Pictures at an Exhibition
Historic display features 1915 artwork

The most enduring legacy of the History Center’s 2015 exhibitions may well be Masterworks: Art of the Exposition Era, a historic gathering of stunning artwork, including medal-winning paintings from the 1915 Exposition. Aptly echoing the virtuoso Mussorgsky suite inspired by an imaginary tour of an art collection, this dramatic presentation demonstrates the power of California artists to interpret our landscape.

A lesser-known feature of the 1915 Expo was its path-breaking art exhibition, featuring 150 paintings, by both national and regional artists, spread across three galleries. This was San Diego’s first major art exhibition, and it was both seminal and somewhat controversial. The History Center has gathered these paintings from museums and private collectors in an assemblage demonstrating, in the words of Co-Curator Bram Dijkstra, that California artists could stand “toe-to-toe” with their renowned East Coast counterparts. Western artists captured our unique environment, what a Los Angeles critic of the day called “talent’s richest and most nourishing soil, below its brightest sun and its clearest skies.” And William Wendt, whose majestic California landscape won the Expo’s Grand Prize (pictured above), was similarly inspired: “One feels that he is on holy ground, in Nature’s temple.” Visitors to this exhibition will no doubt be equally moved by the grandeur of these paintings, and equally struck by their freshness, one hundred years later.

The Masterworks exhibition continues throughout 2015; a commemorative catalog is also available.
Progress and Promise

In China, 2015 is the year of the goat, but in San Diego it is the year of the History Center. We have come a long way in the past three years, attaining greater stature and recognition throughout the community, which now has a much greater appreciation of the San Diego History Center. We have made steady progress toward fulfilling our mission and achieving financial sustainability, and we have recently completed another banner year of activity and public service.

We have celebrated and exhibited local companies such as QUALCOMM; industries such as tuna and craft beer, and the military; and innovators ranging from Sol Price to Dr. Seuss. In 2014, we conducted one hundred Speaker’s Bureaus, expanded our youth oral history program, and hosted History Happy Hours and a successful fashion luncheon.

The 2015 Centennial represents a focus on history, our core value. All San Diegans should be proud of the fact that the History Center has collected, preserved, exhibited, and educated our community on its history for the past eighty-six years! Our 2015 offerings, including the art of Dr. Seuss, our new film on the history and promise of Balboa Park, and our important art exhibition related to the 1915 Exposition, will further our reputation. And our “Makers of San Diego History” Celebration in April will honor San Diego businesses and organizations one hundred years old or older.

To properly and responsibly fulfill our mission, we must build the endowment and raise operating reserves. On March 1, we will announce a plan to raise $5 million to secure our future. Our Board of Trustees is fully engaged, and we hope our members and the entire community will support this campaign. Our executive director, staff, and operating and advisory boards are committed to making the San Diego History Center one of the greatest regional history centers in the US.

BY TOM FETTER, PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Hundred Years of Balboa Park

There is no shortage of information about the 1915 Panama-California Exposition during 2015 at the San Diego History Center.

We are offering our two 1915-related exhibitions and our Centennial Lecture Series — a year-long partnership with the Friends of San Diego Architecture that brings noted historians, authors, and other experts together to discuss Exposition-related topics. And there are other ways to learn about 1915 without leaving your house!

San Diego’s Historic Places, hosted by KPBS reporter Elsa Sevilla, is a local documentary series focusing on San Diego’s history. For 2015, Sevilla and her crew have developed an entire series devoted to the Expo, using rare, historic photos and film from the History Center to tell the story of City Park and how the Exposition was planned.

Topics explore the origins of Balboa Park and the key city leaders who created the monumental urban cultural park for San Diego. Balboa Park’s architectural and landscaping designs, world-renowned architects, and unique aspects of the fair are featured as well, with the aid of our archival footage and photos.

The 1915 Expo Centennial — San Diego’s Historic Places airs on Thursdays at 8pm, starting January 8, on KPBS-TV and online.

BY MATTHEW SCHIFF, MARKETING DIRECTOR
Celebrate Dr. Seuss and Literacy

March marks a month honoring Dr. Seuss and his legacy of literacy

Spring will be rich with programs and events at the San Diego History Center in celebration of Dr. Seuss’s birthday (March 2) and Literacy Month. Sunday, March 1 is Seuss Family Day at the History Center, with special family activities from 11am to 3pm, Seuss reading circles and a Seuss Celebrity Reading at 2pm. On Monday, March 2, the History Center presents a tribute birthday celebration for Theodor Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss, whose books and characters are recognized, loved, and enjoyed by millions of people across generations and who championed literacy. Events on that day will also include many special activities, a Seuss Celebrity Reading at 11am and birthday cake for all. All activities are free with admission.

On the weekend of April 18, Art of Dr. Seuss Curator, Bill Dreyer, will host a national gathering in San Diego of Seuss collectors and devotees titled Oh, the Places You’ll Go, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the publication of his final book. The three-day event includes a private tour of original Dr. Seuss artworks in the Dr. Seuss Archives at the Geisel Library at UCSD and a private viewing of 26 original hats from Dr. Seuss’s private hat collection in the Hats Off to Dr. Seuss national touring exhibition. The weekend culminates with a Curators Tour of our own exhibition, INGENIOUS! The World of Dr. Seuss, capped by an exclusive VIP event at the History Center celebrating Dr. Seuss’s artistic legacy.

Our exhibition continues to draw record crowds and enthusiastic visitors. Our Celebrity Readings continue on Saturday, February 14, Valentine’s Day, with former San Diego Mayor and current Regional Chamber of Commerce CEO Jerry Sanders and his wife, Rana Sampson, a Union Bank vice-president. These readings continue to fulfill Theodor Geisel’s focus on literacy, family, reading and sharing. These readings begin at 2pm and are included with regular admission.

BY MATTHEW SCHIFF, MARKETING DIRECTOR
Mission Federal Gives & Gets

Mission Federal Credit Union’s $3,000 donation to the History Center allows over 350 underserved students in San Diego to participate in our literacy-based education programs connected to Ingenious! The World of Dr. Seuss exhibition. This funding will bring students from throughout San Diego County who have not yet participated in our educational programs.

Established in San Diego in 1961, Mission Federal Credit Union remains committed to serving the San Diego community through philanthropic endeavors, such as the San Diego History Center educational programs.

In gratitude for this generous support, Mission Federal Credit Union members will receive discounts on both museum admission and membership. Through December 31, 2015, Mission Federal Credit Union members can show their member cards or credit cards to receive $1 off museum admission per member and $5 off a new San Diego History Center membership.

We are pleased to offer this reciprocal arrangement and encourage other companies to follow this example. For more information, please contact Sara Morrison at membership@sandiegohistory.org.

MISSION FEDERAL EXECUTIVES PRESENTING CHECK TO HISTORY CENTER’S CHARLOTTE CAGAN AND HEATHER POIRIER.

History Center Thanks 2015 Donors

The San Diego History Center welcomes many new donors who are supporting our 2015 Centennial exhibitions and programs. We express our profound appreciation to all of our sponsors.

**INGENIOUS! The World of Dr. Seuss**

The Navarra Family & Jerome’s Furniture, Rita’s Ice, The Dr. Seuss Fund, Mission Federal Credit Union, The De Falco Foundation, Helen Kinnaird, Connie Golden, Arts Bus Xpress/FOCUS

**San Diego Invites the World: The 1915 Expo**

Union Bank, Willis Allen Real Estate, Barney & Barney, Fidelity National Title, Congregation Beth Israel, Point Loma Nazarene University, Neil Ash and June Barnmore Ash

**Masterworks: Art of the Exposition Era**

The Sefton Family Foundation, Sandra and Bram Dijkstra, Laura Galinson Advised Fund, Ed and Mary Fletcher Family Descendants, Patricia and Richard Amtower, Mary Berend, Helen Kinnaird, Janet Klauber in honor of Alice Ellen Klauber, Alice Klauber Miller Family, Deborah Szekely, Mark Trotter/The Parker Foundation, Ann Vafis

**Noel-Baza Art Gallery: Under the Same Sky**

Fenner Milton

**Presidio to Pacific Powerhouse: How the Military Shaped San Diego**

Waxie Sanitary Supply

**Place of Promise**

The Thursday Club

**Innovation Showcase**

Cymer, ResMed, SDG&E

**Balboa Park: The Jewel of San Diego**


**Centennial Lecture Series**

Cymer

(current as of 12/20/2014)

Additional opportunities are available for exhibition sponsorships and to support our education programs, collections, and oral history program. Please contact us at (619) 232-6203 x140 to learn more.
From baseball to customer service

Charles “Chuck” Symonds came to San Diego from the Bay Area in 1955 via the US Navy. After 23 years as an air crewman and professional baseball player for the Navy, Chuck decided to retire in San Diego. After receiving a degree in Social Welfare he started his second career in customer service. Merging his customer service skills with his passion for history, Chuck became a docent for the San Diego Natural History Museum. Eventually he became a tour guide for San Diego Convention Center's Guest Services and a Navigator for Petco Park, working for both until his recent retirement. Today, Chuck combines his passions for history, San Diego, and customer service, along with his vast tour guide experience, to serve as a docent for the History Center. Stop in to hear stories from this long-time San Diegan, and don’t forget to ask about those Padres!

San Diego Invites the World!

The centerpiece of the History Center’s Centennial Celebration exhibition, San Diego Invites the World, stands apart as the only exhibition in Balboa Park during 2015 devoted entirely to the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

Curated by noted author, historian, and professor Dr. Iris Engstrand, the exhibition offers a family-friendly lighthearted experience of the two-year mega event. The exhibition’s purpose is both to educate visitors about the Exposition and to inspire an appreciation for arguably the most significant event in San Diego’s history. The exhibition narrative engages visitors visually and kinesthetically and is supported almost exclusively by rare objects, artifacts, and images from the History Center’s own archives.

Among the exhibition’s unique features are video ‘re-enactors’, the return of the popular Electriquette, and an extraordinary 3-D replica of the Panama Canal by Fab Lab, members of San Diego’s burgeoning ‘maker’ community. San Diego Invites the World provides a memorable and indelible snapshot of the almost unimaginable event that unfolded here in 1915.

Masterminding the Dream: Balboa Park’s MVPs

Next time you enter Balboa Park from Sixth Avenue, stop at Founder’s Plaza and sit next to the statue of George Marston. Gaze across the pathway to a familiar likeness of his good friend Kate Sessions, similarly cast in bronze, forever linking both to Balboa Park’s story.

Close by are two other prominent statues of individuals whose altruistic thinking galvanized a vision for the Park. Alonzo Horton and fellow businessman Ephraim Morse dreamt that San Diego would one day be a metropolis, and this park was a means to that end. By 1915, both would pass on, but their dream was carried forward by Marston, Sessions, John D. Spreckels, D. C. Collier, Aubrey Davidson, and others.

Aubrey Davidson, President of the Chamber of Commerce, advanced the idea in 1909 of introducing San Diego to the world with a 1915 Exposition. That Exposition might have been given entirely to San Francisco had D. C. Collier not negotiated for San Diego to throw a smaller affair with a garden theme. Positioning the Expo fell to landscape architect John Olmsted, Jr. However, pressure from businessman John D. Spreckels forced Olmsted’s resignation, but not before he gave Cabrillo Canyon its name. Kate Sessions then worked diligently to fill that canyon with the flora we celebrate today.

In the meantime, architect Bertram Goodhue, working alongside Frank Allen, Carleton Winslow, Harrison Albright and others, chose Spanish Colonial as the architectural style for the Exposition buildings. This choice had the greatest impact, not only on Balboa Park, serving as a lasting memory of the events of 1915, but on Southern California as a whole, as Spanish Colonial became a signature, identifying architectural style of the entire region! The collective dreams of these visionaries created the most transformative event in San Diego history, and we forever honor their achievements.

BY MATTHEW SCHIFF, MARKETING DIRECTOR

By Gabe Selak, Public Programs Manager

BY CASILDA PAGAN, VOLUNTEER MANAGER
2014 Donations: Expo Pottery, Gowns and a Chinese Diary

Our Collections Department has accepted many donations throughout 2014. Some represent important milestones in the history of San Diego; others seem unexceptional, but still add to the historical understanding of our city.

One item from 1915 Exposition was a small souvenir pottery bowl with an Exposition stamp on its base. It was not intended for long-term use or made of hard-wearing materials, but it amazingly survived for 100 years when it was only expected to last a fraction of that time, demonstrating that even the lowliest souvenir can find its place in history.

The Costume Council has always been very supportive of our renowned Costume Collection. Betty Passmore Bass, one of its founding members, recently made a donation of personal evening ensembles. All were worn to special events here in San Diego, and she included images of her wearing them to add to their provenance.

An exceptional donation was an 1889 diary by Ah Quin, a highly respected member of our early Chinese community. We have an existing collection of ten handwritten Ah Quin diaries that are believed to be unique. The new diary was not located until recently.

Archives How-To: Scrapbooking

Scrapbooks are a popular way to collect personal and family memories and mementos, but the diversity of their contents makes them a challenge to preserve. If you want your scrapbooks to stand the test of time, there are some important factors to keep in mind while creating them.

The most destructive element is acid, so eliminate as many acidic materials as possible to extend the life of your book. The most common culprit is low-quality paper, which is made with chemically unstable wood pulps that degrade over time. When shopping for scrapbook paper, look for materials marked “archival quality” or “acid-free.” Newspaper is particularly acidic and will quickly turn brown and brittle. Consider copying articles onto acid-free paper and preserving the copies instead.

Avoid using glue wherever possible. Photos and documents should not be pasted directly onto the page. Consider using photo corners or placing your items in archival sleeves. Don’t store them near windows or box them up in muggy sheds. The best environment for paper is one that is cool, dry, and dark.
Honoring Centurions and Centennial Fashions
Save the dates!

Join us Sunday, April 26, at our 2015 Makers of San Diego tribute dinner as we honor and celebrate businesses, organizations, and institutions in our community that are one hundred years old and older. Through the efforts of volunteers and a Logan Jenkins U-T column, we have identified a remarkable list of about 150 businesses, churches, schools, and community organizations reflective of the 39,000 San Diego residents living here in 1915. The tribute will tell their stories through a special edition program sponsored by the San Diego Business Journal. This celebration will take guests back in time as they stroll through the Town and Country Convention Center transformed to resemble the Exposition era.

Fashion Redux! challenges student designers in the Fashion Program at San Diego’s Mesa College to create works in contemporary styles inspired by fabulous fashions from our Historic Clothing Collection. This year students based their designs on the pre-Exposition period of 1900-1914. Fashion highlights included Orientalism, Middle Eastern tunics, pastel colors, and flowing tea gowns.

Marvel at the finalists’ ensembles, on display February 23 to March 8. And be sure to attend the exciting Finale Party on Friday, March 6, where the top designer of 2015 will be announced.

Innovation Showcase
Intrigues and Educates

Visitors entering our Glass Gallery during December and January were greeted with an oversize contraption—with complex components and wiring as impressive as it was large. Also featured was a highly technical, visitor-operated, laser “optical” course. This display was produced by the local high-tech company Cymer, a global leader in developing light sources used to pattern semiconductor chips inside of devices and appliances that improve life for many people around the world.

The Cymer installation was the first of a year-long series that showcases the products of regional innovation leaders, visually educating Balboa Park visitors about why San Diego is considered a global innovation center. The 1915 Exposition was San Diego’s first innovation event and it showcased innovations of the day in industry, drawing millions to marvel at automobiles and moving pictures. Our region continued on its path of innovation, and, one hundred years later, the History Center once again celebrates innovations that advance civilization and improve quality of life globally. Future featured innovators include ResMed and SDG&E.
Calendar

February

5, 12, 19, 26  
Balboa Park History Stroll, 11am & 1pm | $  
6  
History for Half Pints: Dumplings & Dragons, Chinese New Year!, 10am | $ (K)  
7  
From Alcala to Zoro: Balboa Park Architecture Walk & Talk, 11am | $  
7  
Balboa Park History Stroll, 1pm | $  
14  
Seuss Celebrity Reading, 2pm | FREE with admission (K)  
16  
President’s Day Family Activities, 11am | FREE with admission (K)  
18, 25  
San Diego History 101 Series, 10am | $*  
19  
Centennial Lecture Series: Mike Kelly, The Program and Site Plan for the Exposition: 1910 - 1913, 6pm | $  
23  
Fashion Redux! 2015 displays | FREE with admission (thru 3/8)  
28  
1935 Progress of Man Exposition Walk & Talk, 1pm | $ (Meet at Alcazar Gardens)  
28  
Bach Collegium Spring Concert, 7pm | $-$ $**

March (continued)

4  
San Diego History 101, Part 3, 10am | $*  
5, 12, 19, 26  
Balboa Park History Stroll, 11am & 1pm | $  
6  
History for Half Pints: Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!, 10am | $ (K)  
6  
Fashion Redux! 2015 Finale Party, 6pm | $  
7  
From Alcala to Zoro: Balboa Park Architecture Walk & Talk, 11am | $  
7  
Balboa Park History Stroll, 1pm | $  
12  
Homeschool Day: In Search of a Story, 11am | $ (K)  
14  
Seuss Celebrity Reading, 2pm | FREE with admission (K)  
22  
Girl Scout Program Day: Women’s Stories, 11am | $ (K)  
26  
Centennial Lecture Series: Milford Wayne Donaldson, The Architecture of the Exposition Buildings, 6pm | $  
28  
1935 Progress of Man Exposition Walk & Talk, 1pm | $ (Meet at Alcazar Gardens)

March

1  
Dr. Seuss Family Activity Day, 11am | FREE with admission (K)  
2  
Dr. Seuss’ Birthday: Reading & Cake, 11am | FREE with admission (K)

April

16  
Centennial Lecture Series: Vicki Estrada, The Landscape Architecture of the Exposition, 6pm | $  
18-19  
National Seuss Symposium, various locations across San Diego**  
26  
Makers of San Diego History Centurion Celebration, Town & Country Resort, 6pm | $$

$ Programs cost $1 – $15  
$ $ Programs cost $16 – $50  
$ $ Programs cost above $50 (K)  
Kid-Friendly Event  
* Includes a guided visit to the Library and Archive  
** Separate ticket purchase outside SDHC  
All programs take place at the San Diego History Center in Balboa Park unless otherwise noted. Programs subject to change or cancellation.  
All programs require registration or advance ticket purchase.  
Tickets available online at sandiegohistory.org/calendar, by phone at (619) 232.6203, ext. 129, or email rsvp@sandiegohistory.org.