

THE
MONROVIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION GROUP
presents

THE *Preservation Conversation*

APRIL 2024 VOL 32 NO 4

MOHPG.ORG

"PRESERVING MONROVIA'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE"

40TH ANNUAL HISTORIC HOMES TOUR (MORE ON PAGE 4)



310 Wildrose Avenue



319 Wildrose Avenue



320 Wildrose Avenue



323 Wildrose Avenue

INSIDE

President's Message /2
Iris Award /5

April Program /3
Board Report /6

Home Tour Information /4
Recap Blinn House Visit /7

Calendar /8

MONROVIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION GROUP

Newsletter - April 2024
Volume 32 Number 4

*Published monthly (except August) by the
Monrovia Historic Preservation Group
P.O. Box 734
Monrovia, CA 91017*

MISSION

The Monrovia Historic Preservation Group (MOHPG) seeks to preserve Monrovia's architectural heritage through **advocacy and actions that promote historic preservation.**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Jim Wigton

Vice-President

Hal Leavens

Secretary

Michael Scharf

Treasurer

Michael Kaplan

Membership

Kristen Norton

Members-At-Large

Gloria Crudgington

Programs

Lee Schamadan

Fred Wasson

Rich Andrews

Tour Chair

Edie Ramirez

Sergio Jimenez

■ ■ ■

NON-BOARD POSITIONS

Legal Adviser

Darrell Brooke

Emails

John Zuk

The MOHPG Board of Directors meets the first Sunday of each month except August at 10 a.m. All members are welcome to attend. Contact Jim Wigton or any board member for meeting location.

MOHPG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit California corporation. Donations and membership dues may be tax deductible; consult your tax adviser.

■ ■ ■

NEWSLETTER

Staff

Jim Wigton
Susie Ling

The MOHPG newsletter staff welcomes article submissions and letters from our members for publication in the newsletter. All submissions are subject to editing.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Jim Wigton

DEALING WITH SACRAMENTO'S DIRECTIVES

The acute housing shortage in California has prompted the state legislature to recently enact several bills and policies to increase the construction of new housing to address this issue. That's the good news. There is universal agreement that the lack of housing, especially affordable, throughout the state is a real problem. What's not so good is that these "remedies" threaten cities with vintage neighborhoods by taking much of the decision-making process out of local control.

Currently, we are facing the proposed construction of two housing structures at the southern end of our historic downtown (one of them north and one of them south of Olive Avenue, adjacent to Myrtle Avenue on the west side). An EIR (Environmental Impact Report) for each of these proposals has yet to assess the impact these structures will have on the surrounding area, but increased traffic, parking issues, and noise will

THE BROOKE LAW GROUP, PC

DARRELL G. BROOKE

ATTORNEY AT LAW

CERTIFIED SPECIALIST - ESTATE PLANNING, TRUST AND PROBATE LAW

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

525 S. MYRTLE AVENUE
SUITE 204

MONROVIA, CALIFORNIA 91016-6145

TEL (626) 303-1806

FAX (626) 303-1812

E-MAIL: darrell@monroviatrust.com

undoubtedly intensify. The very real possibility exists that in the future the Myrtle Avenue corridor from Olive to Duarte Road could evolve into one long canyon of high rise buildings, a development that would assuredly impact the historic downtown area (Myrtle Avenue, from Palm to Olive).

A meeting requested by MOHPG with each of the developers has provided community members the means by which they can voice their comments and concerns. The first meeting was held with the developers of the 701 S Myrtle Avenue project on February 28 with over 60 people attending. The second is set for March 28 (after this newsletter goes to press). Whether or not these gatherings produce any modifications to the proposals remains to be seen. But without a doubt, civic participation is critical if we are to protect the "ambiance" of our neighborhoods that has taken decades and scores of individual effort to achieve.

When I conduct my monthly historic walking tours in downtown Monrovia, I repeatedly hear from those attending that they love the community and love living here. It would seem that's a feeling worth fighting for.

TEST YOUR MASTERY OF TRIVIA!

MOHPG and the Monrovia Historical Society are combining forces to host a trivia contest that will be open to members of the community. The contest will occur on Sunday, April 14, at 2 pm in the Community Room of the Monrovia Public Library. The event was originally planned to take place last year but was re-scheduled in the hopes of securing better community participation.

Prizes will be awarded to the teams with the highest score. Top prize: Each member of the winning team will receive two tickets to the May 5 40th Annual Historic Homes Tour. Prizes for teams not finishing at the top will also be awarded (At this time how many places will be given prizes is not yet known). To help us better prepare, **we are requesting that teams sign up ahead of time if at all possible.**

Teams may consist of 2-5 members. If you just want to show up that day, you can do so and form your own team with others that are not already a member of a team. If you form your own team ahead of time and wish to sign up prior to the event, **send an email to mohpg1980@gmail.com** and submit the names of the members of your team. (You will receive a confirmation email once you are entered). For added interest, pick a name for your team if you wish!

There will be several rounds of questions, each round consisting of ten questions. Rounds will be graded after each one is completed to help teams see how they are doing in the scoring. The trivia questions will be drawn from a number of categories,

including Monrovia history, and will vary in difficulty level. Snacks and drinks will be provided for those participating in the contest.

This is an event that is open to community members, so we hope that you will gather your friends together for an afternoon of challenge and fun. **And remember, it's free!**

DESIGN • ENGINEERING • CONSTRUCTION



Gary Schaeffler
Cell: (626) 484-5445

MOUNTJOY
CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

135 E. Chestnut Ave., Suite 3B • Monrovia • CA 91016
Tel: (626) 359-3275 • Fax: (626) 239-3624
E-Mail: mtjoycons@aol.com • Cont. Lic. #762523



JOIN US



WHEN: Sunday, April 14, 2024

TIME: 2 pm

LOCATION: Community Room, Monrovia Library,
321 S. Myrtle Ave, Monrovia

MOHPG and the Monrovia Historical Society combine to present a trivia contest, open to the community. Come try your luck! It's free to enter and you can choose teams ahead of time or just show up on the 14th and be partnered with others.



A MILESTONE TOUR

MOHPG will reach another milestone this May as it hosts a historic home tour for the 40th time in its history. The home tour started back in 1983 as a way for the young group to earn funds to pursue the organization's mission. It has become an annual event, eagerly anticipated by both residents and visitors alike and remains one of the oldest home tours in the valley and surrounding area. Besides acting as a funding mechanism, the tour also provides us the opportunity to showcase the wealth and variety of vintage homes and recognize their importance in defining our character neighborhoods.

This year's tour will be held on **Sunday, May 5, 2024, from 10 am until 4 pm**. We will be reprising our tour from 2009 when all the tour homes were located in the newly formed Wild Rose Historic District. Four of the homes on this short block will be open for viewing. All of them have been individually land-marked. In fact, there are a total of nine locally land-marked homes on this short street that has only 18 housing elements.

Because the homes are located so close together, tour goers only have to park once to view the four homes, making the process much easier. There will be vendors on the street (which will be closed off for the day of the tour), as well as lunch for sale by a Hollywood chef (son of one of the homeowners). The presence of vintage cars, a tradition for the home tour, will add to the atmosphere of stepping back in time. MOHPG member Jim Constantian will once again provide us with music from one of his 90 record players and thousands of vintage records and



Formerly housing the Market Grill and store in this building located on Shamrock Avenue along the original path of Route 66, the building is now a car museum and will be open for viewing on tour day. It's an excellent example of how buildings can be re-purposed so that they can be preserved.

share with those interested some fun facts about when/how the music was recorded. Becky Rivanis, locally renowned for her culinary and baking skills, will provide cookies free of charge behind one of the houses.

MOHPG members are encouraged to volunteer as a docent for the tour. There are two shifts, 10 am to 1 pm and 1 pm to 4 pm. Volunteers then get to view all the homes for free, a win-win for both parties. Docents provide information about the homes to enhance the touring experience for everyone.

If you would like to volunteer as a docent (no experience needed - you will be provided with the information about the home), contact Docent Chair Martha Rund at martharund@gmail.com. Volunteering as a docent in one of the ways members choose to actively participate in the organization. It requires very little time and yields benefits for everyone concerned.

Ticket prices for 2024 remain the same as last year - \$25 for tickets bought prior to the tour and \$30 for tickets purchased on tour day. (MOHPG members will get a \$5 discount on tickets bought in advance or on tour day.) Complete information about how to purchase tickets will be posted on the MOHPG website by the beginning of April.

We hope you will be able to join us for another exciting home tour!

Chris Shevlin
Senior Account Manager
(626) 222-4480
CDI# 0G43499



CHICAGO TITLE

Customer Service 500 N. Brand Blvd., Ste 200
(800) 880-9117 Ext. 2 Glendale, CA 91203
Email: ShevlinC@ctt.com Office: (800) 880-9124



A collage of photos from the 2023 home tour.

2023 IRIS AWARD GIVEN TO KATIE GUNDERSEN

Each year, the Monrovia Chamber of Commerce recognizes an outstanding member of the community for their service and contributions. The Iris Award, also known as the “Citizen of the Year” award, was given to MOHPG past-president Katie Gundersen at a special banquet and ceremony at the Doubletree Hotel on Friday evening, March 1.

Katie adds her name to a long list of past Iris Award winners who have been members of MOHPG. They are: Charlotte Schamadan (1984), Joan Bonholtzer (1986), Joe Garcia (1991), Jan Marugg (1994), Linda Proctor (1995), Kris Mariconda (1996), Steve Baker (1997), Mary Ann Lutz (2000), Cleve and Gloria Crudgington (2003), Chris and Becky Shevlin (2005), John Watson and Hal Leavens (2007), Donna Baker (2008), and Mark Still (2013).

Another MOHPG member was recognized at the same banquet. Brenda Trainor was recognized with a plaque for her “Service to the Chamber.”



Katie Gundersen (left) and Brenda Trainor

CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH KATIE AND BRENDA!!



Wonder Dog Ranch

Dog Day Care & Boarding

Proprietors:
Kevin Dods, Brenda Trainor

Ernie Dods, CBO
Emma Foundling, admin

220 Taylor Street
Monrovia, CA 91016
OFC: 626.205-2501

TXT: 626.205-2500 | FAX: 877.294-5773 | toll free 855.DOG RANCH
www.WonderDogRanch.com | info@WonderDogRanch.com

RECAP OF 701 S MYRTLE DEVELOPMENT MEETING

Over 60 members of MOHPG and residents of Monrovia attended a special meeting at City Hall on Wednesday evening, February 28. The meeting was requested by the MOHPG Board to allow members and residents to learn more about this proposed housing project and its impact on the nearby historic downtown area. Members of the development team and staff from the city were present to help answer questions.

For the most part, members of the audience agreed that the project was well designed, but there were concerns over its impact (It is projected to be five stories high) since there are three other housing projects nearby and another one is slated

to go in across the street. The developers are expecting the project to be completed in 2028, but before then an EIR (Environmental Impact Review) must be completed as well as input from the Planning Commission before receiving final approval from the City Council. Stay tuned.



BOARD REPORT MAR 3, 2024

The MOHPG board met on Sunday, March 3, with ten of the eleven board members present. The minutes from the February 4 meeting were approved.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

While the current membership stands at 224 households, only 187 households are paid up for 2024. Newsletters will no longer be sent to households delinquent in their membership dues. Two new memberships were added last month: **Charles Pollard** and **Gary and Judy Schaeffler**. With a renewal reminder being sent out in a few days, the board agreed to continue to offer current members a \$5 discount on home tour tickets as an incentive for lapsed members to renew by May.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial statements, including profit/loss, balance sheet, checks written, and deposits made, were sent to the board prior to the meeting.

PROGRAM CHAIR REPORT

About 20 people attended the program on the Tongva Indians at the Historical Museum on February 11. Later today (March 3), members will have an opportunity to tour the Blinn House in Pasadena, the current home of Pasadena Heritage. On Sunday, April 14, MOHPG and the Monrovia Historical Society will co-sponsor a trivia contest in the Community Room of the library. The board voted that members of the winning team will each receive two tickets to the home tour on May 5. The MOHPG annual meeting will be held on Sunday, July 21, at 5:30 pm in the Community Room of the library. MOHPG is dark in August, and the next program will be the 5th annual earthquake workshop at the library on Saturday, September 14, from 11 am until 2 pm.

TOUR REPORT

The 40th annual Historic Homes Tour will be held on Sunday, May 5, from 10 am until 4 pm. All the homes on tour will be located in the Wild Rose His-

toric District. The application to have a banner across Myrtle Avenue two weeks before the tour was submitted on February 13. The pre-tour dinner will once again be held at the home of Kathy Carter. Last year's dinner drew over 70 people. The board discussed ways in which to advertise the tour for this year. So far, one ad check has been received.

OLD BUSINESS

A walking tour of downtown was held yesterday despite the threat of rain, and two people attended. MOHPG continues to look for a home for a piano donated several years ago. Fred Wasson gave an update on the plans to celebrate the centennial for Route 66 (2026) which could include a float in the Rose Parade in 2026. Comments were made regarding the meeting on Wednesday, February 28, between MOHPG members and the developers of the 701 S. Myrtle Avenue housing project. Over 60 people attended. The meeting with the developers of the Oak Park project is set for March 21 at 5:30 pm but the location has not yet been determined. The order for letterhead stationery and envelopes (500 each) was received and the total cost was \$624.20.



NEW BUSINESS

The board voted to donate \$100 to the Monrovia Library summer reading program. Also approved was reimbursement (50%) of the landmark plaque for 350 W. Colorado Blvd (\$124.65). Website forwarding for www.mohpg.org will need to be renewed at the end of this year.

CORRESPONDENCE

Inquiries received over the past month: question about the date of this year's home tour; a member wanted to know if Espanade is a historic district (It is not); and a question about how to buy tickets for this year's tour.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned after almost 2 1/2 hours. The next board meeting dates are April 14 and May 26. There will not be a meeting in June.

RECAP: VISIT TO THE BLINN HOUSE

Nineteen members of MOHPG made the short trip into Pasadena on Sunday afternoon, March 3, to get a tour of the relatively new headquarters for Pasadena Heritage (2022) - the Blinn House, built in 1906 in the Prairie style. The tour was led by MOHPG board member Kristen Norton, who is on staff at Pasadena Heritage and is very familiar with the house. The house was formerly the home to the Pasadena Women's City Club and was gifted to Pasadena heritage in 2020.

The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is an example of the Prairie School style of architecture. It is situated on a double lot and is three stories high. It has a hipped roof and a broke arch motif is repeated throughout the house, both in the interior and the exterior (Notice the arch over the doorways in both pictures below).



MOHPG board member Kristen Norton (center) who is also on staff at Pasadena Heritage, gives members a personal tour of the relatively new headquarters of Pasadena Heritage - the 1906 Blinn House.

The house was designed by renowned Chicago architect George Washington Maher and is one of only two known commissions by Maher in California. The home's main entrance was relocated to the carriage entry on the building's north side in 1964 when the front porch was enclosed.

Once the tour was completed, members has an opportunity to wander around the adjacent Ford Place Historic District, developed from 1902 to 1916.



SPECIAL MEMBERSHIPS



HERITAGE CIRCLE



Brooke Law Group, PC

Hal Leavens

Gene & Nell Elerding

Jim Wigton

Vicky Hansen

Cleve & Gloria Crudgington

SUPPORTER

Michael Kaplan

Edna Teller

Martha Rund

Fred & Kathleen Wasson

Glenna Super

Duane & Meredith Swierczynski

Corey & Mary Ann Lutz

Emily Verna

Carol Mankiewicz

Glen Kangas

RYAN

THE RYAN LAW FIRM
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

KELLY F. RYAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW

KRYAN@RYANATTORNEYS.COM

626.568.8808

FAX 626.568.8809

139 EAST OLIVE AVENUE
1ST FLOOR
MONROVIA, CA 91016
RYANATTORNEYS.COM

For information on how YOU can become a member at the Heritage Circle or Supporter levels, go to the MOHPG website www.mohpg.org and look under Membership.



*Preserving
Monrovia's Architectural Heritage*

MOHPG
P.O. Box 734
Monrovia, CA 91017

www.mohpg.org

Address Correction Requested

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

CALENDAR OF MOHPG AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

April			
	13	Sat	Historic Walking Tour, 10 am. Meet at SE corner of Myrtle and Palm Avenues; cost \$5 pp.
	14	Sun	MOHPG Board meeting, 10am
	14	Sun	MOHPG program in partnership with the Monrovia Historical Society; a trivia contest with prizes; 2 pm in the Community Room of the library; details on page 3.
May			
	5	Sun	40th Annual Historic Homes Tour, 10am - 4pm
	12	Sun	Mother's Day
	26	Sun	MOHPG Board meeting, 10am
	27	Mon	Memorial Day
June			
	(no board meeting this month)		
	6	Sun	Father's Day
	20	Thurs	Summer Begins
July			
	4	Thurs	Independence Day
	21	Sun	Annual Meeting, Community Room of the library; 5:30 pm