

Park & Restoration

The newsletter of the Balboa Park Committee of 100

Working to preserve Balboa Park's historic architecture, gardens and public spaces since 1967.

www.balboaparkcommitteeof100.org



Mayor Todd Gloria accepting the restored murals, April, 13, 2021. Photo Michael Warburton

Kudos from the Mayor

by **Roger Showley**, President
Balboa Park Committee of 100

Mayor Todd Gloria heaped praise on the Balboa Park Committee of 100 at the April 13 presentation of the San Diego Automotive Museum restoration project to the city of San Diego.

"The Committee of 100's hard work has, of course, brought many philanthropic contributions to Balboa Park," he told a masked and safely...

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President's message

by **Roger Showley**



New name, new look, new faces, new to-do list for 2021. The Board of Directors in January approved updated bylaws, including a slight change to our name -- the "Balboa

Park Committee of 100." This change from "The Committee of One Hundred for the Preservation of Spanish Colonial Architecture in Balboa Park" instantly signals what we're about in fewer words. Our mission remains the same: "Working to preserve Balboa Park's historic architecture, gardens and public spaces since 1967."

The spiffier name prompted a redesign of our newsletter, not only to give it a cleaner look but

also to simplify production. We hope to publish three issues this year. It's a work in progress and we're always interested in your feedback. Our new website, balboaparkcommitteeof100.org, is also evolving, while the previous website remains active, c100.org. Thanks to board member Benjamin Thiele-Long and London-based freelance senior creative graphic designer Naomi Finn.

New faces on the board include Kevin Carpenter, Kaylee Drexel, Samuel Dychter, Tommy Hernandez, Melissa Peterman, Michael Robinson and Benjamin Thiele-Long. Ron Buckley, former Projects Committee chairman, and Kevin Bentz, former treasurer and Finance Committee chairman, have stepped off the board and been added to the C100 Advisory Council -- and we thank them for their long service.

Under our new bylaws, officers are approved



Roger Showley, C100 President, at Auto Museum dedication April 13, 2021. Photo Carol Showley

by the board for one-year terms, starting in January. I'm joined by Lynn Silva, vice president, Sam Dychter, treasurer, Danny Codd, secretary, and Mike Kelly, past president.

Our to-do list includes completion of the San Diego Automotive Museum restoration -- be sure to stop by for a look. Four final items: Two California grizzly bear statues and flagpoles, a historical marker at the building entrance in collaboration with the Friends of Balboa Park and a bronze wall plaque honoring major donors, subject to the approval of the city's Balboa Park Committee.

Next we will turn to the Municipal Gym, which was the Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries at the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition. We hope to bring back the monumental, bronze-like panel and other decorative elements. Repainting will start this summer in collaboration with city facilities workers.

With the Covid-19 pandemic still raging, our annual spring luncheon will have to be postponed for a second year. When allowed, we hope to celebrate the completion of the Auto Museum project in person sometime this year. That means we'll conduct our annual election of directors by mail and email in June.

We delayed our annual fund-raising appeal to February to coincide with the installation of the tile murals. Along with the election materials, look for a special pitch to support the Muni Gym restoration. Please join us by sending checks to our park address, 1649 El Prado, Suite 2, San Diego CA 92101, or donating online via PayPal at balboaparkcommitteeof100.org. All donations will qualify as 2021 dues. See online details on special incentives in coming weeks online or call me for details.

Thanks as always for your support. It's already been a great year for our 54-year-old organization.

Roger Showley
(619) 787-5714
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For information on nominating yourself or someone else to the board, see page 10

THE BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE OF 100 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ADVISORY COUNCIL

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distanced crowd. "Helping us to improve our park by preserving its history, it's so important. As someone who majored in history, I understand exactly what you do for our park and our city to make it a better place to live."

Gloria, who previously represented the park as a City Council and state Assembly member, compared the state of things during San Diego's 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition, at the depths of the Great Depression, to today's pandemic and economic misery for so many.

"Just as times were difficult then, we find ourselves in the midst of great difficulty right now," he said.

The four painted murals, recreated in tile by CI00 on the fair's California State Building, stood as "beacons of hope," Gloria said. They depicted commerce, scenic beauty, agriculture and industry in a brighter future.

"The beauty of history is our ability to understand where we were, how we persevered, how we'll get through it," the mayor said. "We often do that through the visual medium of art."

He continued, "We are here today, these many, many years later, celebrating the vivid story of our city told in this beautiful art that is on these walls. While we have advanced significantly our lifestyles since 1935, two things, I think, still ring true about our great city: San Diego is still resilient and her crown jewel still shines."

Gloria said San Diego remains beautiful and dynamic, adding, "By reflecting on our past, we can imagine a vibrant future where San Diego ceases being content with what is fine and instead, chooses to be truly great."

And he looked forward to further improvements in the Palisades -- once a "sleepy corner" of the park, that can become "the crown jewel of our crown jewel" as one building after



Mayor Todd Gloria and Douglas Barnhardt receive commemorative tiles at the Auto Museum dedication April 13, 2021.

Photo Michael Warburton

another comes back to life.

Also speaking during the 30-minute celebration was Douglas Barnhart, whose Barnhart-Reese Construction company acted as construction manager and general contractor for the museum's restoration.

"We are here today, these many, many years later, celebrating the vivid story of our city told in this beautiful art that is on these walls."

He said while he has built much larger projects, like Petco Park, it's the small projects like C100's that give him great pride because they please people "you will never know that come and enjoy it."

"I just hope that San Diego and the Committee of 100 will stay with the vision, stay with the [reconstruction nearby of the Firestone Singing] Fountain and stay with what it's going to take to bring this plaza back to life. It will benefit San Diego not only commercially but it will reach into the heart of everyone who lives down here and bring us back. So thank you for allowing us to be part of your team."

Gloria and Barnhart both received commemorative mural tiles as tokens of C100's appreciation for their support.

City Parks and Recreation Director Andy Field promised that the city will move forward to renovate the nearby Municipal Gym, where C100 intends to restore artistic features of its facade, as well as the Balboa Park Club, the Botanical Building and other park buildings suffering from years of deferred maintenance. But he said it isn't just the city and groups like C100 that look after the park.

"The improvement of the park rests with each one of us," he said.

Auto Museum Director Lenny Leszczynski also thanked C100 for making this "much needed facelift."

"With the enhancements of the exterior, the staff, volunteers and members all have a little more pep in their step," he said. "There's a renewed energy and enthusiasm as we emerge from this pandemic."

Balboa Park Committee of 100 Wins SOHO's Gift to the People Award

The Save Our Heritage Organisation has announced that the Balboa Park Committee of 100 is the recipient of the 2021 "Gift to the People" award for the San Diego Automotive Museum restoration in SOHO's 38th annual People in Preservation Awards program.

"The implementation of the four monumental tile murals on the San Diego Automotive Museum brings back lost artwork to the park and is a crucial historical component to the Pan-American Plaza, and importantly, to Balboa Park as a whole," SOHO said in its commendation.

"SOHO appreciates and admires the dedication and work the all-volunteer team took in the six-year restoration project, and the sourcing and crafting (of) the materials needed to recreate the historic mural tiles. Upon completion, this project showcases to locals and visitors alike the history of the building and the importance of transportation and industry in the 1930s, and ties into the broader campaign to rehabilitate the entire Palisades in keeping with the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition. "For these reasons and more, it is truly a Gift to the People."



Auto Museum Restoration

Phase I Complete!

by **Kevin Carpenter**, Chairman, Projects Committee

The revival of the Palisades continues! Begun in early January, contractors and artisans have now restored the long-lost grand tile murals and bold bas-relief ornamentation to the Automotive Museum's facade.

Lost to decay after the conclusion of the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, the original faux tile painted murals were recreated with real glazed ceramic tiles by RTK Studios in Ojai, Calif. The 576 tiles were boxed and numbered and carefully shipped to the park for installation.

Like the original murals, the lightweight ornamentation also did not last long after the expo. The ornamentation – bold friezes along the parapet and over the doorways, and obelisks crowning the entry, have been recreated in durable glass-fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) by Bellagio Precast. These restored features will finally make permanent what was once only imagined to be temporary.

Also restored were key elements of the building's illumination. These lighting features will recreate the evening drama (and added safety) that the fairgoers once enjoyed, and aid in re-activating the Palisades area long after sunset.

The Balboa Park Committee of 100's construction team, led by contractor Barnhart-Reese Construction and citizen architect Robert Thiele, launched the project and kept up production even in the face of the ongoing pandemic. Only a few rain days slowed progress starting in late January. The team also worked closely with the Auto Museum to maintain site safety and the security of the collection – even while a separate asbestos abatement project was being carried out concurrently.

As the construction progressed, careful demolition of the original plaster revealed that the original building framing is in great condition and was deemed fully reusable (with only limited reinforcing) by the project structural engineer, Tony Court. The old growth lumber framing and wood lath proved too tough for San Diego's usual termites and moisture decay!

After cutting and removing the plaster within the outline of the murals, the tile subcontractor Christian Brothers began installing the murals. The original wood lath was first clad in water repellant felt, followed by wire lath, then a cement scratch coat, mortar and finally the ceramic tiles and grout. The tile murals now sit flush with the original plaster finish, just as though they had been there since 1935.

Upon completion of the tile murals, the crew moved on to installing the ornamentation. Molded in sections and shipped to the site, the lightweight yet durable GFRC sections of the upper frieze were anchored to the existing framing of the parapet through the original plaster, while the obelisks and lower frieze were bolted into new wood and stainless steel framing added to the original walls.

The lower frieze also conceals the new linear LED lighting fixtures for the murals. Sealing the joints and painting the entire facade were the final steps in blending the ornamentation smoothly with the rest of the building, and, like the murals, now look like they have always been there.



Hard working crew who did an amazing job!! Photo Robert Thiele



Detail of scenic beauty mural taken from scaffolding. Photo Roger Showley

The construction team then took down the fencing and scaffold to proudly present the restored facade to Mayor Todd Gloria for the city of San Diego at a press conference on April 13.

The team is now moving on to Phase II, the California bears and flagpoles.



Scaffolding and application of ornamentation in progress. Photo Roger Showley.

Once final design is complete and permits are granted for Phase II, the team will begin the steel reinforcing and lighting necessary to restore these features to the rooftop.

The two flag poles will fly the California and American flags over the entry rotunda, while the bears will grace the corners of the parapet at either end of the building. These finishing touches are targeted for completion by late this year and will finally restore the exposition's California State building to its former glory.



Ornamentation and detail of mural with RTK signature tile. Photo Michael Warburton.

How the 1935 Murals Came **Back to Life**

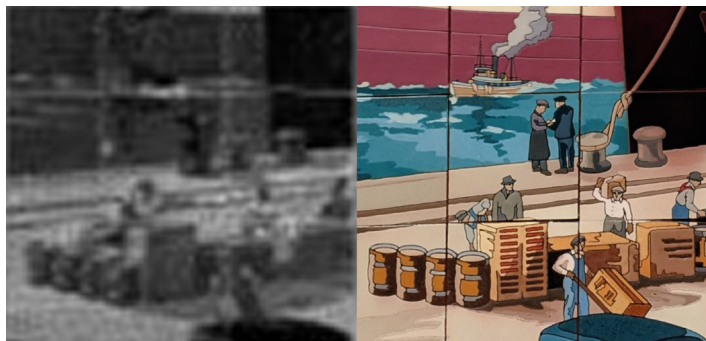
The husband and wife team of **Richard Keit** and **Mary Kennedy**, owners of RTK Studios, tell the story of the re-creation of the San Diego Automotive Museum murals.

In December 2015, RTK Studios in Ojai, Calif., was commissioned to recreate the once-prestigious murals on the 1935 California State Building (now the San Diego Automotive Museum) in durable ceramic tile.

Black and white photos were provided as references, though considering the sizable scale of the murals, most historical details sadly were unrecognizable. Careful computer manipulations were necessary, though it risked degrading precious visual information. Sleuthing out the details involved endless months of research leaving much to be conjured in-house and creating a shared rendition of the final artwork.

One rather frustrating obstacle, a strong vertical, dark and muddled on the "Industry" mural, at long last came to represent the monumental Colorado River Aqueduct, constructed from 1933 to 1939. All factors needed to be historically accurate to this era heralding the end of the Great Depression.

Other fun facts: The large ship in "Commerce" is the proud USS President Hoover Dollar Line turbine



Original Black & White Photo left; recreation of commerce tile right. Photo RTK Studios

steamship. Built 1930 and lost in 1937, the USS President Cleveland cruise ship is docked behind. Harbor Patrol and dutiful dock-master plucked from the murky black-and-white depths. 1930s Essex delivery truck, Hudson Motor Co., lower right. This is fun stuff to impress people at parties. RTK Studios' line art phase for the project was completed in February 2017.

Employing the "cuerda seca" (dry cord) tile-making technique, the line artwork is photo-



Mary Kennedy and Richard Keit, owners of RKT Studios, visit the site on March 12, 2012. Photo Shane Liberty

exposed onto silkscreens and a waxy medium is used to transfer the lines onto ceramic tiles. Four large silkscreens were needed per mural, excluding the upper 24 square feet of sky on each, 576 square feet of tile in total. It is a precise and physically demanding task to match each screened section perfectly to the next before glazing can begin.

Simultaneously, the glaze pallet was being developed, based on RTK Studios' knowledge of historical colors from this time period. As a nod to this bygone era, an artistic decision was made to add a burnished tint of antiquity to the overall pallet. Subtle variation is key to these nature-inspired murals. The sky, for instance, has seven separate dark-to-light glazes creating that characteristic Southern California haze. The far-back mountains nearly disappear into the atmospheric mist, more akin to the vapor than to earth.

No color references for the original murals were available. The black-and-white photos offered only light and dark clues. Over their 40 years of making architectural art tile, RTK Studios has amassed an extensive glaze repertoire from which to draw and an ongoing effort to create custom formulas that can cross blend with various raw minerals and complex glaze bases. Developing and



Mary Kennedy at work. Photo RTK Studios

testing are a familiar routine. The glazes, in a broad sense, are like liquid glass and applied as a painter would use paint. Each color or shade variation is a different formula that reveals its color only in its fired, melted state -- imagine painting in the dark. Predominately satin matte textured glazes were developed that mature while forming tiny crystals during the cooling cycle of the kilns.

The total firing cycle for the tiles takes approximately 60 hours, during which careful monitoring of the kiln is essential to balance the top-to-bottom temperature zones to within a degree or two, especially as it nears the peak of 1,980 degrees Fahrenheit -- in the ceramics world, a feat in itself! A slow cooling is important to prevent cracking from thermal shock. Luckily, the kiln gods were auspicious throughout this phase of the project.

Working in concert from mural to mural, most every surface in the studio was occupied with



Color Palette in development. Photo RTK Studios

this project in all stages of glazing. Alas, the largest studio table holds shy of four rows, barely offering a glimpse of the whole. The quietude of the pandemic lockdown eliminated distraction to be able to wholly focus on this project, allowing the husband-and-wife artistic team to toil and squabble in peace. RTK Studios' artistic addition to the building's rehabilitation was completed in May 2020. Installation of the tile murals began in March 2021.



Richard Keit using "cuerda seca" (dry cord) tile-making technique. Photo RTK Studios

Timeline:

- Dec. 4, 2015** Receive commission
- Feb. 9, 2017** Line-art, coloring phase finished
- Nov. 25, 2017** Fundraising banners hung
- May 17, 2020** All murals finished
- Feb. 4, 2021** All murals transported to San Diego
- March 4, 2021** Installation begun
- March 12, 2021** Richard Keit and Mary Kennedy visit site
- March 26, 2021** Scaffolding removed
- April 13, 2021** Official dedication

Artists:

Richard T. Keit and **Mary C. Kennedy**,
RTK Studios, Ojai, Calif.

Murals by the numbers:

- 576** tiles
- 12x12-inch** tiles
- 3,053** lbs total weight, **5.3** lbs each
- 400+** glazes formulated and tested for murals
- 173** glazes used on murals

Gertrude Gilbert Award 2020: **Darlene Davies**

by **Welton Jones**, Chairman, Nominations Committee

Spanning the millennium, Darlene Davies served four terms and an extra year on the city's Parks and Recreation Board, chairing what later became the Balboa Park Committee. Even when a distracted city hall failed to replace her after her fourth term expired, she and others soldiered onward, providing whatever continuity and leadership was possible.

Her stewardship worked, as the city gradually became aware of the park again. It was reminiscent of the way Gertrude Gilbert herself gently led preservation of the park's 1915-16 exposition buildings into the 1930s, when they were needed again for the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition.

Davies first discovered Balboa Park with her father, walking across the Cabrillo Bridge in 1940. She is still here, a retired professor emerita of speech at San Diego State University, and now, the Old Globe's historian.

From acting in the Old Globe's children's wing (now Junior Theatre) and later on the main stage through service as a board member for the Globe, the Natural History Museum and the Balboa Park Committee of 100, she has been a park fixture for decades.

The Lowell Davies Festival Theatre at the Globe is named for her late husband, a Globe leader for 40 years before his death in 1983.



Darlene Davies. Photo by Vincent Andrunas

C100 Board **Nominations**

In accordance with the Balboa Park Committee of 100's bylaws, nominations are now open for board of directors positions for 2021. In light of pandemic meeting restrictions, the election of board members will be conducted by mail ballot

and email this spring.

If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else to the board, please contact Nominations Chairman Welton Jones at tyree@cox.net or **619-997-8788**.

The requirements for board service include being an annual dues-paying member of C100; any donation of at least \$10 for student/low income or \$50 for individual/family year fulfills that obligation.

Send donations to 1649 El Prado, Suite 2, San Diego CA 92101, or via PayPal at the "Donate" tab on balboaparkcommitteeof100.org.

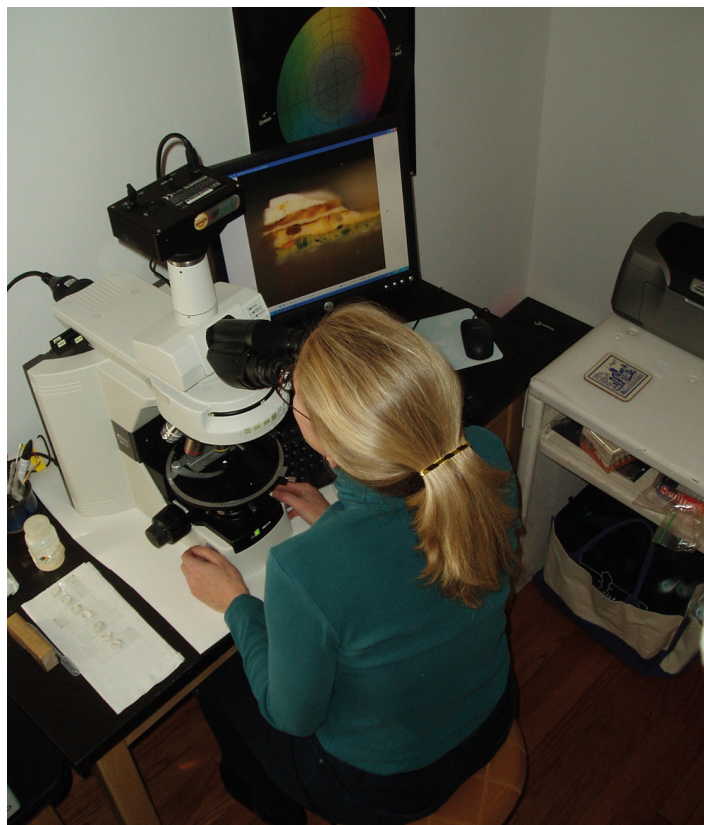
Laboratory Analysis Confirms 1935 Exterior Paint Colors of the Automotive Museum

by **Will Chandler**

The architectural designs for the 1915–16 Panama–California Exposition included uniform exterior color schemes for all buildings and related features.

The so-called temporary exhibition halls on the Central Mesa varied in style, but were unified by their pale walls and contrasting ornamentation, the same two colors on each building. In his plan for the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition, architect Richard Requa retained the 1915 colors on the Central Mesa buildings, both old and new. But he chose a very different scheme for the new Palisades exhibition halls. Those buildings blended indigenous New World architectural decorations with the streamlined glamor of 1930s Modernism.

With the exception of the Ford Building (today's Air & Space Museum), the other Palisades-area buildings each received dramatically colorful entrance decorations. The buildings themselves



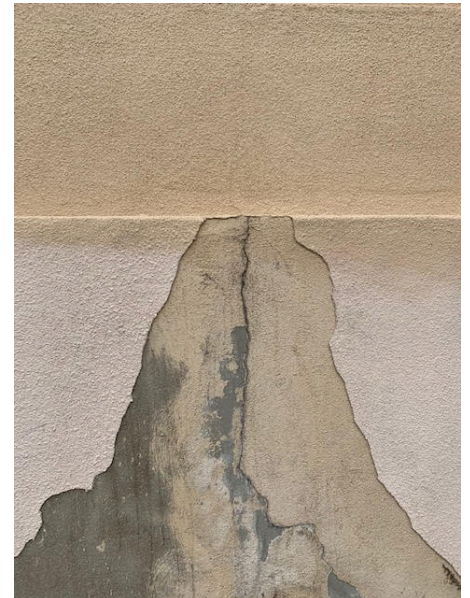
Susan L. Buck working on identifying the wall color of the Municipal Gymnasium. Photo Susan L. Buck

were left relatively plain, their walls and reliefs painted a nearly monochrome scheme that expressed modernity.

The Palisades colors were quickly forgotten after World War II, and the buildings were repainted several times in mismatched two-color versions of the Central Mesa buildings. No written records or reliable color images of the 1935 paints exist.

Fortunately, the original Palisades wall color was

found in a very thin layer under later paints on the Automotive Museum, the Federal Building (future home of the Comic-Con Museum) and the Municipal Gymnasium. Fragments of the Federal Building's original relief decorations, preserved by the San Diego History Center, retain the original



Auto Museum: This underlying paint layer was exposed by the painters. It matched Susan Buck's findings on the Muni Gym. Photo Robert Thiele

Palisades ornament color layer, almost identical to the golden tan wall color.

Complete paint layer sequence samples collected by the writer were sent to two nationally renowned architectural paint analysts. We are all indebted to Susan L. Buck, in Williamsburg, Va., who identified the wall color, and Natasha K. Loeblich, in Portland, Ore., who confirmed the ornamentation color. They successfully matched the 1935 colors to present-day commercially available exterior flat paints: Sherwin-Williams SW 6114 "Bagel" for the wall color, and Benjamin Moore AF-345 "Honeymoon" for the ornamentation.

Bertram G. Goodhue Award 2020: **Frank Drugan**

by **Renato Rodriguez**

Frank Drugan, a field representative for the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain, found himself in San Diego following the 1933 Long Beach earthquake where he had lost everything.

In search of a new beginning, he led the successful initiative to host the California Pacific International Exposition in Balboa Park in 1935-36. He worked to bring exhibits from Chicago's 1933-34 Century of Progress Exposition and was named executive secretary and director of foreign participation of San Diego's second expo.

Perhaps Frank Drugan's greatest legacy was his life's dedication to instituting the principles of world peace. He changed the name of the exposition's "foreign section" in the Palisades area of Balboa Park to the "House of Pacific Relations," with "pacific" referring to peaceful. The result was a series of 15 cottages (now 29) housing what today numbers 32 countries and cultures around the world. Drugan was named life president of the House of Pacific Relations Association and for the last 10 years of his life advocated for a third expo in the city. He died at age 70 in 1950.

Renato Rodriguez, former archivist at the San Diego History Center, is the county government's records manager and archivist.



Frank Drugan, left, receives Peace and International Friendship certificate from Elwood Bailey, executive vice president of the California Pacific International Exposition. Photo San Diego City Clerk Archives

Annual C100 Awards

Each year the Balboa Park Committee of 100 announces two awards in honor of people who have contributed to the park. The Bertram Goodhue Award, named for the architect of the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition, is given to someone who has contributed to the park's development and improvement in the past. The Gertrude Gilbert Award, named for a citizen advocate for park restoration in the

1920s and '30s, honors a living person who has championed park improvement and preservation in recent years.

If you have suggestions for recipients for 2021, please send them to Archives Chairman Bob Wohl at robertwohl@att.net or 760-729-1127.

Mural, Auto Museum Donations Still Welcome

The four beautiful ceramic tile murals are up above the entrance of the San Diego Automotive Museum for all to see. They were financed by generous donors who picked a tile to sponsor. There are still tiles available to "buy" -- \$250 for border tiles and \$500 for scene tiles. Donors are recognized virtually in the online images of the murals at the Balboa Park Committee of 100's website, balboaparkcommitteeof100.org - "Donate" tab/Tile Mural Project link (<https://c100.org/murals.php>). Make a donation and designate the tile you'd like to sponsor.

In addition to the tiles, you are welcome to make a major donation to the project and have your name appear on the bronze plaque that is proposed to be installed on the building later this year. Donors who contribute \$5,000 or more to the project will be included on the plaque. Checks should be sent to 1649 El Prado, Suite 2, San Diego CA 92101. You may also pay via PayPal by going to the "Donate" tab on the website. For more information, contact C100 President Roger Showley at rogershowley@c100.org or 619-787-5714.

Palisades Poster Contest

The Balboa Park Committee of 100 is partnering with the San Diego chapter of AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) to create an art poster inspired by the murals and ornamentation commissioned by C100 for the San Diego Automotive Museum.

Local artists, including professionals, amateurs and students from San Diego County and Tijuana, will be invited to submit designs and a jury of designers, C100 and museum representatives will judge the entries. The winner's design will be printed and distributed later this year. A signed and numbered limited edition of high-quality poster artwork also is planned to be sold to benefit C100's Palisades projects. If the contest is successful, C100 and AIGA hope to conduct annual poster contests to celebrate other achievements in the park.

The contest has been underwritten by the Peggy and Robert Matthews Foundation to cover costs. Peggy Matthews was a long-time C100 board member. "Peggy would have loved supporting this project," said Diane Stocker, the foundation's executive director. "She particularly would have liked the outreach into the community, letting people know about C100 and what they do and encouraging others to be involved with supporting Balboa Park."

If you are interested in participating in the contest or would like further information, contact AIGA Chairman Marc Hedges at marc@marchedgescreative.com or 619-203-8313, or C100 Archives Chairman at Bob Wohl at robertwohl@att.net or 760-729-1127. See details when available at sandiego.aiga.org and balboaparkcommitteeof100.org.

The Balboa Park of Committee of 100 wins a Merit Award in the Pacific Coast Builders Conference Gold Nugget competition!

We are pleased to announce C100 has won a Merit Award in PCBC's 58th Annual Gold Nugget Awards. We were among the candidates in our category, #5 Best Rehabilitation Project, to win the big prize for:

San Diego Automotive Museum/California State Building Restoration

Builder: **Barnhart-Reese Construction**

Developer: **The Balboa Park Committee of 100**

Architect/Designer: **Robert Thiele**

Photographers: **Robert Thiele, Roger Showley,
Shane Liberty, Michael Warburton, Mike Kelly;
RTK Studios**



Selected by two panels of top industry experts who reviewed over 600 entries, the winners showcase the most exciting trends in design, planning and building.

Award of Merit Winners are the top vote recipients in each category and are the finalists for the Grand Award announced in June. Awards are given for the best in custom, mixed-use, indoor-outdoor lifestyle, educational, senior housing, International, and 50 more building categories.

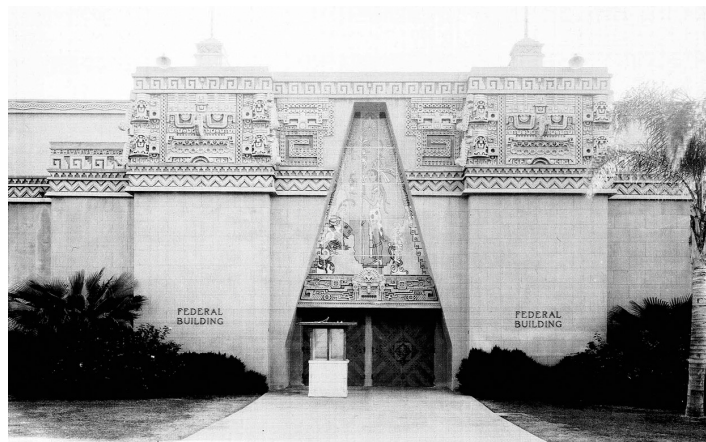
The California Pacific International Exposition of 1935, **Part II: Many Legends Born from 1935-36 Expo**

by **Bob Wohl**, Chairman, Archives Committee

Yes, Sally Rand performed two shows daily here through April 1935 with her salacious fan dance, and Mae West came as well. There were also 50 nudists in Zoro Garden who modeled for visitors, in no coverups, as they read, ate and played together. That was the most popular exhibit, after the Ford Pavilion devoted to the car company.

A replica Old Globe Theatre drew large audiences, with actors performing five daily 45-minute Shakespearean play excerpts. Day and evening concerts were given by traveling symphonies at the Ford Bowl and the Spreckels Organ Pavilion. Expo architect Richard Requa also designed the Spanish Village with 50 attractions, the only village built of his proposed "Villages of the World" exhibit area.

The original 1915 California Building and Tower (today's official symbol for San Diego) became the Palace of Science with the popular Alpha the Robot rolling his eyes, smoking cigarettes, firing a gun and performing stunts (human controlled). The "Midway" fun zone north of El Prado was declared the greatest amusement area of any expo ever, what with the Midget Village, Ripley's Believe It Or Not, the Indian Village and more. A western setting named Gold Gulch greeted you with a hanging dummy "varmit." The parachute jump attracted many daring fairgoers.



Federal building, soon to be the new home of the Comic-Con Museum. The Balboa Park Committee of 100 Archive Collection

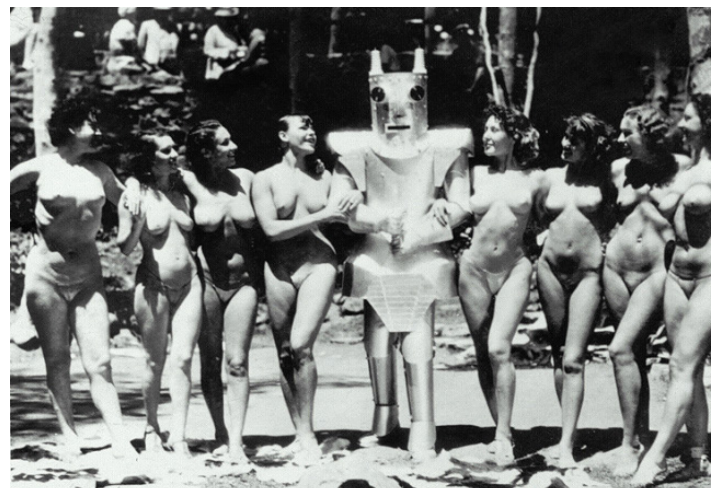


The Midway fun zone. The Balboa Park Committee of 100 Archive Collection

And then there was the "Lost Continent of Mu."

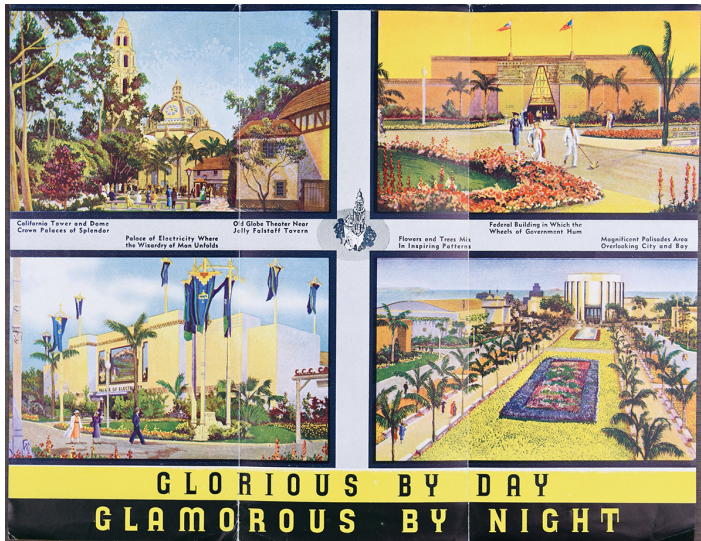
There were controversies aplenty over the nudes in Zoro Garden (knotholes in the fence lured eager males), but an attempt to remove it in 1936 on moral grounds was rejected. It was too popular.

For the second year, the raucous Midway was



Alpha the Robot with nudists. The Balboa Park Committee of 100 Archive Collection.

"cleaned up," banning the barely clad dancing girls, and the expo became a more wholesome family experience. Notorious Gold Gulch, with Gold Gulch Gertie riding "naked" on a burro through the mining



1935 exposition brochure. The Balboa Park Committee of 100 Archive Collection

town, and the hanging man were also eliminated. Nearly five million people came to the expo over the seven months it was open, until Nov. 11, 1935.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited in October, and greeted 50,000 people in Balboa Stadium. Many depression-relief federal funds went into the making of this event and the expo repeated in 1936, with two million more attending.

The California Pacific International Exposition of 1935-36 is the world's fair that the people of San Diego have often forgotten and ignored. And yet, the expo was remarkable for many creative designs. The most praised were the night lighting, the myriad musical speakers and performances, the marvelous gardens and hanging vines from some of the buildings.

The 1935-36 expo was a great and popular event, and did even more than the glorious 1915 expo to attract people to San Diego, some of whom would eventually settle here.

It was a shining beacon for a hoped-for recovery from the Great Depression and listless morale throughout America. The Palisades developed the southwest area of the park's Central Mesa, but the remaining buildings received little love or attention in subsequent decades. New uses were found for most of them, but for many, decorative elements, so admired at the expo, were lost.

Now, the Balboa Park Committee of 100 is leading the drive to return the Palisades to its original prestige and glory. Perhaps by the 100th anniversary of the expo in 2035, the buildings and grounds will be fully restored and repurposed to serve future generations of San Diegans.

Municipal Gym Update

The Balboa Park Committee of 100 isn't sitting long on its laurels after completing the murals and ornamentation on the San Diego Automotive Museum. The next project will be a similar restoration of the nearby Municipal Gym, known as the Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries at the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition.

Key features include a bronze-like relief panel, symbolic of the building's original intent, over the entrance. In addition more than 80 ornamental panels will replicate the originals in glass-fiber reinforced concrete at the parapet and on the marquee.

But first, as with the Auto Museum, the first step is to repaint the building in the same historic "Bagel" or "Palisades Tan" used on the Auto Museum last year. The C100 board voted to underwrite the approximate \$16,000 cost of materials and city crews will do the work in the same public-private partnership that worked so well previously.

To kick off a new C100 fund-raising campaign, C100 Vice President Lynn Silva and her husband Frank have pledged a \$25,000 lead gift toward what could be a \$300,000 project. More details on fund raising will be announced later.

"Frank and I are honored to contribute to the revitalization of the exterior of the Municipal Gym," Lynn Silva said. "It needs it! We have fond memories of the gym from playing there in our youth to watching our three boys playing basketball there. Additionally, fun times were had working at the Thursday Club Rummage Sale held in that same gym until we outgrew it! Please join us in the Committee of 100's restoration efforts to revive the Palisades portion of our city's crown jewel, Balboa Park. Here's to memories...then, now and the future."



Municipal Gym, March 9, 2021. Photo Roger Showley



BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE OF 100

Working to preserve Balboa Park's historic architecture, gardens, and public spaces since 1967

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Membership renewal for 2021

Won't you please join me and our many members of the Balboa Park Committee of 100 in renewing or "newing" a membership? Any dollar amount makes you a member. It's a great time to join and support all that's going on in the historical

preservation efforts of our city's "crown jewel." Send your contributions to Balboa Park Committee of 100, 1649 El Prado Suite 2, San Diego CA 92101. For credit card donations, use the PayPal link on our website, balboaparkcommitteeof100.org.

Lynn Silva, Vice President and Membership chair
(619) 980-5676, lynnrsilva@gmail.com

Calling all **volunteers!**

The Balboa Park Committee of 100 is an all-volunteer organization and that means that we depend on you to lend a hand to our four standing committees.

Finance is planning a major fund-raising drive. Membership is restarting a speaker's bureau, expanded park tours and an "emissary" program to represent C100 at various organizations and committees.

Archives is publishing more newsletters and setting up an internship program with local students, as well as keeping our digital archives, website and social media in shape. And Projects is focused on Phase II of the Automotive Museum, the addition of two California grizzly bear statues and two flagpoles, while looking to a similar restoration of the Municipal Gym next year. Former board member Pam Miller chairs the recently established C100 Advisory Council and is full of great ideas.

Please contact the committee chairs and offer to help:

Archives: Bob Wohl, robertwohl@c100.org

Finance: Sam Dychter, samdychter@c100.org

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Projects: Kevin Carpenter, kevincarpenter@c100.org

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