‘A Very Gentle Sternness’: Ain in the ’30s

SAH/SCC Tour & Talk, Los Angeles
Sunday, March 28, 2010, 1-4PM

Former SAH/SCC President Tony Denzer will be back in Los Angeles for a special tour of Gregory Ain’s residence for A. O. Beckman and of the Dunsmuir Flats project. Denzer, now professor of architecture at University of Wyoming, and author of Gregory Ain: The Modern Home as Social Commentary (Rizzoli, 2008), will speak on Ain’s inspirations, vision, and projects. Light refreshments and a book signing will follow the presentation at the Beckman house. A tour at Dunsmuir Flats will wrap up the afternoon.

Gregory Ain (1908-88) left Richard Neutra’s office in 1935 and designed several important structures as a young man. With strong influences from Neutra, Rudolph Schindler, and Frank Lloyd Wright, he was interested in “cubist” techniques and mathematical “games” to produce three-dimensional forms. Asymmetry, diagonal relationships, overlapping and interlocking elements, and spiral movement mark his finished works. Ain’s considerable contribution to Southern California modernism might be summed up by his own statement that he had found “a house could be quite playful, with a kind of starkness, a very gentle sternness, not at all like the Bauhaus sternness.”

The Beckman House (1938), designed for pharmacist A.O. Beckman, was more lavish than Ain’s other pre-war houses at 2,100 square feet (plus a two-car garage). At $9,250, it was one of his few residences to include a maid’s quarters. One story in front and two stories in back, the Beckman house reveals the influence of Schindler. It features a pinwheel-shaped plan to define multiple courtyards, including a “children’s garden.”

The unusual saw-tooth plan of the four-unit Dunsmuir Flats (1937), for client “Shy” Kaplan, gives each apartment a private garden and private entrance. Virtually every room in the complex receives daylight from three sides. Ain, himself, said of the Dunsmuir Flats, “I tell you in all modesty I think the plan of that was superb.”

‘A Very Gentle Sternness’: Ain in the ’30s: Sunday, March 28, 2010; 1-4PM; $30 for SAH/SCC members; $45 for nonmembers; registration—see order form on Page 8, call 800.972.4722, or go to www.sahscc.org.
SAH/SCC President’s Letter

One of the things that unites the members of SAH/SCC is appreciation for the remarkable built environment that defines Los Angeles. I venture to guess that almost all of us have found ourselves on a street somewhere in the city, marveling at a house or a commercial building we’ve somehow never seen before: a small craftsman bungalow; a Spanish Colonial duplex; a post-and-beam dentist’s office. We may not know the architect. In some cases, there may not have been one. But we recognize the aesthetic value of these buildings and their contribution to Los Angeles’ character.

Likewise, many members of SAH/SCC share a fascination with the untold stories that populate the nearly 500 square miles of Los Angeles. Southern California’s history is rich with stories of people and places that provide us with a greater sense of the city, as well as its role in the national context. The 1884 Harada House in Riverside tells the story of one Japanese-American family’s early-20th-century struggle for civil rights that led all the way to the California Supreme Court. The saga of Chavez Ravine reminds us both of the establishment of the first Jewish cemetery in Los Angeles in 1855, as well as the 1950s removal and relocation of an entire community for the erection of Dodger Stadium. Consider also the house of noted local ceramicist, Glen Lukens, or the little studio of an unknown animator named Walter Elias Disney.

Having covered thousands of miles in the backs of busses, vans, and cars with members of SAH/SCC, I know that many of you have a wealth of information about the people and places that make Los Angeles special. Whether it has been learned or lived, it is valuable information that should be passed along to future generations.

With this in mind, I encourage each of you to participate in My Historic LA. My Historic LA is part of the citywide Survey LA project being undertaken by the Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources. The goal is simple yet daunting: survey 880,000 parcels in the City of Los Angeles to identify our cultural resources. As part of this effort, the City is asking people to provide information about cultural resources that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Survey LA has already integrated the citations from our beloved Gebhard and Winter—An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles (Gibbs, Smith)—into the database. But we all know that it simply scratches the surface. Let’s rally the collective oral history and experience of SAH/SCC members to educate future generations. Participation is simple: Search online for “My Historic LA” or visit http://www.preservation.lacity.org/survey/identify and fill in the online form. This is your chance to increase awareness of Los Angeles’ history and architectural significance in a way that will empower generations of future historians and city planners.

Sian Winship

Winter Wins Tile Heritage Award

For his extraordinary contribution to the tile world, SAH/SCC Advisory Board and Life Member Dr. Robert Winter was presented with the Tile Heritage Award from the Tile Heritage Foundation. This honorary tribute is conferred by the Foundation’s board of directors. The award itself, an 8” x 8” custom tile produced especially for Winter by Steve Moon at the Tile Restoration Center in Seattle, commemorates the 100th anniversary of Ernest Batchelder’s house, where Winter has resided since the early 1970s. A detailed illustration of Batchelder’s bungalow by Marie Glasse Tapp and her daughter Delia Tapp, the founders of the Tile Restoration Center, was incised in clay from which the award tile was produced. Winter’s care of the Batchelder legacy and his willingness to share his knowledge and his residence with others embrace the spirit of Tile Heritage, which is dedicated to promoting an awareness and appreciation of ceramic surfaces.

Bob Winter receives the Tile Heritage Award. Photo: Alan Batchelder

Tile Heritage Award
Senior Campus Planner, architect, and SAH/SCC board member Dennis Whelan will lead an extensive walking tour of the University of California, Santa Barbara, campus. The 405-acre main campus setting on two miles of ocean bluff features spectacular views of the Channel Islands and the Santa Ynez Mountains.

The collection of notable architects who have designed buildings at UCSB includes William Pereira, Charles Luckman, A. Quincy Jones, Edward Killingsworth, Robert A.M. Stern, Michael Graves, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and Antoine Predock, among others. Also noteworthy: the concept of coordinated color, material, and Wrightian blocks; the accommodation of weather and views; the bicycle-friendly layout; and how planners and architects responded to (and shaped) student and faculty use.

The tour will focus on the collection of buildings as they are sited within the campus master plan. Some interiors may be included, depending upon access. Additionally, the tour includes a visit with Alex Hauschild, an archivist at the University Art Museum’s Architecture & Design Collection (ADC). ADC is a repository of more than 750,000 original drawings and records focusing on Southern California-based architects, such as Irving Gill, Rudolph Schindler, Kem Weber, and George Washington Smith, among many others.

You may choose to enhance your experience by staying overnight at the Faculty Club, designed by Charles Moore and William Turnbull in 1968. Space is very limited; reserve through the Club. http://www.faculty-club.ucsb.edu/

Designed for Learning/Living: Saturday, March 20, 2010; 10AM-3PM; $40 for SAH/SCC members; $60 for non-members; includes box lunch from noted Santa Barbara bistro Pierre Lafond; does not include transportation to UCSB or parking ($3); please bring comfortable walking shoes; registration—see order form on Page 8, call 800.972.4722, or go to www.sahscc.org.
SAH/SCC welcomes David Swan, editor of the new book *The Autobiography of Irving K. Pond* (Hyoogen Press, 2009) for a presentation of the life and work of this Chicago architect. The event will be held in the Board Room of the Westwood Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library (Ehrlich Architects, 2005).

Irving K. Pond and his brother Allen Pond practiced architecture in Chicago and were contemporaries of innovative local architects, such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Dwight Perkins, Myron Hunt, Marion Mahoney, Robert Spencer, Walter Burley Griffin, Adamo Boari, and Jules Guerin.

In addition to learning more about the contributions of these two architects, attendees will enjoy this visit to one of Los Angeles’ architecturally significant branch libraries. Designed by architect Steven Ehrlich, FAIA, in 2005, the Westwood Branch was conceived of as an “urban oasis for learning.” A thoughtfully designed urban infill project, the library building is worthy of a visit on its own.

This event is free to SAH/SCC members and the public. Reservations are not required. Up to 60 attendees will be accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis. Light refreshments will be served and a limited number of books will be available for purchase and signing by the author.

Authors on Architecture: Swan on Pond: Saturday, April 10, 2010; 2-3:30PM; Westwood Branch Library, 1246 Glendon Ave., LA; parking in library lot is free for the first 90 minutes with active LAPL library card validation, $1 per 30 minutes thereafter; metered street parking available; no reservations needed.

Westwood Branch Library by Ehrlich Architects. Photo: Tom Bonner
# Calendar of Events

## March 2010

### 1, Monday

### 2, Tuesday
**Keith Mitnick.** Lecture with Mitnick Roddier Hicks principal. Julius Shulman Institute (Rios Clementi Hale Studios 2008), Woodbury U, Burbank; 6:30PM. 818.252.5121. architecture.woodbury.edu.

### 4, Thursday

### 6, Saturday

### 10, Wednesday
**Driven by Dilemma.** Lecture with IDEA Office architects Russell Thomsen & Eric Kahn. SCI-Arc (Paige 2000), LA; 7PM. 213.613.2200. sciarc.edu.

### 13, Saturday
**Ain in the ’30s SAH/SCC Tour & Talk.** See Page 1 for details.

### 16, Saturday

### 18, Saturday
**Annenberg Community Beach House.** Lecture with SAH/SCC Treasurer & Frederick Fisher Partners project architect John Berley with SAH/SCC Life Member & Historic Resources Group managing principal Christy McAvoy. Santa Monica Conservancy; Memorial Park, SM; $10; res. req. 310.496.3146. smconservancy.org.

### 20, Monday
**The Art of Modernism.** Self-driven tour of private residences by architects Conrad Buff & Donald Hensman. Pasadena Heritage; 9AM-4PM; $32-40; res. req. 626.441.6333. pasadenaheritage.org.

### 26, Friday

### 28, Sunday
**The Art of Modernism.** Self-driven tour of private residences by architects Conrad Buff & Donald Hensman. Pasadena Heritage; 9AM-4PM; $32-40; res. req. 626.441.6333. pasadenaheritage.org.

### 30, Tuesday
**Locals Only: Griffin Enright.** Lecture with architect Margaret Griffin. Julius Shulman Institute (Rios Clementi Hale Studios 2008), Woodbury U, Burbank; 6:30PM. 818.252.5121. architecture.woodbury.edu.

## SAH/SCC Event

### 28, Sunday
**Ain in the ’30s SAH/SCC Tour & Talk.** See Page 1 for details.

---

*Calendar information is supplied to SAH/SCC by sponsoring organizations and is correct as of press time. SAH/SCC suggests you contact sponsors prior to attending any event.*
31, Wednesday
*Matter as the Substance of Everything That Exists*. Lecture with artist, theoretician, architect Gail Peter Borden. USC, Harris Hall (Flewelling 1939), LA; 6PM. 213.740.2723. arch.usc.edu.

31, Wednesday

April 1

2, Friday

5, Monday

6, Tuesday

7, Wednesday
*Recent Work*. Lecture with landscape architect Adriaan Geuze. USC, Harris Hall (Flewelling 1939), LA; 6PM. 213.740.2723. arch.usc.edu.

9, Friday

11, Sunday
*LA Heritage Day*. Festival featuring greater LA’s cultural institutions & resources. LA Heritage Alliance; Heritage Square Museum, 3800 Homer St., LA; 323.225.2700. heritagesquare.org.

11, Sunday
*Ugly & Ordinary?* Symposium with professor Edward Dimendberg, architect Jeffery Inaba, & professor Cécile Whiting.

22, Thursday

24, Saturday

26, Monday

28, Wednesday
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters of Modernism: 8-Page, two-color brochure featuring works of Richard Neutra and Frank Lloyd Wright in Bakersfield.</td>
<td>$5 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Tay, Architect: 4&quot; x 8&quot; color brochure featuring five modern ranch-style homes in Long Beach</td>
<td>$3 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture: Inside and Outside: 5&quot;x5&quot; folded color brochure featuring Santa Barbara's Lotusland, Casa del Herrero, and Val Verde</td>
<td>$3 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of the Shadow: 24-page, two-color brochure from Phoenix travel tour featuring the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Al Beadle, Blaine Drake, Paolo Soleri, Edward B. Sawyer, Bennie Gonzales, and Will Bruder</td>
<td>$12 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Block in Glendale: pocket-size fandeck of cards featuring five diverse properties—including a Paul Williams residence—plus historical background information on the Brockmont Heights subdivision</td>
<td>$3 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodney Walker 30 90: 12-page brochure featuring nine homes on five sites, as well as the architect's use of the three-foot module</td>
<td>$8 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space and Learning: eight-page, four-color brochure on the historical and contemporary legacy of LA school architecture, featuring projects by Richard Neutra, Thom Mayne, Rios Clementi Hale Studios, and others</td>
<td>$8 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodney Walker: The Ojai Years: tri-fold, black-and-white brochure featuring Walker's important residences in Ojai, with pictures and article by historian David Mason</td>
<td>$5 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kesling Homes: bi-fold, two-color brochure from the “Kesling Modern Structures” tour</td>
<td>$2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check enclosed (Make checks payable to SAH/SCC)  [ ]

Charge my credit card:  [ ] VISA  [ ] MC

Street
City
State  Zip
Daytime phone  Evening phone

Send to: SAH/SCC, P.O. Box 56478, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Card Number  Expiration Date
Signature

E-mail Address* (PLEASE PRINT)

*SAH/SCC PRIVACY POLICY: SAH/SCC never sells, rents, or shares your mailing or email address. Electronic communications enable us to operate economically and efficiently.
SAH/ORDER FORM

JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!
SAH/SCC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing its members with opportunities to learn about and experience the rich architectural heritage of Southern California and beyond. Our volunteer board members create tours, lectures, travel tours, and other events that explore the ideas behind the architecture as well as the buildings that result from them. From modern to craftsman, from Spanish Colonial to contemporary, our programs are the best-kept secrets in Southern California!

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- Advance notice of all SAH/SCC events—important because they usually sell out just to members
- 20-30% discounts on tour and event ticket prices
- Bi-monthly E-news with printable newsletter and calendar
- FREE tickets to our annual Members’ Celebration event
- Special Members-Only E-Alerts about upcoming events
- A tax deduction for your membership dues
- The knowledge that you are supporting our mission to increase public awareness of Southern California’s architectural heritage

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS THAT FIT YOUR NEEDS!

Fill out the order form below or join online at www.sahscc.org.

$45 Individual - All the membership benefits above for a single individual.

$65 Dual - All the membership benefits for two names at the same address.

$125 Patron - All the membership benefits above, plus priority reservation at our popular and exclusive “Patrons Only” programs, such as “Modern Patrons” and “Contemporary Patrons.” Includes two names at the same address.

$650 Life - A one-time donation that ensures your membership in perpetuity without the expense and inconvenience of annual renewal. Also includes priority reservation at our popular and exclusive “Patrons Only” programs.

$500 Corporate Sponsorship - Annual donation receives Sponsorship listing in the SAH/SCC Website and on SAH/SCC event publications and hyperlink from our Website to yours.

$30 Student (requires scan of valid Student ID) - All the benefits of Individual membership at a 30% discount.

SAH/SCC EVENT TICKETS

Ain in the ’30s—March 28th

_____ Member ticket(s) at $30 each = $_______

_____ Non-member ticket(s) at $45 each = $_______

UCSB Tour—March 20th

_____ Member ticket(s) at $40 = $_______

_____ Non-member ticket(s) at $60 each = $_______

SAH/SCC MEMBERSHIP

_____ Individual membership at $45 each = $_______

_____ Dual membership at $65 each (two names at same address) = $_______

_____ Patron membership at $125 each (two names at same address) = $_______

_____ Life membership at $650 each = $_______

_____ Corporate membership at $500 each = $_______

_____ Student membership at $30 each = $_______

Total Membership = $_______

☐ check enclosed (Make checks payable to SAH/SCC)
☐ charge my credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MC

Card Number Expiration Date

Signature

Name

E-mail Address* (PLEASE PRINT)

Street

City

State Zip

Daytime phone Evening phone

Send to: SAH/SCC, P.O. Box 56478, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

All event ticket sales are final.

We are sorry, refunds cannot be accommodated.

*SAH/SCC PRIVACY POLICY: The SAH/SCC never sells, rents, or shares your mailing or email address. Electronic communications enable us to operate economically and efficiently.