

# OUR CORNERSTONE



## CYPRESS PARK LIBRARY: A PROJECT IN LA'S ZERO-CARBON PROGRAM

*By: Anthea Raymond*



The Cypress Park Library is expected to reopen in January 2025, after Phase One of an internal makeover. These changes will position it at the leading edge of the City's program to decarbonize all its existing municipal buildings. The \$3 million project will be completed in two phases and the upgrades will include solar energy generation, full building electrification conversion such as a water heater, HVAC equipment and LED lighting, and onsite backup electric power battery storage systems.

During Phase One, which began late spring 2024 when the library closed, a new "smart" wiring system was installed. It will track both the building's energy consumption and, after Phase Two, generation. All the lights have been updated to LED, the gas connections have been removed, the HVAC and water heater are new, and energy-efficient window coverings have been installed.

Phase Two will bring solar panels to the library rooftop, and complete the system for storing and possibly sharing any extra energy generated. If all goes as planned, library users will also arrive and see a flat screen that is tracking both the energy the building is using and the energy it is generating. That project could be completed as early as this summer, according to one source.

The library is one for four "pilot" projects selected by the City to lead its municipal building decarbonization efforts. The other three are the Old Fire Station 39, the Balboa Sports Complex, and the Silverlake Library. *(Cont'd page 3) >>*



# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMIE TIJERINA



Dear Friends,

I hope you and your family had a restful and peaceful holiday season. As we embark on another year of tireless dedication to our community's preservation, we look back on all we accomplished in 2024.

Highland Park Heritage Trust welcomed a new board member, Mark Forbes, who will assume the role of Our Cornerstone's editor-in-chief.

We were able to submit two completed Historic Cultural Monument Nominations to the Office of Historic Resources. We are approaching the final stretch of organizing all necessary assets for a large nomination significant to Chicano history that will hopefully land on the National Register of Historic Places. We are also beginning the process of nominating two more historic landmarks for Historic Cultural Monument status in Los Angeles in 2025.

To close out the year, we secured a \$3,000 grant to help us produce and distribute Our Cornerstone news publication to wider swaths of the community. This grant will allow us to stock our local Arroyo Seco Public library and potentially other public places with print issues to ensure more NELA residents are as informed as possible on local history and issues.

As our social and political landscapes continue to morph in 2025, we remain unwavering in our mission to preserve the history of our Arroyo Seco Communities and serve our fellow community members the best way we can—through quality information and relentless advocacy.

We thank you for your support and dedication to our mission in 2024, and we look forward to continuing our crucial work in 2025.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jamie".



## 2025 Officers

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Secretary: JJ Jackman  
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# CYPRESS PARK LIBRARY: A PROJECT IN LA'S ZERO-CARBON PROGRAM

*(continued from page 1)*

The project could make history as the first municipal decarbonization project in the city. A parallel program requires all new municipal buildings to be zero-carbon emission by 2030.

The original location of the Cypress Park library, at 3320 Pepper Avenue, was landmarked in 2011, due to efforts by the Highland Park Heritage Trust. Built in 1927, it was named after Richard Henry Dana, the explorer and author, and its nautical design reflects that. Since then it has been restored and relaunched as the Cypress Park Clubhouse, managed and maintained by the LA City Department of Recreation and Parks.



In 2021, the Cypress Park Branch gained national attention when it became the venue for a performance by the teen punk band, the Linda Lindas. Their set went viral, spotlighting the library as a place where creativity, community and culture converge. It is also the meeting point for the community's annual Dia de los Muertos procession, which was postponed in 2024 due to permit issues.

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## MEET HPHT'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBER



As a fourth-generation Angeleno and a 20-year resident of Highland Park, **Mark Forbes** is thrilled to join the board of the Highland Park Heritage Trust. Mark originally moved to Los Angeles from Northern California to attend UCLA, where he received a B.A. in Psychology. After graduating, he began a long and successful career in the Internet industry as a content producer and project manager, working with the largest media companies, international brands, and high-end real estate developments.

With a desire to make a bigger difference in his community, Mark returned to college and has transitioned into a career in sustainability. He is now an accredited TRUE Advisor in zero waste, a certified Sustainability Technician, and has expertise in a number of sustainability issues, including climate change and conservation. He is currently a stakeholder on the Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council Environmental Committee, a member of the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance, and has become involved in a number of local environmental issues.

With a deep passion for preserving the environment, as well as local history, architecture, and culture, Mark is excited to use his skills as the latest editor-in-chief of Our Cornerstone. In his spare time, Mark enjoys gardening, photography, traveling, music, and writing.



# MOORE LABORATORY TOUR

*By: Mark Forbes*

In October, Heritage Trust members had the opportunity to take a tour of the Moore Laboratory of Zoology at Occidental College led by its Director, Dr. John McCormack. The internationally renowned lab is recognized for its incredible collection of over 65,000 bird specimens and holds the largest collection of Mexican birds in the world. The hummingbird portion alone represents 88% of all the known species.



*L to R: Clara Solis, Silva Blackstone, Mark Forbes, Dr. John McCormack, Yael Pardess*

Robert Thomas Moore of Pasadena, my great-grandfather, originally established the lab in 1951 with Occidental by donating his vast collection of birds and books so others could benefit from and carry on his work. The lab was retrofitted in 2018 to bring it up to modern preservation standards, ensuring that the collection will continue to be protected for years to come.



*Robert T. Moore in the Moore laboratory (1951)*

During our tour, Dr. McCormack unveiled a number of birds, which are meticulously documented and cataloged, and explained how they are used by researchers. In addition to being able to see this fascinating and colorful collection, we also had several interesting bird-related conversations with Dr. McCormack about the growing Los Angeles parrot population and the endangered Least Bell Verio, a Southern California native that local activists are diligently trying to protect.

Moore's legacy and fascination with birds continues today with researchers from around the world and generations of Occidental students who use the lab for historical surveys, conservation projects, and cutting-edge DNA research. For more information about the Moore lab or tours, scan the following QR code. >>



# BEFORE AND AFTER: 100 YEARS AGO ON FIGUEROA

By: Mark Forbes

This issue's Before and After features a familiar stretch of N. Figueroa St. around Avenue 56. The photo on the left was taken in 1925. Although the cars have changed, the buildings look the same!

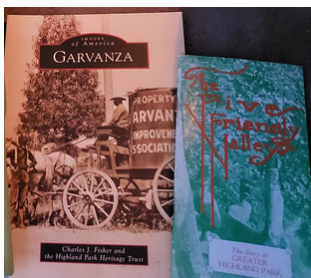


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## HPHT BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE AT POP HOP BOOKSHOP!

Looking for a special gift or the perfect book for your coffee table? You can now pick up copies of "The Five Friendly Valleys" and "Images of America: Garvanza" at our local bookshop, the Pop-Hop Books and Print.

Pop-Hop Books and Print is located at York Blvd. and Ave 50 (5002 York Blvd., 90042).



## NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO GIVE BACK TO HPHT

For your charitable giving in 2025, would you consider a contribution to the Highland Park Heritage Trust? We are an I.R.C. 501(c)(3) non-profit. Your donation to our General Fund is tax-deductible and will help our organization continue to fulfill its mission of preserving history throughout the Arroyo Seco and NELA regions.



You may Donate via PayPal or mail in a check to the address listed on page 2 of *Our Cornerstone*



# THANK YOU FOR ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL HPHT HOLIDAY PARTY!

*By: Jamie Tijerina*

On Monday, December 9, 2024, Highland Park Heritage Trust hosted its annual holiday party along with its board elections at Art in the Park LA at Hermon Park. It served as the perfect chance for us to connect with friends old and new as well as interact with our membership in-person.

We are excited to welcome Mark Forbes to our board as the new Cornerstone editor-in-chief and look forward to his ideas on how we can continue to serve our community through print and digital outreach. Thank you to all who attended, and we wish you all the best as we head into 2025!





# THE LOS ANGELES FIRES - JANUARY 2025

*By: Mark Forbes*

Starting on January 7, 2025, Los Angeles was set ablaze by the worst fires in its recorded history. Fueled by winds throughout the region in excess of 90 miles per hour, the Palisades and Eaton fires burned thousands of homes and affected hundreds of thousands of people for years to come. In the several days following, other fires popped up around the county, some of which were sparked by the larger fires and others by suspected arsons.



*Remains of a house in Altadena*

At the time of publication, at least 24 people have lost their lives to the fires and our heart goes out to their families and friends. Thanks to wide-reaching warnings and evacuation alerts, as well as the quick work of LAFD and many fire departments from around California and out-of-state, the loss of lives has been minimized.

In Northeast Los Angeles, fire crews managed to hold the fire line north of the 134/210 freeways. Businesses and residences south of the freeways were affected by the high winds, downed trees, power outages, and roof damage but largely unaffected by fires itself. However, many of us know families and friends whose lives has been changed forever by these fires. We will continue to see the impact of this disaster first-hand and on an ongoing basis.

As round-the-clock work continues to extinguish the fires, the damage that has been done will last lifetimes. All of us at the Highland Park Heritage Trust empathize with those impacted by this catastrophe.

While our homes, businesses, schools, churches, and public spaces have been lost, we know that our communities are resilient and that despite the loss, we will rebuild stronger than ever.



*Roof damage in Highland Park*