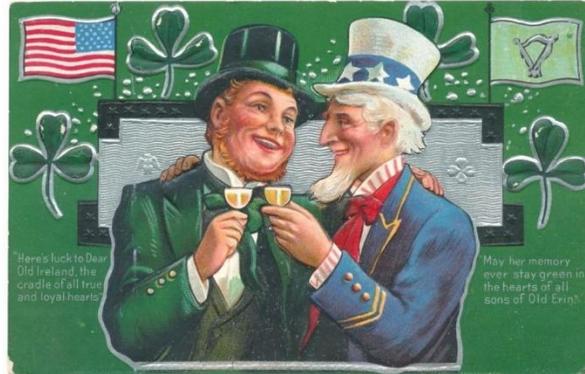


San Clemente Historical Society

"Forward with the Dream"

WHAT'S HAPPENING

March 1, 2021



Happy St. Patrick's Day

North Beach Historic District Web Page



A presentation was made to the San Clemente City Council on February 16 formally announcing that our North Beach Historic District was placed on the National Register. It is important to appreciate the significance of the National Register designation of our new historic district. A City Council can place an individual building or district on their local historic list quite easily. But to get a building or district on the National Register is much more difficult. The history

and significance of the resource needs to be fully documented and evaluated by the California State Office of Historic Preservation.

Only five of our 200 historic buildings have made it to the National Register. Countywide, there were only 19 historic districts in seven cities. Of those 19 historic districts in Orange County, only seven were National Register Historic Districts. North Beach has joined the ranks of the Anaheim Colony, Crystal Cove, Orange Plaza, and the Los Rios. It has been officially recognized as an important part of Orange County's history.

The City has created a web page with an [interactive map](#) and some other nice features. We will be helping to add more to that page.

A special call out to Mayor Kathy Ward for helping to make this happen. She has advocated for this designation for at least the past 6 years. Thank you, Kathy,!



There are still many of our members who have not yet renewed their membership for 2021. Please do not let the lack of an addressed membership envelope prevent you from renewing. If you prefer paying by check, rather than online, please use the following address:

San Clemente Historical Society
P.O. Box 283
San Clemente, CA 92674-0283

It is also extremely easy and safe to pay online by going to our website, sanclementehistoricalsociety.org, clicking Membership, clicking Join, filling in your information, then paying through PayPal.

Please renew today, we need everyone's help in preserving San Clemente's history!

We need more than just money. We need more volunteers. Most of the Board of Director's are NOT youngsters. We need prospective Directors to become involved NOW to insure the continuation of the Society. We need a Membership Chair, a Webmaster, help with social media, a newsletter team and more. Please contact Larry Culbertson, larryculberston3@gmail.com or 949-412-7682. You can attend one of our Board of Directors meeting to see where you might fit in.

The following is a reprint of an article by Tom Marshall recently published in the San Clemente Times.

Pioneer Architect Left His Mark On San Clemente



A few weeks ago, that other Times newspaper, the one published 45 miles north of here, ran a huge two-page story about world famous architect Paul R. Williams. Known as the “Architect to The Stars,” for his masterful early 20th century homes designed for Hollywood’s elite such as Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball, the article also noted Williams designed the iconic crescent wing of The Beverly Hills Hotel, the Al Jolson Memorial Shrine, the Los Angeles County Courthouse and other L.A. landmarks. What the article didn’t mention was San Clemente’s tie to this great visionary.

In 1928 Adlai Goldschmidt called upon Williams to design a sprawling “weekend home” in the new town of San Clemente. Having made a fortune in the wine and spirits industry, Goldschmidt spared no expense in building his new dream home. It even included a secret wet bar that could be rolled out of the walls for parties during prohibition. Due to local building restrictions imposed by town founder Ole Hanson, the design had to be Spanish Colonial Revival, which Williams didn’t particularly like. But, professional that he was, Williams embraced the project with gusto.

Located on the highest hilltop in San Clemente, Williams perfectly sited the 4,800 square foot home to advantage the breathtaking vistas of the ocean, Catalina Island and the new town. He purposely placed the living room windows so that the setting sun was exactly in the middle on the winter solstice. The building at 243 Avenida La Cuesta has stood the test of time. It is the only San Clemente home listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

Lee and Dena Van Slyke owned the house when it was placed on the registry. They not only lived there, but each had their office at home. In a recent Historical Society Oral History video interview Dena called it “love at first sight.” Retired now, they no longer needed so much space and reluctantly sold it. As Lee put it, “you are always maintaining an (older) home like this, but it was a labor of love.”

The living room features arched doorways, carved eleven-foot-high ceilings, a two-sided herringbone fireplace and other details designed by Williams. There are many other small touches that reflect Williams known creative flourishes.

His ascendancy to rock star status in the architect world is all the more amazing because Williams was the first black architect licensed in California and admitted to the American Institute of Architects. Sensitive to racial perceptions of the time, Williams even learned to draw and read blueprints upside down to show his mostly white customers the drawings with a large desk between them.

Yes, history can be ugly at times, but then, that’s how we learn to be better.

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Historical Society Board Member **Jim Hamilton** continues his in-depth study of the downtown businesses and the people who make our historic downtown so interesting.

LuXre Realty - Jan Kang

LuXre Realty
222 Avenida Del Mar
(949) 201-8832



Jan Kang is very understanding of people. Her understanding of people helps our community. From the front porch of 222 Avenida Del Mar, she greets passersby. Sparkle, her rescue canine companion, rests by her feet. Jan engages people and their pets. Mostly dogs, as other animals are not as well represented on this shopping street. Jan adds to this town's friendly feel by engaging in conversations. She is genuinely interested in people and their pets.

Jan shared a brief story about this former residence. Last January 2020, a group of people were in front of 222 Avenida Del Mar, the LuXre Realty Office. Jan offered to take a group photo to include everyone in their party. The group was mainly from Wuhan, China. There was one tall Caucasian man in the group. This man explained that he had been raised in this house. He married into this Chinese family. This Ole Hanson house had been his childhood home! His father was a Marine stationed at nearby Camp Pendleton. He chose to have his family live off base in this small town. The former resident explained the current main office was the former kitchen. He walked through describing each room, including the garage. He said as a youngster he would sit on the porch, as Jan does now, and this was his neighborhood.

222 Avenida Del Mar was constructed in 1941 as a single-family residence. The original one-story residential building was built for A. Daner, but the architect is unknown. It was constructed by the Strang Brothers. These brothers did their fair share of building in town. This property is another example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style that set the early architectural standard for this Spanish Village by the Sea. This was one of the few houses on Del Mar, which was the main shopping street. Travel in 1941 was very restricted because of World War II. Most residents lived, worked, and shopped in San Clemente. Commuting to work was not common. This property is on the Historic Structures List. The following is a description from the San

Clemente Historical Society's website: <https://sanclementehistoricalsociety.org>. Go to Resources, then Links, then DPR Forms:

“The property contains a one-story rectangular plan and wood-frame with a low-pitch front-gable roof with clay tiles over the main mass, and a hip and front-gable roof with clay tiles over the primary (south) elevation. The building includes overhanging eaves. A clay tile shed roof extends over a partial width entry porch supported by wood posts and including a metal balustrade. A low brick wall capped with bricks runs along the entry porch, creating planters that flank clay tile steps leading to the entrance. The building is asymmetrically aligned. The exterior walls are clad with smooth stucco. The fenestration consists of original wood fixed and double-hung windows throughout the building. A two-story addition is located at the rear of the building. The building is in good condition. Its integrity is fair.”

Home is where the heart is, a homily that is indeed true. We all go home again even if the place has changed. Home ownership is key to this residential community. San Clemente's main city revenue source is property tax. This town is largely a residential community. It is also an active dog friendly town. There are a number of water bowls and treat stations for dogs. There is a bakery for dogs, Three Dog Bakery, just up the street.

Jan and the LuXre realty office, besides selling homes, host an annual pet adoption event. Various rescue groups will do an adoption event this year 2021. “Last year we had older dogs, puppies, and there was also a cat room. We had an 80% adoption rate of the animals we hosted. It was a very successful pet event for all of those involved, including Sparkle” explained Jan.

This event, when we first talked months ago, was planned for this February 2021. It is still expected to take place as the sale of homes, shopping, dining, and activities continue to increase in San Clemente. If you would enjoy a friendly greeting and conversation; please, stop by and visit with Jan and Sparkle on the porch of 222 Avenida Del Mar.

Gregorian Copper - San Clemente

by Mike Fitzsimmons



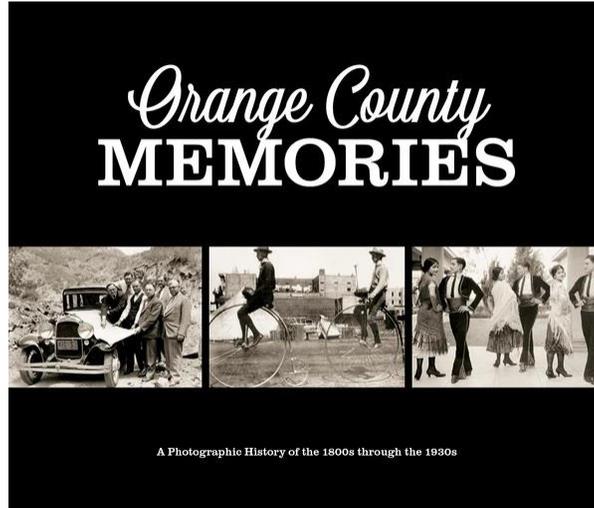
In the late 1940's and early 1950's San Clemente was a very small town with a population of a little over 1000. Children made up a small fraction. Because homes were spread out parents sometimes had to search out other children for their kids to play with. Consequently, most kids knew each other. The only other kids on my street, Avenida Cadiz, were my friends Jack and Judy Gregori. Jack's father Fred and his uncle had started a small copper engraving business in their garage in 1946 after Fred got out of the Navy. Fred's brother PR Gregori had studied metal work

at Butler Art Institute in Youngstown, Ohio and after WWII got hands on experience at Craftsman Studios in Laguna Beach, an artist commune that evolved into a facility that produced copper products in the Arts and Craft style. This encouraged him to start a business, Gregorian Copper.

PR was the metal designer and Fred was the sales manager. They hammered out copper bowls, serving trays, candle holders, drinking mugs, copper vases and pitchers. They would cut and hand beat large copper sheets of various thicknesses into pieces with ruffled edges and raised leaves and berries motif in the center. Their large bowls had edges curled upward like the petals of a giant flower with scalloped surface running down to the center. The Gregori brothers designed a special process that gave each piece a depth of color. They hand rubbed each piece with steel wool, creating either a solid copper finish or a satin finish. To make the copper retain its color it was lacquered and baked for 40 minutes. Each unique piece had an engraved handwritten script with a number and the Gregori name etched into its underside,

The brothers soon were shipping their designed items throughout the US and Latin America. They moved their budding business to the newly designated industrial area on the then outskirts of San Clemente at the corner of Avenida Pico and De Los Molinos. There they built a small factory. The building is now occupied by Rainbow Sandals. Their staff increased to 25 and at their height they were doing a half million dollars in business a year. In 1968 they sold the business to Sunbell Industries who moved the copper works to Albuquerque, New Mexico where they continued to produce hand beaten copper products until late in the 1980s. Gregorian Inc. in South Dakota continues to produce copper giftware and jewelry, but nothing like the classic Gregorian pieces hammered out by the Gregori brothers. There are still people living in San Clemente who own one or more unique Gregorian Copper pieces made in San Clemente. They are valuable. There won't be anymore.

Orange County Memories:
A Photographic History of the 1800's through the 1930's



Sales of this book exceeded our expectations, but we do have a few left. It contains hundreds of high quality rare photographs of Orange County, including many of San Clemente. We are offering the book for \$35 regularly \$45. Contact **Mary Ann at 949-280-4960** if you wish to purchase one. Great gifts for anytime!

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