

Historic Nichols-Leong Mansion sells for Almost \$2 Million

by Charles J. Fisher

THE NICHOLS-LEONG MANSION in Cypress Park, a fabulous Colonial Revival residence, built in 1906 and designed by the architects John C. Austin and Frederick G. Brown, has fetched \$1,974,000.00 in a sale closed on August 13, 2020. The house was declared Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument No. 849 on August 16, 2006.

Austin went on to design some of Los Angeles' best known buildings, including the Griffith Park Planetarium with a later partner, Frederic Ashley, who lived in Garvanza. That partnership also designed the Arroyo Seco

Bank Building, which is now Union Bank, at York Junction.

Originally built for restaurateur Max Nichols, the home was sold by his heirs to Chinatown café owner, Jeung Leong in 1935. The Leong Family lived in the house until the death of their son Elmer in 1991, when ownership was transferred to his brother, the architect Gilbert L. Leong.

As Elmer had aged, the maintenance on the house had waned and it became more of a haunted house in looks.

Some say that it served as an inspiration for the design of

continued on page 3



President's Message

by JAMIE TIJERINA

Dear Members,

ON OCTOBER 1, 2020, the LA Cultural Heritage Commission voted to OFFICIALLY take under consideration the nomination of TWO buildings in Highland Park that were important places in the Chicano Movement: Centro de Arte Publico and Mechicano Art Center.

This is huge!

As the threat of erasure of Chicano history, art, and culture looms over us throughout LA, these nominations demonstrate how important it is to act now to protect it. The Commission's unanimous votes to consider these nominations speak volumes in acknowledging this, especially in this important year that marks the 50th Anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium.

Our VP & resident professional architectural historian Alexandra Madsen did countless hours of research to put together these two strong nominations and strong presentations to the Cultural Heritage Commission. With the help and support of our fellow board members, numerous members of the community (like YOU!), elected officials, non-profit leaders, our Communications Deputy Sam Andrel, we united a strong coalition that showed up in full force to advocate for the Preservation of Chicano History in our Northeast and Eastside Communities of Los Angeles.

The Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) is scheduling the final presentation and vote for the Chicano Arts Collective's nomination for their meeting on January 21, 2021, 10am.

The Commission needs to hear from you, the community!

Voice your support for these by emailing: chc@lacity.org

Subject Line: Centro de Arte Publico CHC-2020-5209-HCM; and Mechicano Art Center CHC-2020-5211-HCM

"We are in support of preserving Chicano history and culture in HLP, NELA and the Eastside of LA!"

If you are with an organization that would like to offer support and need a letter template for guidance, email: sam.andrel@hpht.org and we will send it to you ASAP.

Make sure to follow Highland Park Heritage Trust on Facebook and Instagram @highlandparkheritagetrust to stay updated on ways you can help ensure that these buildings are rightfully designated as Historic Cultural Monuments in the City of Los Angeles.

We will also be making posts in the weeks to come to teach you more about the history and impact of the collectives on the community and beyond.

Highland Park Heritage Trust

2020 Officers

President: Jamie Tijerina

Secretary: JJ Jackman

Treasurer: Charly Kemp

Membership Chair:

Anne Marie Wozniak

Board of Directors

Antonio Castillo

Steve Crouch

Charles Fisher

Irma Jurado

Eric Magallon

Stephanie Maynetto-Jackson

Keiko Miller

Anthea Raymond

Robert Spira

Louisa Van Leer

Nancy Verma

Our Cornerstone is the official newsletter of the Highland Park Heritage Trust, a non-profit community organization.

Editors:

JJ Jackman, Carmela Gomes,

Antonio Castillo

Layout: Future Studio

Distribution:

Robert Mactavish and Marcia Gurrola

Email articles to: Info@hpht.org

Mail to:

HPHT

P.O. Box 50894

Los Angeles, CA 90050-0894

HPHT message line: (323) 908-4127

www.hpht.org

Find us on FACEBOOK
and INSTAGRAM

NICHOLS-LEONG MANSION *continued from page 1*

the haunted house in Disneyland. After Gilbert Leong sold the house and it went through several owners before it was restored around 2002 and later and became a Highland Park Heritage Trust award winner.

Unfortunately the mortgage meltdown in 2008

ultimately lend to foreclosure. The house was eventually purchased by WS Investments in 2018. The new owners began a work regimen that restored much of the infrastructure of the home as well as bring back the facade and interior details. They also replaced the garage that had disappeared sometime after 1976.

Welcome New Board Members to HPHT!

At our December board meeting, HPHT elected three energetic and terrific folks to the Board of Directors. We look forward to working with Nancy, Stephanie and Anthea in the coming year.



Nancy Verma:

Nancy is a local Arroyo Seco resident with a background in urban design, real estate and digital media. When not walking her dogs

around the historic streets of NELA neighborhoods, she can be found gardening and traveling the world from her kitchen. She is honored to serve on the Highland Park Heritage Trust to help promote and protect the rich tapestry of the Arroyo Seco's unique cultural and architectural history.



Anthea Raymond:

You may know me as the producer of the Trust's last two Conservation Awards or the creator of its recent Cypress Park

Walking Tour. Now I'm very excited to join the board as I've been exploring LA's hyper-local histories since the 1990s, when I produced and directed an Emmy-nominated documentary on Ocean Park, California. I'm a native Angeleno who grew up on the Westside and still serve on the board of an historical society there. But I live here and I love my neighborhood in Cypress Park and its complicated history. I hope I'll be a bridge between our community and the other Arroyo Seco neighborhoods as we join together to give our stories past and present voice.



Stephanie Maynetto-Jackson:

Stephanie is a retired combat veteran, a widow, and most importantly a mother to two

young boys. She was born and raised in Highland Park, spending her formative years in this community before going off to serve in the U.S. military. She earned her BA in Management in order to learn how to become a better leader. Her passions include serving her community, spending time with her family, and learning new skills. She looks forward to contributing to the Heritage Trust through her personal lived experiences and to learn more about the community that has been home for multiple generations of Maynettos.



character PROJECTS

Jonathan Silberman

Design, Vintage Lighting & Hardware, and Real Estate for Historic Homes in Los Angeles

characterprojects@gmail.com • 818-599-5568

characterprojects.com

BRE# 01491001

Councilmember Gil Cedillo Secures Capital Funds for Historic Ziegler Estate

by Robin Sherr

ON JULY 1, 2020, the Mayor concurred with Council to approve \$1.19 million dollars in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for upgrades to the City-owned Ziegler Estate in the Highland Park Historic Overlay Zone. Designated City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 416, this public asset is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Interior and exterior upgrades will address deteriorating conditions from intensive use as the Southwest Museum Station Community Services Center and outdated systems. The project will safeguard the Ziegler Estate's landmark status and benefit Northeast Los Angeles working families by providing parents/guardians with access to economic mobility and opportunity and early learning programs for their children.

"We are truly grateful to Councilmember Cedillo for championing our CDBG grant application," says MWPCCC Board President Susan Phifer. "He mobilized City staff from the departments of Public Works Bureau of Engineering, General Services, Housing + Community Investment, and Economic & Workforce Development to conduct a job walk, analyze building conditions, prepare a cost estimate, and determine compliance with HUD eligibility requirements." The City capital budget estimate is \$3,454,427, which will require a multi-year effort.

Built in 1904 by Charles Hornbeck and Alfred P. Wilson, the 5,000 square foot two and one-half story wood structure was designed as a residence with elements of both Queen Anne and American Craftsman architecture. Purchased by the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) from the Southwest Museum in 1992, the CRA and City rehabilitated and adapted it for use as a transit-oriented child-serving institution. Highland Park Heritage Trust advocated for the project over the 10-year period and participated in design reviews to gain funding or plan approval from seven public agencies at the local,



La Casita Verde Child Development Center at the Ziegler Estate, 4601 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles
Photo: Martha Benedict

regional, state, and federal levels.

In 2002, the project won the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Housing and Urban Development Secretary's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation. The award cited "an energetic coalition of city departments, the CRA, the Community Development Department, and citizens groups for rescuing a gem from decrepitude while bringing a high-quality child-care center to the underserved Highland Park area."

Adjacent to the Southwest Museum Station on Metro's L (Gold) Line, the Ziegler Estate is located at 4601 N. Figueroa Street. It houses La Casita Verde, operated by the nonprofit Mt. Washington Preschool & Child Care Center, Inc. (MWPCCC). MWPCCC provides quality and affordable early learning and care in centers serving working families of all incomes. Since 2001, MWPCCC has provided continuous operations at La Casita Verde and contributed to the Arroyo Seco's reputation as a hub of local and regional recreation, culture and education including exhibitions by the Mt. Washington Plein Air Painters sponsored by the Arroyo Arts Collective.

MWPCCC recruited former CRA manager Robin Scherr to prepare the CDBG grant application and requested a stabilization plan from Peyton Hall, FAIA

continued on page 5

HISTORIC ZIEGLER ESTATE *continued from page 5*

of Historic Resources Group, LLC (HRG) to justify the request since Peyton (along with Christy McAvoy and Frank Parello) provided preservation planning services on the original rehabilitation. MWPCCC has committed to commission HRG to prepare a Historic Structures Report and Maintenance Plan for the Ziegler Estate to guide the City and MWPCCC to make cyclical improvements

and facility maintenance to preserve its historic materials. MWPCCC is now seeking cash donations from historic preservation advocates and allies to help fund the \$50,000 cost of these plans. To participate in the Ziegler Estate Landmark Trust Campaign, contact Robin at rdscherr1@gmail.com or (818) 679-0757.

Mt. Washington residents Robin Scherr and her husband Richard Willson are long-time members of the HPHT



Membership with HPHT just got easier. We've instituted *JoinIt* for online registration and renewal.

You may join or renew online at <https://www.joinit.org/o/hpht>

...or mail a check along with your name, address, phone number to

Highland Park Heritage Trust • Attn: Membership • PO Box 50894 • Los Angeles CA 90050-0894

Indicate renewal or new membership in the note section on your check.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

- Individual \$20
- Family \$30
- Student \$5
- Sponsor \$50
- Benefactor \$100
- Angel \$200
- Lifetime \$500

- Renewal
- New Member

My preference for contact: Phone Email

- My employer or my spouse's employer matches gifts to non-profits.
HPHT is a 501c3 Non-Profit Corporation, Tax ID #95-4034485

- Since HPHT is a 501.c3 Non-Profit Corporation, consider creating an endowment. Does your employer match gifts to non-profits?

Beyond paying annual dues you can get involved at your level of interest, expertise and desire to learn in the following ways:

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cornerstone Articles | <input type="checkbox"/> Mailing Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Email |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing & Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Awards Ceremony | <input type="checkbox"/> Reception |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tours Docent | <input type="checkbox"/> Archiving | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School & Education Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral History |



5607 Figueroa Street, former site of the Centro de Arte Publico

**See President's Message (p. 2)
for important updated information and how you can help
this Historic-Cultural site nomination.**



UPDATE: We regret to report that, on December 16, 2020, the German Hospital in Boyle Heights was demolished by order of the City of Los Angeles before a nomination could be heard. HPHT is disappointed and outraged by this loss of more of our historic places on the Eastside of Los Angeles. (Photo: FB David A. Silvas)



PO Box 50894
Los Angeles CA 90050-0894
www.hpht.org

Address Correction Requested

What's Inside

Nichols–Leong Mansion
Historic Ziegler Estate
Please Renew Your Membership

follow **highland park heritage trust** on **facebook**