

# the willmore city enterprise



## What I Remember

By Peter Devereaux

The City of Long Beach was not a pioneer in neighborhood preservation, but in the 70s the experiences of other places began to spark activity here. Bill Montgomery and I used to talk about finding an area in Long Beach that had old, interesting houses, and seemed to have preservation potential. (It was **too early to be talking about "historic district".**)

Bill was a landscape architect working for the City, had a good eye and was active in the Historical Society. Attracted by the Victorian gem at the Drake Park end of 10<sup>th</sup> St., he took his camera out into the surrounding area. The resulting slides showed a good stock of houses from the turn of the century, the teens, and the twenties.

Another friend, Harriet Williams, was also convinced that Long Beach was too careless when it came to neighborhood preservation and nurturing respect for the past. As a member of the School Board she was looking for ways to make people proud of where they lived, and aware of the special character of the different older areas.

The three of us thought a neighborhood group dedicated to promoting the preservation and improvement of the area around Drake Park might be worth the effort; might even serve as a model for other neighborhood groups. We went to San Diego to take in the annual California Preservation Conference. That would have been about the mid-



*The Pacific Coast Club being demolished.*

seventies. We met people from around the state and beyond, heard success stories, learned organizing



**he 1936 Works Progress Administration mosaic originally adorned the upper portion of the north wall of the old Long Beach Auditorium. It was saved from demolition in 1975 and moved to Third Street and the promenade in 1982.**  
File photo

### February Meeting

Date: Tuesday February 21, 2012  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Drake Park

Please join us as we welcome the Long Beach Area Coalition for the Homeless. Their mission is to focus community concern on ending homelessness through education, support for political and economic change to decrease homelessness, and support for services that empower people. Learning about ALL the members of our community is important!

Code Enforcement meets at 6:00.

## Historic Fencing

By Jim Danno

*“Love your neighbor as yourself; but don't take down the fence.” Carl Sandburg*

Fencing is one of the most important elements in the curb appeal of your home and is especially important with an historic home. The design of your fence should complement the style of your architecture. This can be achieved by building your fence of materials and colors that relate to the materials and colors used in the house.

Fence designs change with different architectural periods and styles. If you are lucky enough to have early photographs of your house you are way ahead of the curve. These will provide valuable clues to the design of a fence that was originally built for **your house. If you don't have photos of your own home, check out the Long Beach Historical Society or the archives at the Long Beach Public Library. Keep in mind that quite often, homes during the early 1900's did not have fences.**

Listed below are the most common types of fencing and their suitability for the various styles of homes. I believe that it will help to point you in the right direction.

Style	Fence type
Victorian Cottage	Timber picket Woven wire
Victorian Gothic	Iron palisade Timber picket Woven wire
Federation	Masonry pier & panel Timber picket (usually square topped) Solid masonry
Craftsman	Timber picket (usually squared topped, also stick design) Masonry pier/stone

### Iron Palisade

Palisade fences have panels of cast iron pickets with spiked or shaped tops, connected by a horizontal rail set into a sandstone or cement masonry base. Dressed sandstone posts are usually located at corners and gateways and where necessary, intermediate posts are used.

### Masonry Pier and Panel

Masonry pier and panel fences are found with both Federation and Inter-war (1924-1940) period houses. They are usually built with low panels of face brickwork between brick piers up to 36 inches high. A single pipe rail or panel of wrought metalwork spans between the brick piers. On some sites, sandstone is used instead of face brick.

### Retaining Walls

Retaining walls are used on steep sites, sometimes topped with a metal palisade or picket fence. They are usually incorporated into the garden design.

Typical materials used are either split face block, sandstone or brick face.

### Solid Masonry

Solid masonry fences are usually much lower for Interwar and Post WWII housing with panels at about 18 inches high.

### Timber Picket Fences

Timber picket fences are built with timber pickets fixed to horizontal rails spanning between posts. The spacing of the pickets for Victorian period fences is usually the same as the width of the picket. Some Federation picket fences have closer spaces between pickets. The pickets for fences to Victorian houses usually have a shaped top. Common shapes include pointed, half round, and acorn. Federation house fences are more likely to have square tops and chamfered edges. Posts are often shaped in a design that relates to the shape of the pickets. Federation houses might also have pickets combined with brick piers and low brick panels. Gates for picket fences are made of either matching pickets or boarded timber panels.

### Woven Wire

Variations of woven wire fencing were used in most periods. Wire mesh was fixed to a simple frame of post and rails to provide a simple fence. Earlier examples are rare and often have the wire finished in decorative loops at the top. Later examples use chain wire with timber framing, Privacy was usually achieved by planting a hedge behind the wire mesh. Woven wire fences are rarely more than 36 inches tall. **If you have an earlier version, you're fortunate!**



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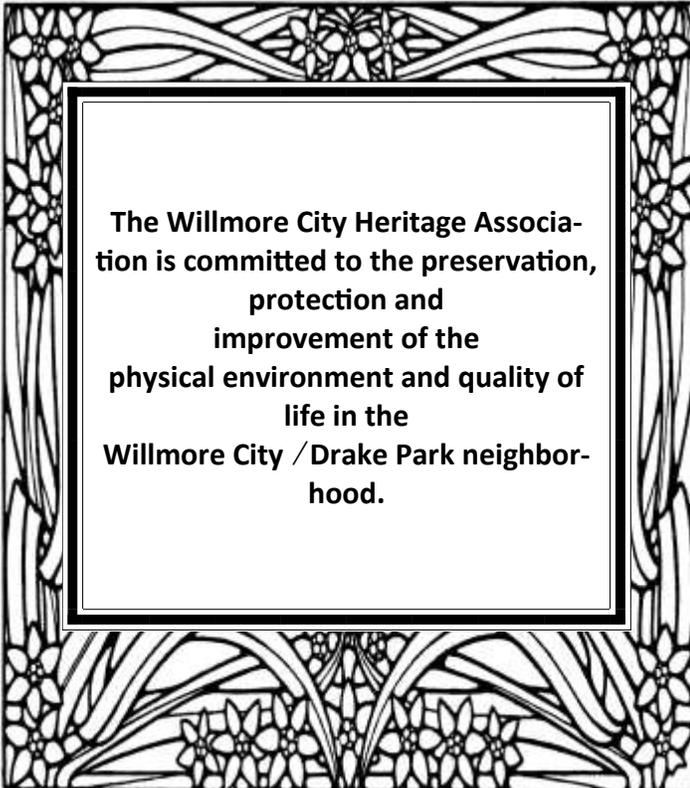
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**The Willmore City Heritage Association is committed to the preservation, protection and improvement of the physical environment and quality of life in the Willmore City / Drake Park neighborhood.**

## Calendar of events

### Bulldog Beauty Contest and Haute Dog Pageant

PLACE: Marine Stadium  
 DATE: February 11  
 TIME: 10:00 a.m.

8th Annual event, courtesy of Justin Rudd, celebrating the joy of man's best friend.  
[www.BulldogBeauty.com](http://www.BulldogBeauty.com)

### Concerts in Historic Sites

PLACE: The Doheny Mansion  
 DATE: February 17, March 10  
 TIME: 8:00 p.m.

The Szymanowsky Quartet (Feb), & Hermitage Trio (Mar) in a beautiful and intimate setting.  
[www.dohenymansion.org](http://www.dohenymansion.org)

### Casino Moderne

PLACE: LA Athletic Club  
 DATE: February 18  
 TIME: 7:00 p.m.—11:00 p.m.

Leave the kids at home and enjoy vintage gaming and prohibition era cocktails!  
[www.adsla.org](http://www.adsla.org)

### LB Heritage Awards Banquet

PLACE: Queen Mary  
 DATE: February 23  
 TIME: 5:30 p.m.

Annual Long Beach preservation awards.  
[www.lbheritage.org](http://www.lbheritage.org)

### California Women Win the Vote!

PLACE: Heritage Square Museum  
 DATE: March 3  
 TIME: 2:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.

Documentary film about California women's struggle for right to vote.  
[www.heritagesquare.org](http://www.heritagesquare.org)

### Cocktails in historic places

PLACE: Tam O' Shanter  
 DATE: March 9  
 TIME: 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Adult beverages in the oldest, single family owned and operated, in the same location, restaurant in Los Angeles—over nine decades.  
[www.adsla.org](http://www.adsla.org)

### Downtown Walking Tours

PLACE: 205 E. 3rd St.  
 DATE: March 17  
 TIME: 9:00 a.m.

Experience the historic gems found in downtown Long Beach on a guided 2 hour walking tour.  
[www.lbheritage.org](http://www.lbheritage.org)

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methods, made valuable contacts. We were delighted to meet Stan Poe there. He lived in a house at 12<sup>th</sup> and Cedar and had been thinking about the same things.

Back in Long Beach, Stan offered his parlor for a meeting. Bill prepared a slide show and we handed out fliers throughout the area. People came to the First Congregational Church to attend meetings of the Willmore City Heritage Association.

Ernie Villa from 5<sup>th</sup> and Magnolia came. Scott Winston had started work on a house fronting Drake Park. Bob Baily, 10<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut, was another early investor. A committee gathered Victorian and other pieces for an exhibit at the Art Museum. Our trusty slide show helped the broader community to become acquainted with the re-birth efforts in a neighborhood that, if known at all, was widely thought to be on the skids.

Consciousness-raising would be important, nor were we unaware that there would be an important political element. Very clearly, the city establishment was resisting preservation, protection of the original pattern, keeping the old. **In fact “re-cycle”** was in the works, meaning zoning incentives to replace the old houses with new multiple units. We spread the alarm and attracted big crowds. Maybe, we were told, there was the possibility of a protected down-zoned area, a planned development, if we reserved our efforts for the blocks north of 7<sup>th</sup> St. That was progress.

The council member in that area, Mark Wilder, was interested and came to meetings. Instead of Cobra-head street lighting, the area received the sidewalk-friendly acorn light posts.

The newly founded Heritage Foundation arranged to complete a survey in preparation for the first historic district in Long Beach, the Drake Park Historic District.

It was in Willmore City/Drake Park that the first house tours took place. They were very successful, and were intended only in a minor way to raise funds, but more importantly to get the neighbors together, clean up the area, and spread the word to the larger community that there was plenty to care about.

At our regular meetings we would hear about new people moving in and others staying to fix up. Part



Where did it go?! This photograph shows a close up of a walnut fireplace located on the tenth floor of the demolished Jergin's Trust building. It has carved dentil-style embellishment along the mantel edge. The mantel also features two elaborately carved corbels. The interior fireplace bricks are constructed in a decorative herringbone pattern. A metal fire screen stands in front of the fireplace. Duplicate: lbpL\_6648

of the strategy was replacing sub-standard buildings with moved-on in-fill houses, and there the city establishment, Long Beach Heritage and the Port were quite helpful. Two went to 8<sup>th</sup> and Daisy, one to Cedar, one to 10<sup>th</sup> St.

The group functioned well when it combined education with fun. We took many outings, finding out what people in Anaheim or San Diego or Pasadena had put together.

There were varying opinions about important matters, such as whether we wanted gentrification to happen, or whether we should guard against it.

Some who came in with enthusiasm gradually wore down and handed the baton to other eager pioneers.

No doubt the Willmore City experience, though unique, was helpful to other neighborhood associations who saw historic preservation as their best way to improve. Most were pleasantly surprised that the Cultural Heritage Commission, and the Preservation Officer, have been able to help seventeen areas in Long Beach become designated as historic districts. They are:

- Belmont Heights
- Bluff Heights
- Bluff Park
- Brenner Place
- California Heights
- Carroll Park
- Craftsman Bungalow Historic Village
- Eliot Lane
- Linden Avenue
- Minerva Park Place
- Rose Park



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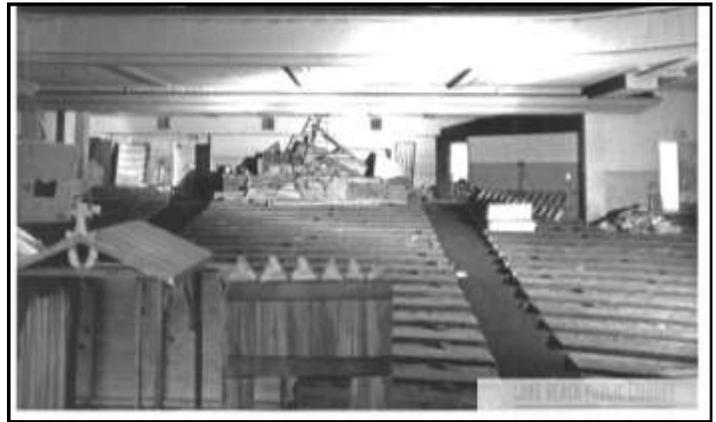
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- Rose Park South
- Sunrise Boulevard
- Willmore City/Drake Park
- Wilton Street
- Wrigley



The famous Cyclone Racer (World's Largest Wooden Roller Coaster) at the end of it's life.



Demolition of the theatre in the Jergin's Trust.



The Jergin's Trust elements —as they were.



Demolition of the Omar Hubbard Building.



Not all change is bad—Broadway and Chestnut—1980's and present.

April and May Meetings—Focus on History  
 If you find yourself a little horrified by these photos of destruction, you have a lot of company. If you are interested in how the Willmore City/Drake Park Historic District began or in the process of having an area declared a historic district (some of them here are only a block long), mark your calendar for April 17th. Stan Poe, historian extraordinaire and founding father, will enlighten you all! Slides of Willmore City in the early 70's will be shown to augment his talk. The following month will be Movie Night! Enjoy some popcorn and view the film, "I Remember Long Beach".



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## March Elections

**It's that time! Time to step up and contribute!** There will be an opening on the WCHA board and Jim Danno, Kathleen Irvine and Jana Shields are all up for re-election. The Willmore/Drake Park Historic District needs tender loving care, especially in these times of budget cuts, RDA dissolving and economic hardship for many of our neighbors. Join us in continuing the great works done by past and present board members that have improved our area so much. If you are interested in running, please contact Cheryl Perry (562-715-0804) or Phyllis McDaniels (562-435-4162) for further info.

our fantastic elves, and the fabulous Dianne McNinch for her face painting talents. We are grateful to Alicia Carrera from CPC, who organized crafts for the kids.

Neighbors and friends had a splendid time enjoying a variety of music and food. We were able to collect close to 400lbs of canned goods for Food Finders, a local food bank, and Wal-Mart donated two bikes that were raffled off to two lucky local children. The success of this event is what makes Willmore City and the 1st District so special - a dream, some moxie, and the community and City support to bring it all together!



*Congratulations on winning a bike, Angel!*



*Another lucky bike winner!*

## Winter in Willmore

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, a big sigh of relief was heard in the household of Jim and Kathleen. Jim Danno's crazy idea of 'Winter in Willmore' had meant adding yet another project to their overflowing plate!!!!

Thank goodness for our Council Member who has never said no to any of the WCHA projects meant to improve our area. Without the assistance of the wonderful 1<sup>st</sup> District staff: Susanna Gonzalez, Lena Gonzalez, Daniel Brezenoff, Isaac Romero, this event could not have been the huge success that it was.

With the generous financial support of Partners of Parks, Port of Long Beach, Long Beach Heritage, The Bembridge House, Wal-Mart, Sharron Hinkey, Mark and Cheryl Perry, 1<sup>st</sup> District Council Office, We Love LB, Community Partners Council, James Bon, and anonymous donors, we raised the funds necessary for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Winter in Willmore. A huge thank you also goes out to Ramon Arevalo, Cory Forester, Gladys Kaiser, Roz Boger, and Theresa Maceyka, for saying yes to the crazy idea. Thanks are also due to Fiazon Medina, Tatianna Thomas, Brianna Gonzalez, Ruby Tamayo, Angel Carrera, Miguel Carrera,



*Dianne McNinch, Santa and the elves.*

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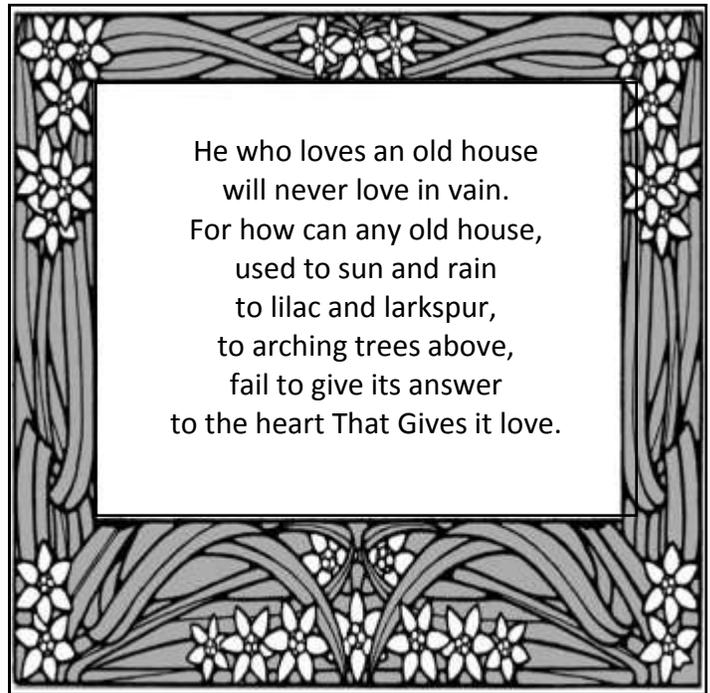
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## February meeting

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The Code Enforcement meeting is at 6:00 pm.

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