



OVERVIEW



Photo by Bruce Carroll

The back side of the library may not look like much in this photo from late October but architect Barton Phelps says when the rest of the trees and landscaping are added this will be the buildings' "best side".

STAR DONATES COMPUTER CENTER

by Pearl Yonezawa, Senior Librarian

Two exciting events are helping the library as we move toward opening in the new building in early 1999 (no date set as of press time).

A Los Feliz Library patron, movie star Leonardo DiCaprio has donated \$35,000 for a state-of-the-art computer center. The computers & programs will help patrons improve their math, reading, language, computer & study skills. The new library building is on the former

Continued on p.4

INSIDE:

From the President	2
Old L.A.	3
Median Update	4
Community Page.	5
Restaurant News.	8
Recycling Info.	11
King School	12
Crime News (C-PAB).	13
Letters to the Editor..	17
MetroRail	18
Bridge News.	22
Perspective on Politics.	24

Interior (right) and exterior of almost completed Los Feliz library

LOS FELIZ LIBRARY OPENING AT LAST!

Library architect Barton Phelps, center, stands below one of the light chambers in the main reading room while project architect David Haggerty, left, explains the plan to visiting architects.



Photo by Bruce Carroll

ALMOST ONE FOR THE BOOKS

by Bruce Carroll

"The approach from the Franklin Hills is the best." That's architect Barton Phelps' view as his design for our Los Feliz Branch library nears reality. The library has a dual personality design that stems, he explained, from competing community concepts... "very urban on one side [Hillhurst] suburban on the other...for hill dwellers who live on curvy streets off the grid."

Phelps says library patrons will "get out of their car and go through a nice area." An area that he's transforming from a mere parking lot into a woodsy garden with several California Live Oaks (the state tree) wisteria vines climbing to the roof and

Continued on p.6

LOS FELIZ BRANCH TO OPEN SOON

By Charley M. Mims

The contractor hopes to complete work on our Los Feliz Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library by the end of this year! They are working on the parking lot area and the interior finish now. Work

A well-founded rumour in the community says that Titanic star Leonardo DiCaprio plans to attend at least one of the opening events!

on the landscaping will start next. The architect is mulling over the right paint color for the exterior finish of our library to make sure it complements his wonderful design.

Continued on p.7

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Adam M. Weisman
President

Seasons Greetings! As the year inches toward the end it is a pleasure to think back about the goals and challenges met by your Franklin Hills Residents' Association. From the start of the year FHRA has worked very hard developing creative events and helping improve our wonderful neighborhood. Since the completion of the Shakespeare Bridge a committee has been working with city officials to complete its restoration. The latter have informed FHRA that additional construction will be necessary to maintain the historical features. This work should begin during early 1999, and we hope will not cause more than one month of a single lane road. After this work is completed a committee will turn its sights to the purchase of two benches along the ends. It was nice to see the bridge pictured in the October issue of Sunset magazine. It was also nice to be invited to the Los Angeles Conservancy 20th Anniversary Festival which recognizes organizations involved in the historical preservation of Southern California. With the help of the students of *Lycée International de Los Angeles* (LILA—The French American Schools of Southern California) holiday lighting will add some seasonal elegance to our bridge.

Currently board members and committees are busy with crime prevention, the Hillside Federation, King Middle School landscape restoration, LILA, the Hyperion Corridor, City Charter, traffic congestion, street fairs, parking and the Franklin Avenue Median. New projects and interests include the reopening of the Los Feliz Public Library, Red Line Shuttle Service and Griffith Observatory renovation. Of course aside from the standing committees, the board is always concerned to address immediate neighborhood concerns. Whether it is a tree, car, pet, skunk, or criminal event, we enjoy tackling each issue and would be glad to gain some new volunteers. The FHRA Hot Line (323-664-7247) always presents us with new challenges, which lead to new resources or linkages with City services.

Through the work of board and area volunteers, FHRA has been faced with extremely LARGE projects coupled with small (in number) volunteer committees. The projects (i.e. the Bridge Party, the median, this newsletter, etc.) have been successful and, not surprisingly, some volunteers burn out and need a sabbatical. More hands to share the project would relieve this problem. They (projects) are not only useful, they are interesting to do, and meetings are actually fun! I hope that many of you readers will make a New Year's resolution to devote some time to your community through FHRA. Big or small, each project is important to us, and you *can* make a difference.

As we end the tax year, please consider FHRA among your tax deductible contributions. Many dues-paying members have given extra donations (Wow! Thank you!) There are an estimated 2000 separate residential units within our boundaries and only a fraction send in dues. This year the fraction is smaller than usual, and the outgo larger (due mostly to the Bridge party). We regard everyone who lives on the hill as a member, and are interested in all of your interest. All we ask is \$10 per person or \$20 per family. Please help us maintain an ongoing donation pool to create projects and events. Another way each active member can help is to get at least one neighbor to join. We have many new residents have moved here. Let -them know about FHRA.

Continued on page 4

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029*

"OLD LA" STILL AN OXYMORON

By Bruce Carroll

On October 11th an official FHRA delegation attended a birthday party at the LA Coliseum. But it wasn't for the Coliseum's 75th birthday. It seems when you get that far up in years many of your old friends...Rams, Raiders, etc...have moved on.

This was a party for the Los Angeles Conservancy whose mission is to see that old buildings like the Coliseum do not have to move on or get mowed down. Dedicated to preserving LA's architectural history, the Conservancy invited the FHRA, and 29 other local groups that help protect our past, to celebrate The Conservancy's 20 years of hard work. Among the treasures they've saved are St. Vibiana's Cathedral, the Bullocks Wilshire Tower, the art deco May Company also on Wilshire and even the oldest living McDonalds...it's been in Downey for 45 years.

The Conservancy provided each group a table, 2 chairs, and a little bit of shade at the peristyle end of the Coliseum...from there we were on our own. Before we were even finished setting up FHRA-land, event organizer Ken Bernstein, the Conservancy's director of Preservation Issues, came by and pointed out that we had the "most ambitious" display and if they'd been giving out awards we would have won.

FHRA President Adam Weisman brought our large stock of FHRA T-shirts in 3 styles and many sizes.

Treasurer Bruce Carroll, hoping to make a few bucks for the FHRA, set up our display of old area photos dating back to 1917. And Median chair Shirley Newland brought her TV/VCR so we could show the official FHRA tape of Bridge Party '98 and Median Magic.

While both sales and crowds were quite modest, it was a good day to meet leaders of other community groups, exchange ideas and tour the Coliseum. I found out the locker room has no lockers. It was also a chance to have a big bite of birthday cake in honor of the organization that works hard to keep bulldozers from taking big bites of old LA.

Editor's note...if you are interested in joining, or learning more, you can contact:
The Los Angeles Conservancy
523 W. 6th St. #1216, Los Angeles, CA 90014.
213-623-2489



Bruce Carroll, Adam Weisman & Shirley Newland in their little bit of shade at the Coliseum Peristyle

photos by Shirley Newland



By Shirley Newland

I once lived in a house that was intended to be a temporary residence. Except for a few shrubs and a spotty lawn, the yard was bare. I love to garden but, planning to be there for only a few months, I just tended to the plants that were there and replaced a few rose bushes that had fallen to the neglect of previous tenants. Seven years later I was still there and still basically looking at a dirt patch.

I learned several lessons from that experience, one being to not let life pass me by anymore. I may start something that turns out to be not so worth while, but at least I tried. If I get involved with something that does not last very long, like the Shakespeare Bridge retrofitting project, I am glad to have been a part of it while it did last. And if a project endures I get to enjoy it every day.

The Franklin Avenue median is an enduring project that, like my yard, was starting to fall to neglect. Unlike past experience, I did not let this go by the wayside. A maintenance committee was formed to revive the median. I got a little carried away at first and made some poor choices of plants and ended up bringing them home to nurse back to health in a more suitable environment. Melinda Taylor who designed the median selected native California plants that can withstand the harsh exposure they get all day and night long. With her ongoing commitment to the original design, Melinda is guiding the committee to restore the median to its intended splendor of natural colors and beauty.

Under this precept, the median will be around for many years. The purpose of the maintenance committee is to involve local residents for its perpetual care. If you are interested in learning the proper care of native California plants and have the time to spare call the hotline today. One person can do a lot in just two hours. For anyone with a love for gardening this is a great way of contributing to the community and sharing the information with neighbors to ensure the care of the median for many years to come.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In closing, it has been a great pleasure and honor to work in the management of this Association. The responsibilities and duties have been very rewarding. With established committees and new projects, there is enough work and fun to keep us busy for years. And, with the help of your donations and active membership, Franklin Hills Residents Association will continue to provide dependable and quality service.

Happy New Year

Adam M. Weisman
President,
Franklin Hills Residents Association

Continued from page 1

COMPUTER CENTER

site of the DiCaprio family home where Leonardo lived during his teenage years. Since the family used the library they wanted to give something back to the community.

Another exiting project is SKYLIGHT'S: LIGHTING: THE WAY TO READING IN OUR COMMUNITY. This special book drive allows you purchase a tax deductible hardcover book from Skylight Books for a 10% discount to donate to the library. Books will have a *Skylights Project* bookplate and Skylight Books will display an ornament for each donation on the tree in the store. Details about the SKYLIGHTS PROJECT are available at Skylight Books, 1818 N. Vermont Ave. and at the Los Feliz Branch Library at 1801 Hillhurst Ave.



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