

NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY JANUARY 2020 MEETING NOTES

DATE: JANUARY 16, 2020

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 8, 2020.

The next meeting will be **THURSDAY February 20, 2020 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	Claudia Watts
Katherine Hon	Jody Surowiec
Paul Spears	Randy Sappenfield
Sharon Turner	Michael Thornhill
Bob Bauer	

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

Hilda Yoder	George Franck
Judy Ciampoli	

Members Kelly (Bleu), Michael B. and Turner joined us. Welcome all!

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The latest Pacific Beach Historical Society newsletter was circulated for viewing. The December 2020 *PastMatters* column was about the history of Pershing Drive and who it was named for (see the last pages of these notes).

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The minutes from the November 19, 2019 meeting have been posted on the website.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials for the period of November 21, 2019 through January 12, 2020 were sent to Board Members before the meeting. During this period, two members renewed (thank you Hilda and Robert!), and one also gave us a donation of \$80 (thank you, Robert!). The San Diego History Center sold one of our tote bags on consignment, netting us \$5. We sold one Burlingame book retail to an individual. We sold five spiral bound North Park history books to the San Diego History Center wholesale, and ten spiral bound North Park history books to Verbatim Books wholesale. Total income in this period was \$338.41. Expenses in this time period consisted of annual dues to VaultPress for website backup (\$55), and consulting for assistance with updating the website (\$100). Total expenses in this time period were \$155.

Final financials for the year will be provided in the 2019 Annual Report, which was distributed to the Board of Directors after the meeting via email on January 22, 2020.

The following state and federal organizational reports were filed on the dates indicated below:

- 199N State income tax report filed online on January 12, 2020
- 990N federal income tax report filed online on January 13, 2020
- State sales tax of \$17 reported and paid online via NPHS debit card on January 13, 2020
- California Registry of Charitable Trusts Registration Renewal form RRF-1 filed online on January 27, 2020

5. NPHS BUDGET 2020

A table presenting the proposed budget for 2020, along with what had been proposed for 2019 and what actually occurred in 2019, was sent to the Board via email on January 15, 2020. The 2019 budget had proposed income of \$5,700 and expenses of \$5,400. The actual 2019 budget had revenue of \$6,295, so we earned \$595 more than anticipated, mostly in book sales. The actual 2019 budget had expenses of \$5,919, so we spent \$519 more than expected, mostly in Car Show expenses (portapotties cost nearly \$1,000), and in supplies (we purchased a nice slide scanner and light box for viewing slides with the help of the 2019 County grant). Overall in 2019, we made a net profit of \$376.

For the proposed 2020 budget, less revenue is projected because we will not be holding the Car Show, and we are not sure yet how many walking tours we will conduct. A moderate revenue goal of \$2,330 is proposed, along with a balancing expense goal of \$2,330. Jody asked for clarification of the \$300 expense proposed for public meetings. Steve explained that could include an honorarium for one or several speakers if we organize multiple lectures as suggested at the November 2019 meeting.

The group discussed ideas for a County Grant request for 2020. In the past, the County has generously helped us pay for Car Show expenses, photo right fees for photos we purchased from the San Diego History Center for the Arcadia book in 2014, and useful equipment like our PowerPoint projector and new slide scanner. The county generally does not favor requests for speaker honorariums, which was one idea the group had. We have some time to keep thinking of ideas and add a County grant request to the budget later.

Sharon moved and Bob seconded that the budget be approved as proposed. The motion was approved unanimously by all Board members present.

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

6. UPDATE ON PLAQUE FOR WATER TOWER

Steve noted that we have \$1,200 remaining in our latest County grant fund for artist consultant fees for the Water Tower project. Although the art portion of the Water Tower project could not proceed because the City made the fence unavailable for a 5-year display, it is possible the funds remaining from the 2019 grant could be applied to the plaque installation. In addition, North Park Main Street had contributed \$1,000 for the Water Tower project. Steve has contacted Christine Jones, Chief of Civic Art Strategies, for an update on the feasibility of placing the plaque in a boulder or some kind of low wall next to the two-story building at the Water Tower site. Steve said that the City is no longer allowing soccer groups to play on top of the rectangular concrete reservoir next to the Water Tower, as the Water Department is concerned about the structural integrity of that facility and security of the site in general. Christine Jones requested additional background information and promised to get back to us soon.

7. WALKING TOURS FOR 2020

We will have more time and resources for walking tours in 2020 since we will not be organizing a car show. The first walking tour for 2020 will be of the Hamilton & Arizona Street neighborhood emphasizing bungalow courts on January 18 for a group attending a conference about the Tiny House movement. George and Michael are guides, with Jody and Sharon as their photo book assistants, respectively. Additional helpers are Michael B., Claudia, Steve and Katherine.

Update: The Tiny House group was small (no pun intended) but very engaged. The weather was perfect and the group's organizer was appreciative. Thank you to organizer Ellen for the photos below.



George introduces the group to this part of North Park. We started in the Community Park.



The group was especially interested in the units of 500 square feet or less.



Michael shared guide duties with George.



The group also admired the architecture of the small Craftsman bungalows in the neighborhood.

Other tours we are considering include the following:

- Burlingame Historic District in the spring
- Dryden Historic District in the summer, and maybe next October for the Rediscovering San Diego class
- Morley Field Recreational Area in September (offered for free to previous car show exhibitors)
- Develop a new walking tour featuring parts of Pauly's Addition.

8. PLANNING FOR PAULY'S ADDITION WALKING TOUR

Sharon, Hilda, Paul, Michael, George, Steve, and Katherine are interested in working to develop a walking tour of part of Pauly's Addition. The sub-committee will meet in February to begin planning. There is a fascinating range of architecture in this area, from pre-1910 to early 1950s and everything in between. The method we followed to develop the Hamilton neighborhood tour was to hold a discovery walk, develop a route pattern and list of houses to highlight, conduct a preliminary practice tour, adjust the route and guide notes, create the photo books to show, and then conduct another practice tour. Katherine will email the people interested in developing the Pauly's Addition tour to set a date for the first discovery walk.

9. REPRINTING OF NORTH PARK: A SAN DIEGO URBAN VILLAGE, 1896-1946

We have 34 spiral-bound books remaining from our previous reprintings of this classic history of North Park by the late Donald Covington. The North Park Historical Society has the permission of the Covington family to produce and sell these books. Katherine shared an estimate for reprinting the books with a spiral binding from Repromagic, the printing company she has used to print her most recent books. Producing 150 copies exactly like the current version — which has full color front and back cover plus 12 pages with color that must be inserted by hand into each copy — would cost \$2,225 or about \$14.83 per book. Producing 150 copies with the same cover but all black & white pages inside would cost \$1,995 or about \$13.30 per book. Katherine noted that our last reprint was in 2014. We currently sell the book for \$25 retail, and \$13.31 wholesale (that is the price other retailers pay us when they buy the book to sell at their stores, like Verbatim Books and the San Diego History Center). So we would make a profit when we sell the book ourselves, and either lose a bit or break even when we sell to other stores, depending on if we keep the color interior pages or do all black & white.

The group was okay with doing all black & white interior as long as both sides of the front and back covers are in color, and not printing more than 150 copies. Sharon said she could help store the books as that many would take up quite a lot of room in Steve and Katherine's garage. The group had some questions:

- How long will it take to sell the remaining 34 books and how long would printing take? Katherine thinks the current supply could last at least until summer, depending on how fast Verbatim Books sells the copies they have. Printing should only take a few weeks.
- What is the San Diego History Center selling the books for? Would they be willing to try a higher price and give us more than \$13.31? Answer: The San Diego History Center is selling the book for \$21.95, so we do not think they would like to change the wholesale price with us.
- What is Verbatim Books selling the book for? Answer: Their retail price is \$25. Their typical arrangement is to split the cost, so we are currently getting more than 50% now.

Katherine will keep track of sales and remaining count, and report back to the Board. She will also check in with our Covington family contact to be sure they are ok with all black & white inside the color front and back cover.

10. UPCOMING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

NPHS participated in the Toyland Parade last year on Sunday, December 8, 2019 at 11 am. The North Park Historical Society group was in Division 1. Sharon, Judy, Claudia, Turner, Steve, and Katherine joined Victor, the Dancing Water Tower, and his adorable son Alex. Paul helped greatly with Water Tower transport, and Ed allowed us to mobilize at his house on Utah Street.

The parade route was shorter this year — straight along University Avenue from Utah to Herman — guaranteeing good crowds throughout the route. The weather was a bit drizzly while we waited, but it did not rain on our parade once we got started. We were ready with umbrellas, and Steve and Sharon put a plastic “shower cap” on the Water Tower to make sure it stayed dry on top. Thank you to all who participated!



Discussion regarding future events in 2020 is summarized below.

- Festival of the Arts: Saturday, May 9, 2020. This event requires a lot of hauling and set up, including canopy, table, chairs, posters, easels, products, etc. At the November 2019 meeting, the group decided to skip exhibiting at the Festival of the Arts in 2020, as several key Board members who do the set-up and take-down will not be available to help on that day.
- Presentations for the Community: We have typically arranged for an outside speaker to make a free presentation in May. Steve noted several speakers who presented at the October City Archives Month could be quite interesting, including Steve Willard with the San Diego Police Historical Association, who has written several Arcadia books; and Jerry Handfield, who is organizing the City's archives and gave an eye-opening lecture about the importance of public records. Also, Richard Carrico, an expert on the Kumeyaay-Ipai tribes, is an excellent speaker. Bob noted that since we are not doing a car show, we could arrange more than one community presentation, and the group agreed. Steve will work on contacting these individuals in the next few months.

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Prepared by



Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

Pershing Drive

Named to honor those who served

PastMatters
KATHERINE HON

Do you know the name of the major road in North Park that honors a World War I general and all San Diegans who fought in that war? Hint: It is a freeway exit from Interstate 5 to North Park.

It is Pershing Drive, named for General John Joseph Pershing. It isn't surprising that few know the answer — the naming and the war itself happened more than 100 years ago.

North Park started growing in the early 1900s when the streetcar — called the "University Avenue Electric road" in a 1907 San Diego Union article — connected the area to Downtown San Diego along University Avenue that year and along 30th Street soon afterward. These streetcar routes extended the public transportation network initiated in 1906 by extension of the San Diego Electric Railway line from Mission Cliff Pavilion in University Heights to the eastern boundary of Normal Heights along Adams Avenue.

After World War I ended in 1918, housing in North Park began to boom. Although the streetcar continued to serve faithfully until 1949, there was an increasing demand for better roadways to satisfy the desire for transport by personal automobile. In "North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946," Donald Covington wrote, "The ideal became the sanitized, all-electric, stucco hacienda, a romantic amalgamation of Edison, Bell, Ford and Zorro with telephone jacks and radio aerial intact. The patio succeeded the verandah; the tiled breakfast room challenged the paneled dining room; the screened sleeping porch gave way to the two-tray laundry porch; and the motor car became the new house pet with its own

attached garage."

Many, North Park businessmen could see that everyone's new "house pet" required a better connection to Downtown for North Park to thrive. A possible connection was the existing road through Balboa Park — still known only as the "Big Grade" — that snaked from 18th Street to the northeast corner of the park at 28th Street. But that road was steep, narrow, and unpaved. The cost to change the hazardous roadway into a 25-foot wide paved boulevard was initially proposed to come from public donations.

Richard Allen Chapman — president of a real estate and insurance company at the time — presented the proposal to improve the Big Grade and name it Pershing Memorial Drive to city officials in November 1918. The San Diego Union's Nov. 15, 1918 issue reported that he intended the project to include "suitable monuments or slabs at both ends of the drive giving the names of the general staff in command of the American forces in France, together with the names of all men from the city of San Diego who died on the field of battle in the cause of liberty."

The Board of Park Commissioners unanimously supported the concept. Soon afterward, the City Council approved the project and promised matching funds.

Throughout 1919, prominent San Diegans including North Park residents Jack Hartley, Will Stevens and Charles Small contributed. The world-renowned opera singer Mrs. Ernestine Schumann-Heink — a beloved figure in San Diego — gave a concert in the Spreckels Organ Pavilion which was advertised in the San Diego Union's May 24, 1919 issue as "the biggest musical event of the year." The newspaper article noted that the

entire proceeds would be "donated to a fund to Build Pershing Paved Road and Monument to the San Diego Boys who died in the service."

John Joseph Pershing (1860-1948), the road's namesake and the representative for all San Diegans who had been killed in the war, was born on a farm in Missouri. He attended the United States Military Academy (West Point) from 1882 to 1886 and served in the U.S. Army through multiple military campaigns prior to World War I.

He served as the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) on the Western Front in World War I from 1917 to 1918. As AEF commander, Pershing was responsible for a fighting force that started as 27,000 inexperienced men and grew to more than 2 million soldiers.

Sufficient funds for the project finally were raised by mid-1922 with the help of G. Aubrey Davidson, president of the Southern Trust and Commerce Bank; George Marston, president of The Marston Company department store; and Charles Small, manager of the Bishop Cracker and Candy Company. In January 1923, paving was completed, and Pershing Drive was opened to travel. It does not appear that the proposed monuments were ever constructed.

In April 1923, the name of the road continuing north to University Avenue was changed from Oregon Street to Pershing Avenue in response to a petition supported by residents, although residents along 28th Street also petitioned for their street to have that honor. At this time, spurs of newly improved Pershing Drive lined up with both streets. In 1992, nearly 70 years later, the Pershing Spur was closed to accommodate plans for Bird Park, which opened officially in September 1997.

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



As you zip south on Pershing Drive past the golf course toward Downtown, imagine this road as it was before January 1923: narrower than 25 feet and unpaved. (Photos by Katherine Hon)



This sidewalk stamp from about 1914 is on what is now Pershing Avenue at Upas Street. The name for this residential street between Upas Street and University Avenue was changed in 1923, when improvements to Pershing Drive between Upas Street and 18th Street Downtown were completed.