

# THE SIGNAL

San Buenaventura Conservancy

Volume 04. Number 02 | July through September 2008

## Project Encore Elks Lodge - July 2008

BY STAFF

Project Encore (PE) has established a working relationship with the owners of the Elks Lodge to explore programming options for the lobby and grand third floor theater. PE envisions this as a two phase process.

**Phase one** began in June and ends upon the start of restoration in mid-2009. PE's lease allows for very low cost use of the space as-is for non-profit groups and start-up creative ventures. This model allows for creative programming and fundraising in the Lodge without high rental fees.

**Phase two** will begin after the completed restoration. This transformation will unveil an ADA accessible theater with new elevator, restrooms, electrical, heating, and a faithfully restored historic lodge building. PE is planning for a sustainable cultural space that serves the community as a cultural venue as it has for the last 80 years. ❧



ENCORE! After weeks of rehearsals beginning in early July 2008, the Rubicon Theatre Company was the first to program the Elks Lodge Theater with their summer youth performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream". The show ran July 9 through 13.

## Views From The Porch Enter The Hero

BY STEPHEN SCHAFER

Every now and then I get a letter from someone in town similar to this: Dear Conservancy, I am writing to tell you about the abandoned "INSERT RESOURCE NAME HERE". The letters go on to say ...please save this valuable part of our heritage... Sincerely, Concerned In Ventura.

That is our job right? We are the stewards of the preservable, we are the "Conservancy." We look out for landmarks and historic and cultural resources both above and below ground. In Ventura, there is another conservancy for the hillsides, and one for the river, and another group for birds and surf and abalone. We all have our marching orders - protect everything in our purview. This seems reasonable, as I expect the surfriders to call a protest if there is an oil spill, and I expect an e-mail from the birders if someone's chopping down trees in spring. Likewise, I consider it our duty to tell our membership when there is an important preservation vote at city council, or if a resource is in danger of destruction, so they can write a letter to the mayor or call a supervisor (or chain themselves to a post-war hotdog stand).

In our Mission city, we have about 40,000 structures. There are probably around 40% over 40 years old in the city limits, and with nearly 75% in the city's historic downtown over 40, you can imagine where all the attention is focused. Most of downtown was populated with Chumash Indians before the Mission, so even the new buildings downtown have very significant resources under their floors. Many of our structures aren't historic, no, many of them are just over 40 years old, they're not architecturally significant, they're not associated with an important person or event, they're just old. It would be easy if they were all significant, because The City Council could name them all landmarks, and preservation would be done (and I could spend more time saving the abalone).

So, in a historic California town with almost 15,000 buildings over four (4) decades old, how can we expect to keep track? Enter the Heros. You may call them historians or preservationists or house-huggers (I was once called a "passionate single-issue advocate" by the planning director one

- CONTINUED PAGE 3

## SIGNAL INSIDE

Did You Know...?	2	CPF 2-Day Workshop in Ventura	Insert
Action Items Update	2	Town Calendar	4

# Did you know...

# Action Items Update

BY STAFF

## CITY OF VENTURA

- **Historic Preservation Committee** [HPC] meets every 4th Monday of the month at 4 p.m., Santa Cruz Room | City Hall.
- **Planning Commission** meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., Council Chambers/City Hall.
- **Design Review Committee** [DRC] meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m., Council Chambers | City Hall.
- **City Council** meets every Monday at 6 p.m., Council Chambers | City Hall. [www.ci.ventura.ca.us](http://www.ci.ventura.ca.us) for agendas and minutes.

## VENTURA COMMUNITY COUNCILS

- **Westside Community Council** – for meeting times and locations, please visit website at: [www.wcventura.org](http://www.wcventura.org).
- **Downtown Ventura Organization** please visit website for meeting times. [www.downtownventura.org](http://www.downtownventura.org).
- **Midtown Community Council** meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., Cooper Hall | 65 S. MacMillan Ave. [www.midtownventura.org](http://www.midtownventura.org).
- **East Ventura Community Council** meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., 1st Assembly of God Church | 346 N. Kimball Road, Room E-3. More info – 805.647.5422.

## CITY OF FILLMORE

- **City Council** meets the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., City Hall. [www.fillmoreca.com](http://www.fillmoreca.com).

## CITY OF OXNARD

- **City Council** meets generally 3 Tuesdays per month at 5:30 p.m., please visit their website for exact dates. [www.ci.oxnard.ca.us](http://www.ci.oxnard.ca.us).

## CITY OF SANTA PAULA

- **City Council** meets the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., City Hall. [www.ci.santa-paula.ca.us](http://www.ci.santa-paula.ca.us).

## COUNTY OF VENTURA

- **CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD** meets the 2nd & 4th Monday of each month at County Hall of Administration | Govt. Center. [www.ventura.org/rma/planning](http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning)

- Recent Conservancy projects have included a June meeting with the Ventura Unified School District on the E.P Foster House and Avenue School property. We will be trying to find ways to utilize the property and stabilize the buildings in a long-term, sustainable way.
- The Planning Commission held a special meeting to assess the cultural resource issues and mitigations surrounding the development of the Embassy Suites Hotel at the end of Figueroa Street across from the Ventura County Fairgrounds. Conservancy members made comments and supported a full archaeological assessment of the site before any work would start. The developer wanted to do archaeological work in tandem with their construction and foundation work. The Planning Commission agreed that a full assessment by Greenwood & Associates should be performed before any construction activity could start.
- In mid-July, president Stephen Schafer was able to attain 36 letters of support for the Oxnard's Wagon Wheel Motel and Restaurant's adaptive reuse and preservation in the face of a development that would scrape the entire 64-acre site for new urban housing and 3 high-rise towers. The letters will be used as testimony in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to show public support for preservation of the most significant buildings at this gateway site .
- Conservancy members have attended all this year's Ventura Historic Preservation Committee meetings and made comments on large and small preservation and development projects. We will continue to monitor all meetings. ❧

## San Buenaventura Conservancy First Memorial Tribute

The San Buenaventura Conservancy would like to thank  
**The Dorothy Ranger Henderson Memorial Tribute**  
for their generous gift received at the end of April, 2008.

Dorothy Ranger Henderson was the dear mother of Millie R. Schofield, who is the great granddaughter of Orpha Woods Foster and Eugene Preston Foster.

Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Foster were Ventura philanthropists whose efforts contributed the entire recreation and parks system in Ventura County, Seaside Park, the E. P. Foster Library, Foster Memorial Hospital (Community Memorial Hospital), the modern foundation of the Ventura Unified School District, and the first causeway road from San Buenaventura to Santa Barbara, to mention just a few.

Millie's early support of archival information in the pursuit of a preservation program for the Foster House located on Ventura Avenue was a critical part of the beginning foundations of community preservation awareness that led to the eventual formation of The San Buenaventura Conservancy.

# ...now you do!

Get involved!

02 | July through September 2008

# Hero

- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

night at city council). Call them what you will; I call them heros, because that is what they are. (And they is us.)

Without people who care about places (or birds, or beaches, or bears...) there would be no way to effectively protect all the resources in any urban area. I believe this completely; every structure, or sacred archaeological place or tree or bridge or landscape – every resource – needs a hero! That is not to say all heros are preservationists, far from it, many are homeowners, or car buffs, or hotdog aficionados, or you. The word hero does conjure up visions of a guy in tights and a cape who battles evil developers with a POW! CRASH!! BANG!!!, then dashes off to stop the next demolition in a nick of time, before slipping into a (now historic?) phone booth to resume his life as a mild-mannered antique dealer. I presume most preservation heros aren't the cape-n'-tights type. Of course, I have a really broad definition of hero.

When my wife and I bought our 1881 tear-down farmhouse, we inadvertently became preservationists. It could be said that at the same time, we inadvertently became the heros of our house. Despite not knowing what we were doing, we sensitively renovated the house and now it's worth too much to demolish. Elizabeth, the 91 year old Scottish woman who owned the house before us could be considered a hero for fixing the roof and the paint for 50 years, but never remudding the house with a 1960s, 70s or 80s kitchen and bathroom. Some heros I've met save one building this month and then move on to save another next month, because there's always a list worth saving. Some heros buy a place and fix what they can, when they can, year after year, until it is saved forever because of its perfect condition. Other heros drive by a place for decades and then when the wrecking crew shows up, they step in at the last minute, buy it, move it, and save the day. Some heros are architects that don't show their clients the inappropriate additions, so they only have compatible ones to choose from. Some heros won't sell their tiny cottage even though every other house in the neighborhood has been converted into high-rise apartments. Some heros go to late-night city council meetings and demand change, and some fail and then go to council again next week. I could go on and on.

My hypothesis – that every building needs a hero – may not be flawless, but I have yet to find a place worthy of preservation that wasn't saved because at least one person thought it was important enough to preserve. The caveat being

that many places were saved by people that just lived there and did normal things, until those normal things all added up to preservation. You've heard of 'demolition by neglect', this is the case of 'preservation by neglect', and since the end result is preservation, I'm willing to bestow the hero moniker to them as well.

One thing my dad always taught me was "Nobody's going to do it for you." And so, I will keep writing my "Dear Hero" letters with a genuine gratitude for all the volunteer heros, putting dad's theme out there in an empowering way. Here's a sample:

Dear Concerned,

Thank you for your letter, I have contacted our Board of Directors to put your resource on our watch-list. We will be contacting the city to find out your resource's status, but I would appreciate further updates from you. Many times communication and advocacy are the most effective ways to preserve a resource and the Conservancy is ready and willing to share resources and give you any support you need.

I would caution that our watch-list is long, and we have many issues to advocate. The best way to protect your resource is to become it's hero. Every building needs a hero to watch out for it, to garner support for it, and advocate its preservation. People preserve buildings and resources, they don't preserve themselves, so it is imperative that someone with your enthusiasm, take it upon themselves to do all they can to make preservation a reality. If no one cares about a resource it will likely disappear with little ceremony, however, often it only takes one person to introduce the entire city to how valuable a resource is, and even tiny resources are important to the historic fabric and character of Ventura. With hundreds of resources to watch over, the Conservancy is grateful when individuals come forward and take one under their wing. I know it may be hard to imagine yourself a preservation hero, but you already are for contacting us. Keep up the good work, keep in touch with developments, and let me know how we might be of assistance. I will help in any way I can.

Sincerely, Stephen Schafer,  
President, San Buenaventura Conservancy

With that, I hope to have created another preservation hero, someone who will monitor the resource they feel passionate about. I hope I have also made you a little more aware of how important the little things we can do for preservation are. We're all capable of heroic acts in the name of historic preservation, I have a couple of resources under my wings myself; I'm their squeaky wheel, I go to planning commission meetings to advocate their preservation, and I sing their praises at cocktail parties. Which resources have you heroed?

Thanks for being a preservation hero, but I have to go now, my tights are giving me a wedgie. ❧

 Dana H. Fisher | 3.23.44 – 6.18.08 

It is with great sadness that the SBC learned of the passing of Dana H. Fisher recently. Dana was a founding member of the Conservancy in 2004.

He worked as a land surveyor in Palm Springs and for the County of Los Angeles. He moved to Oxnard in 1978, and worked as a shipwright and rigger, as well as selling yachts. He met his wife, Linda, at the Whale's Tail Restaurant in Channel Islands Harbor.

One of his passions was locating his grandfather's, F. Julious Fisher, artwork. He was a decorative artist of fine architecture, creating stenciling, wood-carving, easel art in scenic oil and watercolors. Dana created a website devoted to his grandfather's work, which led to his interest in historic preservation. The address is: [www.fjuliousfisher.com](http://www.fjuliousfisher.com)

Dana will be remembered and missed with great fondness and the SBC extends its condolences to his family and loved ones. ■

## ⌘ Board of Directors

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President | 805.652.1000

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## Appointees

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Dan Long

Membership Chair

Emma Armstrong

Membership Administrator

Sherry Schafer

Newsletter Editor | sherry@west.net

Stephen Schafer

Archivist | schaf@west.net

# 2008 Town Calendar

- 07/09 · SBC Board Meeting
- 07/14 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 07/28 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 07/28 · Historic Preservation Committee Meeting
- 08/06 · SBC Board Meeting
- 08/11 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 08/14-15 · CPF Workshop – City Hall, Downtown Ventura
- 08/25 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 08/25 · Historic Preservation Committee Meeting
- 09/08 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 09/10 · SBC Board Meeting
- 09/22 · County Historic Board Meeting
- 09/22 · Historic Preservation Committee Meeting
- 01/14/09 · Upstairs | Downtown:Downtown | Underground

## ⌘ Mission Statement

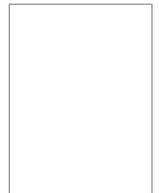
The San Buenaventura Conservancy is a non-profit membership organization that works through advocacy and outreach to recognize, preserve and revitalize the irreplaceable historic, architectural and cultural resources of San Buenaventura and surrounding areas. We seek to increase public awareness of, and participation in, local preservation issues, and disseminate information useful in the preservation of the structures and neighborhoods of San Buenaventura.



Post Office Box 23263

Ventura, California 93002

www.sbconservancy.org



DATED  
MATERIAL





California Preservation Foundation  
 Ventura 2 Day Workshop | August 14 + 15, 2008



Day 1 | Identifying Historic Integrity

Day 2 | Secretary of the Interior's Standard for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Sponsored by the San Buenaventura Conservancy and The City of Ventura.

## Day 1

### IDENTIFYING HISTORIC INTEGRITY

Thursday, August 14, 2008 in Ventura, California

AIA, AICP & MCLE CEU available!

**Register online now! Or get more information and access a downloadable Registration Form on GPF's website.**

**You may also contact GPF office for a Form (ceisen@californiapreservation.org or (415) 495-0349 x202).**

- **Integrity is defined as the “the ability of a property to convey its significance.”** Historic Integrity is often cited as the most confusing aspect in the evaluation of historic resources and at times becomes the make-or-break factor in their evaluation. But what constitutes integrity varies not only with the historic context, but also with the criteria for evaluation associated with the resource.
- This workshop will dissect the concept of historic resource integrity into its component parts, examining local, state and national thresholds, how the condition of

a resource factors into assessments, and individual vs. district integrity.

- Case studies will illustrate how historic integrity relates to CEQA and case law, and how unique structures have lost, or gained integrity in the short span of a few years because of context changes. All presenters will be available for a panel Q & A.
- Finally, the day will close with a special presentation on the integrity of archeological historic resources and an optional walking tour to Ventura's downtown archeological dig.

## Day 2

### THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR THE TREATMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Friday, August 15, 2008 in Ventura, California

AIA, AICP & MCLE CEU available!

**Register online now! Or get more information and access a downloadable Registration Form on GPF's website.**

**You may also contact GPF office for a Form (ceisen@californiapreservation.org or (415) 495-0349 x202).**

- **“The Standards” as they are called, are the most important guidelines for protecting historic resources.**
- This workshop will provide an overall and in-depth examination of the Standards and their interpretation. Lectures and case studies will explore the topics of reversibility, contextual infill, and compatible alterations and additions, with time for Q & A with all of the speakers.

- The workshop will examine case studies as diverse as the Gamble House restoration in Pasadena, and the counterpoint of the tiny Zephyr surf shop in Santa Monica. The workshop will conclude with an examination of Standards and their relationship to Historic Tax Credit Projects, and a field-trip to the Ventura Elks Lodge, Ventura's most recent tax credit project (still being processed).

Register online now! Please visit the website for details and fees.

[www.californiapreservation.org](http://www.californiapreservation.org)



# The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

**1.** A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

**2.** The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

**3.** Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

**4.** Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

**5.** Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

**6.** Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where

possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

**7.** Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

**8.** Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

**9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

**10.** New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

(Standards website: [www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm)) ❏

## Membership Application

PLEASE SELECT ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP (†) CATEGORY

[(†) NON-PROFITS/BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS BEGIN AT SUPPORTING LEVEL]

INDIVIDUAL \$35       DUAL/FAMILY \$55       SUPPORTING \$100  
 SUSTAINING \$250       BENEFACTOR \$500       CORNERSTONE \$1000 +

NEW     RENEWAL     GIFT/GIVEN BY \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

TODAY'S DATE \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBERSHIP YEAR IS JANUARY TO DECEMBER.

Please make checks payable and send to:

SAN BUENAVENTURA CONSERVANCY

Attn: MEMBERSHIP, Post Office Box 23263, Ventura, CA 93002

San Buenaventura Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Your payment is tax-deductible. We thank you for your support and welcome you to the San Buenaventura Conservancy!

[www.sbconservancy.org](http://www.sbconservancy.org)

Make  
A  
Difference.

Save  
Yesterday  
For  
Tomorrow.

Join  
Today.