The Dream Realized

Balboa Park: The Jewel of San Diego Premieres

Featuring stunning vistas shot by aerial photography juxtaposed with historic images from our collection, the documentary film Balboa Park: The Jewel of San Diego nears completion, a decades-long dream realized. A centerpiece of the History Center’s 2015 Centennial Celebration, the film will be shown daily in our Thornton Theatre, starting in early December, as a permanent introduction to Balboa Park for visitors, a valuable history lesson for area youth, and a testimonial of the remarkable vision of the Park’s founders who created one of the great cultural parks of the world.

Using state-of-the-art motion graphics, three-dimensional mapping, an original sound track, and photomontages from both the 1915 and 1935 Expositions, the talented film crew has produced a lively 30-minute capsule history of the Park, whose historical accuracy has been validated by local historians and writers Roger Showley and Dr. Iris Engstrand. The production team, headed by Creative Director Kris Viesselman and ably aided by filmmakers Josh Allard and Cody Long, explores the Park from the heights of the California Tower to the depths of underground museum collections, offering an unforgettable visual experience.

With funding from the San Diego Tourism Authority through the San Diego Tourism Marketing District, as well as support from generous donors including Jerome D. and Anne E. Ryan in memory of Bea Evenson, research funded by the David Whitmire Hearst Jr. Foundation, premier media sponsor U-T San Diego, and additional support from Roberta and Malin Burnham, Trevor Fetter Family, Gildred Families, Ledford-Evans Family, and Legler Benbough Foundation. Premiering on the eve of the Centennial, the film is expected to generate increased interest in Balboa Park as a regional asset and destination.

BY CHARLOTTE CAGAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
A masterful expedition

Beginning January 9, the History Center will present an extraordinary display of paintings from the 1915 Exposition era, the culmination of a two-year journey of discovery and the expertise of an esteemed group of curators. In keeping with our mission of elevating the stature of San Diego art, the exhibition’s centerpiece will be a breathtaking display of 1915-era artwork from regional artists, gleaned from private collections and regional museums, including the Irvine Museum, Laguna Art Museum, and the Bowers Museum. Private lenders from throughout the region are generously lending exquisite work, some never before seen by the public. A special showcase of artwork by renowned East Coast artists featured at the 1915 Exposition will include an unprecedented loan to the History Center from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. An adapted posthumously from the circa 1933 watercolor and ink painting created for the cover of the June 1933 Judge magazine. It is just one of the many exciting pieces featured in the exhibition which will illuminate Theodor Seuss Geisel’s work not only as the world’s most beloved children’s book author but as a true artist. Dr. Seuss’s literacy advocacy and unique approach to storytelling transformed the world of children’s literature, and this fanciful exhibit will immerse visitors in that world.

On Saturday, November 22, Dr. Seuss collectors from throughout Southern California will gather for an exclusive VIP viewing of this exhibition dedicated to the art and life of Dr. Seuss. Hosted by the San Diego History Center and five regional galleries that represent The Art of Dr. Seuss, this event will explore the amazing depths of Geisel’s artistic legacy as a San Diego resident and significant 20th century American artist.

Our special guest for both receptions is William Dreyer, The Art of Dr. Seuss collection curator and editor of two acclaimed books Dr. Seuss’s Secrets of the Deep and The Cat Behind the Hat. Dreyer will speak about Seuss at both events. In keeping with the holiday spirit, the galleries will donate a percent of the proceeds from each exhibition-related gallery sale to the History Center through the end of the year.

BY CHARLOTTE CAGAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Balboa Park truly is a remarkable place. Likely you’ve wondered whether it has always looked like this. Surely it didn’t just appear out of nowhere like the idyllic Xanadu, the mythical place described in the Samuel Taylor Coleridge poem *Kubla Khan*. Although referred to as Xanadu by early park planner Samuel Parsons, the 1915 Exposition grounds were a carefully conceived cultural landscape that planners and local business leaders hoped would one day bring world recognition to this charming, seaside port. The opening of the Panama Canal was the surefire opportunity for San Diego to present itself to the world. To do so meant proving it was a cultural destination, comparable to other world-class cities like New York, Paris, London, and Rome. It was up to community leaders to tout the virtues of the city and to draw the world’s attention to San Diego.

In order to accomplish a similar goal nearly 100 years later, the History Center, through its *Balboa Park Centennial Lecture Series: Celebrating the 1915 Panama-California Exposition*, is drawing on a new generation of community leaders and experts in architecture, landscaping, park planning, and cultural heritage to revisit the years leading up to and including the 1915 Exposition.

The lecture series launched in October with Dr. Ray Ashley, Executive Director of the San Diego Maritime Museum, extolling San Diego’s connection to the world’s canals, and the importance of the Panama Canal in shaping San Diego’s future. In November, USD History Professor, Dr. Molly McClain looks at the World’s Fairs from 1851-1915, that served as models for San Diego’s Expo.

Special thanks are due Cymer, a global industry leader, for sponsoring the Centennial Lecture Series. Mark your calendars for the remaining lectures in the Centennial year. For the complete schedule visit, sandiegohistory.org/CentennialLectureSeries.
New Place of Promise
On October 24, the History Center re-launched its longtime permanent exhibition, Place of Promise, in a new location in the newly finished rear gallery. Visitors to the "new" exhibition will see enhancements to the original Place of Promise, but more importantly, the installation engages visitors with richer interpretive materials that convey a greater aspect of San Diego’s past. New displays of original objects, imagery, and props — from the Kumeyaay through the early American period — are on exhibit.

Another updated feature, and one popular with visitors and schoolchildren, is the Walk on San Diego map. Reskinned with higher resolution mapping and containing more features than before, the map acts like a canvas for the new elements of the exhibition that discuss the United States-Mexico border.

Place of Promise, in its new location, offers a greater chronological context than its predecessor and, among other features, addresses the question: How did San Diego recover from the 1880s real estate bust? The answer is, in part, through the 1915 Exposition. This concept complements the upcoming adjacent exhibition, San Diego Invites the World, which focuses on the Panama-California Exposition and its impact on San Diego.

Volunteer in 2015
The History Center is currently recruiting for our inspiring 2015 exhibitions and programs. Our volunteers specifically are an essential part of the visitor experience. We are seeking volunteers to assist at exciting special events throughout the year, to interact with visitors as informal gallery guides and to lead visitors as docents on our popular Balboa Park History Strolls. The only requirement for volunteering is an enthusiasm for San Diego history; we will teach you the rest. For more information or to apply, visit sandiegohistory.org/volunteer or contact Casilda Pagan at volunteer@sandiegohistory.org.

The Holidays are RIGHT around the corner!
Impress your guests with an evening for the history books.
Book your Holiday Party NOW!
Save Up to 20%
619.232.6203 X109
events@sandiegohistory.org
sandiegohistory.org/rentals

SDHC & JAHSSD welcome the Minato Gakuen!
On Sunday, September 14, the San Diego History Center and the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego (JAHSSD) partnered to welcome students, teachers, and family members from the Minato Gakuen, a non-profit school dedicated to providing supplementary Japanese education to students living in San Diego. During their two-hour visit, students and families were immersed in the Japanese history of San Diego through a series of collaborative events. Working together, our education department, JAHSSD, and Minato School parents created a highly visual and engaging presentation about the Japanese presence and influence in San Diego from the 1880s to today. All three institutions contributed photographs and text from their collections to facilitate personal and communal connectedness.

Students and families received a hands-on look at history with an interactive artifacts table that included documents, maps, photographs, and objects from JAHSSD. Groups were guided through both the History Center’s Sin Diego exhibition and JAHSSD’s exhibit to gain a deeper understanding of our city’s Japanese residential and business areas, including the industries that flourished as a result of their contributions. To conclude their visit, students and families had the opportunity to engage with three panelists, two of whom were interned in Poston III, and a third who was a successful business owner in the Stingaree District.

The San Diego History Center and the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego look forward to welcoming back Minato Gakuen for future successful explorations.

MINATO SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARNING ABOUT CONDITIONS AT POSTON INTERNMENT CAMP POSTON FROM ARTIFACTS.

SDHC & JAHSSD welcome the Minato Gakuen!
DEVELOPMENT/MEMBERSHIP

Welcome new members

Welcome to the members who have joined the San Diego History Center from June to August 2014.

Brock Andersen
Donald Bell & Barbara Gail Jacobson
Jenny Bettis
Justin Brent
Lucinda Bush
Maria Butler
Charles Connors
Joyce Evans
Olivia & Eric Fletcher
Patricia Foley
Leslie Giesemann
Todd Gloria
Mathieu & Raphael Gregoire
Gregory & Katherine Horn
Carl Hu
Karl Johnson
Shirley Kelly
Joy Ledford
Richard & Marsha Lenyk
William Littmann
Dan McGeorge
Oscar Parra
Peggy Rose
Campbell Schengel
Richard & Marsha Lenyk
William Littmann
Dan McGeorge
Pat Minnich
Sharon & Ralph Sotelo
Lissa Stephen
Richard Stravinsky
James Werner
Larry & Patricia Williams
Charles Young

Celebrate San Diego sponsors step up

New sponsors are providing generous support for our 2015 Centennial Celebration. Joining Seuss exhibition Presenting Sponsors the Navarra Family & Jerome’s Furniture, the Seuss Fund at the San Diego Foundation, the De Falco Family Foundation, Mission Federal Credit Union and Rita’s Ice are supporting the INGENIOUS! exhibition. Sandy and Bram Dijkstra are providing a generous gift for the Masterworks exhibition, in addition to Bram’s curatorial contributions. Cymer will demonstrate their unique laser technology in the manufacture of modern digital chips in our Glass Gallery Innovation Showcase, highlighting the ways that San Diego continues to be a global innovation leader. Cymer is also sponsoring our Centennial Lecture Series, in cooperation with The Friends of San Diego Architecture and additional sponsor UCSD Extension.

Celebrate San Diego sponsors step up

It pays to be a member!
The San Diego History Center is pleased to offer our members unique discounts and savings at select local retailers and exclusive experiences in San Diego. Our Affiliate Partners program connects San Diego businesses with our members by offering new benefits. San Diego History Center members receive 15% off at the Village Hat Shop, both in-store by showing your membership card and online with the promotion code SDHISTORY. Village Hat Shops are located in Hillcrest, Seaport Village, India Street, and Long Beach.

One of our preferred hotels, The Dana Resort on Mission Bay, offers premier waterfront accommodations to members. Special discounts include 20% off the best available rate, 20% off food and beverages (excluding alcohol) at any of their restaurants, and a $20 flat parking fee. To receive your discount at The Dana, use the promotion code SDHC/SDHC.

The Tony Award-winning La Jolla Playhouse offers members discounts on select performances. Recently the theater offered $29 tickets to productions of both The Orphan of Zhao and Ether Dome.

To receive information about the most current discounts, make sure we have your email address on file. As our list of Affiliate Partners continues to grow, you can check sandiegohistory.org/benefits to discover new member discounts and benefits of being a History Center member.

Save the date!

CELEBRATE SAN DIEGO!
The San Diego History Center celebrates the Centurions of San Diego 2015: Makers of San Diego History, Sunday, April 26, 2015 at The Town & Country Resort.

For additional information on sponsorships, contact Sharon LeeMaster at sleemaster@sandiegohistory.org or Bev Fritschner at bfritschner@sandiegohistory.org.

By Sara Morrison, Membership Director
City of San Diego reclaims its records

In 1984, the San Diego History Center and the City of San Diego made an official agreement, supported by a City Council resolution, whereby the History Center became custodian of many of the city’s foundational records “in order to maintain them for historical purposes and to make them more accessible to the public.” The 322 large volumes included City Council minutes, deed records, leases and contract information, minutes of the Board of Public Works, and resolutions and ordinances. Over the subsequent 30 years that they have remained in our care, the records have been made available for public research and used by countless researchers exploring the history of our city.

The Office of the City Clerk has recently embarked on an access and preservation project, which involves digitization of all city records and making them available online. To this end, the city has requested the return of its records, and the History Center is working with city officials to accommodate their removal to the Office of the City Clerk. The archives staff has welcomed the opportunity to work with these valuable records, but is enthusiastic that they are now being returned to their rightful place and that research access is being enhanced by this major digitization project.

1915 exposition “Big Book” project

Prior to 1915, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce asked Alexander Henry Ross of local bookbinders Ross and Ross to create a guest book for use by visitors to San Diego’s upcoming Exposition. This was no ordinary guest book, however, as it measured around three cubic feet and weighed over 250 pounds. It was so big that it was used for both the 1915 and 1916 Expositions and still had many empty pages to spare. After some use in the years following the Expositions, the Chamber of Commerce almost forgot about the enormous volume until it came to light again in the 1930s. The Chamber then went back to Ross and Ross, but this time to dispose of the book. The Chamber wanted it cut up into pads of paper for general use — a suggestion that horrified Alexander Louis Ross, who had taken over the business from his father. He offered an alternate proposal that he provide the Chamber with pads of paper in return for giving him the “big book.” This satisfactory arrangement left the book in the care of Ross and Ross until 2000 when the company closed, and Norman Ross, a third-generation bookbinder, fortunately donated the book to the San Diego History Center, where it holds a place of honor in our collections.

In preparation for its display in San Diego Invites the World: The 1915 Exposition, we are researching the contents of this gigantic artifact to determine where visitors came from in 1915, as well as hoping to discover some interesting visitors who signed their names in this extraordinary book, all of which will be shared with visitors to this historic exhibition.
Wall of support: teaming up for veterans

Wells Fargo, a major sponsor of the Presidio to Pacific Powerhouse exhibition, sponsors Soldiers to Summits, a program that builds transformative experiences designed to help wounded veterans overcome barriers to their physical limitations and live a life of proud purpose. This year, Soldiers to Summits helped veterans summit the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States: Mt. Whitney.

Wells Fargo reached out to the History Center in late July to host a “Wall of Support” for the wounded veterans who would be summiting the mountain in mid-September. The “Wall” was a large video screen staffed by a support crew who invited museum passersby to write a message to the veterans via Twitter and Facebook. The messages were sent to the veterans’ social media feeds as they ascended the mountain, providing words and sentiments of support to those climbing at around 14,000 feet.

Installed in our Glass Gallery, the “Wall of Support” at the History Center delivered 400 messages of support and encouragement to those who have served our country so admirably. Our multi-gallery exhibition telling the story of the military in San Diego continues through December 2014 and in a reinterpreted version through 2015.

Archtoberfest celebrates San Diego architecture

October had a new look this year—a look at building facades, condo conversions, historic preservation projects, and landscape—as the San Diego Architectural Foundation launched Archtoberfest! Partnering with dozens of architects, designers, schools, historians, museums, and environmental organizations, Archtoberfest kicked off a month-long celebration of San Diego’s built environment.

Condo complexes, public buildings, architect offices, architecture schools, city skyscrapers, and more served as venues for dozens of tours, talks, walks, and workshops. The History Center participated with an Introduction to the Architectural Drawings Collection held in our Document Archive as well as two architectural walking tours of Balboa Park, which concluded with a stop in our Research Library to view original architectural drawings for many of the Park’s most recognizable landmark structures. Public architecture tours of Balboa Park will continue periodically throughout 2015, so keep an eye on our program calendar for upcoming dates and times.

Announcing: Bum the Dog Kids Club!

Calling all kids! The San Diego History Center is proud to announce the launch of Bum the Dog Kids Club, especially for kids ages 5-11. In the late 1880s, Bum the Dog was San Diego’s mascot, belonging to no one but loved by everyone.

Bum the Dog Kids Club members will engage with and learn about San Diego history and our community through special Kids Club programs and resources. Kids Club members receive an exclusive dog tag showing they are a member of Bum the Dog Kids Club, $1 off admission to the History Center, 15% discount on Bum the Dog books and plush toys at the museum store, and invitations to special Kids Club programs and events throughout the year. Joining the Kids Club is absolutely FREE! To join today, visit sandiegohistory.org/kids. While you are there, explore the site, learn about Bum’s amazing story, and discover exciting activities just for kids.

Bring History Home

Over 50,000 historic images available at sandiegohistory.org/photostore.

Reprinted version of Archtoberfest continues through 2015.

Collection held in our Document Archive as well as two architectural walking tours of Balboa Park, which concluded with a stop in our Research Library to view original architectural drawings for many of the Park’s most recognizable landmark structures. Public architecture tours of Balboa Park will continue periodically throughout 2015, so keep an eye on our program calendar for upcoming dates and times.

BY SARA MORRISON, MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

BY MATTHEW SCHIFF, MARKETING DIRECTOR

BY GABE SELAK, PUBLIC PROGRAMS MANAGER
The History Center Store has your cure!

Open Daily:

10am - 5pm

Do you suffer from indecisive shopping syndrome?

Tax time isn’t the only time to donate your car!

Call (844) SDHC CAR
Or visit sandiegohistory.org and click on the “Donate Your Car” link at the bottom of the page.

Support the History Center. It’s free and easy!