

**NORTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MAY 2020 MEETING SUMMARY**

DATE: MAY 21, 2020

TIME: XX PM

These notes summarize information that was planned to be presented at the May 21, 2020 Business Meeting of the North Park Historical Society (NPHS) Board of Directors, and the activities discussion for the organization. These notes include updates as of May 23, 2020. The meeting was canceled in advance due to concerns about the novel coronavirus and resulting state and local restrictions on gatherings.

The next meeting scheduled for **THURSDAY June 18, 2020 starting at 6:30 p.m.** in a second-floor meeting room at Grace Lutheran Church **WILL NOT OCCUR**. We will monitor state and local guidance, Grace Lutheran Church, and the opinion of the NPHS Board regarding when it might be appropriate to resume our public meetings this year.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

We hope all our members and friends are staying safe and healthy.

2. AGENDA REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The latest Pacific Beach Historical Society newsletters will be circulated for viewing at the next possible meeting. The May 2020 PastMatters column in Uptown News was the first installment of a series about historic street names in San Diego (see the last page of this summary).

3. MINUTES ACCEPTANCE

The meeting summary from the canceled April 16, 2020 meeting has been posted on the website.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

The financials for the period of April 17 to May 22, 2020 were sent to Board Members on May 22. During this period, three members renewed (thank you Sue, David and Randy!). Total income in this period was \$60. Expenses in this time period totaled \$23.30 for stamps.

ACTIVITIES PORTION OF MEETING

5. UPDATE ON PLAQUE FOR WATER TOWER

Coordination with City Public Utilities Department staff regarding 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 is pending return to some kind of normalcy.

6. UPDATE ON COUNTY COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Coordination with County staff regarding the question of if we can apply the remaining \$1,250 from the 2019-2020 grant for water tower art to placement of the plaque is pending return to some kind of normalcy.

7. PLANNING FOR PAULY'S ADDITION WALKING TOUR

The team has developed a route pattern focusing on the southern part of Pauly's Addition from Dwight to Upas and Alabama to Texas streets. A draft table with information about each house and walking hazards has been compiled. A photo notebook has also been initiated including interior photos of houses that had been staged for sale. Our next steps are to choose the homes to highlight with more research, conduct a preliminary practice tour, adjust the route and guide notes, add pictures to the photo book, and then conduct another practice tour, pending return to some kind of normalcy.

8. EVALUATIONS OF HISTORIC HOMES

In May, we sent an information flyer to 12 recently sold properties that the NPHS evaluation team thought could qualify as individually significant historic resources. The flyer announced our free evaluation service and encouraged the new owner to contact NPHS.

One of the new owners contacted us, and NPHS provided an evaluation of her house regarding its potential to be designated. The home was found to reflect the Mission Revival style with high integrity and should qualify as an Individually Significant historical resource.



9. COMMUNITY COORDINATION

Gregg Schloss of A&B Sporting Goods shared some photos and brochures from Toyland Parades during the 1960s, which Katherine scanned. A few of these items follow.



Janice Hillis, 1960 Toyland Parade Queen, poses with Jay North, TV's Dennis the Menace.

(Advertisement)

**NORTH PARK TOYLAND
PARADE QUEEN
ENTRY COUPON**

Pictured at left is Jean Martin, 1962-63 "MISS NORTH PARK", who will relinquish her crown to the new Queen, at the Coronation Ball on Saturday, November 30th, at Del Coronado Hotel.

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Registration now open, and will close on Oct. 7 at 10 a.m. Contestant must be 15-22, and single. Winner will ride on Queen's float at North Park Toyland Parade on Dec. 8. She also will reign as Miss North Park until her successor is chosen. She also will receive a "Treasure Chest of Gifts" valued at \$1500, plus a \$1000 U. S. Savings bond.

**Send or bring this coupon to Jean Graham,
3985 30th Street, Phone 297-2886**

Entry coupon for the 1963 Toyland Parade Queen. The winner received some excellent gifts.



The 1960 Toyland Parade Court and other VIPs. From left, Lou Briscoe, Judy Cleer, Victor Jory, Janice Hillis, Karen Saunders, Patrick McVey, Jan Worrell and Judy Vultaggio. Jory and McVey starred in the TV show "Manhunt" from 1959 to 1961 as Detective Lieutenant Howard Finucane and police reporter Ben Andrews, respectively. The show was set in San Diego.



Brochure for the 1965 Toyland Parade

The May 2020 PastMatters column in Uptown News initiated a series about San Diego street names. Before 1900, multiple subdivisions in San Diego were mapped with numbered street names and other duplications. More than 250 street names were changed by Ordinance No. 755 adopted May 21, 1900 to correct the potential mass confusion as real development began. Alphabetical themes for street names changed by Ordinance No. 755 were provided by Louis Jackson Davids, the relatively new city engineer. See the last page of these notes for the article about this interesting gentleman. Future columns will solve the mystery of Missouri Street among gems in Pacific Beach, and identify street names celebrating authors in Point Loma, military heroes in La Playa, and scientists in La Jolla, all courtesy of City Engineer Davids.

10. UPCOMING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Information regarding future events in 2020 is summarized below.

- Table in Lobby at San Diego History Center: August 2020. Before public health restrictions were implemented, the History Center offered us another opportunity to display in August, when Katherine was scheduled to give a Tuesday Talk on “North Park and How it Grew.” If the History Center is open by that time, we will consider doing it.
- Festival of the Arts: At this time, North Park Main Street has postponed this event to October 2020. Due to reasons not related to the current pandemic, the NPHS Board decided at the November 2019 meeting to skip exhibiting at the Festival of the Arts in 2020.
- Presentations for the Community: We have typically arranged for an outside speaker to make a free presentation in May, and have a few people in mind who could be quite interesting. However, given the current public health crisis, we will wait until it is safe to gather in groups before arranging a community meeting. Such events may have to wait for a safe and effective vaccine.

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Prepared by



Katherine Hon
Secretary, North Park Historical Society

The engineer behind authors, gems, heroes and scientists

San Diego street names: The first installment in the series

PastMatters

KATHERINE HON

Many streets in San Diego originally had different names from what we know them by today, especially the subdivisions ("tracts") mapped prior to 1900. In those early days, development was so sparse, it did not much matter that there were at least fifteen "First Streets" throughout the city. However, by the late 1890s,

urbanization was intensifying, and the potential for mass confusion with the existing street name patterns was obvious.

To eliminate duplication and achieve some continuity where street names changed from tract to tract, about 90 names were changed throughout the city by Ordinance No. 599 adopted by the Board of Aldermen on February 6, 1899, and more than 250 names were changed by Ordinance No. 755 adopted May 21, 1900. Ordinance No. 755 brought

authors to Point Loma and gems to Pacific Beach, among many other changes.

The source of alphabetical themes for street names changed by Ordinance No. 755 was Louis Jackson Davids, the relatively new city engineer. He wrote the following memorandum to the Board of Public Works on February 1, 1900: "Gentlemen, I hand you herewith a list of streets in the City limits of San Diego, the names of which occur in other and more central parts of the City. The new names suggested are taken either from natural objects (trees, flowers etc.) or from men celebrated in Science, Literature, Statesmanship, War etc.; care being taken to maintain alphabetical order. It would seem advisable to have these names changed by ordinance and to take such action as will prevent further duplication in names of streets."

The Board of Public Works acknowledged receipt of Davids' memorandum and list at their February 8, 1900 meeting, noting, "The City Engineer suggests new names, with a recommendation that they be substituted for the old ones. Upon motion being duly seconded the same was referred to the Common Council with recommendation that the same be adopted."

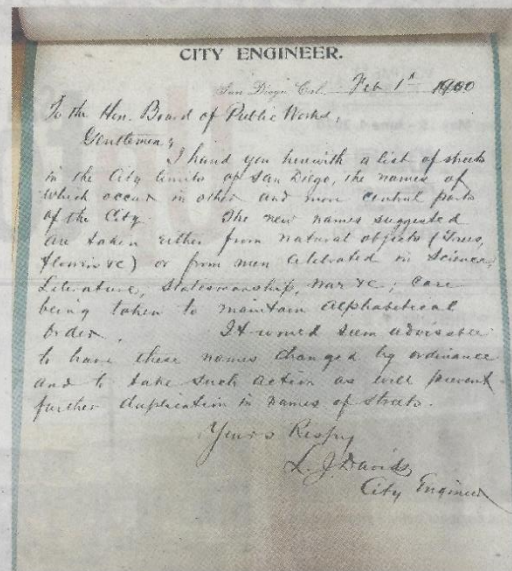
The San Diego Union's February 9, 1900 issue reported, "Mr. Davids has proposed new names for most of the duplicates and the board has decided that it would be a good thing to make the change before any greater difficulty is likely to result from the change. A communication will be sent to the council recommending the adoption of the suggestions made by the engineer."

Ordinance No. 755, which provided for "changing the names and regulating the naming of certain streets in the city of San Diego," was read and adopted at the aldermen's meeting on May 21, 1900 and approved by the mayor the following day. The list of name changes was certified by the city clerk as being published in the San Diego Union's May 24, 25, and 26, 1900 issues.

Davids' list of new street names that are mostly still present include alphabetical authors from Addison to Zouch — later Zola — and Alcott through Dumas in Roseville, authors Elliott through Lytton in Loma Portal, historians Abbott through Guizot in Ocean Beach, gems Agate through Hornblend and statesmen Allison through Randall in Pacific Beach, naval heroes Bainbridge through Rogers in La Playa, cities Chicago through Nashville in Clairemont/Bay Park, and scientists/engineers Cuvier through Herschel in La Jolla.

Who was this scholarly civil engineer?

Davids had been unanimously selected by the Board of Public Works to be city engineer from



This February 1, 1900 memo and accompanying list of recommended new street names from City Engineer Louis J. Davids initiated the name changes of more than 250 streets in San Diego. Ordinance No. 755 was approved on May 22, 1900 by Mayor Edwin Capps. (Courtesy of City Clerk Archives)

three candidates on April 27, 1899. He replaced Edwin Capps, city engineer since July 1893, who resigned because he had just been elected mayor.

Davids' selection was favorably received. The San Diego Union's April 28, 1899 issue reported, "Mr. Davids is by far the best man, so far as engineering ability is concerned, that the board of public works could have chosen... it is safe to say that the city's interests will at all times be carefully guarded by him."

Davids was born in New Rochelle, New York, in 1854 and obtained his civil engineering degree from Union College — a private liberal arts college in Schenectady, New York — in 1879. He began living in San Diego around 1886. An article about his wedding to Eda Skidmore in the San Diego Union's April 27, 1894 issue noted, "Mr. Davids is well-known in this city as a gentleman of more than ordinary culture and enviable attainments as a civil engineer, in this state as well as in Mexico and South America, where he was engaged for a series of years in railroad construction. He recently quit the services of the Santa Fe railroad company to look after his private interests in and about San Diego." His "beautiful and accomplished bride" was described as a native Californian who had traveled extensively and had recently "been teaching in the public schools of this city." Perhaps the couple came up with the "celebrated" names for streets together.

Davids was described in the 1894 Great Register of San Diego County as being 40 years old and 5 feet 10 inches tall, having a light complexion with blue eyes and brown hair, and living at 170 21st Street.

Davids' home was on the southwest corner of 21st and L streets

in what is now the Sherman Heights Historic District. His house was built in 1892 and has been replaced with a newer structure. However, other nearby homes built in the late 1800s still grace the neighborhood. Davids'

across-the-street neighbor was William B. Hollington, a retired English physician who lived at 171 21st Street from about 1888 to his death in 1908. Hollington's Victorian-era Queen Anne style house was built in 1887 and is a designated historic resource.

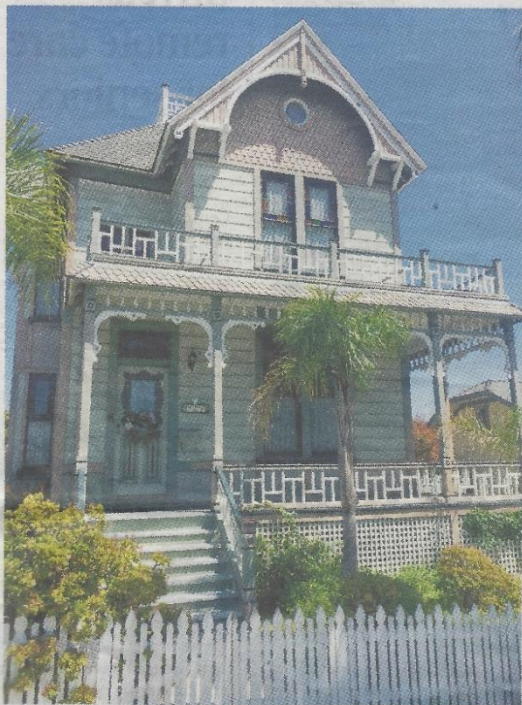
The Board of Public Works "dispensed with" the services of Davids at their October 25, 1900 meeting. The Evening Tribune's October 25, 1900 issue related the conversation of the board members, who acknowledged he was "a competent engineer, but has a different opinion from this board as to the manner of running his office." They replaced him with George d'Hemicourt — one of the other candidates in 1899 — at a special meeting on October 30, 1900.

Davids subsequently moved to Oakland with Eda and their son Cyril. He worked as a civil engineer there and in Los Angeles, where the family was living by 1920. He and his wife died within nine days of each other in October 1933 in Los Angeles.

Although he was San Diego's city engineer for only a year and a half, Davids' renaming of city streets in 1900 had a profound effect on the identity of many San Diego neighborhoods.

Stay tuned to future PastMatters columns for more about original street names and changes throughout the city.

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



Retired physician William B. Hollington lived across the street from Louis J. Davids in this historically designated Victorian-era Queen Anne style home built in 1887. (Photo by Katherine Hon)