



THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED

Working to preserve Balboa Park's historic architecture, gardens and public spaces since 1967.

www.c100.org

Spring 2020 Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to 2020, a new decade for San Diego and Balboa Park. With Mike Kelly's decision to step down as president in January after 14 years in the job, I find myself trying to top a leader of unparalleled dedication.

Opportunities are limitless for the Committee of One Hundred, the park's oldest support group, and challenges will persist.

One of our roles as the premier, all-volunteer support group is to lend our voice to all issues in the park: Tourists stream into San Diego by the millions but if they can't find parking they go elsewhere; the park attracts the homeless when authorities push them from downtown; we hope to attract a new generation of San Diegans who want to enjoy the park at night as well as in the daytime.

On the following pages board member and architect Robert Thiele discusses our Palisades project, touching on all these matters. An unsightly parking lot stands in the way of creating a new pedestrian destination where visitors should be able stroll safely between museums and the Starlight Bowl. If we can bring back some of the magic of the 1935 landscaping and architecture, it will serve as a backdrop for our great institutions, especially with the scheduled opening of the Comic-Con Museum in mid-2021.

Our dedicated board can't accomplish all this alone. We need your help as volunteers and donors. Please sign up to help on one of our four committees. Tell your friends about C100 and encourage them to join. We play a unique role in the park in partnership with

the dozens of other organizations without whom Balboa Park cannot become a world-class destination.

If Balboa Park is truly our crown jewel, we should treat it accordingly. It needs more funds, better governance and countywide energy from all San Diegans to keep it shining brilliantly into the future. As Lew Scarr wrote in The San Diego Union in 1969, "San Diego is a city with a park for a heart ... Balboa Park is not finished. Neither is San Diego."

Roger Showley, (619) 787-5714
rogershowley@c100.org



Mike Kelly was feted at our board's January meeting with proclamations and resolutions from all the elected officials whose districts include Balboa Park. Jan. 13, 2020, was declared Mike Kelly Day in the city and the county. "All my colleagues and the mayor are very proud and honored for the work you have done and are grateful for your leadership" said San Diego City Councilmember Chris Ward. Representatives of state Senator Toni Atkins, former Senator Christine Kehoe, Assemblymember Todd Gloria, County Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, and Rep. Susan Davis presented proclamations citing Mike's dedication and contributions to the people of San Diego and the state of California.

Palisades Rehabilitation

by Robert Thiele, Citizen Architect

Over the past four years the Committee of One Hundred has initiated projects to restore the Palisades, the southernmost part of Balboa Park's National Historic Landmark District: first will be the rehabilitation of the 1935 exposition's California State Building (home to today's San Diego Automotive Museum), with plans for the reconstruction of four large murals representing California's best features and achievements, and for reconstructing the Maya-style ornament that was removed in 1947.

The tile murals are in production at RTK Studio in Ojai and should be ready for installation this spring. The glass fiber reinforced concrete ornament has been modeled and is ready for production. Plans have been prepared and have been submitted for a permit to remodel the entrance, install the 18-foot-tall tile murals and the Maya-style ornament with LED lighting. All should come together by this summer.



South end of Pan American Plaza. Photo courtesy Robert Thiele.

Richard Requa, architect of the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, envisioned a plaza surrounded by buildings that represented cultures of all the Americas. Maya-style ornament hung from the parapets and was mounted above the entrance to the California State Building and the Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries. Maya ornamentation was integrated on the Federal Building.

The Firestone Singing Fountain anchored the public space at the south end of the plaza in 1935. This three-tiered, cascading fountain sang and danced with six round fountain heads, synchronized with music and lights.



Pan American Plaza, 1935 Ford Building. Photo courtesy Robert Thiele.

The 1935 Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries, today home to the Municipal Gymnasium, had a large bronze-colored mural above the entrance. The Committee of One Hundred plans to reconstruct this mural and restore the inlaid mural on the entry floor. We plan to reconstruct these elements that characterized the 1935 building.

A Maya warrior was painted on the glass above the entrance to the 1935 Federal Building, now home to the planned Comic-Con Museum. We have asked Comic-Con to include a reproduction of that cartoon image in their future plans. Projecting images from within would allow for the Maya-style mural as well as other images desired by the tenant to be displayed on a rotating basis.

In the fall of 2019 the Committee of One Hundred commissioned WET Design to create a concept plan of a 21st century reconstruction of the 1935 fountain with choreographed, color-changing, dancing, fountain features for which WET is known around the world. After a public workshop, stakeholder input and direct talks with the Historical Resources Board and Save Our Heritage Organisation, we look forward to seeing



Pan American Plaza, with 1935 radial garden. Photo courtesy Robert Thiele.

the concept plan that can bring this public space to life again.

Parks and Recreation will soon break ground on Phase One of the Palisades rehabilitation. In planning for and with input from some stakeholders a utility and security plan illustrates a power and communication spine from south to north around the fountain to a hub at the tram stop then up the center to the north end for the purpose of future activity planning and power from solar panels obscured from public view on the gymnasium.

Imagine the cars gone
Imagine the thrill of children
Imagine the wonder of visitors
From the sky above and the plaza below
Imagine water, light, sound, fire, fog,
dance, song, theater
Imagine what has not yet been imagined...

Phase Two of the Palisades rehabilitation could include reconstructing the radial gardens in the middle of the Pan American Plaza and a performance stage plaza at the north end as shown in the Central Mesa Precise Plan. The radial garden was a signature element that defined the 1935 plaza.

The citizens of San Diego have been waiting 82 years for the return of a pedestrian Pan American Plaza. People want access to parking and to transportation within the park. They want an attractive pedestrian plaza where we currently have a parking lot that can accommodate up to 280 cars but cannot support night life, entertainment, food trucks, events or exhibits outside the museum walls.

The Workhorse for Success: C100 Committees

The C100 board of directors has created four new standing committees to carry out our many goals for 2020. Please call or email the chairs and sign up to help. Recruit friends and family to join in. One other committee is in the works to serve as an advisory committee of former board members and other community leaders.

MEMBERSHIP: Welton Jones (weltonjones@c100.org). Plan the annual luncheon and other events; grow the membership; manage a group of "emissaries" to represent C100 and monitor activities of other park, community and government organizations and agencies; create a speakers' bureau; lead tours of the park.

FINANCE: Kevin Bentz (kevinbentz@c100.org). Oversee C100 finances; organize fund-raising campaigns and annual appeals.

PROJECTS: Vince Marchetti (vincemarchetti@c100.org). Plan and implement the rehabilitation of the Palisades into a pedestrian-only plaza; restore and reconstruct ornamentation on the buildings and build a replica of the Firestone Singing Fountains; participate in parkwide efforts to improve parking and circulation, security, maintenance and activation of public spaces.

ARCHIVES: Bob Wohl (robertwohl@c100.org). Manage the C100 website and digital archives; partner with the San Diego History Center and other institutions to improve access to historic records of the park; publish the quarterly newsletter.



THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED

for the Preservation of Spanish Colonial Architecture in Balboa Park

1649 El Prado, Suite 2
San Diego, CA 92101

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SAVE THE DATE FOR ANNUAL LUNCHEON

FRIDAY, JUNE 5 • BALBOA PARK CLUB

*Details will be posted on our website in May.
Invitations will be mailed to our members and donors.*

Guest Speaker:
Parks and Recreation Director, Andy Field



Jack and Irma Redfern were members and supporters of The Committee of One Hundred for more than 40 years. Born in Mexico, Irma met Jack in Coronado, where they would live. Jack worked as a surveyor for the County of San Diego. Irma and Jack were together whenever they attended Balboa Park events, where they were seen regularly. Married for 56 years, Irma passed away in 2016; Jack died last year on July 24. Their estate included generous legacies to The Committee of One Hundred and other Balboa Park organizations. This photo was taken at our annual luncheon several years ago.

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**The Committee of One Hundred
1649 El Prado, Suite 2
San Diego, CA 92101**

Mail other checks to same address or donate online.

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