



SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2014

The North Park Historical Society (NPHS) did not hold a meeting in December, but the following summary is provided to document our highly successful year. Many thanks to all who contributed with their time, talent, memberships and donations! The primary purpose of NPHS as stated in our Bylaws is "to conduct research and educational outreach in order to facilitate preservation of North Park's cultural and architectural history." The accomplishments of NPHS in 2014 grouped by the seven objectives stated in our Bylaws under the primary purpose are summarized below.

Objective 1. To market and distribute printed and digital publications consistent with our purpose (e.g., *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946*, our book on the history of North Park's first 50 years).

- Submitted final text and photos for the *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* book to Arcadia Publishing Company six weeks early. The book was published on September 8. It is available for retail sale at SOHO, San Diego History Center, and multiple stores including Pigment, Kaleidoscope, Paras Newsstand, North Park Hardware, and The Grove. NPHS sold 73 books to our members and friends in 2014.
- Held two Arcadia book launch events: a PowerPoint presentation and book signing at the San Diego History Center on September 23, and a PowerPoint presentation and sales event with University Heights Historical Society on October 16.
- Printed 200 more of our "original" history book: *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946* by Donald Covington, which is published and distributed by NPHS. We sold a total of 128 books in 2014, including to the San Diego History Center, Amazon, North Park Main Street, local retailers, and individuals.
- In October, added Paras Newsstand as a retail outlet for the "original" history book (including both perfect-bound and spiral-bound versions). In just three months, Paras Newsstand has sold 30 books, which is more than other local retailers sell in one year.
- Added the ability for credit card purchases through Square.

Objective 2. To coordinate with other organizations on public historical education and preservation efforts, including designation of historical districts and/or structures.

- Received a SOHO People in Preservation (PIP) Award for successful designation of the water tower and surrounding water supply facilities on the National Register of Historic Places in 2013, sharing the award with University Heights Historical Society, McKinley Elementary School, and historian Alexander Bevil, who prepared the historical designation application.
- Obtained a pro-bono ground-level assessment of the condition of the water tower from V&A Consulting Engineers. The technical memo concluded the tower should be re-coated in about 10 years, and estimated such a project would cost up to \$2 million partly due to the need to remove all existing layers of coatings and for a lead abatement program as there is lead in the existing coating.
- At SOHO's request, NPHS was their partner for the SOHO Annual Historic Home Tour Weekend in June 2014. We helped them identify homes to be open to the public, provided informational materials, and conducted multiple walking tours.

Objective 3. To develop and conduct walking tours relating educational information about the history of various areas in North Park.

- Developed the Hamilton Streetcar Suburb tour. The tour and guidebook were developed by George Franck with extensive design assistance by Valerie Hayken Photography & Design, and Sande Lollis Elements of Design, and with additional photography by Immedia Christian Michaels.
- Conducted more than 20 walking tours in five different areas attended by more than 400 people. Principal tour leaders were George Franck, Michael Thornhill, Steve Hon, Katherine Hon, Don Taylor, and Steve Fobes. Hilda Yoder and Maura Donnelly have trained to be guides and helped

on tours. Other helpers included Jody Surowiec, Sharon Turner, Paul Spears, Pat Taylor, Robert Drake, Ed Orozco, Bob Bauer, Randy Sappenfield, Linda Canada, Melanie Gilbert, Claudia Watts, Yolanda Campbell, Tera Vessels, Charles Sykes, Juliet Sykes, Dave Abrams and Joyce Abrams. Tours included:

- Nine walking tours (three each at Hamilton Streetcar Suburb, Morley Field, and Dryden Historic District) as part of the SOHO Annual Historic Home Tour Weekend on June 7.
- Two walking tours of the Dryden Historic District for Archtoberfest in partnership with SOHO on October 11.
- Multiple walking tours of Burlingame Historic District (April), Morley Field (July), and the Dryden Historic District (December) for the San Diego Community College Continuing Education Emeritus Program's "Rediscovering San Diego" class.
- A commercial walking tour in partnership with the San Diego History Center focused on scenes in the Arcadia *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* book on October 4.
- A commercial walking tour in partnership with North Park Main Street that included stops at four businesses to sample their products/food and meet the owners on November 15.

Objective 4. To research and write objective articles about the history of North Park's people, landmarks, architecture, homes, commercial buildings, tracts, and other topics for publications.

- Received the following press about our events and projects:
 - A photo of the group receiving the "Towering Achievement" PIP Award was published on the front page of the *North Park News* (June 2014 issue).
 - An article about the NPHS Car Show was published in *Uptown News* (Aug. 29-Sept. 11, 2014 issue).
 - An article about the Arcadia *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* book was published on the first page of *Uptown News* (Sept. 26-Oct. 9, 2014 issue).
 - Two articles written by Katherine Hon for NPHS were published in *Uptown News*: one on the water tower (Nov. 21-Dec. 4, 2014 issue) and one on NPHS walking tours (Dec. 19, 2014-Jan. 1, 2015 issue).

Objective 5. To make and sponsor presentations of information useful to helping the public understand the origin and significance of historical resources in the community, including buildings, landmarks, and other structures.

- Displayed at the San Diego History Center's inaugural "Memories of Our Community" event on January 14.
- Displayed at North Park Festival of the Arts and Old House Fair.
- Held 5th Annual Car Show hosted by Balboa Tennis Club.
- Marched in Toyland Parade with Victor Flake as the beloved Water Tower, re-created in 2013 by the Old Globe Theatre prop department as a gift to NPHS.
- Sent a letter and supplemental photographic inventory prepared by Paul Spears documenting the single- and multi-family homes in the residential Wightman Street area to the North Park Planning Committee and City staff to oppose rezoning. As a result, City staff concluded "It's likely that the implementation of a Commercial-Residential Transition zone within this area could disrupt the established, predominant residential character..." and "Planning Staff will not be pursuing the idea of a Commercial-Residential Transition zone along this portion of Wightman Street."

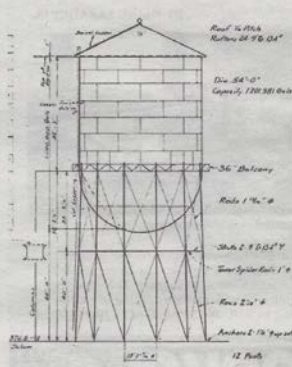
Objective 6. To organize, convert to digital format (when possible) and provide the following materials for research and other purposes: documents, slides, data, notes, photos, and various ephemera and records related to history donated to the North Park Historical Society, and to establish a North Park collection for eventual donation to the San Diego Historical Society for preservation.

- As part of preparing the Arcadia *Images of America: San Diego's North Park* book, obtained digital files of more than 100 photos from individuals.

Objective 7. To conduct outreach to schools regarding North Park history consistent with our purpose.

- Presented the PowerPoint "North Park Now and Then" at the Jefferson Elementary School centennial celebration on May 28.
- Nominated McKinley Elementary School and its 5th grade students in the SOHO PIP Award for the water tower to recognize their active support. Students prepared a poster and illustrated essays that were included in the historical designation application.

North Park's 'Water Tower'



A rendering of the historic "North Park Water Tower" (Courtesy North Park Historical Society)

By Katherine Hon
North Park Historical Society

The North Park Historical Society has a big project ahead. The elevated water storage tank known locally as the "North Park Water Tower" looms large over the heart of San Diego's earliest streetcar suburbs. At 127 feet tall, the 1.2-million-gallon tank can be seen for miles around. The tank was constructed in 1924 to provide better water pressure to the quickly growing area surrounding it. The structure is the only known example of a full hemispherical bottom, elevated riveted steel plate water storage tank supported by a dozen Z-laced girder steel legs in Southern California, if not the entire western United States. (Most such elevated tanks are set on only four legs and are considerably smaller.) It was reputed to be the "largest elevated tank in the world" in 1924. Now, this beloved community icon needs some help if it is to celebrate its 100th birthday.

Through efforts supported by the North Park Historical Society, the elevated tank was added to the National Register of Historic Places on June 25, 2013 as part of the University Heights Water Storage and Pumping Station Historic District. It is owned by the city of San Diego and sits in the center of a still-active city water supply facility complex. The existing soccer fields between El Cajon Boulevard and Howard Avenue at Oregon Street are the top of an active water supply reservoir. However, the elevated tank has been empty

since the 1990s when more stringent seismic criteria that took into account the dynamics of sloshing water were implemented. Unfortunately, this means that water bill revenue cannot be dedicated to its maintenance.

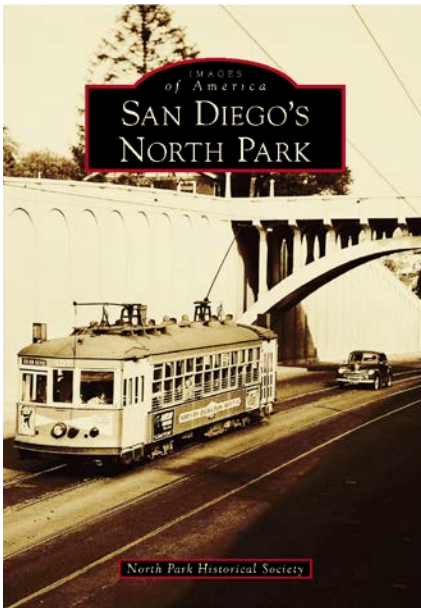
In July 2014, V&A Consulting Engineers, a local consulting firm specializing in evaluating the condition of public facilities, provided an initial assessment of the elevated tank from the ground at no cost as a contribution to the community. The assessment focused on the condition of the existing coating which was applied most recently in 1983, is in relatively good condition. It is recommended that the elevated tank be re-coated in about 10 years. The bad news is that the existing coating should be removed before a new coating is applied, because the existing layers are now too thick to hold an additional layer. More bad news is that a lead abatement and containment plan would have to be implemented for the removal process because there is lead in the existing coating materials on the elevated tank.

This would be a major engineering and construction effort estimated to cost around \$1.7 million. It may take some time to establish the funding necessary, and this is a project that will have to be managed by the city. The North Park Historical Society is interested in working with stakeholders throughout the community and the state to help raise funds for a full assessment of the entire structure, a new coating, and an appropriately located educational monument to document the significance of the "North Park Water Tower" in San Diego's history.

For more information, contact Katherine Hon at info@northparkhistory.org or visit us on the web at northparkhistory.org.

Interested in writing a regular column for your community organization? Contact editor Hutton Marshall at hutton@sdccn.com

A Pictorial Summary of 2014



SOHO PRESENTS THE ANNUAL
Historic Home Tour Weekend
 FEATURING
 The Community of North Park
 June 6-8, 2014

People In Preservation Awards
 Architectural Walking Tours
 Sunday Historic Home Tour

Advance Discount Tickets Available
 Purchase online or by phone
 SOHOsandiego.org - (619) 297-9327

Produced in partnership with
 North Park Historical Society

SATURDAY
 SEPTEMBER 6, 2014
NORTH PARK CAR SHOW
 10AM TO 2PM
 FREE TO ATTENDEES

LOCATED IN THE PARKING LOT AT THE BALBOA TENNIS CLUB COURTS IN MORLEY FIELD
 TROPHIES FOR 1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD PEOPLE'S CHOICE, PLUS OTHER PRIZES
 DOZENS OF OLD CLASSICS

FOR MORE INFO GO TO
NORTH PARK HISTORY.ORG
 OR CALL (619) 294-8990

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PEOPLE IN PRESERVATION AWARDS 2014

SOHO recognizes excellence in historic preservation, advocacy and education



Members of the North Park Historical Society with the North Park water tower in the background. From left: Pat Taylor, Ernie Born, Alexander Bevil, Katherine Hon, Kathleen Phillips, Steve Hon and George Franck. (Photo/Sarah Letell)

