CULVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY MARKS 25 YEARS!

HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH OF MAY KICKS OFF YEAR-LONG CELEBRATION

MARTHA SIGALL –
CCHS MEMBER, HONORED ARTIST & AUTHOR TO SPEAK APR. 20

The April 19, 2005 General Meeting of the Culver City Historical Society will have as its guest speaker, longtime Society member Martha Sigall who will discuss her new book, Living Life Inside the Lines: Tales from the Golden Age of Animation.

With a career spanning more than 50 years, Martha has quite a tale to tell! This is "an insider's account of the wild and wacky teams that created cartoon classics for Warner Bros. and MGM Animation."

A LONG-HELD DREAM REALIZED IN 1980

There were many in Culver City who long understood and appreciated the unique and special qualities of our small but vital city. In 1979, a group came together, in the home of Mildred Kearney, to create an "official" organization to preserve and promote the fascinating and internationally important history of the City of Culver City.

It was in 1980 that the "Articles of Incorporation of Culver City Historical Society" were formally adopted and named this non-profit corporation as the "Culver City Historical Society."

The Articles of Incorporation begins:

"The purposes for which this corporation is formed are:

(a) The specific and primary purposes of this non-profit corporation shall be to bring together those people interested in history, and especially in the history of Culver City, California. Understanding the history of our community is basic to our democratic way of life, gives us a better understanding of our State and nation, and promotes a better appreciation of our American heritage.

The corporation's major function will be to discover and collect any material which may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area: its exploration, settlement, development, and activities in peace and in war; its progress in population, wealth, education, arts, science, agriculture, manufactures, trade, and transportation. It will collect printed material, such as histories, genealogies, biographies, descriptions, gazetteers, directories, newspapers, pamphlets, catalogs, circulars, handbills, programs and....."

(contr'd on page 3)

~ APRIL 20TH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ~

Special Guest Speaker
CARTOONIST MARTHA SIGALL

The Historical Society's Spring General Membership Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20th in the Lethbridge Garden Room at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Ave. at 7:00 pm.

A truly fascinating evening is in store with Society member and honored cartoonist, Martha Sigall as our special guest. Martha will talk about her new book, Living Life Inside the Lines: Tales from the Golden Age of Animation (see story above) and share her wonderful adventures in cartoonland! Be sure to come and bring your friends for an enjoyable evening.

The public is invited to enjoy the free program and students are encouraged to attend. For more information, please call (310) 287-3850.
**Calver Historical Highlights**

**Box 3428 • Culver City, CA 90231-3428**
310-287-3860
cultural@calvercity.net

The Culver City Historical Society, founded in 1960, is a nonprofit membership organization whose purpose is the collection, preserving and exhibiting the history of Culver City and its cultural and civic accomplishments.

The CCHS Newsletter is published quarterly. 

Editor: Delores Newman
Associate Editor: Judy Stangler
Contributing Writers: Julie Lugo Carri

Printed by: Mr. Printer

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**Notes from Your City Historian**

By Julie Lugo Carri

**MAY IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH — AND WE HAVE A LOT TO CELEBRATE!**

First, May, all of the historic plaques should be placed on the Landmark and Significant designated structures in Culver City. The original historic survey took place in 1987, was published in final form in 1990, and the city council adopted the historic preservation ordinance and a list of historic structures in 1991. I am pleased that the Cultural Affairs Commission approved my request to expand this project which will be a benefit to the owners and visitors to the various chosen structures.

"**COLONNADE**" TURNS 90

The well-known "colonade" - the entrance design to Sony Pictures Studios on Washington Boulevard - will be 90-years-old this year! It was commissioned by Arch who designed it for his Culver City studio in 1915-16. The city designated the formal, neo-classical, Beaux Arts architectural style entranceway with Landmark status. It retains most of its original integrity and was restored by Geneser and Associates in the 1980s. Pictured here, can you guess 1) why cars have not entered through this gate since 1941 and 2) are all of the columns original? (answers below)

**OSCAR TRIBUTE TO ROGER MAYER**

The 77th Academy Awards were held February 27 was quite a show this year, and Culver City should have been especially proud when Martin Scorsese gave the Academy's prestigious Jean Hersholt Humanitarian award to Roger Mayer, president of Turner Entertainment Co. Mr. Mayer was the first recipient of our own Culver City Historical Society's Heart of Screenland Star Award. He has been a major influence in film preservation and his long history on the local MGM buildings

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Editor's Column

**25 YEARS !!! How did the time fly by so fast?**

So many wonderful people have helped to make the Culver City Historical Society one of the most respected around, and our new members get all the bad press as well! We hope to highlight many of those folks as well as report some of the important highlights of the past quarter century in the upcoming issues.

We’re also introducing a new series, “Remembering,” that will remember those who left memories of times & places of our city’s past.

A note of “Congratulations” to past President Roger Mayer who is retainer as Director of CC Parks, Recreation and Community Services — enjoy! (I can’t help your MCHS Historical Society — we can’t succeed without you!!)

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**FIRST THOMAS H. INCE AWARDS HONORS DANIEL M. SELNICK**

The Festival’s first presentation of the “Thomas H. Ince Award” honored noted film producer Daniel M. Selnick, whose professional and personal history reaches into the “Golden Age of Movies.”

Thomas Ince, one of the most important and influential figures in the history of the film industry, introduced production procedures and quality standards that set the model and helped mold the distinct image of Hollywood films to this day. It was with the encouragement of real estate entrepreneur Arch who commissioned Ince in 1915 that Ince constructed the first of two major motion picture studios in the new town of Culver City. These two studios (now Sony Pictures Entertainment) and the Culver Studios dominated the economic, cultural and civic life of Culver City as well as publicizing Culver City around the world.

The legacy of Thomas Ince is enormously important to the history of the development of the motion picture industry in the United States, the City of Los Angeles and in Culver City. It is most appropriate that the Backlot Film Festival should establish the Thomas H. Ince Award to honor those film creators who have made a contribution to the history of the film industry in Culver City, California.

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**REEL LIFE**

The first Backlot Film Festival celebrated “A Tribute to the Extraordinary Motion Pictures of 1939.” This was a fitting debut for a film festival created to appreciate the rich heritage of the motion picture industry as an industry, and to create a greater understanding of the debt current filmmakers owe to the earlier pioneers.

Held from December 16-19, 2004, the festival focused on helping to strengthen the growing film program at the West Los Angeles College with screenings in its 400-seat Fine Arts Theatre.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**APRIL 20:** CCHS GENERAL MEETING
**JULY 20:** CCHS ANNUAL PICNIC
**AUG. 22-28:** FESTA LA BALLONA
**AUG. 23:** CCHS FIESTA DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS
**OCT. 20:** CCHS General Meeting

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**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Remember, all memberships were up for renewal in January. 2005. Please send your renewal TODAY!!

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**REMEMBERING...**

"SEPUVELADA/JEFFERSON" by Steve Rose

As a lifelong resident of Culver City and growing up in my parent’s business, I want to share my memories of the Sepulveda/Jefferson area from my childhood.

Alter Segundo Sepulveda & Playa is where the Bert’s Bar-B-Q first started. Bert Maddox and his wife Penny, who still lives in Culver City, opened the restaurant. Bert was a small family-owned restaurant that later moved to the 5300 block of Sepulveda Blvd. which is now a hubcap store next to KFC — which used to be known as "Colonial Sanders KFC Fried Chicken" which replaced an earlier (and much cheaper) Mohawk Service Station.

Bert was the cook and Penny was one of the waitresses that served local CC residents along with numerous well-known folks such as Howard Hughes, Hughes Shattner and many others. Bert’s recipe was different then that of Stern’s Bar-B-Q. It was not as sweet and their homemade coleslaw was crisp and tart — something that you cannot find anymore.

Just remembering my childhood...
The Early Days ......

CCHS FIRST INSTALLATION, 1980
L-R: Mari Divjak, Rusty Kostick, Cathy Zermeno
(1st CCHS Pres.) being installed by Charles R. Lugo.
Courtesy: Cathy Zermeno.

1981 CCHS FUNDRAISER
AT THE CULVER STUDIOS
A “1917 picnic” theme and dressed for the beach:
Steven Rose and Cathy Zermeno.
Courtesy: Cathy Zermeno.

LEGION BUILDING FUNDRAISER
L-R: Working are Jo Ellen Weaver and past CCHS Pres. Lupe Smith.
Courtesy: Cathy Zermeno.

1981 CCHS FUNDRAISER
AT THE CULVER STUDIOS
L-R: Cathy Zermeno and Mildred Kaarney in “1917” costumes surrounded by “gentlemen.”
Courtesy: Cathy Zermeno.

Any fool can make history, but it takes a genius to write it. ~ Oscar Wilde

CULVER CITY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S
DESIGNATED HISTORIC SITES

Historic Site # 1: City Hall
Historic Site # 2: The Hull Building
Historic Site # 3: St. Augustine’s Church
Historic Site # 4: The Citizen Building
Historic Site # 5: The Legion Building
Historic Site # 6: Main Street
Historic Site # 7: The Culver Studios
Historic Site # 8: The Lugo Ranch
Historic Site # 9: The Helms Building
Historic Site # 10: La Ballona School

What Were They Thinking?
by Sandy Burton

Looking through the dusty pages of The Culver City News dated November 24th, 1925, I was attracted to an article entitled “The People’s Water Co.”

It seems that the residents of Culver City, Palms and the nearby vicinity were using 1500 gallons per minute – one might wonder what the residents of Culver City alone are using in water consumption today – and it was a story!

Located at 3392 Motor Ave, The People’s Water Co, existed when Culver City wasn’t much more than a small, little-known barley field. Anticipating the increasing demand for water, the company drilled for additional wells and installed pipelines before additional capacity was necessary.

You see, this relatively unknown company was well ahead of its time – planning and anticipating the needs and possible emergencies of its customers and customers-to-be. According to R.M. Moore, the manager, many thousand feet of cast iron pipe were to be installed to provide water to the new subdivisions.

The People’s Water Co served over 5000 residents within the area roughly bounded by the California Country Club on Cheviot Drive to the north, to Baldwin Hills on the south, and from Sawtelle Blvd. on the west over to the eastern city limits near La Brea Blvd.

Back then, the five pumps, each 300-feet deep, had the capacity to pump twice the required amount for its customers, amounting to about 3000 gallons a minute. The power to pump the water was purchased from the City of Los Angeles and The Edison Co. Three wells were located north of Palms at the top of the hill. The other two wells were located on Centenary Street off Washington Blvd. The water company employed 25 people and sometimes as many as 75 when pipelines were being laid.

Although the dry spells of 1923 and 1924 reduced the water levels of the existing reservoirs, the needs of Culver City residents were met by boring new wells. And, by charging reasonable rates, water users wouldn’t have to be stingy about watering their vegetable gardens! Later, the Colorado River would furnish a huge stream of water through the proposed All-American Canal.

In 1925, it’s interesting to learn that the local businessmen were thinking ahead to provide the safe and abundant year-round water supply which would insures Culver City’s future growth and development.

30th Annual California Preservation Conference ~ May 12-15, 2005
Riverside, CA (at the historic Riverside Mission Inn) ~ www.californiahistory.org/calendar/html
The Catalina Island Museum and Society

Celebrates the island's rich cultural history, including famous Catalina Potteries and life.

P.O. Box 666

http://www.catalinamuseum.com

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The Fowler Museum of Cultural History, UCLA

Museum explores art and material culture from around the world: Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and past and present.

P.O. Box 666

http://www.fowler.ucla.edu/

http://www.fowler.ucla.edu/
Become a Member of the Culver City Historical Society Today!
Join others in preserving the history of the “Heart of Screenland” and the efforts to create the Culver City Heritage Museum. We can’t do it without you!

**TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP**

- Benefactor ($1000)
- Corporate Sponsor ($500)
- Patron Member ($100)
- Family Lifetime Member ($500)
- Family Member ($25)
- Business Member ($50)
- Organization ($15)
- Individual Lifetime Member ($250)
- Individual Member ($15)
- Youth Member ($5)

Name/Company: __________________________________________ Telephone: ______________________
Contact Person: __________________________________________ Fax: ______________________
Mailing Address: __________________________________________ Email: ______________________

Please make checks payable to **The Culver City Historical Society** and mail to P.O. Box 3428, Culver City, CA 90231-3428. For further information, call (310) 287-3850 or email: cchistorical@pacbell.com. Contributions of both historic and social significance as well as monetary donations are encouraged, and the CCHS IRS tax exempt status may make such contributions tax deductible.

**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.

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PO Box 3428 • Culver City, CA • 90231-3428