



Los Angeles City HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

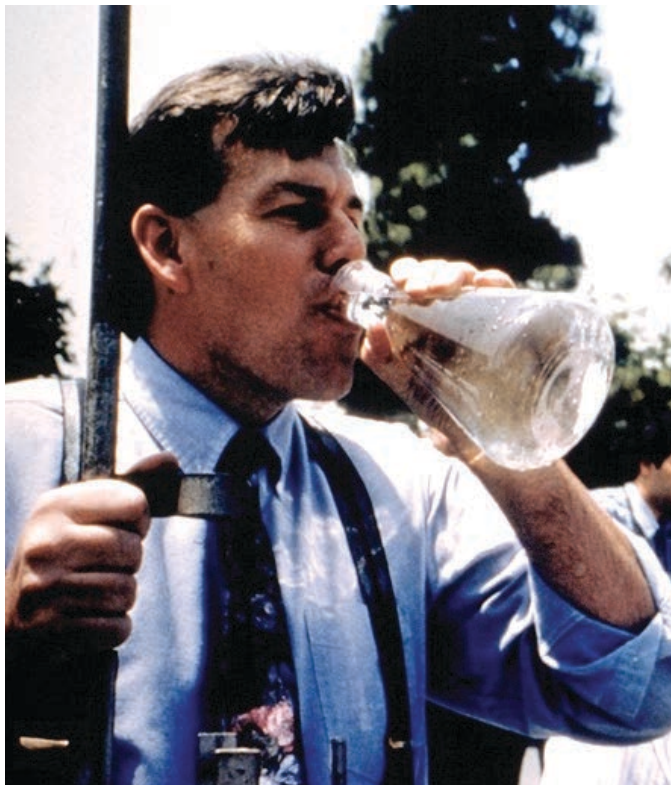
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Toilet-to-Tap

BY ANNA SKLAR

The catchy phrase toilet-to-tap often appears in stories about recycling, despite recent widespread use of reclaimed water that is pumped into groundwater aquifers in Southern California. Even the *New York Times* in a recent story about recycling referred to the yuck factor, the “toilet-to-tap” fears of the uninformed.

So when did “toilet-to-tap” become a byword? The term was coined by Miller Brewing public relations people in December 1993 and was adopted by newspapers in the San Gabriel Valley during a Los Angeles County Sanitation District plan to expand its three decade groundwater replenishment program from the San Jose Creek Water Reclamation Plant.



Earle Hartling, sampling L.A. County Reclaimed Water.

The plan in 1993 was to build a nine-mile underground pipeline that would transport reclaimed water north from the Whittier plant, to the Upper San Gabriel Water aquifer running along the 605 freeway to the Santa Fe spreading grounds at the intersection of the 210 freeway in Irwindale.

Miller Brewing drew its water from drinking water near its Irwindale Plant. They were horrified by the prospect of customers identifying Miller Beer with recycled sewage water. For more than a year they had been holding up progress by bombarding the county with questions. According to Miller attorney, Terry O. Kelly, “The plan could increase the breeding ground of disease-carrying mosquitoes. It could foster health problems for infants, caused by nitrates in water. It could threaten sensitive plant and animal life. Pure and simple,” he said, “We don’t want the water changed. We don’t want the purity altered.”

Earle Hartling is the water recycling manager for the county and was designated the point person for the county’s counter attack to Miller as well as to caustic anti-recycling opponent, Dr. Forest S. Tennant. Tennant created a new non-profit, “Citizens for Clean Water.” Tennant, once an adviser to the National Football League on how its players could beat drug problems, in 1993, was operating a pain clinic in West Covina. He used his medical and political connections and his money to marshal forces against the plan. He financed newspaper ads that, according to Hartling, suggested that “cancer, dementia, birth defects, hormone deficiency and cardiac disease” might arise from the reclaimed water.

In a recent interview, Hartling told me, “The full-on assault began at a hearing in December with the appearance of a gentleman who adopted a clown persona, E T Snell, the clown.” Snell, dressed as a clown, his hair frizzy green and his face pale with white makeup, stood up and said “This is a plot by the trilateral commission secret world government to poison of the San Gabriel Valley.” Hartling noted that in his harangue, Snell pointed at him, and said, “if this water is so good why doesn’t this guy,

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President's Message

GREETINGS MEMBERS:

I hope you and your families are enjoying the holiday season! We are getting off to an early start this year by holding our holiday gala in November. I hope you all can join us for brunch at the Bullocks Wilshire on Sunday, November 15. We have a slate of awards to present as well as a presentation on the Bullocks Wilshire that I am sure you will enjoy. We are very excited to bring you a brunch event rather than the usual dinner, it was the best way to see the Bullocks Wilshire and it helped to keep the price manageable.

We continue to plan regular events for our members. We are heavily using Facebook now to advertise our events so I encourage you all to like our page and follow us. We do try to update our website and send out e-mails with these notices but sometimes there just is not time to get the word out except through social media.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of the historical society and I look forward to seeing you at events and at the gala.

Sincerely,
Todd Gaydowski, President



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Gordon B. Kaufmann: Unsung Visionary Architect

BY LYNNE T. JEWELL

Gordon B. Kaufmann, the architect solely responsible for creating the breathtaking streamlined look of Hoover Dam, was barely recognized as the landmark's designer when he died in 1948. Obits in both the *Los Angeles Times* and *New York Times* made no reference to the fact that Kaufmann was not only the architect, but went on to become a leading authority on dam design.

Fast-forward eighty years and a recent *LA Times*' Hot Property piece refers to Kaufmann as the Hoover Dam architect. The blurb was about the sale of the Isidor Eisner Estate, one of the elegant Mediterranean revival mansions designed by Kaufmann in the 1920s. Perhaps he is finally earning recognition he deserves.

Just who was Gordon Bernie Kaufmann? The British-bred architect came to Southern California with no job. He worked briefly as a gardener before making a name for himself as a distinguished designer of "California-style" residences and then moving on to "public modernism" over the next two decades. He has some 500 residential, commercial, educational, sports and entertainment projects to his credit.

He was charming and handsome. He was promotional minded, involved in civic activities. He'd fight for what he thought was the right design, but was willing to give way to client demands. He was stickler for detail, surrounding himself with talented artisans.

Born to Jewish parents in 1888, his father was German and his mother Scottish. He studied and started his career in London. He worked briefly in Canada before coming to Southern California in 1914, wanting to bring his ill wife to a warmer climate. Being a gardener was fortuitous. His boss was architect Reginald Johnson who built grand estates. Kaufmann went from gardening to draftsman to associate to partner in the newly formed architectural firm Johnson, Kaufmann & Coate.

Together they won big ecclesiastical commissions, starting with St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral (now demolished) in downtown. Of course, it didn't hurt that Johnson's father was the Episcopal Bishop of LA. They're also credited with All Saints in Pasadena. After three years, the partnership broke up amicably, but they continued sharing offices and draftsmen in the Union Bank building, which coincidentally housed moneyed clients.

Kaufmann's first solo commission came from the bank's president, Benjamin Meyer. He designed a

Mediterranean Revival house in Beverly Hills. But it was the Eisner House in Hancock Park, built a few years later, that put a spotlight on the young architect. The Tuscan-inspired 40-room mansion featured all the Kaufmann characteristics he would become known for: exquisite front doors, second-story loggias, inner courtyards, private patios and archways. Kaufmann loved beautiful gardens, so he turned to residential landscape architect Paul Thiene. This house won Kaufmann an AIA recognition, the first of many awards.

Meanwhile, the Eisner House was greatly admired by Lucy Doheny who convinced her rich father-in-law Edward Doheny to hire Kaufmann to build the Greystone Mansion. Again, Thiene designed the gorgeous Italian gardens. To show their appreciation with the 55-room medieval English Tudor mansion, the Dohenys gifted Kaufmann with a Cord Sports car to tool around in.

The Eisner estate in Kaufmann's growing portfolio helped him score his first educational commission, Scripps College in Claremont. The trustees said it was the Hancock Park property that convinced them that the "charming Mr. K" should design the newly founded women's college. He created what's considered to be one of the most beautiful college campuses in the world, bringing a feminine touch and warmth to the domestic-like dorms.

In Pasadena, he was named to build the men's dorms and the Athenaeum at Cal Tech. Kaufmann gave a much more masculine look to the then men's campus. And, as one architectural critic said, he "California-ized" an Italian
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Eisner House in Hancock Park

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villa. Today, the Athenaeum faculty club is considered one of his masterpieces.

Meanwhile, back at the bank he earned a commission from Union Bank's vice president Milton Getz. Kaufmann designed a huge H-shaped Mediterranean mansion: 29 bedrooms and 40 bathrooms. Actress Marion Davies purchased the Beverly House in the 1940s, living there with boyfriend and newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst. Because of the "H" design, people assumed it was originally built for Hearst who actually died there in 1951. It's become one of the nation's most expensive residential listings.

Kaufmann had other Westside projects, including the Holmby Tower in Westwood and a women's dorm for the new UCLA campus. He also served on the design committee for the Bel Air development, which had strict rules, allowing no Jews or actors. Ironically, because Kaufmann was Jewish, he could build houses in Bel Air, just couldn't live there. Instead, he built a house in nearby Holmby Hills. It later became the residence of actor Burt Reynolds.

In the mid-1920s, Kaufmann started experiencing with the Art Deco style. You could say he took washing dirty clothes to new heights with the design of the Royal Laundry for H.A. Tubbs on Pasadena's Raymond Avenue. Today it's the Disney Stores headquarters.

Kaufmann won the commission to build the Art Deco horse-racing park at Santa Anita, opening Christmas Day 1934.

Probably the biggest and most worthwhile connection of his career was his association with the Chandler publishing family. Kaufmann got the nod (there were



Holmby Tower, Westwood.

no other bids) to design Hoover Dam thanks to Times publisher Harry Chandler. *Times* writer Michael Hiltzik said in his 2010 book on the Grand Dam, "For Chandler there could scarcely be a better way to impose his personal stamp on his pet project in the desert than to place his pet architect in charge." In the same year, Kaufmann finalized the Los Angeles Times Building. Its "majestic concrete lines" echo those of Hoover Dam, said Hiltzik. Once completed, The Times building was hailed as a monument to the progress of the city and Southern California. But Kaufmann was not pleased. He told friends he wished it had been even more modern. In spite of the architect's remorse, the cathedral-like building at First and Spring won a gold medal at the 1937 Paris Exposition for the granite-and-limestone architecture design, often referred to as late Art Deco or PWA/WPA Moderne.

Kaufmann built other Chandler houses, including Los Tiempos, a ranch-style home in Arcadia. This was part of a real estate experiment. The Chandlers lived at Rancho Santa Anita from 1937 to 1956 when they moved to Hancock Park. From his new Mid-Wilshire office-cum-apartment, Kaufmann finished another Chandler assignment. This one was for Harry Chandler's son Norman, whose son Otis would ultimately follow him as publisher. It was a Streamline Moderne-style beach house in Long Beach that has been described as "romantically whimsical" with port holes, horizontal lines and observation deck. It was often noted that the beach house was where the future publisher found his passion: surfing. Although altered



Rancho Santa Anita with Buffy Chandler's handwritten notes.

Welcome New Members

Donna Young of Playa del Rey • Mike Lawler of La Crescenta • Frank Moramarco of Covina • Lois Mills of Newhall
Mark Hayward of Los Feliz • Bret Loewen of Los Angeles • Perias Pillay of Los Angeles

over the years, the oceanfront property has weathered the marine elements. It's located along the strand at 69th Place at the end of the peninsula.

Meanwhile, Kaufmann went Hollywood in the late '30s with the Earl Carroll Theatre on Sunset Boulevard. Throughout the supper club theater he included neon figures and zigzag lighting. The theater featured A Wall of Fame on its front, showcasing autographed plaques of glam stars like Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell. The building, having gone through several name changes and styles, is now Nickelodeon and is barely recognizable as a Kaufmann design.

Kaufmann's last big hooray before WWII was the Palladium on Sunset Boulevard, across from the Earl Carroll Theatre, adorned with still-there neon dancing figures. It was a hot spot for swing-time lovers, with a capacity of 7,500 on the maple wood dance floor. The Palladium opened Halloween night in 1940 with headliners, the Tony Dorsey Orchestra and a relatively unknown singer, Frank Sinatra. The nightclub's side drive-up entrance was built with auto-centric LA in mind.

Even though Kaufmann confided with fellow

architects that he didn't believe the U.S. would go to war, when it did, the British émigré was very patriotic. He spent three years in Washington D.C. working in the Chemical Warfare Department, rising to the rank of colonel. He was awarded the Legion of Merit by the Army for his outstanding contributions.

In 1949, he became ill and died four months later at his residence off Wilshire Boulevard. His life had come full circle. His memorial service was held at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, the church he built with partners Johnson and Coate. Kaufmann had grown to love this city, and it's not exactly known why Colonel Kaufmann was buried with a cross at the Golden Gate National Cemetery, south of San Francisco with a full military service.

The work of this visionary architect is all around us. He had a versatile four-decade career. More than his peers, he was successful in winning non-residential commissions. It's been said he brought a freshness and British sensibility to the drafting table. We know his buildings but not his name. He is an unsung and underappreciated figure in architectural history who helped shape the built landscape of not only LA but the West. ■



Moulin Rouge, original Earl Carroll Theater.

LACHS Board Member in the News

Board member Michael Holland was featured in a Sunday September 27 story in the *Los Angeles Times*. Apparently Michael likes to make wine. And he is using “with the permission of El Pueblo Director Chris Espinosa,” grapes from the vines over trellises over the El Pueblo courtyard. He has harvested at least 12 or 13 pounds of grapes, which he has picked “in the early morning before anyone is around.”

Speaking to the reporter, he said, “What is there is there I have to adapt to what the vines are doing. In a normal vineyard system, you have your trellis, your spacing, your canopy management. Up there, it’s literally

a green carpet of leaves and tendrils with clusters here and there.”

He explained that his “first batch of wine will be a test run...I’ll probably make it in my garage like I do my other wines.” Who knew that our city archivist is also a winemaker, among his many talents? And, he’s not letting anyone know whether he’ll be making a sweet sacramental wine or “a great table (dry) wine....He’s playing it close to his vest.” He says he’ll “know by spring what he’s got.”

Maybe he’ll save some for a summer board meeting. We can only hope. ■



Michael Holland with his vines.

Letters to the Editor

We would like to inaugurate a new column in the next issue of the newsletter. We want to hear from you, our members.

Do you have any suggestions for history you’d like to know more about? Do you have a specific story you’d like to share with other members?

We invite you also to suggest programs that the board could consider for future events.

Basically, we’d like you to participate in a dialogue with the board to continue to improve the Los Angeles City Historical Society. We look forward to your letters. ■

The Tartaglia Brothers

BY GERALDINE KNATZ

The Los Angeles City Historical Society recently held a lecture about the Italian immigrants to Los Angeles as part of the Marie Northrop Lecture series. Always on the lookout for Los Angeles historical memorabilia, I happened to find an advertising mirror that advertises the Tartaglia and Bros. Tailors with their motto, “Six Brothers, Six Reasons.” Many businesses used promotional giveaways of this type in the early part of the 20th century. This one is special. Photographs of each of the six Tartaglia brothers, Charles, Joseph, Michael, John, Angelo and Otto grace the front of the mirror. All the Tartaglia brothers were born in Italy and immigrated to the United States settling in Los Angeles. Charles arrived first in 1902. Joseph and Michael came to America in 1905 and 1906, respectively. Charles joined the Journeymen Tailors Union of America in 1907 and the same year opened his tailoring business “Charles Tartaglia & Bros. Tailors.” Brothers John and Angelo immigrated in 1909 and Otto in 1912 to join the business. The brothers were all about fourteen or fifteen when they immigrated with the exception of John who came when he was twenty-four. Charles married his wife Rosina who emigrated from Italy in 1913 and was ten years his junior. They both became naturalized citizens in 1917. By 1920, three of the brothers had married and they all lived next to each other on South St. Andrews Place. Each of the married brothers had one bachelor brother living with them.

The Tartaglia tailors prided themselves on their union affiliation calling themselves the union tailors for men and



Gene Austry purchased suits from the Tartaglia brothers in the 1960's. Rock Hudson also used Tartaglia brothers. This receipt below from the Rock Hudson estate collection shows Tartaglia Bros. Tailors with two locations in 1964, one in Los Angeles and one in Beverly Hills.

DATE	ITEMS	AMOUNT
1964		
Dec. 16	Balance	\$ 275.60

FROM BEVERLY HILLS
CREATVIEW 5-6473

TARTAGLIA BROS. LTD. TAILORS
ESTABLISHED 1907
9885 SANTA MONICA BLVD.
BEVERLY HILLS

FROM LOS ANGELES
BRADSHAW 2-2874

Dec. 31 1964

Mr. Rock Hudson
9402 Beverly Crest
Beverly Hills, California

REC'D. DEC 31 1964
PAID JAN 21 1965
CHECK 10
JAN 23 1965
H/S



women. Their advertisement from the 1914 *California State Federation of Labor Yearbook* stressed their being the only “reliable” union tailors. Otto, the youngest of the six had immigrated in 1912 so the “six brothers” motto had to have been developed between 1912 and 1914. On October 12, 1929, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Charles Tartaglia and Bros. Tailors had taken up a new home at 713 Flower Street, adding to the importance of Flower Street as an important street in the downtown Los Angeles shopping district. The tailoring business occupied the entire two story building right next to Barker Brothers. Although there is no information to verify the date of the advertising mirror, a rough guess as to the ages of the brothers from their pictures in the 1914 advertisement and the mirror would likely date the mirror to the mid 1920's. By 1930 Charles was living with his wife and son Mario in his own home on Clayton Avenue, then valued at \$14,000. By 1940, Charles' wife, Rosina, has joined him in the tailoring business; Charles was renting at that time with his business listed in the city directory at 3149 Wilshire. Later we find the business at 9885 Santa Monica Boulevard in Beverly Hills where they catered to well-heeled clients like movie stars. One can also find other Tartaglia tailoring establishments in other parts of Los Angeles as the family grew.

Today, collectors of

vintage clothing look for the Tartaglia label. Unfortunately, Yelp reports the most recent location at 9905 Santa Monica Boulevard is closed. ■



Donald C. Tillman Reclamation Plant.

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pointing at Harling, drink it.” Hartling said, “I opened the bottle of water and drank it right in front of him. I was his personal demon.”

Miller Beer decided to focus most of their attention on Anthony Fellow, a member of the Upper San Gabriel Water Board, who supported the reclamation plan. Fellow’s memory was still vivid twenty-two years later as we talked about what happened. At the time Fellow was running for re-election to the water board. He said, “They would come in with toilets and all this stuff, during the election time, and the campaign was just horrible, they sent out flyers with my face on a toilet. They took out ads using sexy words together, ‘the horror of it, bodily fluids, etc.’”

Fellow spoke with pride about his battle with Miller. Although “Miller spent \$120,000 to defeat me,” he said, “I came home and we started walking and on election night we defeated them three to one.” But the board did not vote for the expansion of the recycling program.

And the campaign backfired on Miller Beer.

The campaign was covered extensively by the local news media. Television stories prominently displayed Miller Beer bottles on a moving rack behind the anchor’s reports. The bottles were clear and Miller Beer was yellow. Hartling laughed as he recalled the reaction from viewers. “Sales of Miller plummeted, they shot themselves in the foot. It was such a big deal, Jay Leno made jokes for two weeks about the project.” Hartling said that Phillip Morris, the parent company for Miller, fired the legal team and told Miller to stop the campaign. He added, “Never put beer in clear bottles.”

At that point, Hartling said, Upper San Gabriel had exhausted their will and gave up. We fought to a standstill. The only one left standing was the one with the most money.” The bad publicity convinced the water board to halt the program.

Toilet-to-Tap re-emerged in the San Fernando Valley in 2000, when the city’s Bureau of Sanitation and the

Department of Water and Power planned to take up to 60 MGD of highly treated water from the Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant through pipes to spreading grounds near Hansen Dam.

It was called the East Valley Reclamation Project. In 1990, after receiving approval from the necessary state and federal regulatory agencies, the DWP followed its usual pattern of public information. They held two public meetings, attended by no more than forty people, a few of whom questioned the project, because of their concerns about it promoting development in the valley. DWP also posted notices in local newspapers. There appeared to be no real opposition to the project.

But, in June 2000, all hell broke loose. The battle was begun by Encino homeowner Gerald Silver, who had attended the meetings in 1990 and was then opposed to the project because it might open up more development in the valley. Now, he took up the Toilet-to-Tap idea and met with reporters for the *Daily News*, claiming that the city was poisoning the water supply of the San Fernando Valley with tainted water, a toilet-to-tap scheme that should be exposed. The newspaper went on to feature almost daily stories about the potential harm to people who drank the reclaimed water.

Soon politicians picked up on the fear that was spreading about the reclamation project that had begun a few months earlier. They were urged on by then Councilman Joel Wachs who was running for mayor at the time. Wachs claimed that the DWP was trying to pull a fast one on the Los Angeles public, and that despite presentations to the council earlier, "I didn't understand back then what the project would do."

He went on to compare reclaimed water to aerial spraying of malathion. Wachs was soon joined by then State Senator Richard Alarcon who called a special meeting of the Senate Select Committee on Environmental Justice.

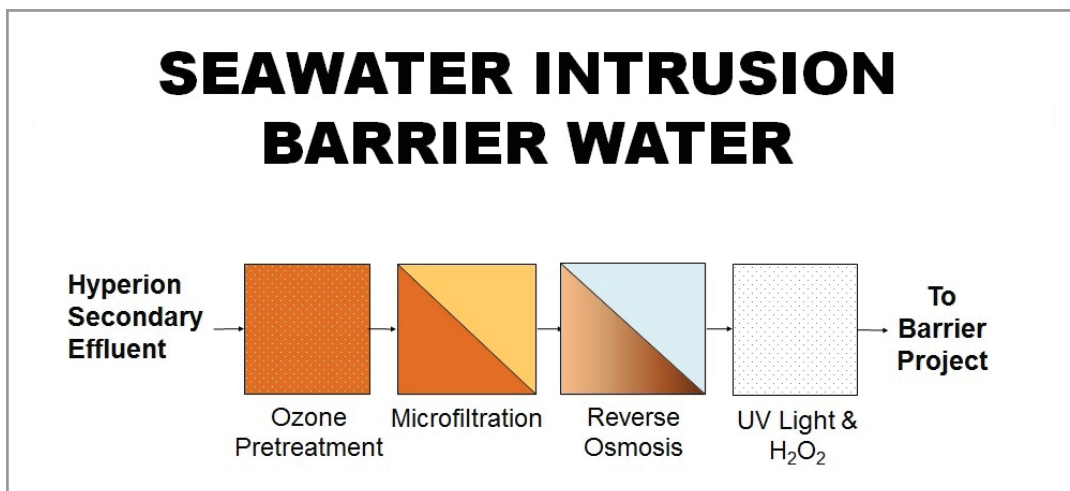
Alarcon claimed that communities had not been given enough facts about the project or how it would affect their drinking water "This is an option of last resort," he said. Soon the Family Child Care Council of the San Fernando Valley, a Mexican-American health organization joined the opposition. "Children are not just little adults, and their exposure to this treated sewage water cannot be compared to adults," said Mary May of the Child Care organization.

Faced with the political fallout, Mayor James Hahn formerly closed the program several days after Alarcon's hearing. William VanWagoner, the DWP engineer in charge of the program said, "We spent a total of \$55 million including hardware for recycling wastewater to recharge groundwater in Hansen Dam area." With a laugh he added, "I spent slightly under one million bucks an acre foot—62 acre feet before it was shut off—I turned it on and it worked from October 1999 through June 2000."

Toilet-to-Tap was a no-show when the West Basin Water District decided in 1995 to begin its own water recycling program. West Basin opened the first recycling plant with the wastewater from the Hyperion Treatment Plant, that was then receiving primary and secondary treatment before being discharged into Santa Monica Bay.

West Basin used advanced treatment that included microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and UV treatment of the water, a program that was similar to one begun in 2008 by the Orange County Sanitation District. West Basin's plant in El Segundo is only a few miles from the Hyperion Treatment Plant. The recycling plant began with 20 million gallons a day that was piped from Hyperion. Los Angeles charges West Basin approximately \$300,000 a year. After the water receives treatment by West Basin, the district sells it to various customers: 35% is sold for well water and as a seawater barrier, with 80% of that water ending up as groundwater recharge. The well water goes

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West Basin Water District Re-Use.

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through microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and UV light with hydrogen peroxide. Irrigation gets about 12% and is sold to cities that use it for parks, including Torrance, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, El Segundo, and Hermosa. Ron Wildemuth with West Basin told me that some also goes to Stubhub, a soccer field in Carson, some to Toyota and Honda for flushing toilets, some to Goodyear in their airfield in Carson, and Cal State Dominguez Hills uses it for landscaping. The rest of the reclaimed water, 53%, goes to refineries Chevron, Tsoro (BP) in Wilmington, Exxon-Mobil in Torrance for cooling towers, low pressure boiler water, high pressure water, also some landscaping. There has been no outcry about toilet-to-tap from customers of West Basin. Currently West Basin buys 40 MGD of treated wastewater from Hyperion.

And there has been no outcry of toilet-to-tap from Orange County customers who are now receiving up to 100 MGD of reclaimed water from a program that began in 2008 with 70 MGD from the Orange County Sanitation District, using microfiltration, reverse osmosis, and is then dosed with hydrogen peroxide and bombarded with ultraviolet light to neutralize any remaining contaminants. When the County decided to recycle its wastewater in 1998, Ron Wildemuth was their public information officer. He led a massive information campaign and attended at least 2,000 community meetings where he held one-on-one discussions with schools, homeowners, community organizations, volunteer associations, and the environmental community. His staff went into overdrive, distributing slick educational brochures and videos and giving pizza parties. He told me, "If there was a group, we talked to them. Historical societies, chambers of commerce, flower committees." They also used phrases like "local control" and "independence from imported water. The county easily received widespread approval for recycling wastewater for eventual re-introduction to the water supply. Orange County began with 70 MGD and recently increased their replenishment program to 100 MGD. About 2.4 million Orange County residents get their water from a massive underground aquifer, which, since 2008, has been steadily recharged with billions of gallons of purified wastewater.

People in the San Fernando Valley and the original planned recipients of the Tillman Reclamation Project—from Hollywood, downtown Los Angeles, Hancock Park and the Hollywood Hills—are still waiting for delivery of recycled water.

Reclaiming sewage water costs at least 20% less than imported water, and in some cases, as with West Basin, it is 30% less than imported water. The approximately 60



Young boy sipping water at West Basin Water.

MGD of treated effluent from the Tillman Reclamation Plant in the San Fernando Valley flows into the Los Angeles River creating a pastoral vision for kayakers, wildlife and the environmentalists who envision a better Los Angeles River, and celebrate this odd rejuvenation of the river, which eventually, in dry weather, glides its way down the river bed. Wasted, it empties into the Santa Monica Bay.

Meanwhile the DWP appears to have embraced wastewater recycling for the future. It probably doesn't hurt that because of the drought, Governor Jerry Brown has freed up more state money for water recycling projects: \$800 million in low-interest loans approved by the State Water Resources Control Board in March 2014 and \$725 million in a water bond approved by the state's voters in November of 2014. And the Metropolitan Water District that provides water for most of Southern California recently announced plans to begin a recycling program of reclaiming approximately 150 million gallons of wastewater (sewage) a day. Although they did not mention toilet-to-tap, the phrase continues to resonate in news stories about cities and water districts throughout California now exploring their own plans to recycle their wastewater in an effort to fight the worst drought in California history that shows no signs of abating. ■

Recent Tours Coordinated and Led by Board Member Sandi Hammerlein

The March Tour of El Pueblo Historical Monument and Olvera Street was a sold-out success. Sandi noted that the condition of the Avila Adobe building on Olvera Street had deteriorated since being built in 1818 and was finally condemned in 1926 by the City Health Department. “It was then severely damaged in the 1971 Sylmar earthquake,” she said. “Because of its historical significance as the oldest residence in LA, it was saved and restored to represent life in the 1840s.”

The morning tour of Hollyhock House was also a sold-out success. Hollyhock House was built between 1919 and 1921 on thirty-six acres on property known as Olive Hill, at the edge of Hollywood Boulevard and west of Vermont Boulevard. The house was built by Frank Lloyd Wright

for Aline Barnsdall, an oil heiress, who hired the architect to develop a plan that included a home for Barnsdall and her young daughter, two secondary residences, a theater, a director’s house, a dormitory for actors, studios for artists, shops and a motion picture theater.

Hollyhock House takes its name from Aline Barnsdall’s favorite flower. At her request, hollyhocks were incorporated into the decorative program of the house, and stylized representations of the flower are found on the roofline, walls, columns planters and furnishings.

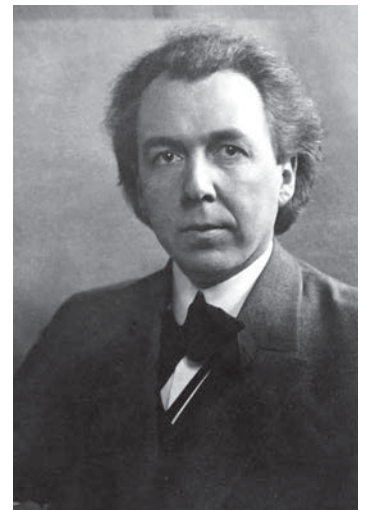
In 1927, Aline Barnsdall gave Hollyhock House and eleven surrounding acres to the City of Los Angeles for use as a public art park in memory of her father, Theodore Barnsdall. ■



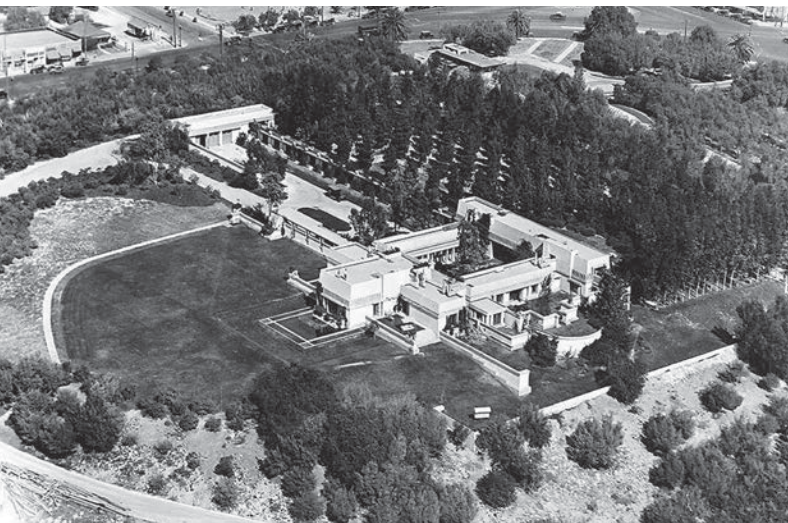
LACHS Members at El Pueblo Historical Monument.



Aline Barnsdall



Frank Lloyd Wright



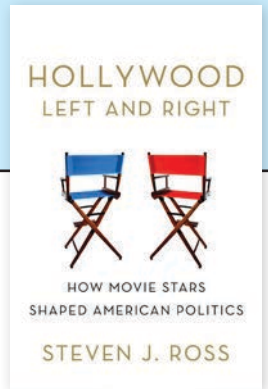
Aerial view of Barnsdall Park.



LACHS Members at Hollyhock House.

BOOK
REVIEW

HOLLYWOOD LEFT AND RIGHT: *How Movie Stars Shaped American Politics*, by Steven J. Ross. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Illustrations, Notes, Index. Paper, \$21.95.



BY ABRAHAM HOFFMAN

Think “Hollywood: and “politics” and you usually get an image of left-liberal support for Democrats, a stereotype that history professor Steven J. Ross concedes is at least partially true. However, he persuasively modifies the stereotype in this engaging, well-researched study of the involvement and influence of motion picture industry figures in California and the rest of the nation across the 20th century and into the present day. Granting that many major film actors and actresses have supported liberal causes and candidates, Ross argues that industry executives, most famously (or infamously) Louis B. Mayer, have sided with Republicans and conservative issues.

Ross frames his study by profiling ten major players in the movie industry, demonstrating impartiality in selecting five liberal and five conservative people who exemplified the left and right wings of Hollywood politics. His analysis of these people is fair-minded, acknowledging strong points as well as shortcomings. As with all the profiles, Ross traces their lives from childhood to success and looks at the factors that shaped their political outlook. He credits Charlie Chaplin as the “first political movie star.” Chaplin held an animosity towards authority figures. Watch his films and laugh as Chaplin the Little Tramp clashes with policemen, orphanage operators, department store managers, and anyone else whose arrogance exceeds their competence. Unfortunately for Chaplin, the laughing stopped when he strayed too far to the left, embracing liberal causes while making movies that weren’t funny anymore. Denied reentry after a trip abroad, Chaplin lived the remainder of his long life in Europe.

In contrast to Chaplin (who retained his English citizenship), Louis B. Mayer embraced America, to the point where he celebrated his birthday on the Fourth of July (his actual birth date was uncertain). Recognizing the potential of moving pictures, Mayer became the head of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, enjoying fabulous wealth and prominence, a friend to Republican presidents and other politicians. He exercised tight control over his studio and made family-oriented films that offered mass-market appeal such as the Andy Hardy series. He also made some false newsreels in 1934 that contributed to the defeat of Upton Sinclair in that year’s gubernatorial election. Mayer’s influence declined in the late 1940s when a Supreme Court

decision separated studio film production from exhibition.

Edward G. Robinson gained more fame as “Little Caesar,” but he was a fine actor who could attract audiences in comedies as well as drama. He also attracted criticism for his generous financial support for liberal causes, earning him the enmity of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Robinson wasn’t a Communist, but he had lent his name to the letterheads of too many suspect organizations, and the negative publicity may have injured his career, though he continued to act in films until his death in 1973.

Ross covers the careers of conservatives George Murphy and Ronald Reagan in one chapter, noting their similarities and their conversion from liberal Democrats to conservative Republicans. He credits Murphy with far more political acumen than is generally acknowledged, an awareness in politics that gave him the opportunity to upstage (and defeat) the hapless Democrat Pierre Salinger in the U.S. Senate race in California in 1964—the same election year that the state overwhelmingly supported Lyndon B. Johnson over Barry Goldwater. Reagan’s successful race for the governorship two years later included his claim to be a “citizen politician” even though he had a long association with political issues as a president of the Screen Actors Guild. Ross next considers Harry Belafonte who never ran for public office but was an intimate friend of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and a strong supporter of civil rights. By contrast, Jane Fonda never overcame the animosity directed at her as “Hanoi Jane” for posing by a North Vietnamese anti-aircraft cannon, a moment she always regretted. Her success in Hollywood came from the fact that moviegoers ignored her politics because she was a fine actress, and the movie producers saw she was a bankable star despite her political views.

Another liberal who became an outspoken conservative, Charlton Heston, switched party allegiances when he rejected George McGovern as a presidential candidate in 1972. An iconic figure for many people, Heston was “Moses” who could lead them to a promised land. Heston rejected all offers to run for political office; sadly, in his last years his support of the National Rifle Association tarnished his Moses image. Like Heston,

Warren Beatty rejected running for public office, though in the film *Bulworth* he was able not only to be a candidate but to campaign for a liberal platform.

The book's final chapter, on Arnold Schwarzenegger, illustrates the pitfalls of a Hollywood figure who gains high office but runs into difficulty when he cannot please his constituency or placate his opponents. For anyone who has marveled at the public's adoration (or rejection) of

Hollywood celebrities running for office or taking political positions on major issues, this is a must-read, fascinating book. I would have liked to see a chapter on Sonny Bono, but Ross had to keep this fascinating group down to, let's say, a Hollywood Ten (pun intended). But wait; that was another story. ■

BOOK REVIEW

POST-GHETTO: *Reimagining South Los Angeles*, edited by Josh Sides. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. 232 pp. Maps, Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardbound, \$45. www.ucpress.edu.



BY ABRAHAM HOFFMAN

South Los Angeles suffers from the stereotypes of urban plight, extreme poverty, gangs and drugs, and other urban ills. Josh Sides and the contributors to this anthology attempt to redress this view of South Los Angeles. Their essays make a powerful argument for local empowerment and community pride. Problems persist, but African Americans and Latinos have and continue to demonstrate perseverance in working for the betterment of their neighborhoods. As Sides observes, “In South Los Angeles, creativity has flourished even without the complete satisfaction of essential needs, but the capacity exists to more fully nourish the creative endeavors of the region’s residents.”

What are those essential needs, and what are those creative endeavors? Following Sides’ introductory essay on the history of South Los Angeles, Jorge N. Leal discusses the dramatic transformation of what was almost an entirely African American community to one that now has a majority Latino population and the creation of Plaza Mexico and La Alameda shopping centers. These places serve not only Hispanic but also black and white people who come together to enjoy an inviting commercial environment. Josh Sides examines the failure and successes of corporate investment in South Los Angeles. Although companies pledged after the 1965 and 1992 riots to invest in rebuilding the area, few such promises were kept. Chesterfield Square, however, proves an exception to corporate neglect, though one mall can hardly solve long-standing problems.

Three essays focus on food issues. Natale Zappia sounds a hopeful note in the growing number of vegetable, herbal, and fruit gardens in South Los Angeles, a

community effort to deal with the lack of supermarkets in the area. Mark Valliantos, Andrew Azuma, and Robert Gottlieb explore the problems of too many liquor stores and not enough food retail locations.

Of a thousand locations, almost 300 were fast-food restaurants, and more than half of the locations offered fast food and liquor. Fewer than twenty supermarkets could be found in their survey. Food prices for basic commodities run higher in South Los Angeles than elsewhere. David C. Sloane describes community efforts to limit the number of liquor stores in South Los Angeles and the campaign to stop liquor stores destroyed in the 1992 riots from rebuilding.

Edna Bonacich and Jake Almahomed-Wilson trace a bleak history of segregation and discrimination in employment for black residents of South L.A. They focus on efforts to integrate the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Union and the construction trades. Although there have been some gains, unemployment remains high. Karen M. Hennigan and Cheryl Maxson examine the persistence of gang membership and the attempts to reduce juvenile delinquency. Public policies have largely failed in dealing with this problem; they urge a tighter focus in programs dealing with gang prevention.

Scott Saul explores the accomplishments of Good lifers and Project Blowmedians in moving black popular music from gangsta rap to imaginative hip-hop, and the growth of black-themed novels set in South L.A. by authors such as Chris Abani, Walter Mosley and Nina Revoyr. Artistic endeavors include Edgar Arceneaux’s Watts House Project.

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Daniel Widener examines the frustrations of African Americans in trying to break down the barriers of the motion picture industry in its denial of employment to black screen actors, cameramen, and other jobs. Coupled with this resistance is a long-time persistence in relegating black actors and actresses, with a few exceptions, to stereotypical roles. He discusses two black-produced films, *Wattstax* and *Repression*, which present contrasting views on South Los Angeles. I have to wonder if Widener has seen much TV these days, especially the drama programs that show black doctors, policemen, businessmen, and other positive role models.

In the book's final essay, Jill Leovy, long-time reporter on homicide in South L.A. for the *Los Angeles Times*, assesses the successes and shortcomings of the evolution of the Los Angeles Police Department in its dealing with South L.A.'s residents. While important reforms were accomplished under the tenure of Chief William J. Bratton, homicides continue to plague the area, with black-on-black murders a continuing problem. The statistics

suggest the crime rate is down, but South L.A. residents insist they do not live in a safe environment. Subsequent to this book's publication, confrontations between police officers and blacks, especially young black men, have demonstrated a crucial need for the retraining of LAPD officers to take on the more positive role of guardians of the community rather than an occupying army.

Josh Sides ends the book with a personal note on how he, a white graduate student, came to commit his research to South Los Angeles. He concludes this important anthology on an optimistic note: "It is entirely possible that the term 'South Los Angeles' will someday be free of stigma and refer exclusively nonsensationally, to yet another geographic point in the vast Los Angeles Metropolitan Region," he writes. "We have the capacity to usher in that transformation today, but do we—do you—have the will?" ■

Abraham Hoffman teaches history at Los Angeles Valley College.

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17th Annual LACHS Meeting

When LACHS hosts its annual meeting and awards program on November 15, it will be a Sunday brunch, served on the second floor of the Bullock's Wilshire Building, 3050 Wilshire Boulevard.

The luxury department store closed in 1993 but remains one of Los Angeles' most well known structures. In 1997, when its new owners, Southwestern University School of Law, was deep into a renovation and restoration, the *New York Times* called the building's dramatic 10-story high tower, sheathed in terra cotta and copper, "as Californian as a redwood."

In its heyday, in the midst of Wilshire's cluster of temples and churches, the store was a temple to merchandising. Even the parking lot was considered revolutionary, for John Bullock was banking on the possibilities of suburbia and attracting "patrons," as he insisted customers be called, who until then had shopped downtown. Los Angeles's population was moving west, and Bullock's Wilshire was the first department store to follow auto-driven humanity.

Where models formerly sauntered in couture clothing, LACHS guests will sip prosecco and listen to live classical guitar before dining on a buffet prepared by Kensington Caterers. Brunch includes fluffy scrambled eggs with

chives, sautéed red potatoes with caramelized onions and mushrooms, crispy maple-glazed smoked bacon, fruit and sweet cheese Danish. The 1:30 program features an audio-visual presentation on the history of Bullock's Wilshire. Award winners will be announced in printed and digital invitations released in mid-October.

Brunch and program take place in the Louis XVI Room, an interpretation by designer Eleanor LeMaire of Marie Antoinette's boudoir in the Petit Trianon at Versailles. Louis XVI was the last monarch in the line of French kings preceding the revolution. Known as the Garment Salon, the room is one of the few in the building not put to use as a law school space. Guests will have access to restrooms on the 5th floor as well as the famed Tea Room where generations of Angelenos dined on finger sandwiches while models passed by tables in the stylish fashions of the day. Today the Tea Room serves as the law school cafeteria.

The event begins at noon and concludes at three. LACHS members may purchase tickets for \$75. Non-members may attend for \$100, a rate that includes a one-year LACHS membership. For further information, contact LACHS board member Claudine Ajeti at cajети@aol.com. ■



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