



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Volume 39, No.1
Winter 2018

A Brief History of Culver City's Major Houses of Worship

By Ryan Vincent

Culver City's first house of worship, St. Augustine Church began when the Figueroa family donated land in 1883 in what was to become Culver City, when Washington Blvd. was just a dirt road. In 1887 a modest wood framed church that sat 200 was built, and in 1922 it was expanded to seat 500. On Christmas Morning 1957 the current church opened, which seats 1,070.



St. Augustine Church, c. 1887 (donated to the Society by Christina Machado-Essex)

Before Temple Akiba was built, Culver City's Jewish congregants held high holy days in Veterans Memorial Auditorium. The initial sanctuary on Sepulveda Blvd. was dedicated in 1955, and its latest renovation, with a new entryway courtyard and a sanctuary including windows for the first time, was completed in 2015.

Culver-Palms United Methodist Church has enjoyed a prominent place on Sepulveda Blvd. next to the YMCA, First Southern Baptist Church is located in Culver City's earliest neighborhood (just a couple of blocks from City Hall) and Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church on Overland

is just a few blocks from Culver City High School. Early Grace Evangelical congregants met at the Scout Hut on Culver Blvd. before its members built the original church (now the Fireside Room) by hand, including pews and pulpit, in 1948. The main church, also built by church members including the wrought-iron, was dedicated in 1952 and seats 220.

Recent history has not been kind to Culver City Seventh-day Adventist Church on Washington, which has been hit by cars four times, and Culver Community Church on Washington and Sawtelle has also had to deal with vehicle damage. Culver City Presbyterian Church, built circa 1950 and able to accommodate 224 with another 50 in the loft, has thrived despite the 405 Freeway having been built just a block away.

Culver City's King Fahad Mosque, with its 2,000 worshipper capacity, marble façade, Turkish hand-made tiles, and 72-foot-high minaret, opened in July 1998. The mosque demonstrates Culver City's diversity, both in terms of demographics and religious tolerance. When a group gathered in 2006 to protest at the mosque over unfounded connections to the 9/11 attacks, clergy from other faiths stood arm-in-arm to protect the King Fahad.

"Now that's what I call people of the faith," Usman Madha, Director of Administration and Public Relations, told *Annenberg Digital News* in 2011. "When you believe in God, you have mercy and love. It doesn't matter if you're Catholic, Christian, Jewish, or Muslim."

UPCOMING EVENTS

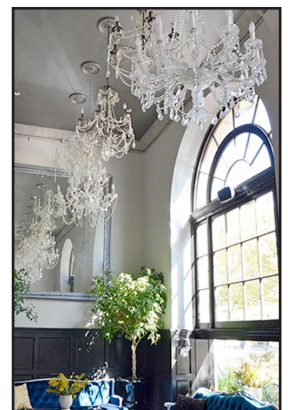
January 17, 2018 General Meeting and Program – Installation of Officers NOTE SPECIAL LOCATION! The Crystal Dining Room at The Culver Hotel, 7PM

Please join us for the Installation of Officers for the 2018-2020 term, including former Vice President of Programs Hope M. Parrish, who will be taking the helm of the Culver City Historical Society as our next president.

We look forward to officially recognizing this new group of board members:

President – Hope Parrish
Vice-President, Development – Laura Stuart
Vice-Presidents, ARC/Museum – Ellen and Art Litman
Vice-President, General Programs – Ryan Vincent
Treasurer – Carolyn Wispe Burns
Secretary – Fred Alexander
Immediate Past President – Michelle Bernardin

The Installation of Officers will be held during an hors d'oeuvres reception at The Crystal Dining Room at The Culver Hotel on Wednesday, January 17, 2018, 7 p.m. The Crystal Dining Room entrance is next to the hotel's outdoor patio, across from ArcLight Culver City movie theater. Limited seating. Please use the enclosed RSVP form to reserve your tickets in advance.



Culver Hotel (culverhotel.com)

YOUR PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

By Michelle Bernardin and Hope Parrish



Dear Members and Friends,
Happy Holidays!

It gives me such pleasure to use this space to introduce you to the Historical Society's new president, Hope Parrish. After working with her as Vice-President of Programs and getting to know her as a friend for the last four years, I have come to know her great love for Culver City and its people. It's infectious! She has taken the programs

of our General Meetings to new heights, exploring interesting and popular subjects of our city's history – down to its pastrami sandwiches!

I am happy to give her this opportunity to reach out to you in advance of her installation as president, because the next newsletter does not come out until Spring! I hope you will lift her up as you did me, and continue your essential support of the Historical Society.

We cannot do this without you.

– Michelle



It has been such a privilege to be Vice-President of Programs for the past four years. It was a wonderful experience for my father, Dennis, and me to bring you programs of our wonderful local history of the studios, businesses, and community.

When I received the call from nominating chair Steve Rose asking if I would accept this position as president, it was without hesitation that I said YES. I hope that I can continue

the work that Michelle Bernardin, past presidents, and board members have set in place. I thank the board members in advance who will be staying on, and I welcome our soon-to-be new board members for taking on their tasks.

It is such an honor and a privilege to pick up the mantle. I look forward to seeing everyone at our installation and throughout this coming year as we continue the good work from our Culver City Centennial celebration by sharing passion for our city's history with our community.

– Hope

In Memoriam

George Zermeno, husband of our founding president, passed away in November. He is survived by his wife, Catherine "Cathy" Zermeno, their daughter, Melissa, and her family. George worked in the movie industry and helped add to the Historical Society collection with photos like a behind the scenes look at *It's a Wonderful Life*, filmed at what today is known as The Culver Studios.

OUR MISSION

The Culver City Historical Society was created for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and exhibiting the history, cultural, and civic accomplishments of Culver City and its environs.

Newsletter Editor

Ryan Vincent

Newsletter Design

Sue Slutzky

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Michelle Bernardin, President

Stu Freeman, Immediate Past President

Ellen and Arthur Litman, VP, Museum/ARC

Hope Parrish, VP, Programs

Tami Eskridge, Treasurer

Adrienne Bernardin, Secretary

Ryan Vincent, Communications Chair

Denice Renteria, Costumes Chair

Julie Lugo Cerra, Historic Sites Chair

Jeanne Conklin, Membership Chair

Steven J. Rose, Government Liaison

Kevin Lachoff, Photographer

HOW TO CONTACT US

T (310) 253-6941, leave a message

F (310) 253-6942

info@CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org

P.O. Box 3428

Culver City, CA 90231-3428

STAY CONNECTED

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org

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instagram.com/culvercityhistoricalsociety

MEMBERSHIP

The Culver City Historical Society exists because of the involvement and generosity of people like you. Please help strengthen our voice for preserving Culver City's architectural and cultural heritage by becoming a member.

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org/membership

Welcome Our New Members

Carmen and Fred Alexander

Pamela Helvey & Lillian Caldwell

Eric Kalmus

Heather Coombs Perez

Anthony Spano

Laura Stuart

Robin VanZak

Glee Willis



Our Centennial: A Recap

Culver City's rich history encouraged and supported many activities in celebration of our first hundred years. Locals, under the umbrella of the Centennial Committee, planned a broad scope of events from the beginning of the year-long commemoration to the end: the kickoff at Sony Pictures; an

old-fashioned community parade; a 5K Run through downtown, including both of our historic studio lots – Sony Pictures Studios and The Culver Studios; our Historic Bus Tours; and much more. There were many opportunities for residents to enjoy what I often call "painless education" – sweet bites of our amazing history!

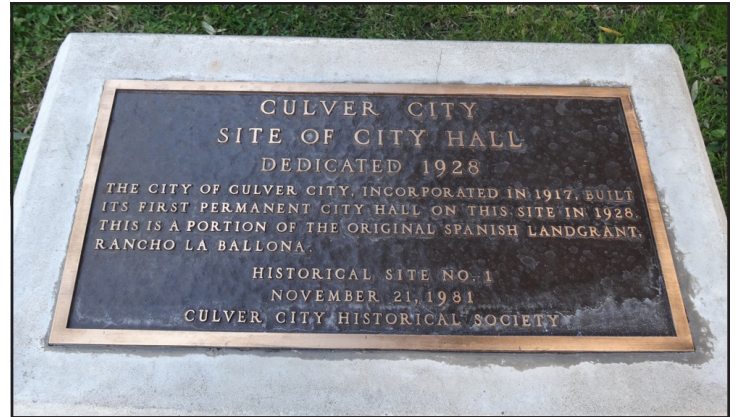
One of the highlights was the involvement of Culver family descendants. Pat Culver Battle, Harry Culver's only child, was always a supportive presence in Culver City. Chris Wilde, her younger son who lived in Southern California for some time, gave us a helping hand by supporting the Society, and he served on the Centennial Committee as an advisor. Pat's elder son, Dr. John Battle, and his family graciously planned their vacations to coincide with our closing ceremonies and presented the Society with a plaque. Meeting the newest member of the family, three-year-old Culver, and his older sister, Addison, resulted in many smiles.



(Culver) Battle-McMillan Family Plaque (Julie Lugo Cerra)

Our schools participated on many levels, and streetlight banners showed off many students' Centennial artwork. At the closing ceremony, representatives from our newest sister city, Capo de Oro, in Sicily, Italy, were in attendance to officially celebrate our relationship.

Recently, the City Hall courtyard was renamed for the remarkable H. Dale Jones, who retired from his city service as Chief Administrative Officer. The courtyard will have a new Centennial garden with restored public artwork. Restoration so far has included the Society's first marker, seen below.



The Society's first marker, presented in 1981 to commemorate the 1928 City Hall, was amongst the restored bronze plaques. (Julie Lugo Cerra)

The Culver City Julian Dixon Library is exhibiting hand-made quilts that show off a plethora of our historic sites! Stop by the library to see them on display. And don't forget to note the beautiful Japanese Meditation Garden in front, a gift from our second sister city, Kaizuka, Japan.



"Yarnscape" quilt project is on view at the Culver City Julian Dixon Library. (Nancy Kuechle)

Please visit your Historical Society Archives to see our latest exhibit and to support the new board, headed by President Hope Parrish. Many good wishes for a productive term, with thanks to Michelle Bernardin and cabinet who have worked so hard!

Yours in history,
Julie



P.O. Box 3428
Culver City, CA 90231-3428

www.culvercityhistoricalsociety.org
(310) 253-6941

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 17

General Meeting and Installation of Officers

Crystal Dining Room, The Culver Hotel, 7PM

April 18

General Meeting and Program

Multi-Purpose Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES

1st and 3rd Sundays, 1-3PM

Jan. 7, Jan. 21, Feb. 4, Feb. 18,

Mar. 4, Mar. 18, Apr. 1 (Closed for Easter)

Business Member Roster

These fine Culver City area businesses support our work to preserve Culver City history for future generations.
Please show your support by your patronage of their services and products.

Supporting Benefactor Sponsor

The Culver Studios Michael Goldfarb (310) 202-1234

Supporting Corporate Sponsors

Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary Paul Goldstein (310) 641-0707

Sony Pictures Entertainment Kristin Cavanaugh (310) 244-4000

Supporting Business Members

Cantalini's Salerno Beach Restaurant Lisa Schwab (310) 821-0018

Cavanaugh Realtors Dannie Cavanaugh (310) 837-7161

Culver Center Flower Shop Mike Eskridge (310) 839-2344

Culver City Animal Hospital Dean Gebroe (310) 836-4551

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Freeman Properties Stuart Freeman (310) 839-7593

George Petrelli Famous Steaks Marie Petrelli (310) 398-9777

Goran Eriksson / Techtrans Goran Eriksson (310) 841-2901

JLF, LLC Joel & Linda Forman (310) 837-7455

John Riordan Plumbing John Riordan (310) 838-4656

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Keller Williams Silicon Beach Baron Bruno (424) 465-3225

Santa Maria BBQ Jim Rodrigues (310) 559-5709

SendOutCards Richard A. Marcus (310) 397-4696

Tower Insurance Associates Janice Beighey (310) 837-6101

Please Renew or Become a Member of the Culver City Historical Society Today!

Join others in preserving the history of the "Heart of Screenland" and support the Culver City Historical Society Archives and Resource Center (ARC). We can't preserve local history without you!

- ☐ Benefactor (\$1,000)
- ☐ Corporate Sponsor (\$500)
- ☐ Family Lifetime Member (\$300)
- ☐ Patron Member (\$100)
- ☐ Business Member (\$50)
- ☐ Family Member (\$30)
- ☐ Individual Member (\$20)
- ☐ Non Profit Organization (\$15)
- ☐ New Member
- ☐ Renewal

Name/Company _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Voluntary Contribution to Museum Fund \$ _____

Please check type of membership and enclose your check payable to:
The Culver City Historical Society, P.O. Box 3428, Culver City, CA 90231-3428

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