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Just two months ago, in late April, two Charles Reiffel murals and two Belle Baranceanu murals were brought out of the Society's vaults, and seen for the first time in perhaps 25 years. The Reiffel pieces are spectacular not just for their artistry and scale, but also for the stories they tell—stories of San Diego before and during the depression years. They now hang in the central space of the coming core exhibition on San Diego history and will be available for full public viewing in late July, when the first phase of the exhibition opens.

One of the Reiffel murals looks to the east, to San Diego's back country and mountains, to its reservoirs of water and rich agricultural resources. The other looks west, to the harbor and its fishing boats, to the promise of the sea and its commerce. They look back in time to an era before the great boom years brought on by World War II, yet they look forward as well, pointing to San Diego as a place of great promise. Their rich color and bold figures suggest a bright outlook on both the present and future.

The Baranceanu murals, in their remarkable depiction of pre-Hispanic Americans, convey a similar, highly charged sense of optimism about the future, while leaving no doubt about the sacrifice implicit in the stories of early people in the area. Baranceanu's work communicates a powerful message of the dignity of everyday people as they create their stories and legacies. At times working in concert with each other, both artists developed an expressionist idiom that captured a young city defined by the energy and hard work of its already deeply diverse, optimistic people.

Standing in front of these murals, it is impossible not to want to know more about our history, more about what drove the early fishermen—whether of Japanese, Italian, Mexican, or Portuguese origin—and other entrepreneurs to create infrastructure and lay the groundwork for today's commerce in goods, arts, education, and, simply, in ideas. Who built the reservoirs, the roads, the houses, the tall buildings, and the railroads?

In bringing these murals to the public, we also begin a new chapter for the San Diego Historical Society. In July we open the first, central gallery of the core exhibition, a space that will highlight what San Diego has become today—richly bilingual and binational, a crossroads of activity spanning the world and influenced by it. Visitors to the exhibit will be asked to participate, to leave their own stories as they experience those that have been told.

Like the murals, which invite the viewer into their world, the exhibit will be an interactive, inviting place, beginning with an invitation to watch conservators as they work on the Reiffels and Baranceanu to restore and repair them, to ask questions and to make comments. In the fall, we open a second exhibit featuring the Baranceanu works in our collection. Remarkable in scope, these paintings and drawings likewise invite the viewer to engage in the artistic process, and capture with exciting precision the steps she went through in order to create her murals. Fascinating on their own merits, her studies open a rare window to artistic creation.

It is with great excitement that I, along with staff, supporting community members, and our Trustees, anticipate the opening of these exhibits. Our curators will bring out an array of images, documents, and iconic pieces from our costume and three-dimensional collections. An authentic, full size trolley car, an old Model T Ford, a ZLAC rowing shell, and a stagecoach will all emerge for the first time in years and stimulate us to become engaged in the stories of San Diego. The murals are just the beginning, but they are a beginning well worth seeing and experiencing. I join all my colleagues here in inviting you to come and see.

David S. Watson, Executive Director

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From David S. Watson

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**Executive Director**

David S. Watson
Place of Promise: Stories of San Diego
Opens July 21

Visitors will literally be able to walk on San Diego and explore how the diverse and evolving landscape continues to influence our opportunities and struggles. A thirty by thirty foot physical floor map of San Diego County will extend from wall to wall in the central gallery of our core exhibition. As the first element to open in this exhibition, it will set the scene for the stories of San Diego that will be interpreted through artifacts, oral histories and interactive activities, as the rest of the galleries are opened in the coming months. Standing on the map, visitors will be able to see two large, colorful murals by artist Charles Reiffel, depicting a backcountry scene on the east wall and a harbor scene on the west wall.

Gallery 3, Museum of San Diego History
Paintings and prints from San Diego artist Belle Baranceanu will be on display, beginning September 16. Art from the SDHS collection as well as pieces on loan will highlight her process of mural development as well as her finished works.

*Gallery 4, Museum of San Diego History*
After four years, Orchids & Onions, San Diego’s premier awards program for the built environment, has been “re-invented.” With a ceremony planned for fall 2006, this year’s program has a new organizer, a new look, and a new vision.

Formerly organized by the San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and other professional organizations, this year it is being orchestrated by the San Diego Architectural Foundation.

The theme for 2006 will be Re-Invention. With a new focus on educational outreach, Orchids & Onions will center attention on the significant changes San Diego’s architectural and related design environments have undergone over the past four years.

The goals for Orchids and Onions are:

• To increase community awareness of the value in the built environment
• To raise community standards for good design and development

The awards ceremony, to take place on November 4, 2006, will be held at the recently renovated North Park Theater. The event will begin at 3 p.m. with a special catered street celebration on 29th Street between North Park Way and University Avenue, while the awards ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. in the theater.

The Orchids & Onions Retrospective is a traveling exhibition of previous award winners, with an explanation of the repercussions of awards given and the ongoing controversy over the program. The exhibition will be featured at various locations including the Museum of San Diego History in Balboa Park.
The Society wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation to these sponsors who so generously supported the Showcase 2006 Gala

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SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Showcase 2006
The weather is getting warmer, and the Education Department has new programs to occupy these sunny days!

• In July we will begin a program for our future historians, *History for Half-Pints*. Adults and children, ages three and four, will learn about San Diego through stories and crafts while socializing with fellow history lovers from their community.

• *Path to the Past*, our new San Diego orientation tour, highlights the story of our city’s development. It begins with a tour of the presidio site and Serra Museum, continues with a bus tour through downtown and Balboa Park, and ends with a tour of the Marston House and gardens.

• We are pleased to announce the expansion of *School in the Park* program to include a second school. Hamilton Elementary will join Rosa Parks Elementary students for this “school out of school” program starting in September, which will almost double the number of students in the program.

• Our *History Case* has been visiting fourth-grade classrooms in San Diego County. In this outreach program, students explore presidio life through a fun and educational hands-on mystery; who is the undercover presidio merchant?

• The numbers are in! We had our 2,000th student visit the Serra Museum on May 3rd for the *San Diego Before Statehood* program.

• We would like to congratulate those students who showcased their History Day Projects in the atrium of the Museum of San Diego History last month. They won the San Diego Historical Society’s award for “Best Use of Primary Sources” at the annual History Day competition at the San Diego County Office of Education. Their hard work showed in the detail and content of their exhibits.

To contact the Education Department, please call (619) 232-6203 x104 or email us at edu@sandieghohistory.org.

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The Battle for Tecate of 1911 (A Chapter in the Other Mexican Revolution)  
Richard Vanheck, 8th Grade, Oak Grove Middle School

Operation Deep Freeze  
Eyra Allen, 9th Grade, Rancho Buena Vista High School

Daughters of Free Men  
Jessica Krups & Melissa Krups, 8th Grade, Oak Grove Middle School

Rosa Parks: Mother of Civil Rights  
Leila Cruz, Dana Duong, Holly Keene, 8th Grade, Del Dios Middle School

Simon Wiesenthal: Taking a Stand for Justice  
Jocelyn Lindsey, 9th Grade, Rancho Buena Vista High School
Partners in History at the Serra Museum

by Raffael Hoffmann, Site Educator

The San Diego Before Statehood Program at the Serra Museum introduces fourth-grade students to local history. The volunteers in the program facilitate fun and educational tours. They introduce people like Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and Josefa Carillo de Fitch using costumes as they wander the grounds of the former Presidio. They play games to illuminate life in the past, and even stage a scavenger hunt to engage the students' interest in the artifacts. Each year over 3,000 students and chaperones enjoy this program that is tailored to the California state standards. The Education Department is proud of our marvelous volunteers and grateful for the opportunity to work with them. Here is what they have to say about volunteering for the program:

Patricia Baker
“Now that I am retired I have time to pursue my interests. My curiosity for the history of San Diego led me to various historic sites, including the Mission de Alcalá, and I discovered the beautiful work of the Historical Society. I learned that I could use my teaching talents to facilitate tours for fourth-graders at the Serra Museum on Presidio Hill and the rest is history! I look forward to the days that I give tours because sharing stories of the past with children is very enjoyable.”

Sue Ellen Benson
“As a retired teacher, I get my “kiddy fix” through giving the tours. The program offered here is exemplary and I love to share all the information and history of the site with both the students and the adults. It is so enjoyable to see the students get excited about their local history.”

Teresa Chafe
“I like being a tour facilitator because I enjoy children and history, and the combination works very well.”

Sally Finch
“I enjoy history and want to help kids learn about their past. It is a real challenge to get some of them interested and involved.”

Judy Hayden
“I love sharing information about Presidio Park in the context of San Diego and, even, global history. My involvement began with a desire to be at a beautiful site where, as a youngster, I had rolled up and down the hills, not knowing archaeological ruins lay beneath. I credit the SDHS program and its resources for broadening my knowledge and deepening my interest.”

Derek Kiy
“As an English immigrant to California, I somehow feel connected to the early settlers and like to share their experiences and my own with the students that visit the Serra Museum. When I talk about the English hero, Sir Francis Drake, who was also a pirate capturing Spanish galleons, I always get a smile. Captain [Henry] Delano Fitch married a Mexican girl and I did too. I mention that the Serra Museum was opened in 1929 just one year after I was born. Little bits of trivia that the students seem to enjoy.”

Suzanne McCotter
“I do these tours because it is fun for me and I try to make it that for the kids and adults. I continue to learn more about our history and I love San Diego! We docents appreciate the continuing education program the Education Department provides to us…life is to always be learning.”

Patty Serrano-Raney
“On each tour my goal is to spark a passion for history in each child. I want every child to know the exciting history we are so lucky have here in San Diego. I really enjoy learning at our educational meetings and from fellow docents.”

Ed Streicher
“There is no better volunteer job. It’s fun to take the kids around and show them the historic sites. And, the Park and Museum are truly lovely. Also, it’s a pleasure to work with the other [tour] facilitators.”

Diane Wilson
“I know it is supposed to be all about the children, but the joy these fourth-graders give me at the Serra is wonderful. I even got a group hug a few weeks ago.”

Note: Tony Pfoser also volunteers for the program, but was unavailable to provide a quote for this article.
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The San Diego Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the following organizations and individuals in the period from July 2005 to May 2006.

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Francis Elliott Patterson (known to his friends as Elliotte, and in the Archives as F.E.P.) was a talented and prolific photographer working in San Diego from the late 1880s until the 1920s. The Booth Historical Photograph Archives is fortunate to have thousands of his negatives in the collection.

Mr. Patterson’s subjects included – but were not limited to – automobiles, individuals, businesses, Balboa Park, Baja California, dams, events, individuals, missions, residences, ship, and many parts of the county, especially Spring Valley, where he lived with his family. The family citrus business, La Vida Ranch, was named after one of his daughters, Vida, who also worked as his assistant for many years.

Mr. Patterson died in 1931 at the age of 78 and his collected images are now housed and taken care of in the Photograph Archives, thanks in part to a large bequest from the estate of Frances Elliotte Crabtree, his granddaughter.

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If you wish to schedule a preliminary tour of our facilities, or have any questions, please contact Michelle Swinney, site rental coordinator at:
(619) 232-6203, ext. 109 or email: rentals@sandiegohistory.org
Make your special event historic…

Events Diary

JUNE 27 - JULY 14
Orchids & Onions Traveling Exhibition
Museum of San Diego History

JULY 21
Opening of Place of Promise: Stories of San Diego
Museum of San Diego History

SEPTEMBER 16
Opening of Belle Baranceanu Exhibition
Museum of San Diego History

EXHIBITIONS NOW ON VIEW
Developing San Diego: Making History Everyday
Gallery 4, Museum of San Diego History
ROMP! Children Discover Balboa Park
Gallery 1, Museum of San Diego History
From Blueprints to Buildings: San Diego Architecture
Gallery 1, Museum of San Diego History
Commemorating 74 Years: The Serra Museum
Junipero Serra Museum in Presidio Park
Life on Presidio Hill
Junipero Serra Museum in Presidio Park

SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
38th Annual Institute of History
The San Diego Historical Society’s Institute of History encourages research on San Diego subjects of historical significance. Papers pertaining to California, the Southwest, and Baja California are appropriate to submit to the Institute when they involve events or individuals with some relationship to San Diego’s past. Students, non-professional, and professional writers are encouraged to submit papers. Awards may not be given in a category if no papers of sufficient merit are submitted, as determined by the judges. All papers submitted to the Institute of History will be considered for publication in the Society’s quarterly Journal of San Diego History.

Deadline for submission of papers October 15, 2006
Further details to be announced.
San Diego Historical Society
Where our history comes alive!

Museum of San Diego History
Casa de Balboa
1649 El Prado, Balboa Park
San Diego, CA 92101
619-232-6203
Open every day 10am - 5pm

Research Library and Booth Historical Photograph Archives
Casa de Balboa (lower level)
1649 El Prado, Balboa Park
San Diego, CA 92101
619-232-6203 ext. 117
Thursday - Saturday 10am - 4.30pm

Serra Museum
2727 Presidio Drive
Presidio Park
San Diego, CA 92103
619-297-3258
Open every day 10am - 4:30pm

Villa Montezuma (temporarily closed)
1925 K Street
(corner of 20th and K streets)
San Diego, CA 92102
619-239-2211
Friday - Sunday 10am - 5pm
Tours begin on the hour; last tour at 4pm

Marston House
3525 Seventh Avenue
Balboa Park
San Diego, CA 92103
619-298-3142
Friday - Sunday 10am - 5pm
Tours begin on the hour; last tour at 4pm

SERRA MUSEUM

SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TIMES Newsletter
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