



Los Angeles City HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XLVX • ISSUE 3 • SUMMER 2017

The Olympic Games

BY ANNA SKLAR

This September, the International Organizing Committee will announce whether Paris or Los Angeles will host the Summer Games in 2024 or 1928. Either way, Los Angeles will get another Summer Olympics. This offers an opportunity to take a look back to the surprisingly successful 1932 Olympics held in Los Angeles, July 31 to August 15, with opening ceremonies on July 30.

Despite the Great Depression, at its nadir in 1932, more than one hundred thousand spectators filled the seats of the Memorial Coliseum, temporarily renamed the Olympic Stadium, for the opening ceremonies of the Xth Olympiad. “It was the largest crowd in Olympic history,” wrote Stephen Gee in his 2013 biography of John Parkinson, architect of the Memorial Coliseum. Thousands of people descended on the city. At least 105,000 filled the arena on subsequent days to watch the daily competitive

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Opening Ceremonies of the Xth Olympiad



President's Message

Greetings Everyone!

Summer is here and I hope you and your families are making fun vacation plans. We wrapped up our Marie Northrop Lecture series with a unique alternative to our usual location at LAPL. We met at the LA84 Foundation and enjoyed a tour, a presentation, and a question and answer session featuring Lorraine Bradley, the daughter of Mayor Tom Bradley. Our thanks to Wayne Wilson and the LA84 Foundation! And I can assure you that our Marie Northrop Lecture Committee, chaired by Board member Michael Holland, is already working on next year's series.

We have two new Board members! Robert Alaniz is an active duty Field Sergeant with LAPD and an avid historian and supporter of the Los Angeles Police Museum and the Los Angeles Police Historical Society. Robert brings a great deal of experience to our board. Lennart Christofferson is a long time member and active participant in our programs. He has stepped up to assume the role of coordinating future activities. I want to thank them both for joining the board and I know they will contribute greatly to our society.

As always I thank you for your ongoing support and let's continue to make 2017 a great year for LACHS!

Sincerely,

Todd Gaydowski
President

Welcome New Members

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MELVIN FLANNAGAN JR., Charlottesville, Virginia
SHERYL ROWLAND, Chino
STEVEN TYLER, Tarzana
BOB WOLFE, Hermosa Beach ☘

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Hollyhock House images: Kevin Roderick; other photos courtesy of LAPL, Pacific Security Collection, LACity Archives, USC Digital Library, and Getty Images.

THE OLYMPIC GAMES
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events. Thousands of spectators attended various other sporting events held throughout Southern California: cycling in Pasadena's Rose Bowl; a spectacular rowing course in Long Beach; and equestrian events at the Riviera Country Club in the Pacific Palisades. They crammed into hotel lobbies, while streets, in the words of the Los Angeles Examiner, "were choked with hundreds of thousands," many of whom who could not afford to attend the Games, but wanted to witness and cheer the visiting international delegations and celebrate the coming of age of Los Angeles.

The effort to bring the Olympics to Los Angeles began in the spring of 1920 when local businessmen led by real estate promoter William May Garner organized the non-profit Community Development Association to raise \$800,000 to build a stadium, a memorial to the veterans of WWI that would also serve as a "venue capable of attracting conventions and tourism dollars."

In July 1920, Garland, as president of the CDA, travelled to Europe with a proposal to host the Olympics

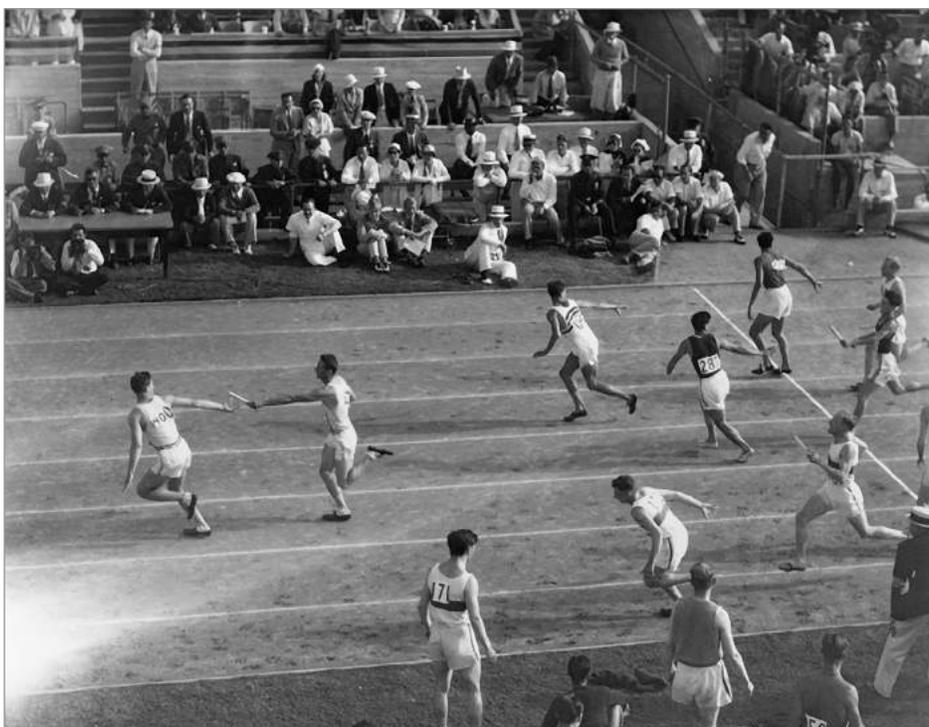


Promotional Photo for the Games

in Los Angeles, carrying with him a preliminary sketch by architect John Parkinson for a new Memorial Stadium to be built in Exposition Park. Parkinson was a prominent Los Angeles architect with a reputation for spectacular buildings. He had designed homes for wealthy residents and most of the city's major hotels, including the Rosslyn Hotel, the luxurious Hotel Alexandria, and, among his

other works, designed the California Club, the Los Angeles Athletic Club, and the first skyscraper in the city, the Braly Block. Parkinson became the architect for all work on the Memorial Coliseum.

Garland visited France and Belgium and included a side trip to Antwerp to visit the 1920 Olympic Games, where he met with IOC members and Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics. Garland presented his proposal that the Olympics be held in Los Angeles in 1924. He gave Coubertin supporting letters from the city, the county, and the state, as well as dozens of local business organizations. Coubertin explained to Garland that the Summer Games of 1924 had already been awarded to Paris, while the 1928 games had been



Track Meet During Olympics

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Hollyhock House

By KEVIN RODERICK, EDITOR *LA OBSERVED*

In honor of architect Frank Lloyd Wright's 150th birthday [June 8], the keepers of his celebrated Hollyhock House in Barnsdall Park allowed photographs inside the home the weekend of June 10th. Photos by visitors are usually forbidden. I stopped in Saturday morning and pointed my camera in a few directions. Visitors on Sunday's self-guided tours were also able to take pictures. After the weekend, the prohibition went back on.

If you are going, take note that you don't get to actually go into the nicer rooms. Visitors are kept out of the living room, dining room and kitchen, which all would have been nice to see from within. You don't get to see the upstairs bedrooms at all. But it's a good introduction to the house for \$7 (they don't accept cash) and there are knowledgeable docents on hand.

For those who don't know the story of the first Frank Lloyd Wright home in Los Angeles, or its patron Aline Barnsdall, here's 12 things you didn't know about Hollyhock House from the Getty's Iris blog in 2015. Sample:

Hollyhock House is a gorgeous Mayan Revival style house with 17 rooms and 7 bathrooms.

Oil heiress, theater producer, single mother, and social activist Aline Barnsdall commissioned the house, and it was originally intended to be part of an avant-garde arts and theater complex known as Olive Hill, now known as Barnsdall Art Park. Barnsdall

tapped Wright for the job when she bought Olive Hill in 1919. Wright was hired to design multiple buildings, but he only finished the plans for Hollyhock House before being fired. He wasn't on the job long enough to see the house completed in 1921.



This project marked a transitional moment for Wright, as it heralded the end of his prairie style home period. It also marked a turning point in the history of modern architecture in Los Angeles; the house's construction brought three seminal architects — Wright, Rudolph Schindler, and Richard Neutra — to the city. All three went on to create iconic buildings

throughout Los Angeles, defining California modernism in the process. It's one of the many L.A. treasures listed on HistoricPlacesLA.org, a historic preservation resource from the City of L.A. and the Getty Conservation Institute.

Also this: "In 1989, the building was used as the Piranha Temple in the cult classic 'Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death.'"

Here's a quick briefing too from the Hollyhock House website.

"Hollyhock House is Frank Lloyd Wright's first Los Angeles project. Built between 1919 and 1921, it represents his earliest efforts to develop a regionally appropriate style of architecture for Southern California. Wright himself referred to

it as California Romanza, using a musical term meaning 'freedom to make one's own form.'

"Taking advantage of Los Angeles' dry, temperate



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HOLLYHOCK HOUSE, *continued from page 4*

climate, Hollyhock House is a remarkable combination of house and gardens. In addition to the central garden court, each major interior space adjoins an equivalent exterior space, connected either by glass doors, a porch, pergola or colonnade. A series of rooftop terraces further extend the living space and provide magnificent views of the Los Angeles basin and the Hollywood Hills.”

“Selecting a thirty-six acre site known as Olive Hill, Wright and Barnsdall worked together to develop a plan that included a home for Barnsdall and her young daughter, two secondary residences, a theater, a director’s house, a dormitory for actors, studios for artists, shops and a motion picture theater.

“But because of financial and artistic differences, only the main home and two secondary residences were built. The secondary structures include Residence A (extant) and Residence B (demolished to make way for apartments in 1948).”

“Hollyhock House takes its name from Aline Barnsdall’s favorite flower. At her request, hollyhocks were incorporated into the decorative program of the house, and stylized representations of the flower are found on the roofline, walls, columns planters and furnishings.

“In 1927, Aline Barnsdall gave Hollyhock House and eleven surrounding acres to the City of Los Angeles for use as a public art park in memory of her father, Theodore Barnsdall.”

In 2012, Hollyhock House underwent an extensive restoration. It is the only Frank Lloyd Wright residence in Los Angeles open to the public. It’s open for self-guided tours Thursdays through Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Hollyhock House is a National Historic Landmark and has been nominated to be placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. ★

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The King of Transportation

By JOHN E. FISHER

Since the beginning of history, the human race has depended on animals — horses, mules, camels and oxen — for long distance transportation across land. Such was the case in Southern California. Los Angeles and other settlements along El Camino Real were accessible only by horseback and stagecoach. That would begin to change with the efforts of a person who would become known as the “King of Transportation,” Phineas T. Banning.

Banning was a mule skinner, stagecoach driver and entrepreneur in a freight transportation company after arriving in San Pedro in 1851. He built trade routes to Ft. Tejon, Yuma, Tucson, and Salt Lake City and used his San Pedro wharf as the base for his shipping business.

Soon he would achieve greater successes. When a storm ripped apart his San Pedro wharf in 1857, he built a new one a few miles to the south. He then transformed a marshland, known as “Goose Town,” into a shipping wharf at the end of what is now Avalon Boulevard. Around that wharf, he carved out a town that he would call New San Pedro. He would later re-name it Wilmington, after the capital of his home state of Delaware.

In 1865, he began two two-year terms to the State Senate and was focused on seeking funds to build Los

Angeles’ first railroad. In the grander scheme of things, he believed that a railroad would revive Los Angeles after the national economic collapse resulting from the Civil War. But on the personal level, he would greatly gain from this effort to transport goods from the Wilmington wharf to the young city along the “river on wheels.” His bill passed the Legislature in 1868, and a \$225,000 bond for the San Pedro and Los Angeles Railroad was approved by Los Angeles voters by a mere 28-vote margin. Conflict of interest notwithstanding, Banning was a major stockholder in the railroad and was awarded the construction contract.

On October 26, 1869, the first railway in Southern California opened along the 22-mile Dominguez Route ending at what is now Commercial Street. In 1873, the line was sold to Southern Pacific to entice them to extend the national rail network from San Francisco to Los Angeles. This linkage was realized in 1876.

Soon thereafter, Banning improved the wharf into a deep-water port where large seagoing steamers would dock. Banning’s seaport was eventually absorbed by the Port of Los Angeles and the “King of Transportation” also would become known as the “Father of the Los Angeles Harbor.” The linkage of the city with the national rail network, the development of the wharf into a harbor, and

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Wilmington Wharf with San Pedro and Los Angeles Railroad Tracks

THE KING OF TRANSPORTATION, *continued from page 6*

the accessibility between these two points was the catalyst, which activated the transformation of Los Angeles from a dusty pueblo to a major metropolis.

During the automobile era, the road was built alongside the Dominguez Route that is now known as Alameda Street. Due to the growth of the county, numerous grade crossings were added, thus resulting in collisions, delay, and deteriorated freight operation. In April 2002, the Alameda Corridor was completed that

rebuilt Banning's railroad below the street network. This national model of freight rail transportation permanently reaffirmed Banning's vision of a "river on-wheels."

Banning's 24-room 1864 mansion survives as a Los Angeles City landmark museum in the Wilmington district, set on 20 acres of parkland at 401 East M Street. 🌟

John E. Fisher is a former LACHS Board Member and is a retired Assistant Manager of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation.

The 2017 Marie Northrop Series: A Review

BY MICHAEL HOLLAND

The Marie Northrop series of presentations for 2017 have come to an end and what a busy year it was. The theme was the centennial of Mayor Tom Bradley's birth, which linked itself to events in the city's subsequent history as well as certain current events.

The screening of the documentary *Bridging The Divide: Tom Bradley And The Politics Of Race* and the following discussion with the filmmakers Alison Sotomayor and Lynn Goldfarb was central to the program. It's been viewed nationally since its first broadcast two years ago.

The second in the series, *State Of Emergency*, was the hardest and most challenging part of the program. The Bradley centennial had to include the 1992 Unrest, whose 25th anniversary was also this year. I was fortunate enough to have been able to consult with several people as to who would make a good panelist on what is still a contentious subject. My thanks to Alison Rose Jefferson, Denise McIver and Alison Sotomayor for their assistance. And my even greater thanks to my panelists: Robert Farrell, a Freedom Rider in the 1960s and former Los Angeles City Councilman (1974-1991) and Wanda Combs Moore, former executive assistant to Mayor Bradley.

Both of these presentations were recorded at the Mark Taper Auditorium and can be viewed at the

Los Angeles City Historical Society Facebook Page.

Our final presentation took us afield as we went on the road to the West Adams location of the LA84 Foundation to discuss the 1984 Olympics. We had Lorraine Bradley's memories of her father's work to bring the Games to Los Angeles. We also discussed with Wayne Wilson of the Foundation the possibility of the 2024 (or 2028) Games coming back. The timing of the 2024 bid turned out to bring a lot to the discussion. My thanks to Wilson and Jeremy Rosenberg of LA84 for the invitation and hosting us at their archive and library. There is no official recording of the event.

What is the plan for 2018? You'll have to wait until the 12th Annual Archives Bazaar at the Doheny Library at USC to learn more. The actual programs will be announced in January. My personal thanks to those members who made suggestions and offered advice during this process. None of the programs would have been possible without the direct support of Cynthia McNaughton and Russell Pyle of the Los Angeles Public

Library and the sponsorship of the LACHS and History Department of the LAPL.

See you all in 2018. 🌟

Michael Holland is a board member, organizer of the Marie Northrop Lecture Series, and is the City of Los Angeles Archivist.



L-R, Councilman Robert Farrell, Wanda Combs Moore, Michael Holland

THE OLYMPIC GAMES, *continued from page 3*

promised to Amsterdam.

When Garland returned home, he learned that Los Angeles voters had failed to approve a bond measure to build the Coliseum. Fourteen prominent bankers then provided a loan of \$800,000 to build the stadium. Meanwhile, Garland was invited to join the International Olympics Committee by American Olympic Committee member William Sloan. At the 1923 IOC session in Rome, Garland delivered another bid for the Summer Olympics, this time for the 1932 Games. Although members were uncertain as to the exact location of Los Angeles, Garland's detailed plan received unanimous approval when some of the members learned that Los Angeles was actually the home of Hollywood, which was by then an international sensation.

Parkinson completed the stadium on schedule on May 1, 1923. Opening day was June 1, but only a small crowd attended. The Coliseum soon received a much larger attendance for the American Historical Revue and Motion Picture Exposition on July 2, which continued to August 15. According to the *LA Times*, "Thousands streamed into the 'vastness of the Coliseum' to watch the Centennial's opening ceremony, which included an acrobatic performance by the Flying Codonas, five historical tableaux depicting historic moments in American history, and an impressive fireworks display. Almost every notable silent movie star attended, 'adding to the event an

aura of glamour."

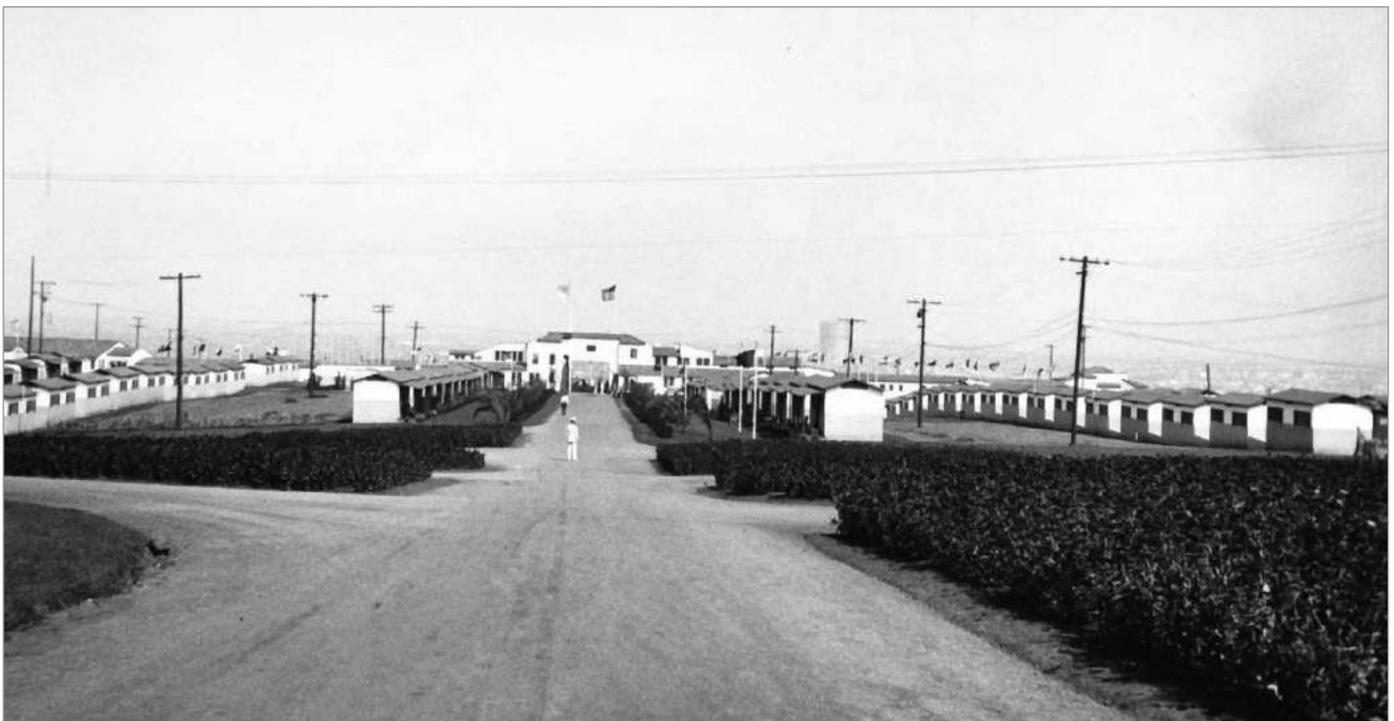
On October 23, the USC Trojans made the Coliseum their formal home, as they hosted and beat the Pomona College Sagehens 23-7, inaugurating the football future of the Coliseum.

During its early years, the Coliseum would host multiple football games, 15 track and field meets (including one featuring 7,000 children from local elementary schools), Olympic tryouts for the 1924 Paris games, Memorial Day services, and public concerts.

In November 1928, California voters approved a \$1 million bond measure to support the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. Parkinson and his son, who had recently joined his father, were asked to expand the 75,000 seat stadium to one that would accommodate 101,000, that would include seats for dignitaries, a lighted scoreboard, a section for visiting newsmen, and an imposing concrete torch topped with a bronze fixture that held the flame that burned throughout the games.

Work on the expansion began in 1930. Parkinson later recalled, Gee wrote, "There were 105,000 numbered seats, with backs numbered. Each seat had an unobstructed view of all parts of the field with exits so numerous and conveniently placed that all of the audience of 105,000 can, without hurry or confusion, reach the exterior in less than ten minutes." A new track made of crushed peat was installed. The new surface was exceptionally fast, resulting in 10 world records in the running events. Uniform

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Olympic Village entrance and Administration Building

THE OLYMPIC GAMES
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automatic timing and the photo-finish camera were used for the first time at the 1932 Games.

In February 1928, the Xth Olympiad Committee of the Games was formally incorporated as a non-profit organization. Thirty leading businessmen in Los Angeles formed the original committee with Zack Farmer, general manager of the CDA becoming the General Manager of the Olympic Committee. He appointed four additional people to head the executive council, which supervised the work of the dozens of departments that would oversee the 1932 Games. Under the direction of William Garland, Parkinson also served as chairman of a committee that would oversee all external venues.

The 1932 games in Los Angeles gave birth to the modern format for the Olympics. Between 1900 and 1928, no Summer Games had been shorter than 79 days. But, in Los Angeles, this was cut to just 16 days. It has remained between 15 and 18 days ever since.

Among the many firsts was the introduction of the Olympic Torch and construction of an Olympic Village for the male athletes. Less than ten percent of the athletes were women and they were housed at the elegant Chapman Hotel on Wilshire, a few miles from the stadium. The Village was set in the Baldwin Hills (due to its perceived lowest temperature of the greater Los Angeles area) and became a popular attraction for visitors to the Games. Architect H. O. Davis designed and built the unique village.

The Olympic Village covered 321 acres. The athletes were housed in more than 500 bungalows and had access to a hospital, a library, a post office, and 40 kitchens serving a variety of cuisines. 1,836 male athletes lived in the village for the duration of the Games. As Abby Chin-Martin wrote in 2012, "Frank Wykoff of Alhambra [who] was a member of the 400-meter relay team in the 1932 games recalled, 'I'll never forget the elation of living at the Olympic Village in Baldwin Hills. Being able to visit throughout the village, trying to overcome the language differences with



Babe Didrikson Wins Gold in the Hurdles

representatives of 56 nations was a rare delight.”

But the Great Depression had not been anticipated in the boom years of the 1920s. Conduct of the Olympics was based on a tight and austere budget. Traffic control was a major concern, especially due to the approximately one million automobiles that were in use in Los Angeles at the time. Chief of Police Roy E. Steckel and other committee members planned for months how to deploy 650 police officers. Officers agreed to work 12-hour days instead of the regular eight, and 150 college students helped the police maintain traffic control. All streets leading to and from the stadium were converted to one-way traffic before and after all events. People were urged to ride the Pacific Electric Red Cars, to avoid parking problems.

Fewer than half the number of athletes who participated in the 1928 Games — 1,332 athletes from 37 countries — came to Los Angeles, probably due to the worldwide economic downturn, the housing expenses as well as travel costs. A few were unable to raise enough money to attend. Cuban athletes brought pounds of sugar so sell, hoping to make enough to pay the \$2 daily housing fee for accommodation at the Olympic Village. Unfortunately, they were unable to sell their sugar and were forced to return to Cuba. Event tickets were \$1-\$3 each. An all access pass cost \$22.

A local reporter recalls that in 1984, Mayor Tom Bradley confided that he, as a boy of 15, had snuck into the Coliseum in 1932 to watch some of the field and track

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THE OLYMPIC GAMES,
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games.

Babe Didrikson was one of the most famous American winners at the '32 Games. She won a Gold Medal in the javelin, another Gold in the hurdles event, and won a Silver Medal in the high jump. After her marriage to George Zaharias, a professional wrestler, in 1938, she became known professionally as Babe Didrikson Zaharias. Didrikson soon became a champion golfer, winning multiple golfing championships, including 10 for the Ladies Professional Golf Association. The

Associated Press, in 1950, named her "the Greatest Female Athlete of the First Half of the Twentieth Century."

Other American winners included Eddie Tolan, who won Gold Medals in the 100 meter and 200 meter sprint events; swimmer Helene Madison, who became the first woman to win three Olympic Gold Medals; while Georgia



Downtown Los Angeles in Anticipation of the Games

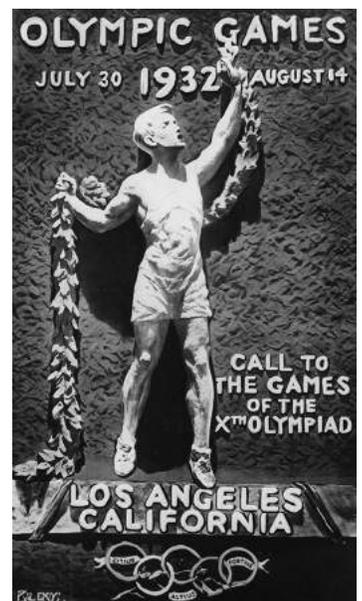
Coleman won a Gold and a Silver medal in diving events.

The official auditors reported that the 1932 Games had a profit of \$1,259,000. At the end of the Games, the Organizing Committee reimbursed the state \$100,000 plus an additional \$53,000, the premium for the sale of the

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Olympic Swimming Stadium



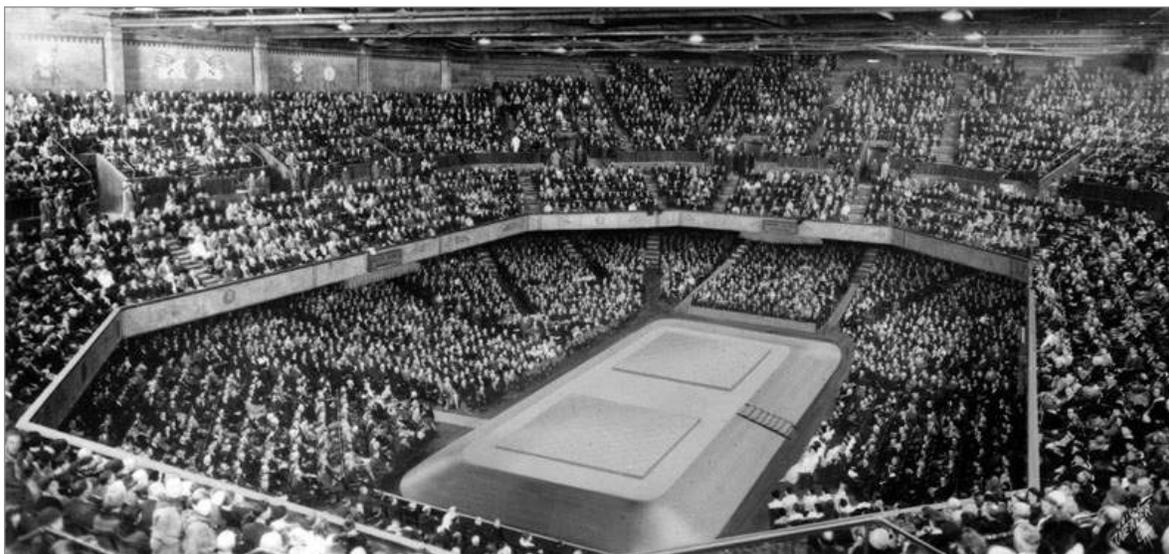
THE OLYMPIC GAMES, *continued from page 10*

bonds, after California voters overwhelmingly supported the loan to the city to host the Games. As part of the contract that the city and county of Los Angeles had initially signed with the CDA to co-sponsor the Games, each received \$213,872.28.

The '32 Games, with its stunning American victories, gave all of Depression America a moral boost in the dismal last months of the Herbert Hoover presidency. But they also showcased Los Angeles to the nation and the world as no previous event ever had. ★



Babe Didrikson with the Javelin (Getty Images)



Olympic Boxing Stadium Platform



Crowds Line the Shore for Rowing at Long Beach

Fire Station Adaptively Reused as a Museum

BY DIANE KANNER, BOARD MEMBER

Jim Finn, president of the Los Angeles Fire Department Historical Society, led a tour May 11 through the Hollywood Fire Department Museum for several dozen LACHS members. The stories behind the multiple exhibits held the guests' interest for nearly four hours. "Firemen rely upon wooden ladders for a couple of reasons," Finn said. "Even though aluminum or fiberglass ladders are lighter weight, there are power lines everywhere, and these materials will conduct electricity." Active firemen are expected to maintain the equipment in their stations and frequently sand and varnish wood ladders and clean the beam bolts that hold the ladders together. "All the supplies we use are provided by the Supply and Maintenance Division," Finn said. "Repairing fire hoses and fire engines takes place offsite in Maintenance."

The visit was organized by retired Los Angeles City Councilmember Tom LaBonge and included a two-course lunch provided by Palermo Restaurant of Los Feliz. The museum is located in Fire Station 27, City of Los Angeles Cultural Historic Monument 165, at 1355 N. Cahuenga Boulevard. The LAFD Historical Society has 3,000 members, Finn said.

To learn more about the two LAFD museums and the hours of free admission to the public, visit www.lafdmuseum.org. ✪



LACHS Members with Jim Finn and Wooden Ladder

Geraldine Knatz



We hope to bring you occasional profiles of LACHS board members, especially how and why they joined the board. Following is our first such profile.

Dr. Geraldine Knatz is a USC Professor of the Practice of Policy and Engineering and a contributor to LACHS newsletters, as well as other publications. She became the Port of Los Angeles executive director in 2006 and held that position until she retired in 2013.

When asked why she joined our board, she wrote, "I joined the board because Charley Mims asked me to after I retired. And I saw it as a way to stay connected with the city especially as I am so interested in the history of the City of L A, of course with special emphasis on the harbor. Originally I hoped to make my contribution writing blogs for the website but stopped after a few posts, holding off until the website is updated. Then I became a mole for the past 16 months since I got my Haynes Grant to write the history of the LA Harbor. I am finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and hope to get back to doing more blog posts."

New Board Member Robert Alaniz

Roberto Alaniz is an active 35-year member of the Los Angeles Police Department with the rank of sergeant. He is currently assigned to Northeast Division, which includes Highland Park, Eagle Rock Silver Lake and East Hollywood areas. During his career, he was



involved with the Northridge Earthquake, the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program) Program and the L.A. Riots. Alaniz also worked with Community Relations for LAPD, and in that capacity, developed several successful youth programs for LAPD. He also had a unique experience with the popular television program *Baywatch*.

During his long tenure with the Police Department, Alaniz participated in the police detail that protected athletes and visitors to the 1984 Olympics, as well as the 1987 visit of Pope John Paul II to Los Angeles. He was also peripherally involved in O. J. Simpson's trial in 1995 for the murder of Simpson's ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman in the summer of 1994. Although he was never called as a witness, during and after the trial, Alaniz maintained a staunch defense of Detective Mark Fuhrman, whose recorded racist statements may have influenced Simpson's acquittal.

"Mark Fuhrman was my former partner and good friend at the time," Alaniz says. He adds that in 1984, Fuhrman specifically requested Alaniz to be his partner, knowing that Alaniz is Hispanic, and subsequently they did ride together. He says he saw no evidence of any racism by Fuhrman while they were patrol partners. During the trial Alaniz was briefly stationed in the LAPD press office and became deeply involved with the media covering the case due to his strong defense of Fuhrman, including an appearance on Geraldo Rivera's cable news program in New York, where they discussed what was described as "Fuhrman and racism in LAPD."

Alaniz also played a significant role — not realized by Alaniz or his fellow officers at the time — regarding the year-long rampage of the *Night Stalker*, Richard Ramirez,

who terrorized the entire Southern California area with his home invasions and murderous crime spree from June 1984 to August 1985. While on patrol with other officers in West Los Angeles in December 1984, Alaniz recalls, "We caught him [Ramirez] trying to case some homes in Brentwood at 3 am. He was driving a stolen car and we arrested him on that charge." At the time, Ramirez had not been identified as the Night Stalker. Alaniz took a booking photo of Ramirez at the police station and his fingerprints were taken and filed, after which he was released.

Months later it was discovered that Richard Muñoz Ramirez, a 25-year-old drifter from Texas, matched fingerprints found in several of the attacks from various homes he had invaded, as well as the prints found in the earlier stolen car. On August 25, 1985, police released Alaniz's booking photo to the media and his photo was soon headlined in stories in local and national newspapers in several languages and on television news programs. The mug shot of Ramirez, taken by Alaniz, directly led to apprehension of Ramirez by a group of men in East Los Angeles who chased him across the Santa Ana Freeway, after Ramirez failed to carjack a woman's car, caught him and held him down until the authorities arrived. Alaniz notes "We, at least, prevented him from killing anyone that night."



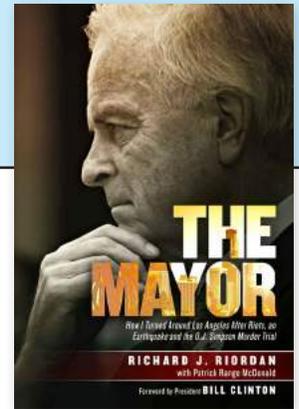
Alaniz's experience with the television program *Baywatch* was sort of serendipitous. He explains, "I worked the beach detail 1984, 1985 and 1986 and I met Greg Bonnan in the summer of 1984." Bonnan was a lifeguard, television producer, director, and writer, best known for co-creating the internationally syndicated television series, *Baywatch*. Alaniz notes, "The character of beach cop Garner Alan Williams was based on information that I provided." He often visited the set accompanied by his daughter. "On the set," he writes, "they called me 'Officer Bob.'"

Alaniz says he "has a passion for local history, specifically learning about the development of law enforcement in Los Angeles. He adds, "Los Angeles has the distinction of being under the rule of three different countries, Spain, Mexico and the United States, each bringing their style of

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BOOK
REVIEW

THE MAYOR: *How I Turned Around Los Angeles After Riots, Earthquake and the O.J. Simpson Murder Trial*, by Richard J. Riordan, with Patrick Range McDonald. Franklin, TN: Post Hill Press, 2014. 252 pp. Illustrations, Hardbound, \$27.00.



By Abe Hoffman

Aside from the rather hyperbolic title, Richard Riordan has written a memoir that will remind Los Angeles residents of a fairly successful, two-term (1993-2001) era when some important reforms were made in Los Angeles city government, and the role played by Riordan in achieving them. Born in Queens, New York, the youngest of ten children, Riordan grew up in an Irish Catholic family, his father a successful businessman who became president of the Stern Brothers department store in Manhattan. Riordan attended Santa Clara University on a football scholarship, but at his father's request he returned East and completed his college education at Princeton. Riordan served in the Korean War, earned a law degree at the University of Michigan, and secured a position with the Los Angeles law firm of O'Melveny & Myers. Los Angeles became his adopted home.

Riordan's talents as a businessman brought him wealth and success. Politically, he considered himself a moderate Republican. But financial success did not exempt him from personal tragedy: his sister and his son died in accidents, and one daughter died of anorexia. Riordan's brother died in a Mandeville Canyon mudslide. Drinking got Riordan into trouble, with two DUI arrests and another for disorderly conduct at a bar; he was unfaithful to his first wife, and they divorced in 1978; his subsequent two marriages also ended in divorce.

Riordan is candid about these personal issues, taking responsibility for his actions. A workaholic, he was a millionaire by the 1990s. Riordan deplored the 1992 riots. He believed that Mayor Tom Bradley, in his fifth term, was just going through the motions. Prevailed upon by friends to run for mayor, Riordan ran against City Council Member Mike Woo. Riordan began his first term determined to repair the city's image and economy. He may never have looked better than he did during the 1994 earthquake, when his entrepreneurial instincts persuaded Washington to make LA's recovery a top priority. He instituted a number of reforms during his two terms as mayor, (WHICH) presided over the major 1999 Charter reform, nudged LAPD Chief Willie Williams out of the job (replaced by Bernard Parks), and stressed the view that although he was a moderate Republican in a city with a majority Democrat voters, he was mayor of all the

people. His program included partnering with business leaders to get around the stultified city bureaucracy, getting the Staples Center and Walt Disney Concert Hall completed, serving on the Metropolitan Transit Authority (now Metro), and striving to improve the city's schools—which were actually not, legally speaking, under the mayor's authority.

Riordan's "moderate Republican" politics did not extend to Los Angeles labor unions, especially United Teachers-Los Angeles (UTLA). He claimed a friendship with UTLA President Helen Bernstein, but insisted that UTLA was more concerned with protecting its teacher members, even incompetent ones, instead of prioritizing the educational needs of children. His views in this area are arguable, since demonizing teachers as responsible for the LAUSD's faults overlooks or ignores a long history of struggle for teachers to obtain professional status. Riordan also criticizes the Los Angeles City Council with whom he found it difficult to work, citing an entrenched city bureaucracy and opponents who disagreed with his managerial approach to city government. For their part, several Los Angeles City Council members at that time complained often that this mayor didn't understand the basic process of representative government. Nevertheless he won a resounding victory over maverick challenger Tom Hayden in his bid for a second term in 1997.

Termed out in 2001, Riordan contemplated a run for governor, but his self-proclaimed moderate Republican views on abortion and gay rights won little favor among conservatives who preferred someone more to the right, in this case Bill Simon. Gray Davis defeated Simon but was recalled in 2003. Riordan gave his blessing to Arnold Schwarzenegger, who won the 2003 recall election. Ironically, Schwarzenegger's attempts to use a managerial style akin to Riordan's approach won him little favor from the state legislature or voters.

Since leaving public office Riordan has served in an advisory capacity on several boards. His attempt to start a newspaper, reflecting his long animosity to the *Los Angeles Times*, was dead on arrival. As to his legacy, his hopes for educational reform lasted only until the

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policing.” And notes, “If we are going to be the best police department in the world, we need to study our past and learn from our history.” He says that in the written “history of the Old West, the development of law enforcement stops at Tombstone (Arizona). This, even though Los Angeles has a rich history of law enforcement with outstanding police officers equally courageous as those we are currently familiar with.” Alaniz has written several articles about local law enforcement officers during



the 1850s and has his own web site lapolicehistory.com, to highlight their achievements.

Alaniz says “I became a member of our Board to help increase its membership, and use my experiences with LAPD Community Relations in developing outreach programs for our youth in the community as well as adults.” He adds, I also want to help establish a headquarters for the organization where we can promote the history of Los Angeles City.” ★

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USC is minutes from downtown Los Angeles and is easily accessible by major freeways and the Metro Expo line. Doheny Library is located in the center of campus, adjacent to Alumni Park and across from Bovard Auditorium, on Trousdale Avenue. For information regarding parking on campus, visit the Parking Services Website. ★

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people he supported for the LAUSD Board of Education either left the board or were defeated for reelection. The LAUSD’s problems with a disastrous payroll foul-up and Superintendent John Deasy’s ill-planned offer to give every student an I-pod are not connected to Riordan’s legacy, but demonstrate the problems the city’s schools have experienced since his term in office.

On balance, Riordan did accomplish some of his goals, yet Bernard Parks didn’t last long as police chief, subsequently being elected to the City Council after being ousted by Riordan’s successor Jim Hahn. My own personal

resentment of his “legacy” was the decision of the Board of Library Commissioners (whose members he appointed) to rename the Central Library after him, effectively erasing Rufus B. von KleinSmid from history though von KleinSmid in his career was president of the University of Southern California and a long-time supporter of the city’s library system. Riordan’s biography will be useful in providing basic information about his life and career until a more critical and penetrating study comes along. ★

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Los Angeles City
HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
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