A Centennial Success
A look back at the successes of the past year at the History Center

As the City of San Diego marked the centennial of the Panama-California Exposition in 2015, the San Diego History Center marked a year of success with record-setting attendance at its two museums and an enthused and engaged base of donors, members, volunteers, staff, and supporters.

In this special “Year in Review” issue of The TIMES, we look at the History Center’s performance and progress. Visitors from throughout San Diego and from around the world have toured Ingenious! The Art of Dr. Seuss and Masterworks: Art of the Exposition Era, which closed after a year-long run and were followed by The Lore Behind the Roar! 100 Years of the San Diego Zoo. This family-friendly and interactive exhibition tells the story of how a group of animals left over from the 1915 Exposition grew into the World Famous San Diego Zoo, today San Diego Zoo Global, the world leader in conservation. A new permanent exhibit, Inside|OUT, funded through the generosity of Las Patronas, brings to light the unique, unusual, and commonplace objects in the San Diego History Center collections.

In 2015 the History Center’s Education programming expanded to provide services to a record 20,000 students from around San Diego County. For many of these students, this was their first visit to Balboa Park, and for some, their first visit to a museum!

At the Junípero Serra Museum in Presidio Park, two new exhibitions funded through a grant by the San Diego River Conservancy and State Coastal Conservancy will look at the history and ecology of the site and activate the loggia on the north side of the tower. The City of San Diego has committed to upgrading the site to be ADA compliant, opening it to a wider audience. Both projects are scheduled to be completed in time for the 250th anniversary of the founding of San Diego in 2019.

We hope you enjoy this “Year in Review” and continue to be a part of our future.
A Year to Remember

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am excited to share our “Year in Review.” And what an amazing year it was! With strong, committed volunteer and staff leadership in place, attendance growing, and financial support from the community on the rise, the future looks bright for your San Diego History Center.

While my volunteer service has been gratifying to date, my optimism regarding the renaissance of the History Center has reached a new level. Under the leadership of Bill Lawrence, who became our new Executive Director last January, our progress has accelerated. An impressive innovation is our new Give Forward admission policy. By moving away from transactional paid admissions to visitors donating to the organization based on their experience, attendance is already on the rise.

A Message from the Executive Director

We are quite proud of the last fiscal year here at the San Diego History Center. I would like to acknowledge the work of Charlotte Cagan who, as Executive Director, ran the organization during the past five years. As we look back, we also look forward to the coming year and beyond.

We are making profound changes in the institution to support and enhance our ability to accomplish our mission and to engage with and enlist the support of our visitors, members, donors, and community. To this end we have

• Implemented a new donations-based admissions policy. This removes a financial barrier and allows members of the public, who otherwise may not be able to attend, to visit our exhibitions. Guests are then invited to place a value on their experience and Give Forward to enhance the experience of a future visitor. An admission based on generosity is, at its heart, practice of a “Culture of Philanthropy.”
• We have launched a new “History Ambassador” program designed to produce new content, which allows us to reach more audiences on our website and through social media, and to engage new audiences to instill an understanding of the importance of our region’s past and its relationship to the present and future.
• The staff of the San Diego History Center is a primary reason for our success. So, too, is the support of our community, visitors, donors, and volunteers. Thank you for your support, and we look forward to continued success.

BY BILL LAWRENCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Volunteers Keep the History Center Moving Forward

251 reasons why the History Center continues to thrive

Over the past fiscal year, 251 volunteers contributed their time, talents, and energy to help the San Diego History Center and Junipero Serra Museum become more accessible to an ever-changing visitor base. Volunteers donated hours in the areas of education, special events, collections, membership, development, administration, and curatorial. By playing an integral role in daily operations and enhancing our visitors’ understanding of the history of San Diego, they support the organization in achieving its mission. The History Center is fortunate to have the service of such an enthusiastic and dedicated group, and we, most assuredly, could not do it without them.

BY BILL LAWRENCE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Statistics

• Youngest volunteer = 14 years old
• Oldest volunteer = 102 years old
• Market value of donated hours = $258,087
• Languages spoken by SDHC volunteers = 11

Volunteer Contributions

• Market value of donated hours for 2016 = $258,087
• Languages spoken by SDHC volunteers include: Aramaic, Dutch, English, French, Japanese, Mandarin, Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Hausa, and American Sign Language
• Records added to the Marriage License database = 20,000 (by long-time volunteer Jane Compill)

THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR EXHIBITION SPONSORS

The Lore Behind the Roar: 100 Years of the San Diego Zoo
Presenting Sponsor:
THE LEGGIERI FOUNDATION
Media Sponsor:
INGENIOUS! The World of Dr. Seuss
Sponsor:
Jerome’s Furniture
Masterworks: Art of the Exposition Era
Sponsors: J.W. Selton Foundation, L.J. Oelsohn Advised Fund, Sandra & Brian Oelsohn
Inside Out: A Permanently Exhibited, Rotating Display Of Rarely-Seen Items From The San Diego History Center Collections
Sponsor: Las Patronas

The support of our major donors makes our engaging and exciting exhibitions available to the public. We offer our sincere thanks to them, and look forward to our continued partnerships.

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Engaging People of All Ages in the Discourse of History
New learning styles for looking at the past

**Momentum Centennials Brought About Support Historical**
Philanthropic support in the form of programmatic and general funding through donations and grants allowed the History Center to succeed over the past year. We are honored to acknowledge the support of the following generous individuals, family foundations, corporations, and the City and County of San Diego.

**Corporate and Foundation Support**
The San Diego History Center gratefully acknowledges the generous support of businesses and foundations contributing above $1000 between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016.

**Leaving a Legacy**
The San Diego History Center would like to recognize the following philanthropists who committed over $1,000 in gifts through their estates during the past fiscal year:

**Major Sponsor**
JRN Selph Foundation
Lauren Eaton Advised Fund
Sarars & Brey Rakita

**Additional Sponsors**
Christine Brain and Charles Abdouraham
Patricia and Richard Antenower
Jean and H. Michael Collins
Ed and Mary Fletcher Descendents
Heather and Valerie Kennedy
Jenet Klauber
Alice Miller
Connor K. Golden
Fenner Milton
Noel Blaze Fire Art
Kay Rutter
Deborah Sorkin
Mark Trotter / The Parker Foundation
City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

**Major Sponsor**
Rita’s Italian Ice

**Additional Sponsors**
The Beatrice F. Knott Estate
Ed and Mary Fletcher Descendents
Jean and H. Michael Collins
Ed and Mary Fletcher Descendents
Heather and Valerie Kennedy
Jenet Klauber
Alice Miller
Connor K. Golden
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Deborah Sorkin
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City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

**Majors**
**President**
The San Diego History Center for Arts and Culture

**Presenting Sponsor**
City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

**Educational Media Sponsor**
The San Diego History Center acknowledges the generous support of organizations that align with our exhibitions. Through these kinds of efforts, we are pivotting SDHC’s reputation into one that has fun and meaningful opportunities for audiences of all ages.

The excitement and rigor of learning history lie in the interpretation—how one makes sense of the facts. Education at the History Center provides an opportunity for students and people of all ages to have a voice in an ongoing dialogue about the relevance of our shared community history. Our K-12 and adult programming endeavors to offer the best in 21st-century learning to all of San Diego County.

This year we saw the implementation of two dynamic initiatives: (1) our Climate Change in Your Time exhibit and (2) our Pluviculture in our Time! exhibit. We also tackled current topics like homelessness, the school-to-prison pipeline, and even the science and history behind pluviculture (rain making) in our time of drought! We are proud to feature the work of educators, we have experienced a 260% growth in new learning styles for looking at the past. On your next visit you will notice the differences in our educational endeavors to offer the best in 21st-century learning to all of San Diego County.

Through the hard work of our professional museum educators, we have experienced a 260% growth over the last two years in our daily school program attendance. Three-quarters of our K-2 audiences are underserved. Our slate of public programs this year tackled current topics like homelessness, the San Diego-Mexico border, the future of urban cultural parks, and even the science and history behind pluviculture (rain making) in our time of drought!

This year we saw the implementation of two dynamic family learning spaces—Ingenious! The World of Dr. Seuss and the San Diego Gas & Electric Inventors’ Gallery. The Ingenuity of the World of Dr. Seuss and the RoAR Family Den. On your next visit you might also see a Gallery Educator engaging visitors in a one-on-one dialogue using objects and documents/photographs.

**Thank you to all our donors. We are grateful for your continued support!**
My name is Buzz Owen and I was born in San Diego in 1934. For years I have been trying to locate information about a large building that burned down before it formally opened, killing a security guard. It has been an obsession of mine for many years now. I thought if I want to find out, I had better get on with it (I am 81 now). I contacted the History Center, and they were able to locate photos showing the apartment building before and after the fire. I cannot thank them enough! I was actually in such emotional shock when I saw the photos. I had all but given up in this crazy search andfigured I would never see this building, which has haunted my dreams for so many years, again. The 1950 photo with the west wall collapsed is how it looked when my grandmother, my mom, and I walked up to it around 1947.

Visible Collections Enrich Visitor Experiences
Objects from the past can offer an opportunity for the future.

The core mission of the San Diego History Center is to preserve our region’s past. There is no better example of this than our collections that document how the San Diego region became what it is today. With more than 45 million documents, 2.5 million images, 1,700 pieces of fine art, 15,000 historic, and 1,500 oral histories, there is no greater repository for our region’s history. The History Center is now able to share more of the rare, unusual and even everyday items within our collection with our members and visitors due to the generosity of Las Patronas, who funded our new permanent exhibition Inside|OUT.

Highlights from the Archives:
- Most significant object donated this year: The History Center received a Washington Hand Press from former San Diego Union-Tribune owner and local businessman and philanthropist “Papa” Doug Manchester. This press, which weighs approximately 2,500 pounds, is identical to the one brought to San Diego in 1851 by John Judson Ames to print the San Diego Herald, San Diego’s first newspaper. It is also identical to the press brought to Old Town San Diego from San Andreas, California, in 1868 by William Jeff Gatewood to publish The San Diego Union. The first edition was printed on October 1, 1868.
- Increased access to collections. Over 1,000 records were added to the online catalog, including 1,300 document files, 400 oral history interviews, and more than 200 serial (periodicals) collections. These records were previously unavailable to researchers and help provide additional perspectives from which to view our region’s collective past.
- Ensuring the collections are here tomorrow: 90 original, early oral histories previously archived on dictabelts (analog voice recordings) were transferred to a digital format, preserving for the future the voices and stories of some of the History Center’s earliest interviewees.
- Greater ability to engage with audiences: The History Center received a Community Enhancement Program grant, providing us the photographic equipment necessary to digitally document and process the Costume Collection among other items. This year they have added over 3,500 images to the public online Photo Gallery.
Thank You, Carol Myers, for 30 Years!

Carol Myers started working with the History Center on a grant project in 1985 that eventually transformed into a full-time job. As Photo Archivist, Carol’s extensive memory of San Diego history and the images in the SDHC collection have helped staff and researchers for three decades. Thorough, patient, and hardworking, Carol has a great dedication to the Photograph Collection and has worked continuously to care for it and make it accessible to all. She is a community treasure: helping patrons with research, cataloging images, processing photo orders, and so much more. From typewriters to computers, from the darkroom to digital, Carol has remained steadfast and loyal through 13 Executive Directors. **We celebrate and thank you, Carol!**