



The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society

Spring 2022

**SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS**

JUDSON: INNOVATION IN STAINED GLASS

**By
DAVID JUDSON**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May, 2022

Spring is here and signs of reopening are everywhere. During COVID, when people were looking for outdoor activities, many discovered Lacy Park. From our offices in the Thurnher House, we watched families enjoying time together strolling the paths of the park and watching children on the playground.

When docents were able to welcome visitors into Thurnher House for tours on the first and third Sundays of the month, many visitors learned more about the history of the park, the city, and its founding fathers.

After presenting our last two programs on Zoom, we are happy to be offering our Spring Program on Monday, May 23 live in person at the Crowell Public Library. Our speaker will be David Judson of Judson Stained Glass Studio. He will share the story of this famous studio that was founded in 1897.

Always looking for ways to reach out to the community, the Historical Society participated in the city-sponsored Trunk or Treat for children on Halloween. Recently, the Easter event saw a Historical Society table organized by new board member Christa Lakon featuring a self-guided quiz about the history of the park, bunny stickers, and candy. We are also collaborating with the San Marino City Club and the Rotary Club in upcoming events.

We welcomed new board members Christa Lakon, Aaron Gil, and Joyce Batnij, all of whom will help to increase our ability to reach out into the community. We were saddened to learn of the passing of Ken Veronda, Graziella Almanza, and Burt Thurnher. All three were important to the history of San Marino and the San Marino Historical Society, and we honor their many contributions to our city.

Isaac Hung
President



On Monday, May 23, the San Marino Historical Society Welcomes David Judson, president and owner of Judson Studios, a fifth-generation family member to operate the legendary stained-glass company that was founded in 1897. Judson Studios has been recognized internationally as among the world's finest stained glass artistry, and their hand-crafted works have been a family tradition for five generations. David Judson will chronicle this local stained glass studio's remarkable story.

Monday, May 23, 2022 7:00 pm
Crowell Public Library
Barth Community Room
1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino
Public is Welcome, Admission is Free

San Marino Historical Society Executive Officers and Members of the Board 2022

Officers

President.....	Isaac Hung
Vice President.....	TBA
Secretary.....	Pat Salvaty
Treasurer.....	Bob Houston
Immediate Past President.....	John Ryan

Committee Chairs

Archives	Christa Lakon Judy Carter Joyce Batnij
Membership	Wayne Carter
Newsletter	Chris Datwyler
Programs.....	Christa Lakon
Publicity.....	Ed Tom
Thurnher House Docents.....	John Ryan John Morris
Members-At-Large.....	Michael Moran Aaron Gil
City Council Members	Council Member Gretchen Shepherd Romey Alternate: Steve Talt

Emeritus Board Members

Robert Almanza
Jim Elliott
Marilyn Peck
Peggy Winkler

Society Presidents (1974-2016)

Midge Sherwood	1974
Mary Smith.....	1976
Jack Sherwood.....	1978
Ed Ford	1980
Graziella Almanza	1982
Laverne Smith	1985
Jeanne Imler.....	1989
Gary Fleming.....	1991
Lillian Campbell	1993
Marilyn Peck.....	1995
Paul Crowley	1999
Gene Dryden.....	2004
Benjamin Salvaty.....	2008
Ave Maria Bortz.....	2008
John Morris	2010
Judith Carter.....	2014
John Ryan	2016

Thurnher House Hours

The Thurnher House is open on the first and third Sunday afternoon of each month from noon to 3:00pm. It is also open for tours by appointment. If you would like to visit the house on Tuesdays, please call 626-304-9375 or info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org for an appointment.

New to the Archives

From Carver School to the Republic of San Marino, new items cover the gamut.

One of our board members spotted a collection of 4"x6" cookbooks created by PTA mothers as school fundraisers in the 1970s that were being donated in a local online group. When the owner was contacted by the Historical Society, they agreed to donate them. Come by the Thurnher House and thumb through them for a glimpse of what San Marino families served 50 years ago. Nary a kale or gluten-free recipe to be found!

Our Republic of San Marino collection was enhanced by a donation from Winnie Reitnouer. Her husband Lynn was decorated by the Republic of San Marino for his support during the 1984 Olympics and for establishing a Sister City relationship with the Italian microstate. She contributed a large sign with the Republic's name on it.

A few weeks later, former City Council Member Andrew Hallum stopped by to donate a pottery pitcher inscribed with the emblem and name of the Republic of San Marino.

Are you or someone you know cleaning house or moving? Please keep the San Marino Historical Society in mind. We are always interested in San Marino photos, records, memorabilia, souvenirs, school items, clothing, yearbooks, or just about anything else that sheds light on San Marinans, their way of life, and their history.

Bertram Thurnher 1933 – 2021

Bertram Thurnher was the son of the late Armin Thurnher, who developed and maintained Lacy Park for several decades. His son Jeffrey visited the Historical Society to inform the staff that his father passed away in 2021. Bertram and his brothers grew up in the Lacy Park Superintendent's home at 1475 Virginia Road, which is now named the Thurnher House. Thurnher is a name that has left an indelible mark on San Marino.

Michael White Book

[The Story of Michael White a California Rebel Pioneer 1801-1885](#) by Dorothy Jenkins Ross is a fascinating story which provides a unique view of the San Gabriel Valley's development during this notable period in California history. The book may be purchased at the Crowell Public Library, San Marino Toy and Books or by contacting the San Marino Historical Society. The price of the book is \$27.20 for a hardcover copy including sales tax and \$19.57 for soft cover.



Millard Sheets Public Art Sculpture Identified in San Marino

When author Robert Inman spoke to the Historical Society on the subject of enjoying architecture through urban walks, no one expected him to reveal a significant piece of artwork on our very own Huntington Drive. But that is exactly what happened last fall when Inman told a rapt online audience that a sculpture at 2270 Huntington Drive was from the famous artist Millard Sheets.

The audience was surprised to learn of a Millard Sheets sculpture in San Marino. The very next day, one of our Board members walked to the site and viewed the bronze sculpture that depicts parents with their young daughter, seemingly floating across the facade of what is now Chase Bank. The Board member noticed the work of art was signed by the name Richard H. Ellis, found his contact information through his website, and moments later was speaking to Richard H. Ellis himself.

At 84 years of age, Mr. Ellis is still a working sculptor and now lives in Oregon. Ellis explained that the legendary artist Millard Sheets and his design group, Millard Sheets Studio, were commissioned from the late 1950s through the 1980s by financier Howard Ahmanson of the well-known Ahmanson family, to design and decorate what would eventually be around 80 Los Angeles area branches of Home Savings, which was controlled by the Ahmanson family. Millard Sheets characteristically employed several artists like Ellis to carry out those commissions under Millard Sheets' tutelage. Some of these artists, like mosaicists Susan Hertel and Denis O'Connor, became well-known in their own right.



The sculpture, "Family", can be viewed at 2270 Huntington Drive

Ellis, having designed sculptures from his South Pasadena studio at 1011 Mission for five Home Savings branches, is one of the contributors to the legacy of Millard Sheets' Home Savings buildings and their art that are now peppered throughout Southern California. Ellis completed his first sculpture for a Millard Sheets' Home Savings in 1967. The bronze sculpture that he made for the Home Savings (now Chase Bank) in San Marino, was



Ellis working on the sculpture in 1987

completed in 1987, two years before Sheets died. Two of the five former Home Savings buildings for which he created sculptures were remodeled, and those sculptures were relocated and can now be viewed at Chapman University and Forest Lawn. All five sculptures he made for Home Savings depict family scenes. One of them, in Santa Monica, depicts a sculpture of a family playing at the beach. "The family groupings in the art convey the connection between the bank's services and family values," a Santa Monica Conservancy press release states.

The work that Sheets, Ellis, and other artists contributed to helped to "convey an image of security and financial stability. The monumental geometric masses clad in travertine with gold trim, enhanced with mosaics, sculpture, and stained glass, became Home Savings' recognizable identity, attracting customers seeking to build or purchase new homes during the Southland's post-war building boom," states the Conservancy.

The Millard Sheets Studio-Home Savings collaboration ended in 1991, two years after Sheets died. Today, the mosaics and sculptures featured on buildings are noted by art historians, architects, and preservation groups and admired for their contribution to the movement of public art — art that was intended not to be hidden away in the private estates of the wealthy, but to be appreciated by everyone on buildings visible to the public at large.

Now, thanks to the tip from Robert Inman, San Marino urban walkers in the know can appreciate the public art on Huntington Drive that was borne by the forward-thinking Ahmanson family, the talented Richard H. Ellis, and the vision of Millard Sheets.

For more information on Richard H. Ellis' work, see his website at richardhellis-sculptor.com

For more information on Millard Sheets, see Adam Arenson's book [Banking on Beauty](#).

Kenneth Veronda 1940 – 2022

The San Marino Historical Society mourns the loss of Ken Veronda who was so much a part of San Marino, it is difficult to accept that we will no longer receive his phone calls and emails. Although Ken's title was Headmaster of Southwestern Academy, that in no way describes who he was.



Ken attended kindergarten at Stone-man School, grew up on the South-western campus, founded by his father, Major Maurice Veronda, and continued his education through the San Marino School system graduating with the San Marino High School class of 1958. He continued his education at Stanford University where he earned both a bachelor's and masters degrees in history.

With Midge Sherwood, Ken founded the San Marino Historical Society in anticipation of the country's bicentennial. Later the Rotary Club of San Marino elected him as its president for the 1999-2000 year. For many years he wrote their newsletter.

Harkening back to his college years, Ken maintained his love of history and would always be willing to speak to community groups on a variety of topics. One of his favorites was to pick a year and perform as if he was living in that year. Audiences were taken back to a point in time as if they lived the experience in Ken's words.

A true original, Ken contributed so much to the community that he loved. He will be missed by many.

Graziella Almanza

Graziella Almanza was born in Italy and moved to Southern California in 1962 upon her marriage to her American husband, Robert. She moved to San Marino in 1976. Graziella is fondly remembered as the 1982 President of the San Marino Historical Society, and was honored in 2014 by becoming elevated to Board Emeritus. Almanza also played a role in establishing the Republic of San Marino as a Sister City. She also served as translator for the Republic of San Marino's Olympic team at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Almanza volunteered in a number of city organizations. She served as the president of the San Marino Woman's Club from 1981-1982 and was among the longest serving members in the organization's history.

THE SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 80222
SAN MARINO, CALIFORNIA 91118-8222
(626) 304-9375
info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org
<http://sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org/>

Calendar of Events

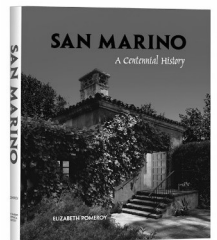
- May 1, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society.
- May 15, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society.
- May 23, 2022 Monday, 7 p.m., San Marino Historical Society Program, Judson: Innovation In Stained Glass, by David Judson, Crowell Public Library, Barth Community Room.
- June 5, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society
- June 19, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society.
- July 17, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society.
- August 7, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society
- August 21, 2022 Sunday, Open House at the Thurnher House, 12-3 p.m. Docent-led tours of the historical Thurnher House at Lacy Park, headquarters of the San Marino Historical Society
- October 24, 2022 7 p.m., San Marino Historical Society Program, TBD, Crowell Public Library, Barth Community Room.

Order San Marino Centennial Book Now

\$55 per copy + 4.95 tax = \$59.95. Add \$7.50 if you wish the book to be mailed to you for a total of \$67.45.

Order on-line at:

www.sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org or by stopping by the Thurnher House on the first and third Sunday from 12-3 or on Tuesdays from 9:30-3. Books are also currently available for sale at San Marino Toy and Books, Julienne, Port O' Call, The Old Mill, The Huntington Store, Vromans, and the Pasadena Museum of History



WEBSITE

Visit our website to learn more about your Society's programs and activities as well as viewing current and past issues of our newsletter – the "Grapevine":

www.sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org/