



100

THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED

Dedicated to the Preservation of Spanish Colonial Architecture in Balboa Park

WINTER 2008

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NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Alcazar Garden Tile Restoration



Tile restoration work has begun in the Alcazar Garden. Nearly a year ago, The Committee of One Hundred commissioned the reproduction of ceramic tiles to replace missing and badly damaged tiles on the two tile fountains and the eight tile benches in the Alcazar Garden. Laird Plumleigh asked Dennis Caffrey of the Tile Guild in Los Angeles to undertake the daunting task of creating

new tiles to match the old tiles in design, color, and appearance. Dennis explained to us that many of the chemicals used in making these tiles are not used in tile-making today, so multiple tests had to be run with different ingredients in order to get accurate colors. Original tiles were a red earthenware clay body. Caffrey believes that the original tiles were supplied by the D and M Tile Company of Los Angeles, which made ceramic tiles from 1928-1939. Twenty-eight different designs of new tiles had to be made to match the originals as closely as possible. Tiles had weathered during the 73 years since the fountains were created, and those on the top were weathered more than those on the sides. After nearly a year, all the replacement ceramic tiles have been made.

Save This Date
Alcazar Garden Dedication
Friday March 7, 2 pm

The Alcazar Garden was designed by Richard Requa, architect of the 1935-1936 California Pacific Exposition held in Balboa Park. Requa had traveled to Spain and written two books on Mediterranean architecture. He recognized the significance of Balboa Park's Spanish Colonial Revival buildings, built for the Panama-California Exposition "under the brilliant direction of Mr. Bertram Goodhue of New York, America's foremost authority on Spanish-Colonial architecture." He encouraged San Diego's leaders to preserve the temporary buildings that had deteriorated over the 20 years since they were built for the 1915-1916 exposition. Requa was enchanted by the bright ceramic tiles used extensively in the "architectural gardens" of Spain and Mexico. He introduced these wonderful spaces to Balboa Park in the interior patio of the House of Hospitality and



Laird Plumleigh, Dennis Caffrey, and Chuck Fitzgerald

the Casa del Rey Moro Garden behind that building, the Persian Water Rug fountain, and the Alcazar Garden.

In 1937 Requa wrote:

In the former Exposition, there was a splendid representation of Spanish and Spanish-Colonial buildings in the various styles developed in that opulent period of "The Golden Age" in Spanish history between the discovery of America and the revolt of the colonies in the opening years of the 19th century. But, where were these gardens so intimately associated with all Spanish architecture?

The 1915 Exposition contained not a single example of these colorful and important adjuncts to Spanish buildings. I was determined to supply this deficiency.

Our dedication ceremony will take place on Friday, March 7, 2008 in the Alcazar Garden. I hope you will join us as we celebrate the completion of this long-awaited restoration.

Thanks to all of our contributors for your support of this important project.

Michael Kelly

Preservation on El Prado



term repairs based on a well researched understanding of the causes of the deterioration and the application of methods to protect the historic fabric of the buildings. All work on this project conforms to strict guidelines of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration.*

Repair work began in June of 2007 with the restoration of the California Building's frontispiece around the entrance to the Museum of Man. The beautifully delicate cast-concrete frontispiece repairs are nearly complete. In early 2008 work on the California Tower will be underway and a scaffold will cocoon the upper portion of the tower for several months. Significant repairs, not readily apparent from the ground, will be completed to protect the building from the effects of wind and rain. In addition, several missing ornamental flourishes will be meticulously recreated based on historic photographs, bringing the tower back to its 1915 appearance.



Rehabilitation of the California Building & Tower Curtis Drake, Heritage Architecture and Planning

Many of you may be wondering why our cherished Balboa Park icon, the California Building, is currently shrouded in scaffolding. The City of San Diego hired a team of experts to evaluate and then restore the exterior ornamentation of Bertram Goodhue's Spanish Colonial Revival masterpiece from the 1915-16 Panama-California Exposition.

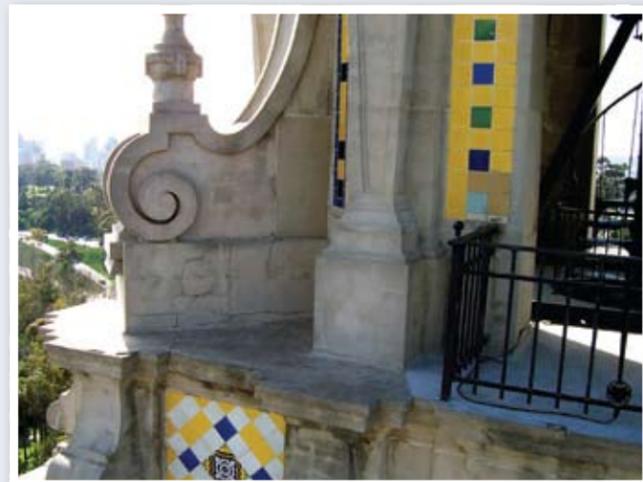
The restoration of the California Building is the second notable ornamentation repair project undertaken on the concrete structure in its 93 years. An earlier repair project in 1976 patched damaged ornamentation and replaced missing pieces. In recent years, falling fragments and new cracks indicated that the building needed more help to stay in one piece. The current project began with a testing/report phase in 2004 that included a detailed investigation of the condition of the cast-concrete (historically known as "cast-stone") ornamentation and structural systems.

During initial inspections of the tower, falling hazards were identified and stabilized. Next, protective materials and methods were tested and evaluated. The scope of the \$5.28 million project—which also includes work on the Museum of Art and Casa del Prado facades—was prioritized to get the maximum benefit for the money. The primary goal is to provide long-

By June of 2008 the California Building, Museum of Art, and Casa del Prado will be physically fit and ready for the upcoming 2015 Centennial in all their historically accurate splendor.

The key participants in the restoration are:

- City of San Diego, Park & Recreation Department
- Heritage Architecture & Planning
- Curry Price Court, Structural Engineers
- Wiss Janey Elstner, Ornamentation Conservators
- Soltek Pacific, General Contractor



Our Current Fundraising Projects



Alcazar Garden Tile Restoration Fund

The Committee of One Hundred has created a dedicated fund that will allow us to make future tile repairs to the Alcazar Garden fountains and benches promptly whenever damage occurs. We are committed to keeping these historic fountains from ever again deteriorating into the eyesore that they had become. Designate the Alcazar Garden Tile Maintenance Fund on your check if you wish to restrict your gift to this fund.

California Tower Earthquake Retrofit

There is nothing more important to our mission than the preservation of the California Tower. What a tragedy it would be if an earthquake were to topple this San Diego landmark!

Work will be done in two stages:

- 1) assessment and development of an earthquake retrofit plan, and
- 2) implementation of the earthquake retrofit.

The Committee of One Hundred has pledged \$10,000 in matching funds for the planning stage.

Cost estimate: \$600,000 for planning, \$6 million for the earthquake retrofit itself.



Simulation by Heritage Architecture and Planning

Administration Building Façade

This photo simulation shows the missing ornamentation above the doorway at the left. The original ornamentation around and above the entrance has been long missing. The Committee of One Hundred intends to restore this entrance to its original condition.

Cost estimate: \$700,000

Please contribute to one or all of these deserving projects. Make your check to The Committee of One Hundred and mail it to:

The Committee of One Hundred
Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92101-4753

THE COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED
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