



IN THIS ISSUE

A Journey With GPS	1
President's Letter	2
Modern Patrons	3
Lautner Screening	4
May/June Events	5
SAH/SCC Publications for Sale	7

A Journey With GPS—General Panel System

SAH/SCC Tour & Talk: Laguna Beach
Saturday, June 12, 2010, 2-4PM

Join SAH/SCC for an afternoon of discovery at a formerly unknown General Panel System home. SAH/SCC News Editor Julie D. Taylor will moderate a discussion with homeowner David Schroeder and architectural historian Jeffrey Head, as they tell the story of uncovering the home's provenance and discuss LA-based pre-fab pioneers.

Having purchased the Laguna Beach house in 1978, Schroeder was the seventh owner, and he knew nothing of the home's background. Upon reading Head's 2009 *Los Angeles Times* article (<http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jun/13/home/hm-panel13>) on a General Panel System pre-fab remodel, he recognized that his home must be within the GPS family.

The Burbank-based General Panel Corporation was launched in 1947 by architects Walter Gropius and Konrad Wachsmann, and lasted until its bankruptcy in 1952. The Schroeder House is known as Type B3—The Town & Country, and was designed by architect Josef Van der Kar.

From Head's article: "[The] system cut cost and construction time because it was based on standardized panels, each about 3 feet, 4 inches wide and 8 feet, 4 inches tall. The panels were built on a wood frame and covered with quarter-inch waterproof Douglas fir plywood on both sides. This basic building unit formed the walls, the floor, the ceiling and the roof. Other panels were fitted with doors and windows.

"At the core of the design were three built-in metal 'wedge connectors,' a sort of Chinese puzzle that locked the panels together. A hammer tightened the wedge; no nails or screws were needed.

"The connector was a precisely engineered technological solution, one that Wachsmann patented. The design opened up endless variations. Rooms could be made practically any size, in multiples of 3 foot 4. 'General Panel has standardized not the house, but its elements,' Wachsmann would declare in company documents."

A Journey With GPS: Saturday, June 12, 2010; 2-4PM; \$35 for SAH/SCC Members; \$79 for non-members (includes one-year SAH/SCC membership); reservations required; space is limited; registration—see order form on Page 8, call 800.972.4722, or go to www.sahscc.org.



Photos: courtesy David Schroeder

SAH/SCC President's Letter

Scholars, historians, and stewards are increasingly interested in the contributions of historic landscape to the built environment. I recently had the opportunity to hear a presentation by Charles Birnbaum, the leader of this movement. His Cultural Landscape Foundation is working to increase national awareness of these resources and educate people about their value.

As Southern Californians, we have long understood and enjoyed the interplay of building and landscape. From Spanish Colonial courtyards and arcades to modern floor-to-ceiling glass and sliding doors, California's climate has inspired architects and landscape architects to create spaces that push traditional boundaries of the building, transitional space, and nature.

Although it is not often articulated, for Californians, the negative space in our built environment is as important to the spatial experience as the building itself.

Several recent SAH/SCC events have celebrated this on a subtle level. SAH/SCC Executive Board Member Dennis Whelan's tour of UCSB challenged us to think about the spaces *between* the buildings as a vital component of the campus design. Past SAH/SCC President Merry Ovnick's tour celebrating the work of Gregory Ain (with guest speaker and Past SAH/SCC President Tony Denzer) took us to Ain's Dunsmuir Apartments. Here we saw how the harmonious relationship of building and landscape can enhance the quality of life for people of modest means.

Landscape, as part of a philosophy of total design, will be explored further this month with our Modern Patrons program at the King Residence (1979) by Buff & Hensman (see Page 3 for more details). Under the direction of architect Don Hensman, a landscape was created that not only connects interior and exterior spaces to enhance the experience within the house, but also takes maximum advantage of the natural and man-made environmental elements of the property to sculpt a variety of spaces to experience nature. The arroyo, the Highway 134 overpass, and WPA-built walls on the site are incorporated as elements of the total design.

Southern California is home to the work of not only master architects, but master landscape architects as well: Lockwood de Forest, Kate Sessions, Garrett Eckbo, Isamu Noguchi, and many more. We have much yet to discover. Southern California can make a significant contribution to this national dialogue.

Sian Winship

Vision Quest



SAH/SCC Executive Board Members chat with Freida Lee Mock, director of "Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision," after a screening at the Glendale Public Library. Left to right: Arline Chambers, administration; Sian Winship, president; Mock; Jay Platt, member-at-large; Marisa Kurtzman, member-at-large; John Berley, treasurer. (Photo: Chuck Wike, Glendale Public Library)



SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Tour and Event Information:

1.800.972.4722;

info@sahscc.org

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Editor: Julie D. Taylor, Hon. AIA/LA

Internet Editor: Brent Eckerman

Art Director: Svetlana Petrovic

Administration: Arline Chambers

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Julie D. Taylor, Editor

SAH/SCC News P.O. Box 56478

Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Newsletter telephone: 310.247.1099

Newsletter fax: 310.247.8147

Newsletter e-mail: julie@taylor-pr.com

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Modern Patrons: Buff & Hensman in Pasadena

SAH/SCC Tour & Talk: Pasadena
Saturday, May 8, 2010, 10AM-12PM

SAH/SCC is offering another signature event in our Modern Patrons program with a very special opportunity to visit the Buff & Hensman King Residence in Pasadena.

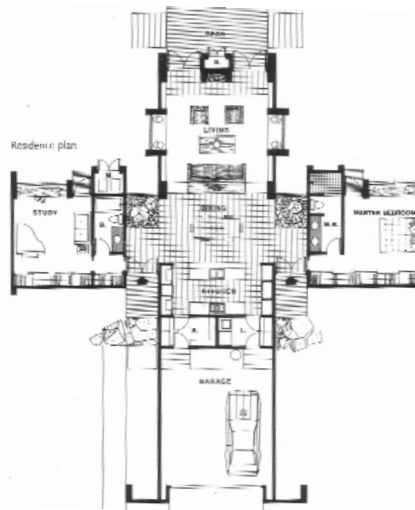
Built in 1979, the King Residence is a superb example of Buff & Hensman's melding of architecture and landscape in a most unusual setting in the Arroyo, beneath the monumental Highway 134 overcrossing.

This will be a rare opportunity to enjoy the house and surrounding gardens and also learn firsthand from the owners who hired the architects to create a place of serenity and refuge in a spectacular setting. In the monograph *Buff & Hensman* (USC Guild Press/Balcony Press, 2004), on his partnership with Conrad Buff III, author Don Hensman recalls the King Residence as "a deceptively straightforward floor plan (that) is balanced without being superfluous. Neutral stucco walls complement the natural wood trim of the sunken living room. In fact, the home feels more like sculpture than structure. We designed the artscape and landscaping to connect three structures, blending them into the natural surroundings." Executed in three phases, the undertaking led to a close friendship among the homeowners and architects.

Make your plans to join us for another truly remarkable example of our region's extensive architectural heritage.

Modern Patrons: Buff & Hensman in Pasadena: Saturday, May 8, 2010; 10AM-12PM; \$10 each for Patron and Life Members; reservations required; space is limited; tickets will be made available to general membership should the opportunity arise, on a first-come first-served basis; registration—see order form on Page 8, call 800.972.4722, or go to www.sahscc.org.

Photo: Anthony Peres



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continues

The Spirit in Architecture

SAH/SCC Film & Talk: Downtown LA

Saturday, July 31, 2010, 2PM

Mark your calendar for a special screening of "The Spirit in Architecture: John Lautner." The film journeys into Lautner's world with footage from his apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, extensive documentation of his extraordinary buildings, interviews with historians, critics, collaborators, and clients, and engaging footage of Lautner himself. Following the screening we'll have a panel discussion with award-winning filmmaker Bette Jane Cohen; architect and film co-writer Tom Marble; co-producer Evelyn Wendell; author, historian, and architect Alan Hess; and Lautner scholar Jon Yoder.

The Spirit in Architecture: Saturday, July 31, 2010; 2PM; Southern California Institute of Architecture (Gary Paige, 2000), 960 E. 3rd St., LA; \$15 for SAH/SCC Members; \$30 for non-members; free for SCI-Arc students and alumni.



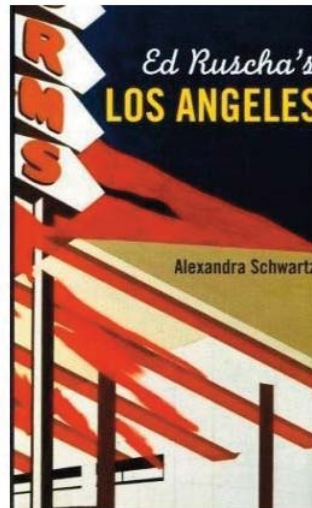
Photo: courtesy Bette Jane Cohen

BOOKMARKS

Ed Ruscha's Los Angeles

by Alexandra Schwartz

Almost no other artist has so enjoyed and captured the ephemeral and truly "pop" vibe of Los Angeles as Ed Ruscha. Although I expected this stout volume to be chock-a-block with bright color images, it is instead a scholarly examination of Ruscha's work—paintings, drawings, prints, photos, films, books—within the historical, social, artistic, and political context of LA in the 1960s and '70s. Of note is the "Learning From Ed Ruscha" chapter, which focuses on his books, particularly those that look at LA's built environment: *Some Los Angeles Apartments*, *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (copied and acknowledged by Venturi, Scott-Brown, and Izenour in *Learning From Las Vegas*), and *Thirtyfour Parking Lots in Los Angeles*, among others. They combine obsession, observation, tautology, and irony—and command a following among architects. Said Ruscha in 1972: "Architects write me about the parking lots book because they are interested in seeing parking lot patterns and things like that. But those patterns and their abstract design quality mean nothing to me. I'll tell you what is more interesting: the oil droppings on the ground." The author astutely notes: "Although here the artist denies sharing architects' concern with Los Angeles' urban fabric, the detail with which he documented the parking lots testifies to his fascination with the city and its ever-shifting infrastructure." For an in-depth analysis of this artist's view of our city, pick up this book (replete with black-and-white images).—Julie D. Taylor



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Kristi Yuzuki & Thomas LaGraff

New Student Member

Heather Goers

1, Saturday

May Day at Marston House. Historic house & garden tours. Save Our Heritage Organisation; Marston House (Hebbard & Gill 1905), 3525 7th Ave., SD; 10AM-5PM; \$3-25. 619.297.9327. sohosandiego.org.

1, Saturday

In Conversation: Frances Anderton & Frederick Fisher. Program with "DnA: Design & Architecture" host Anderton & architect Fisher in conjunction with his "Thinking by Hand" exhibit. Edward Cella Art + Architecture, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., LA; 1-3PM; res. req. 323.525.0053. edwardcella.com.

1, Saturday

Lloyd Wright: Architect of Sunshine & Shadow. Lecture with architectural historian Dana Hutt. Art Center (Ellwood 1977), 1700 Lido St., Pasadena; 7:30PM. 626.793.3334. artcenter.edu.

1, 8, 15, 22, Saturday

John Lautner. Gallery talk on "Between Earth & Heaven" exhibit. Palm Springs Art Museum (Williams 1976), 101 Museum Dr.; 1PM. 760.322.4800. psmuseum.org.

1, 8, 15, 22, 29, Saturday

Hollywood Boulevard. Walking tour with historic preservationist. Hollywood Heritage; 9AM-12:30PM; \$5-10; res. req. 323.465.6716. hollywoodheritage.org.

2, Sunday

Looking at Julia Morgan. Tour of architect's early homes in Berkeley. Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association; 1-5PM; \$30-40; res. req. 510.841.2242. berkeleyheritage.com.

3, Monday

Chamber Music in Historic Sites. Concerto Koln at the Park Plaza Hotel (Curlett & Beelman 1925). Da Camera Society; LA; talk-7:30PM, concert-8PM; \$44-49; res. req. 213.477.2952. dacamera.org.

3-4, Monday-Tuesday

Identification & Evaluation of Mid-20th-Century Buildings. Seminar with architectural historians James C. Massey & Shirley Maxwell. National Preservation Institute; LA; \$250-500; res. req. 703.765.0100. npi.org.

4, Tuesday

Ideas From the Classical Chinese Gardens of Suzhou. Lecture with landscape designer Daxin Liu. Huntington Library (Hunt & Grey 1910), San Marino; 7:30PM. 626.405.2100. huntington.org.

5, Wednesday

Doing It Right: 21st-Century Style. Talk with furniture designer Dakota Jackson. Pacific Design Center (Pelli 1975), 8687 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; 11AM. 310.657.0800. pacificdesigncenter.com.

8, Saturday

Lloyd Wright Home Tour. Self-guided tour of Sowden (1926), Gainsberg (1946), Derby (1926) houses. FoGH; LA, Glendale, La Canada-Flintridge; 10-AM-4PM; \$35-45. 626.793.3334. gamblehouse.org.

8, Saturday

Open Doors. Home & garden self-guided tour of Huntington Beach homes. Huntington Beach Educational Foundation; Huntington Beach Art Center; 10AM-4PM; \$50; res. req. 714.863.7752. hbef4kids.org.

8, Saturday

Hancock Park Open Day. Tour of six private gardens, including Allumbaugh Gardens (Hanson) at Getty House (Meyer & Holler 1921). The Garden Conservancy; 10AM-4PM; \$5 per garden. 888.842.2442. opendaysprogram.org.

8, Saturday

Restore, Refresh, Renew: New Desert Projects. Modernism discussion with Annenberg Foundation Trust director Janice Lyle & Palm Springs Art Museum curator Sidney Williams. Edward Cella Art + Architecture, 6018 Wilshire Blvd., LA; 4-6PM; res. req. 323.525.0053. edwardcella.com.

9, Sunday

Chamber Music in Historic Sites. Calefax Reed Quintet at the Munger-English Estate (Johnson 1919; Lenkin 2008). Da Camera Society; Pasadena; 2 & 4PM; \$92; res. req. 213.477.2952. dacamera.org.

10, Monday

On the Cusp. Lecture with architect Greg Lynn & film director Joe Kosinski. UCLA Architecture, LA; 6:30PM. 310.267.4704. aud.ucla.edu.

12, Wednesday

Marketing for Emerging Professionals. Business panel with architects Stephen Olson, John Frane, marketer Sherry Hoffman, and PR professional Julie D. Taylor. AIA/LA; DSI Entertainment Systems, 653 N. Robertson Blvd., WH; res. req. 213.639.0777. aialosangeles.org.

12, Wednesday

Orange Preserves Meeting. Talk with preservation consultant Robert Imboden at Chapman Chapel (1906). Old Towne Preservation Association; Maple & Grand Sts., Orange; 7-8:30PM. 714.639.6840. otpa.org.

12-15, Wednesday-Saturday

The Sierra Nevada: Preserving a Sense of Place. California Preservation Foundation annual conference. CPF; Miners Foundry, Nevada City; \$225-295; res. req. 415.495.0349. californiapreservation.org.

13, Thursday

Los Angeles: A Pictorial Celebration. Discussion with documentary filmmakers and authors Jon and Nancy Wilkman. Architecture & Beyond; Los Feliz Library (Phelps 2003), 1874 Hillhurst Ave.; 6:45-7:45PM. 323.913.4710. lapl.org.

15, Saturday

Marin Living: Home Tours. Tours of modern homes. AIA San Francisco; 10AM-4PM; \$55-65; res. req. 415.362.7397. aiasf.org.

SAH/SCC EVENT**8, Saturday****Modern Patrons**

Buff & Hensman in Pasadena. See Page 3 for details.



Photo: Anthony Peres

15, Saturday

A Walk in the Wood Streets. Tour of six vintage homes. Old Riverside Foundation; 10AM-5PM; \$15-18. 951.509.7682. oldriverside.org.

15, Saturday

LA Noir: The Struggle for the Soul of America's Most Seductive City. Lecture with historian John Buntin on Mayor Frank L. Shaw (1933-38). LA City Historical Society; LA Central Library (Goodhue & Winslow 1926), 630 W. 5th St.; 2PM. 323.936.2912. lacityhistory.org.

15, Friday

Doheny Soiree. Aviv String Quartet at the Doheny Mansion (Hunt & Eisen 1899). Da Camera Society; LA; talk-7:45PM, concert-8PM; \$66-88; res. req. 213.477.2952. dacamera.org.

17, Monday

On the Cusp. Lecture with Urban Think Tank directors Alfredo Brillembourg & Hubert Klumpner. UCLA Architecture, LA; 6:30PM. 310.267.4704. aud.ucla.edu.

20, Thursday

Live + Work. Talk & book signing with Shubin + Donaldson Architects. Chaucer's Books, 3321 State St., Santa Barbara; 7-9PM. 805.682.6787. chaucersbooks.com.

22, Saturday

Taste & Space. West Hollywood Structures + Style benefit tour of eight area restaurants with reception at Sierra Bonita Housing (Tighe 2010). West Hollywood Community Housing Corp.; 11AM-5PM; \$90-100; res. req. 323.650.8771. whchc.org.

22, Saturday

Uncovering History in Pasadena's Busch Gardens. Lecture and tour of first Busch Gardens (1905) with researcher Michael Logan. Pasadena Heritage; lecture-10AM, tours-11:30AM-4PM; res. req. 626.441.6333. pasadenaheritage.org.

24, Monday

On the Cusp. Lecture with Tokyo architect Sou Fujimoto. UCLA Architecture, LA; 6:30PM. 310.267.4704. aud.ucla.edu.

26, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" (1967) at Los Angeles Theatre (Lee 1931). LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

June

2, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "Strangers on a Train" (1951) at Million Dollar Theatre (Martin 1918). LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

4, Friday

Immuring. Exhibition discussion with architects David Erdman, Clover Lee & SCI-Arc director Eric Owen Moss. SCI-Arc (Paige 2000), LA; 7PM. 213.613.2200. sciarc.edu.

5, 12, 19, 26, Saturday

Hollywood Boulevard. Walking tour with historic preservationist. Hollywood Heritage; 9AM-12:30PM; \$5-10; res. req. 323.465.6716. hollywoodheritage.org.

5, 12, 19, 26, Saturday

Neon Cruise. Nighttime bus tour of neon signs in downtown LA & Hollywood. Museum of Neon Art, 136 W. 4th St.; 7:30-11PM; \$45-55; res. req. 213.489.9918. neonmona.org.

9, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "American Graffiti" (1973) at Orpheum Theatre (Lansburgh 1926). LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

16, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "The Graduate" (1967) at Los Angeles Theatre (Lee 1931). LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

17, Thursday

Ansel Adams' Los Angeles. Discussion with photographer and Los Feliz expert Richard Stanley. Architecture & Beyond; Los Feliz Library (Phelps 2003), 1874 Hillhurst Ave.; 6:45-7:45PM. 323.913.4710. lapl.org.

23, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "Flor Silvestre (Wild Flower)" (1943) at Million Dollar Theatre (Martin 1918). Latin American Cinemateca

of LA & LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

25, Friday

Hiroshige: Master of the Printed Landscape. Lecture with author & curator Meher McArthur. Norton Simon Museum (Ladd & Kelsey 1969), 411 W. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; 7-8PM. 626.449.6840. nortonsimon.org.

24-26, Thursday-Saturday

Mobius LA. Design conference on business, practice, and art of architecture. AIA LA; LA Convention Center (Luckman 1972; Pei 1980; Gruen 1993); res. req. 213.639.0777. aialosangeles.org.

25-27, Friday-Sunday

Dwell on Design. Three days of trade-show floor, programs, and tours. Dwell Magazine; LA Convention Center (Luckman 1972; Pei 1980; Gruen 1993). 415.373.5100. dwellondesign.com.

27, Sunday

Conversations With Artists. Artist John Baldessari speaks with LACMA curator Leslie Jones in conjunction with his "Pure Beauty" exhibit. LACMA (Pereira 1964; Pfeiffer 1983), 5905 Wilshire Blvd., LA; 2PM. 323.857.6528. lacma.org.

30, Wednesday

Last Remaining Seats. "Peter Pan" (1924) at Orpheum Theatre (Lansburgh 1926). LA Conservancy; 8PM; \$16-20; res. req. 213.623.2489. laconservancy.org.

SAH/SCC EVENT

12, Saturday

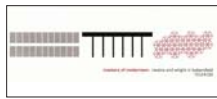
A Journey With GPS

General Panel System house in Laguna Beach. See Page 1 for details.



Photo: courtesy David Schroeder

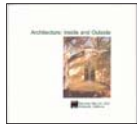
SAH/SCC PUBLICATIONS



_____ at \$5 each
Masters of Modernism: 8-Page, two-color brochure featuring works of Richard Neutra and Frank Lloyd Wright in Bakersfield.



_____ at \$3 each
Paul Tay, Architect: 4"x 8" color brochure featuring five modern ranch-style homes in Long Beach



_____ at \$3 each
Architecture: Inside and Outside: 5"x5" folded color brochure featuring Santa Barbara's Lotusland, Casa del Herrero, and Val Verde



_____ at \$12 each
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



_____ at \$3 each
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



_____ at \$8 each
Rodney Walker 3 30 90: 12-page brochure featuring nine homes on five sites, as well as the architect's use of the three-foot module



_____ at \$8 each
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



_____ at \$5 each
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



_____ at \$2 each
Kesling Homes: bi-fold, two-color brochure from the "Kesling Modern Structures" tour



_____ at \$10 each
The Historic and Modern Spirit of Ventura: 20-page guide from Ventura tour



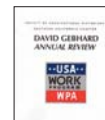
_____ at \$10 each
Modernism for the Masses: tri-fold brochure with inserts of detailed floor plans of Eichler homes visited on the Orange County tour



_____ at \$10 each
Reconsidering Lloyd Wright: 21-page, four-color booklet from "Reconsidering Lloyd Wright" house tour



_____ at \$2 each
Union Station and MTA Transit Center: bi-fold map for a self-guided walking tour including historical facts and photos



_____ at \$5 each
David Gebhard Review: essays on the Works Project Administration by Robert W. Winter, Orville O. Clarke, Jr., and Mitzi March Mogul

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JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!

SAH/SCC is a 501c 3 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

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

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Modern Patrons—May 8th

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All event ticket sales are final.

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