

**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MAY 2019 MEETING NOTES**

DATE: MAY 16, 2019

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 May 24, 2019.

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY June 20, 2019 starting at 6:30 p.m.** in a second floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church, 3967 Park Boulevard, corner of Park Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

Steve Hon	Sharon Turner
Katherine Hon	Jody Surowiec
Paul Spears	Claudia Watts
Judy Ciampoli	Bob Bauer
George Franck	Randy Sappenfield

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

Hilda Yoder	Michael Thornhill
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Member Michael B. joined us. Welcome all!

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The latest Pacific Beach Historical Society newsletter was circulated for viewing.

The March 2019 PastMatters column in *Uptown News* discussed the results of our recent project developing detailed historic information about the homes in Pauly's Addition. The April 2019 PastMatters column paid tribute to Pekin Cafe, a venerable restaurant on University Avenue that served North Park for nearly nine decades. Scans of these articles are at the end of these meeting notes.

George, who conducts tours for Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO), shared that SOHO will be celebrating People in Preservation at the Marston House on Thursday, May 30th, 4 to 6 pm . See the SOHO website for details.

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

There was no formal NPHS meeting in April 2019, so no meeting notes were prepared.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials for the period of March 20 through May 15, 2019 were sent to Board Members before the meeting. During this period, five members renewed (thank you, Janet, Linda, Donna, Michael B., and Ed!), one renewing member gave us a donation of \$20 (thank you, Donna!), and one new member joined us (welcome, Jill!). The San Diego History Center paid for three tote bags and five coil-bound North Park history books. We got two Car Show \$100 sponsors (thank you, Steve and West Coast Tavern!) and six Car Show entries. Amazon paid for one coil-bound North Park history book, Paras Newsstand paid for five, and Katherine bought one.

At the Festival of the Arts, we sold two Arcadia books, two coil-bound North Park history books, one Burlingame book, and two tote bags. One of the renewing members paid at the Festival, and our new member joined there. We also received \$2 in donations. So this was our most successful Festival in a long time. Total income in this period was \$694. Expenses in this time period included a slide scanner for \$369 and a light box for viewing slides for \$30.98, as approved by the Board at the March 21, 2019 meeting and using funds from our 2018-2019 County Community Enhancement Grant. Total expenses for the time period were \$402.71.

Katherine noted that our SSL certificate with Go Daddy has been renewed for our northparkhistory.org website to continue to be an https address as approved by the Board at the March 21, 2019 meeting.

Steve noted it cost \$55 to park in the CVS lot for the Festival, which was the best location for loading and unloading all of our NPHS "gear," including the canopy, table, chairs, and boxes of supplies. Jody moved and George seconded that Steve be reimbursed for this rather exorbitant event parking fee. The motion was approved by eight Board members present, and two abstained (Steve and Katherine).

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

5. WATER TOWER PUBLIC ART PROJECT UPDATE

The final conceptual design was presented to the selection committee by the artist team of Bhavna Mehta and Lynn Susholtz on November 7, 2018. The final conceptual design was approved by the selection committee at that meeting, and by the NPHS Board at the November 15, 2018 meeting. A draft permit application for consideration as a 5-year loan was prepared and submitted to Christine Jones, our contact at the City, on December 4, 2018 for her review and guidance regarding if the application appeared ready to submit formally to the Commission for Arts and Culture.

Steve Hon, NPHS President, and Katherine Hon, NPHS Secretary, met with Christine Jones, Chief of Civic Arts Strategies, and Charles Miller, Senior Public Art Manager, on March 28, 2019 to discuss the NPHS draft application illustrating the proposed concept that NPHS sent to the City on December 4, 2018. The major points communicated to NPHS by the City at the review meeting are summarized as follows:

1. The allowable time frame for exhibition on the fence has been significantly reduced from the 5-year period that was the previous understanding. Any art installed would have to be removed from the fence/site by early 2022.
2. City staff recommended the proposal be revised to present an installation across the approximately 100-foot-long expanse of fencing instead of only the initial 23-foot long "centerpiece" illustrated in the application.
3. City staff recommended the draft "Application for Temporary Exhibits of Artwork on City of San Diego Property" be revised to include more information provided in a supplemental attachment, including details that would require consultation with a structural engineer.
4. City staff recommended the permitting process be completed before fundraising, to be sure the art will be accepted. The next processing steps would be a review of the enhanced application by City staff, then submitting a final Application to the City Commission's art review committee, next to the full Commission, and then a final decision by the Executive Director.

On April 18, 2019, eight of twelve members of the NPHS Board of Directors met to discuss the implications that the significant reduction in allowable exhibition time and the City's new recommendations for expanded design and additional documentation have on the feasibility of this project. The group agreed that the artists put together a great concept that creatively addressed all prior City comments. However, the amount of time required to address new City comments, continue with the review process, accomplish fundraising, and then produce and install the artwork would leave very little time for the exhibition to activate the fence site and celebrate the Water Tower as we envisioned in 2015 when NPHS started the project.

On April 18, 2019, this majority of NPHS Board of Directors voted unanimously to terminate the project, formally withdraw the draft Application from consideration by the City, and release the artists and their concept from further obligations to NPHS.

Accordingly, NPHS wrote a formal letter to the City withdrawing our draft Application for Temporary Exhibits of Artwork on City of San Diego Property submitted on December 4, 2018 from consideration by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

NPHS also wrote a formal letter to the artists releasing them from further obligations to NPHS, and notifying them that they are free to realize their proposed artwork elsewhere. As a courtesy to the artists, NPHS is undertaking not to publish any images and/or text depicting and/or relating to the proposed artwork and/or any other material submitted in the Application, and NPHS has asked the City to extend the same courtesy.

Christine Jones of the City responded to the letter from NPHS as follows:

"On behalf of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, thank you for notifying us of that the North Park Historical Society will no longer be pursuing the proposed temporary artwork for placement near the water tower nor submitting a formal application for the City's further consideration. We compliment your efforts, and the efforts of the artists, to creatively activate public spaces in North Park, as well as your efforts to bring attention to the water tower as a site of historic and cultural significance. These are indeed worthy causes.

We're sorry to learn you will not be pursuing further development of the proposal, however we do greatly appreciate your understanding of the constraints. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions."

Although we could not overcome the difficulties associated with placing inspirational art within a City owned property for a limited period on a challenging "canvas" (an aging chain-link fence), the NPHS Board is proud to have made a professional and well intentioned attempt. NPHS remains committed to installing the bronze plaque that NPHS paid to create in 2015 recognizing the Water Tower as a Local Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. The installation will likely consist of the plaque mounted in a boulder. The company recommended by the City to provide the boulder and installation is Seaman-Poe Monument Company in Bonita. Paul will help Katherine prepare a sketch with dimensions for the monument company to develop a proposal and cost estimate. Christine Jones with the City has instructed us that NPHS is "welcome to reach out to me when you proceed with the plaque project and I'll connect you with the appropriate City staff."



6. NPHS CAR SHOW

Plans for the show are proceeding well. Previous exhibitors have been responding to the registration flyer Katherine sent to them, and we have several sponsors already. It was emphasized at the meeting that the 2019 Car Show will be the 10th and Final show organized by our group. The NPHS Board agreed at the October 18, 2018 meeting to end organizing the annual car show after the 2019 show in order to re-focus our group energy and resources on core activities like walking tours and other educational outreach that build community knowledge about North Park's history.

7. FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS FOLLOW-UP

Although the morning started out rainy, by noon the skies were clear and we had an excellent Festival, as discussed under the Treasurer's Report. Special thanks to Claudia and Turner for coming early to help Steve and Katherine get the canopy set up before it rained! Assistance through the day by Judy, Randy and Jody, and closing up help by Bob and George was also much appreciated. A fun highlight of the day was watching the Lucky Lion Dancers, who stopped to honor the Lions Club members in the booth next to us.



Steve and Judy await Festival attendees.



Jody and Randy are ready to share information.



The Lucky Lion Dancers stopped to honor the Lions Club booth.

8. OLD HOUSE FAIR EVENT

The Old House Fair has eliminated the street fair part of their event, so NPHS is not exhibiting there. This is just as well, because the new organizers have also changed the date to occur in May the week after the North Park Festival of the Arts.

9. STORY BOARDS ON UNIVERSITY AVENUE

Jody noted that the North Park Maintenance Assessment District (MAD) is going to restore in-place the concrete storyboards in the sidewalk around the theater and other buildings at University Avenue and 30th Street. The MAD is hoping to find out what the original colors were. It was suggested that they ask Patrick Edwards. Katherine will look for any pictures or slides. **Update:** Katherine found this photo of Don Covington, who developed the storyboards, with an installed storyboard and emailed it to Jody on May 24, 2019. She will forward it to the MAD.



10. UPCOMING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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

- **North Park Car Show:** Saturday, September 7, 2019, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Balboa Tennis Club has agreed to host us for our 10th and Final Car Show, and Steve has already obtained the permit from the City to use the parking lot.
- **Toyland Parade:** Sunday, December 8, 2019. This is the second Sunday in December, a change from being held on the first Saturday. North Park Main Street has taken over organization of this event, which is a good thing.

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Prepared by

Katherine Hon

Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

Pauly's Addition details are online

PastMatters

Katherine Hon

Last summer, the North Park Historical Society (NPHS) began wondering if all or part of Pauly's Addition could qualify as a historic district. This neighborhood extends from Alabama to Arizona streets between University Avenue and Upas Street. It was the first subdivision to be formally mapped and filed in the North Park area.

Aaron Pauly — an early San Diego pioneer and merchant — filed his subdivision map on April 1, 1873. He beat the West End map filing by six weeks, Park Villas by 14 years, and University Heights by 15 years. However, little commercial or residential construction occurred in any of these subdivisions until the streetcar was extended along University Avenue east of Park Boulevard in 1907.

To examine the history and current integrity of homes in Pauly's Addition, NPHS board members conducted an on-foot reconnaissance of the entire 20-block area and compiled information for each main structure visible from the street in a set of tables organized by address.

Data in the tables include address, architectural style, estimated year built, condition, a photo, and an initial assessment of the potential to

be considered a contributing structure in a historic district. If it could be determined from city lot books, the actual year a structure was completed, as well as the first owner and builder, are also listed in the tables.

The data tables have been added to the NPHS website at northparkhistory.org/projects/paulys-addition-survey.

The tables are searchable. To find an individual address, click on the Summary Table for the block in which that particular address would occur — 3400, 3500, 3600, 3700 or 3800. When the PDF file has downloaded, input the address of interest with just the number and name of the street — for example, 3505 Alabama — as the item to search for, and your cursor will move to the place in the table with details on that address. Key words such as a builder's last name can also be searched.

Research in the city lot books revealed that by January 1911, there were 16 homes in Pauly's Addition, and William J. Chadwick had built six of them along the west side of Arizona Street between Dwight and Landis streets. He is listed in the 1909 and 1910 City Directory as living at "Arizona nw cor Dwight" in a house now numbered 3608 Arizona St. According to the 1910 Federal Census, this modest home also accommodated Chadwick's sons Richard and John, daughter Agnes, a daughter-in-law and

two granddaughters.

By 1915, nearly 80 homes had been built in the subdivision. Most of the homes on the west side of Arizona Street between Landis and Wightman streets were built in 1913 and 1914 by the Hillcrest Company and reflect classic Craftsman/California bungalow style.

The 1920s were a boom decade for residential construction throughout North Park, and Pauly's Addition was no exception. Most of the lots still vacant after 1928 were in the 3400 blocks west of Louisiana Street, which encompassed an area with challenging topography.

Because lots tended to be sold and homes built on an individual basis, structures reflect a wide range of architectural styles, including California Bungalow, Craftsman, Spanish Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, Tudor Revival, French Eclectic, Minimal Traditional and Modern. Master builders who constructed homes in Pauly's Addition include Edward F. Bryans, Alexander Schreiber, John Pearson and David Owen Dryden.

NPHS compiled information on 430 homes in the 20-block subdivision and identified 260 homes — approximately 60 percent — as potentially contributing to a historic district.

Although alterations and demolition for apartments have degraded historic integrity

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PASTMATTERS

throughout Pauly's Addition, many homes have retained their original historic character — particularly south of Dwight Street. Six homes are known to be historically designated, representing Craftsman, Spanish Colonial Revival, Mission

Revival and Tudor Revival styles.

Staff of the city's Historical Resources Board are currently busy processing other historic districts identified in the most recent community plan updates for North Park, South Park and other Uptown neighborhoods. However, NPHS is considering preparing a nomination report for a historic

district encompassing all or a subset of Pauly's Addition. NPHS is also planning on developing a walking tour in the future of this interesting part of North Park.

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

Photos on next page



The oldest homes in Pauly's Addition are documented in the city lot books as completed by January 1910, including 3636 Arizona St. (Photos by Katherine Hon)



J. Weiss was the first owner in January 1922 of this Craftsman home built by Master Builder David Owen Dryden at 3777 Mississippi St.



This Spanish Colonial Revival home at 3530 Mississippi St. was built by Master Builder John Pearson in 1926. It has been identified by NPHS as having the potential to be designated an individually significant historic resource.



The charming Tudor Revival house at 3505 Alabama St. was built in 1927 on the edge of a small canyon.

A Tribute to the Pekin Cafe

PastMatters
Katherine Hon

The elaborate Oriental facade of 2877 University Ave. has been a North Park constant since the 1930s. The bright neon sign announcing "Pekin Cafe CHOP SUEY" seemed to smile as you walked through the double wooden doors. But those doors are closed for now.

A sign posted on the window announces to all "loyal and amazing customers" that the difficult decision to retire the restaurant as of March 2019 was made "with a full and heavy heart," but staff "are ready for the next chapter of retirement and new endeavors." A thank you sign on the door notes, "It has been an absolute pleasure knowing you all and serving you through the generations...Thank you for welcoming us into your lives and making us a part of your tradition."

The uniquely-styled restaurant building sits between the stately white brick Granada Building and the elegant terra cotta Spanish Renaissance North Park Theatre — more recently rebranded as The Observatory North Park — on the south side of University Avenue east of Granada Avenue. The contrasts in architecture were not always so exuberant. The Pekin Cafe building started life in 1922 as the North Park Furniture store owned by Frank J. Crover, who came to the United States from Germany in 1911. The building

was constructed in a Spanish Revival style with a parapet roofline and four long, narrow windows on the half floor above the first floor.

In 1923, Pabco Paint took over the building and operated there until 1931.

In June and July of 1931, permits for plumbing, plastering, electrical and gas work recorded in the Evening Tribune indicated major changes were happening at 2877 University Ave. The Evening Tribune's July 10, 1931 issue recorded permits by San Diego Neon Sign Company for an "electric sign" at the building.

The San Diego Union's July 12, 1931 issue announced Pekin Cafe was "just opened" and would serve their regular \$1 dinner for only 50 cents "to get acquainted with the people of San Diego." The restaurant advertised it was a place to dine and dance on New Year's Eve in 1931 and placed similar ads for many years afterwards.

The San Diego Union's June 23, 1935 issue noted "Pekin Cafe Reopened After Redecoration — Entirely redecorated in an Oriental motif, Pekin cafe, 2877 University Ave., has reopened. The same policies that prevailed before will be in effect, it was stated, with the same Chinese cooks, food, prices and service." Newspaper advertisements through the 1940s highlighted the cafe's "exclusive booths." In 1948, the restaurant advertised being newly decorated with "all private booths."

A fire on Oct. 21, 1981

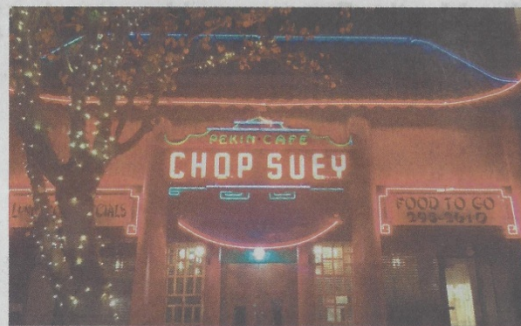
extensively damaged the kitchen, but the restaurant reopened on Feb. 24, 1982 after repairs and redecoration that eliminated the private booths.

Pekin Cafe has been owned and operated by a close-knit circle of friends and family through-out nearly nine decades. In addition to creating some of the first "Chinese-American" dishes — including their brightly advertised chop suey — these courageous immigrants provided employment and housing for others who had just come to America. Pekin Cafe became a safe place for many Chinese immigrants to take their first steps toward success in a very new world.

The 1932 City Directory was the first to list a restaurant at 2877 University Ave., and the person associated with the address was Kway Chew. His name also appeared as Kway "Chow" in various directories through the years, including as the manager of Pekin Cafe in 1945.

Book (also "Back") Cho and his wife Muriel worked at the restaurant in its early days, and Muriel was listed as working at Pekin Cafe in 1947. In a departure from most directory listings during the 1930s, the 1935 Business Directory listed "Cho Book You" as the restaurant at 2877 University Ave. instead of Kway Chew or Chow.

Even though newspaper advertisements consistently used "Pekin Cafe" from 1931 forward, the name did not appear as a separate listing in the City Directory until 1940. That



This 2019 photograph proves that the Pekin Cafe has retained its distinctive facade and neon sign for more than 80 years. (Photo by Steve Hon)

year, Kway Chow was named with Backyau Chow, So Leung and Leo Ying as being with the restaurant.

So Leung (1899-1955) came to the U.S. from China in 1917. In 1930, he was operating a retail produce business and boarding with Leo Ying, who came to the U.S. from China in 1921 and was also selling produce.

Ying (1905-2004) formally changed his last name to Fong in his 1951 naturalization paperwork. He worked at Pekin Cafe and co-owned the business and the building with his nephew Roy Lowe Fong and friend Frank Chan for many decades. Leo Fong retired with his wife Emily in 1973.

Roy Fong (1921-1999) and his wife Irene were both born in China and became naturalized U.S. citizens in 1964. He was a long-time head chef at Pekin Cafe and retired in 1973.

Frank Chan (1902-1974) witnessed Roy Fong's naturalization

paperwork — on which both were listed as restaurant owners. Chan was born in Walnut Grove, California. He and his wife Mamie worked in retail stores before he began managing the Pekin Cafe in 1946. Mamie (1911-1999) was born in Taft, California. She was a hostess and cashier at the restaurant and translated for others who did not know English as well.

In the early 1970s, Leo Fong's son Kenneth took over Pekin Cafe. Kenneth and his wife Maria have owned and run the restaurant ever since.

The final message to restaurant customers concluded, "Thank you for loving us and thank you for the memories." North Park says the same to all members of the Pekin Cafe family, past and present.

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