

**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
JANUARY 2018 MEETING NOTES**

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2018

TIME: 6:30 PM

The first part of this meeting was a Business Meeting of the North Park Historical Society (NPHS) Board of Directors, and the second part was the activities discussion for the organization. These notes include updates as of February 3, 2018.

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY February 15, 2018** at 6:30 pm in a second floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church, 3967 Park Boulevard.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The following members of the NPHS Board of Directors were present:

Steve Hon	Katherine Hon
Jody Surowiec	Claudia Watts
George Franck	Sharon Turner
Paul Spears	Hilda Yoder
Judy Ciampoli	

The following members of the NPHS Board of Directors were absent:

Bob Bauer	Michael Thornhill
Randy Sappenfield	

Members Sue and Turner also joined us. Welcome!

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The latest Pacific Beach Historical Society newsletter was circulated for viewing. The latest PastMatters column in *Uptown News* is at the end of these notes.

Congress of History Conference. Steve announced that the next Congress of History conference will be March 2 and 3, 2018 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal in Point Loma. This location is across the street from the Portuguese Museum and next door to the 1922 Portuguese Chapel, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in February 2017. Pricing for the two-day conference is: \$35 for adults, \$25 for seniors (65+), and \$15 for active military or any student (12 & older) with ID. (There is no discount if you will only attend one day.)

Steve, Katherine and George often attend this conference and it is always interesting.

The conference theme this year is a celebration of adventures in local history, with historic tales about places that you may THINK you know. Neighborhood stories include:

- Rosanne Goodwin: "The Name Game: Community and Neighborhood Names Over the Decades"
- Christopher Milnes: "University Heights: What's that Ostrich doing in My Neighborhood? 1904 and the Arrival of Harvey Bentley's Ostrich Farm"
- Alex Bevil: "A Neighborhood in Flames: the 40th Anniversary of the Crash of PSA Flight 182 in North Park"



See the registration form on the next page. Go to CongressOfHistory.org for more information.

Registration Form • 53rd Annual History Conference

**Friday, March 2 and
Saturday, March 3, 2018**



Doors open at 8:30 a.m. Conference Location:

Portuguese Hall

2818 Avenida de Portugal (Point Loma), San Diego, CA 92106

Free Off-Street Parking. Many history tables and vendors.

**Lunch is on your own. There are many food options a block away
(maps will be provided at the conference)!**

Please print out then fill out this registration form. You may also join or renew your Congress of History membership.

Make your check to "Congress of History." Mail your completed form with your check to

Congress of History Conference Registration, P.O. Box 1346, Lemon Grove, CA 91946.

Note: Event tickets are not mailed. Your badge will be waiting at the conference. Bring cash for book purchases!

Name (ONE person ONLY per form) _____

Individual's Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Individual's Phone(s): Home (_____) _____ Cell (_____) _____

Individual's email address _____

Organization (if any), or School (if any) _____

Organization's Phone (_____) _____ Organization's email _____

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

One Attendee at this 2-day Conference (price is the same if you can only attend one day): \$35.....\$ _____

One Senior (65 & older) Attendee: \$25.....\$ _____

One Student (12 & Older, with student ID): \$15.....\$ _____

COH MEMBERSHIP (our year runs from July 2018 through June 2019). Please choose one of the following:

Individual member: \$20.....\$ _____

Senior member (65 & older) or Student (12+, with ID): \$15.....\$ _____

Organization, Business, or Family membership (circle which): \$25.....\$ _____

Donor: \$100.....\$ _____

Lifetime: \$250.....\$ _____

Our newsletter showcases the historic happenings of our member groups. It is sent via email. Use individual or organization email (circle one)?

TOTAL PAYMENT (conference and, if applicable, membership): Your check # _____ \$ _____

Conference Registration and Membership payment may be written in one check. Make your check or money order payable to Congress of History.



Keep history alive. Support UNITY & JOINT EFFORT.

The Congress of History is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Mail this form and your payment to

**Congress of History Conference Registration
P.O. Box 1346, Lemon Grove, CA 91946**

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Utility Undergrounding in North Park. Steve commented that at the latest North Park Planning Committee meeting on January 16, 2018, a Master Plan Update for the Utilities Undergrounding Program for overhead utility lines was noted to be available for review on the City's website at: <https://www.sandiego.gov/undergrounding/overview/master-plan>.

Update: Steve attended an open house for the undergrounding on January 24, 2018. He found that undergrounding of overhead utility lines is not really imminent in most of North Park, but might happen within the next 6 to 10 years.

Designation of George Klicka's First Home in San Diego.

Katherine announced that the designation of 3543 Pershing Avenue in the Dryden District will be heard by the Historical Resources Board (HRB) on January 25, 2018. The owner, a very supportive NPHS member, has conducted extensive research to justify the house being listed not only for its Craftsman architecture and being a notable work of Master Builder David Owen Dryden, but also for being the first house that George Klicka occupied in San Diego, from 1921 to 1925, when George Klicka started the Klicka Lumber Company with his brother Emil.



In November 2017, NPHS sent a letter of support to the HRB for this historical designation that would recognize George Klicka as a person important to the history of San Diego. See the last page of these meeting notes for the PastMatters column about George Klicka.

Update: Congratulations to Bill and Karen for achieving designation of their beautifully restored home at 3543 Pershing Avenue for all three criteria: architecture, work of a Master Builder, and association with a person important to San Diego's history! The vote of the HRB was unanimous. Bill gave a compelling and thorough documentation of George Klicka's many contributions to the development of San Diego, particularly North Park. He was supported by his neighbors, who showed up to give him enough speaker time, and by NPHS member Ed C. and NPHS Secretary Katherine, who spoke for the designation. Members of the HRB commented how impressed they were by Bill's presentation and research.

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The minutes from the November 16, 2017 NPHS meeting have been posted on the website. There was no meeting in December.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials for the period of November 14 to December 31, 2017 were sent to Board Members before the meeting. During this period, we received donations totaling \$180 from a very generous renewing member (thank you, Cia!). Three members renewed for revenue of \$60 from dues. North Park Main Street donated \$1,000 for our assistance with their Partners In Preservation project, which raised awareness of the historic importance of the Stevens-Hartley

building, now Western Dental (Thank you, Angie!!). We sold 2 perfect-bound and 5 spiral-bound North Park history books to Paras Newsstand for revenue of \$93.17. Expenses were a total of \$3,073, which included Jim's consulting fee (\$750), enhanced web security monitoring through GoDaddy (\$300), increased RAM for the website for 5 years (\$168), website backup annual fee (\$55), and consulting by Gail Goldman for the Water Tower Art Project (\$1,800).

In addition, the Annual Report for 2017 was sent to the Board on January 7, 2018. The Annual Report included an illustrated List of Accomplishments for the year. With approval from the Board at this meeting, a stand-alone List of Accomplishments has been sent to the NPHS email distribution list.

Katherine noted that the following submissions required for our operation as a 501c3 non-profit organization have been completed:

- Annual Registration Renewal to the Attorney General - California Registry of Charitable Trusts (January 4, 2018)
- Sales tax payment of \$27 to the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (January 6, 2018)
- California Form 199N e-postcard to State of California Franchise Tax Board (January 2, 2018)
- Federal Form 990-N e-postcard to the IRS (January 9, 2018)

5. NPHS BUDGET 2018 AND

6. NPHS APPLICATION FOR COUNTY COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM 2018-2019

Steve discussed the draft budget for 2018, which was distributed to the attendees at the meeting. He proposed asking for a Community Enhancement Program Grant of \$3,000 from the County for support of our annual Car Show, our Water Tower Art Project consultant, and equipment/services to begin digitizing the hundreds of slides we have from Don and Karon Covington. Sharon moved and Claudia seconded that the budget and the County grant application for 2018-2019 that was incorporated into the budget be approved as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

Claudia noted she has experience scanning slides from a personal project she has been doing. Katherine will coordinate with her on equipment that would allow us to maintain possession of the irreplaceable slides, instead of having an outside service do the scanning.

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

7. WEBSITE UPDATE

Jim completed his contract work, including the security update for the website, moving our domain names to GoDaddy, incorporating more RAM working memory to improve the website performance, and adding software to enable photo "slide shows" like all the car show photos, which are now easily viewable.

8. WATER TOWER PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Seismic Retrofit Project by the City. Steve announced that City Public Works Department staff and consultants presented an update of their North Park Water Tower Seismic Retrofit project at the latest North Park Planning Committee meeting on January 16, 2018. The project design is nearly complete and construction is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2018. The work will take about 6 months. The project will include replacing in-kind the existing corroded tie-rod bracing and gusset plates, strengthening the footings, and recoating the support structures to

match the weathered appearance and color of the existing tank. No work is proposed on the water tank itself, the catwalk around the mid-section of the tank, or the ladders. The project is intended to provide structural upgrades to protect the Water Tower in the case of a wind or seismic event. The Water Tower has been empty since the 1990s and is not intended to ever provide water again, but it is a local historic civil engineering landmark, has been designated significant by the City of San Diego, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. City staff noted in the presentation that the project has been reviewed and approved by City HRB staff to make sure that the historical integrity of the water tower will not be impacted by this seismic retrofit work.

NPHS Art Project. No seismic retrofit work is proposed on the fencing on the wall of the concrete rectangular reservoir facing Howard Avenue, which is the proposed site of the 5-year temporary art installation. So the seismic retrofit project discussed above should not interfere with the NPHS art project. Progress to date is summarized below.

The artists presented their concepts to the Artist Selection Committee on November 29, 2017 at North Park Main Street, who volunteered their new office space at 3939 Iowa Street for this meeting. Artist Miki Iwasaki presented a concept using hand cut aluminum sheets that would allow light through to create patterns and textures that would bring water flowing on land to the mind of the viewer. The artist team of Bhavna Mehta and Lynn Susholtz presented a concept involving horizontally attaching shaped acrylic pieces at the top of the reservoir wall to cast shadows of various colors on the wall below, and vertically attaching painted sheet metal shapes to the fence and posts.

The Artist Selection Committee selected the team of Bhavna Mehta and Lynn Susholtz to prepare a final concept. Hilda and Judy, who were on the Artist Selection Committee, noted that this team's concept involved more color and motion and seemed more compelling than the more subtle proposal by Miki. They also felt that the team's concept would change throughout the day and night, and bring people back to see the installation from different perspectives. A draft contract agreement for the team was sent to the Board for review in advance of the meeting. Hilda moved and Judy seconded to approve the agreement for signature by the artist team. The motion was approved unanimously.

Update: The artist team's concept proposal has been emailed to our city contact, Christine Jones (now Chief of Civic Art Strategies for the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture), with a request for input on the general feasibility of the concept as being acceptable to the City before the artist team starts a final design development proposal. Christine has replied, "We will take a look and get back to you with some additional guidance." We will wait to send the contract until we get input from the City.

9. UPCOMING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The annual events NPHS is participating in or organizing include the following:

- Exhibit at San Diego History Center: March 13, 2018: The History Center offers non-profits an opportunity to display information in their lobby once a year on a selected Free Tuesday. Steve will man the table for NPHS on March 13 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Come by to say hello if you are in the park that day.
- North Park Festival of the Arts: May 12, 2018. We are getting our booth fee waived in exchange for assisting North Park Main Street with a new project being developed that involves creating a virtual tour experience for San Diego visitors.

- North Park Car Show: September 8, 2018. The Balboa Tennis Club has agreed to host us for our 9th Annual Car Show, and Steve has already obtained the permit from the City to use the parking lot.
- Old House Fair - We believe this event will go on as usual in June 2018. More later.
- Toyland Parade: December 1, 2018. We expect the parade to be held the first Saturday in December like last year. More later.

10. HISTORICAL DESIGNATION HELP

Paul and a small group of other Board members have activated a free advice service helping to inform people on how historic designation happens, where there are resources explaining what needs to be done, the difference between historic designation and the Mills Act property tax reduction contract, and what factors into a structure qualifying as a significant historic resource. The group has conducted a "practice run" and is ready to help anyone asking for advice. Paul gave the ok for the blurb announcing the service to be posted on the website and our Facebook page. Paul is the clearinghouse for all requests and responses. Katherine will forward all requests to him, and will keep a file of all requests and responses. **Update:** The blurb has been posted on the website and Facebook page.

11. REVIEW OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR HISTORICAL REPORTS

Last year, Paul reviewed 166 permit applications to the City affecting buildings older than 45 years old. This is a lot of work and we sincerely appreciate Paul donating his time to this effort! For potentially historic buildings, the HRB reviews the plans and makes requirements. A historic report is not always needed for changes to a potentially historic building because of the nature of the change being requested.

12. 10TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF NPHS

NPHS officially "graduated" from being the History Committee of the North Park Community Association to an independent 501c3 organization in 2008. This year is our tenth anniversary as a stand-alone organization, and we can be very proud of all we have accomplished in that time. The group discussed where we might have a special celebration, timed as part of history events in May. The most favored idea was an open house type of pizza party in the back room of Paesano Italian Restaurant on 30th Street. Steve will ask Joe Romano, owner of the restaurant, about such an event.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY February 15, 2018** at 6:30 pm in a second floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church, 3967 Park Boulevard, corner of Park and Lincoln Avenue.

Prepared by



Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

Klicka's 'Studio Bungalow' provided affordable housing in 1930s

PastMatters
Katherine Hon

In 1935, as the United States was recovering from the Great Depression, a North Park businessman focused his creativity and company resources on developing affordable housing for the average wage earner.

That businessman was George Klicka, manager of Klicka Lumber Company of North Park.

The National Housing Act of 1934, which created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), made home ownership for families with low to moderate incomes possible through long-term loans with minimal monthly payments. The act generated demand, but after several years of little or no construction, San Diego was experiencing an extreme housing shortage. This was good news for Klicka Lumber Company, which announced in a 1935 advertisement, "Busy Days Are Here Again!"

George Klicka believed that "to own a home and fireside is every man's ambition and every family's heritage." He recognized that the costly construction techniques of the 1920s would need to be simplified to meet this goal, and that his company was uniquely positioned to help fill the affordable-housing demand.

Klicka Lumber Company originally incorporated in San Diego as Klicka Brothers Company in December 1921. The company's broad purposes included "to build, construct, alter, repair, move, decorate, furnish and improve houses, office buildings and other structures."

The Klicka lumber yard and mill was located on 30th Street just north of University Avenue (now the site of La Boheme condominiums), near Dixie Lumber, which had opened in 1914 on Ohio Street north of University Avenue.

George Klicka, youngest of four brothers, started the company with his eldest brother Emil. Their father had founded Joseph Klicka Company in Chicago in 1880, which became a leader in the wood molding manufacturing industry, selling product across the country. By the turn of the century, Joseph Sr. had died, and the four brothers were running the successful company.

In 1915, George — who traveled extensively around the country as a salesman for the family firm — took an adventurous trek to California with a friend. The motorcar trip involved nine tire changes and multiple incidents of being mired in mud. The primary destination was San Francisco, which was holding the official World's Fair, but Klicka also visited San Diego and its Panama-California Exposition before returning to Chicago. He declared San Diego's Exposition to be the superior event, and San Diego's climate to be the best of any town on the Pacific Coast.

Six years later, in April 1921, George and his wife Wilhelmina moved into a Craftsman home



George Klicka, circa 1940 (Courtesy of the Klicka Family)

built by David Owen Dryden at 3543 Oregon St. (now Pershing Avenue). The same year, Emil and his wife Jessie moved to 3506 28th St., just a block away. From these North Park homes, both brothers would exert considerable beneficial influence on the growth of San Diego.

Fast forward to the mid-1930s, when San Diego was pulling itself out of the Great Depression through, among other activities, a second Exposition. Klicka Lumber Company announced they were "busy supplying materials for the Exposition buildings and new housing facilities for Exposition visitors."

At the same time, George developed and patented plans for a low-cost kit house, a pre-fabricated package transported by truck to the owner's lot and constructed for prices starting at less than \$2,000. The design was described in a brochure by the Capital Lumber Company in Sacramento, California as "Introducing all-wood, plaster-less construction, ultra-modern design and detail achieved thru brilliant engineering."

George described the "Klicka Studio Bungalow" as having "complete sanitary plumbing fixtures, automatic water heater, modern electric fixtures in every room and large casement windows throughout. Beside the two bedrooms, there is a kitchen of ample size, with tile sink and built-in features, large and modern breakfast room, hall and linen closets and a commodious living room."

The kit house was introduced as a model home at the 1935-36



This Klicka Lumber Company advertisement announced "Klicka House Day" on Sept. 7, 1936. (Courtesy of the Covington Family)

Exposition in Balboa Park. In 1936, the house design was approved by the federal government for a 25-year FHA loan. By the end of 1941, Klicka Lumber Company had sold more than 1,100 kit homes throughout San Diego and as far away as Florida.

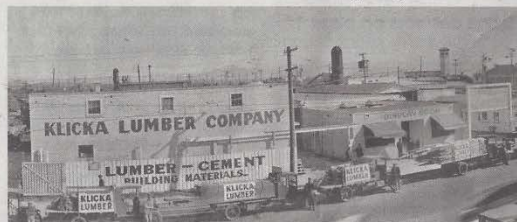
Houses at 4575 Shirley Ann Place, 3666 Alabama St., and the five-unit bungalow court at 3988 Kansas St. near Lincoln Avenue are documented Klicka projects.

Although only a few of these

examples of novel affordable home construction survive, they represent an innovation in home building with the purpose of expanding the benefits of home ownership throughout San Diego at a time of great need.

William Strack, now the proud owner of 3543 Pershing Ave., has extensively researched George Klicka, and has concluded that he was "one of those rare individuals that without realizing it, was in the right place at the right time to do a great deal of good for others. ... I have no doubt that without George Klicka's involvement and contributions, the North Park that we know now would be different, and likely something less, than the great community that we share today."

—Katherine Hon is the secretary of the North Park Historical Society. Reach her at info@northparkhistory.org or 619-294-8990.



Klicka Lumber Company, located along the east side of 30th Street in 1926, helped build much of the Mid-City area. (Courtesy of the Covington Family)