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**The August potluck and house
tour will be held
Wednesday Aug. 20th from
6:30 - 9:00 p.m. at
419 Daisy Ave.**

THE WILLMORE CITY ENTERPRISE
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THE WILLMORE CITY ENTERPRISE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WILLMORE CITY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION FALL 2008



Celebration of "School House" Project Completion

Please join us on Wednesday August 20th from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. to celebrate the completion of the "School House" project. 5 years and thousands of hours of labor later, this beautiful 1904 Foursquare style house is ready for visitors.

WCHA usually has an August potluck so we thought we'd combine that with the house opening. We will tour the house and then share some good food and good company. Bring a favorite dish and see you at 419 Daisy Avenue on Wednesday evening August 20th!

There will be NO Code Enforcement Meeting in August

The "School House" Project



In 2002 the Long Beach Unified School District acquired and scheduled for demolition all the houses between Maine and Golden, Broadway and Third Streets in order to make room for a new elementary school. Thanks to the support and efforts of our 1st District Council Office, one home out of this block was saved - the 1904 Foursquare house at 249 Maine. You may wonder why we call it the "school house" project when we were



restoring a "house" and not an actual "schoolhouse". Well, at the time this all started, there were several historic houses under discussion for various projects and when we would try to describe to someone which house we were talking about we'd say "the house where the school is being built" and that eventually got shortened to just "the school house" thus the project became known as "The School House Project".

In 2003 the house was moved by the Redevelopment Agency to a temporary location a block away on Third Street and WCHA was invited to submit a proposal for the restoration/renovation of the house. Redevelopment owned two small adjacent lots in the Willmore City Historic District which would be ideal for the house. The year before, WCHA had worked with Long Beach Housing Development Company to move and restore another vintage house



on Orange Ave that was scheduled for demolition. On this new project, however, we had to find our own financing and were fortunate to secure a loan from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C.



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Kathleen Irvine (Blue Gecko Landscape) generously donated a drought tolerant landscape design for the property and Lita Greenberg donated the drawings for us so we could apply for and ultimately receive grants from the Long Beach Water Department and Community Development's Neighborhood Partners Program. Scot Hunter and Ty Hall from Kellogg Garden Products in Carson provided a huge contribution of planting materials while Ed Gonzalez of Ed Gonzalez Landscape Service donated labor to install a drip irrigation system.

Jana Shields coordinated work days for WCHA volunteers who worked many hours moving mounds of dirt and planting plants. I don't have all of the names but a few of those hardy volunteers were Ophy, Bryner, Brianne & Britney Ramos, Ernie Villa, Allen McDaniels, Erik Sochin, Sherron Leno, Margaret Madden, Margaret Blake, Kathleen Irvine, Jim Danno, and Mike Zeke and his students from the ACE Academy. Kathleen Irvine and Jim Danno hand watered the plants daily until the automatic drip watering system could be installed. And prior to the planting, Elena Munoz and Tony Montenegro installed a custom wooden fence in the front and on the alley side which Jim and Ernie painted to match the porch railing. ENOUGH CAN'T BE SAID FOR ALL OF THE VOUNTEERS WHO WORKED ON THIS PROJECT !

As anyone familiar with vintage homes understands, such a project is a compromise between restoration and renovation and the availability of time and financial resources (or lack of). Saving the best of the historical elements of a house while at the same time trying to include some of today's amenities can be challenging to say the least.

So why did Willmore City Heritage Association, a small non-profit neighborhood organization decide to tackle this enormous project? We were crazy. No....just kidding! The purpose of WCHA is to promote and preserve the Willmore City Historic District. The homes that were being demolished were adjacent to our District and thus very similar in architectural styles plus we had vacant lots that needed to be in-filled. Historic preservation had not been a high priority for developers and the city. We wanted to raise awareness of the importance of preservation of our historic resources and felt that we had to show that saving houses could be done.

With the support of Long Beach Heritage and CPAC (Central Project Advisory Committee), WCHA encouraged Redevelopment to allocate funds to save a few additional houses from the West Gateway project area. Redevelopment agreed, and so, counting the 419 Daisy house, we have a total of 5 turn-of-the-century homes that have been saved and will be restored. Each will have a significant impact on the block where it has been re-located. Thank you RDA!

In addition to the preservation of Long Beach's history, the preservation of vintage homes is a perfect example of sustainability. As Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation says, "what could be greener than reusing a building? Historic preservation can and must be a key component of any effort to promote sustainable development". How true! Let's continue this practice and encourage responsible sustainable development by preserving more of Long Beach's historic houses and buildings.

Cheryl Perry



Elena & Tony work on fence



New driveway is poured



Volunteers Planting

The Hunters

John & Emmily Hunter moved to Long Beach from Nebraska in 1906. They took the train from Nebraska to San Francisco (just months before the San Francisco earthquake) and from there were headed to Pasadena. On the train they met a couple who told them they should check out Long Beach. They did and they ended up buying the house at 249 Maine. They had two sons, Harvey and Fred. John Hunter died in 1933 and Emmily before that.

Fred Hunter was born in 1899. He was 6 years old when they moved into the house on Maine. He grew up there and went to school locally. Fred married his wife Susie in 1930. In 1933 he inherited the house at 249 Maine.

During the Depression the Hunters had a difficult time making ends meet so they rented out the top floor of the house to boarders up until sometime in the 1940s. At one point Susie did some work for the City in order to pay their taxes. Fred was a member of the Masons and worked as a photographer for Shell Oil.

Fred and Susie had 3 daughters: Elaine (1938), Louise (1940) and Anna (1946). All three girls grew up in the house and went to school at Edison Elementary, Franklin Middle School and Poly High.

Susie died in 1977 and Fred sold the house and moved to Leisure World.

In August 2006 Anna was in town visiting and she and her niece drove down to see the old neighborhood. In trying to find Edison School, they made a wrong turn down Daisy and saw the house. She was astonished as she thought the house had been demolished when the school was built. She called her sister Louise who got in touch with Redevelopment at the City and spoke to Barbi Clark who then gave her WCHA's number.

We are grateful to the Hunter sisters for providing us with numerous old photos of the house, their family, and Long Beach.



Fred Hunter



Susie Hunter

W I L L M O R E C A L E N D A R

- August 20th August Potluck & Tour 6:30 p.m.
419 Daisy Avenue

- September 17th Code Enforcement 6:30 pm
WCHA Meeting 7:30 pm
Willmore Community Police Center

- September 21st Restoration Trade Fair
Rose Park Neighborhood Association
Luther Burbank Elementary School (4th & Junipero)
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- October 19th WCHA Anniversary Gala
SAVE THE DATE! 5:00 - 9:00 P.M. at the Willmore
MORE INFO TO FOLLOW

The "School House" Project cont'd

In July of 2006 we finally had all of the documents signed from the City of Long Beach and the National Trust and the house was again moved - this time to its current and hopefully final location at 419 Daisy Avenue.

After almost a year getting plans approved, construction of a new foundation began. Once that was completed and cured for 30 days, the house movers came back out and set the house down on its new foundation. After that, the General Contractor Glen-Built Construction began the time consuming process of uncovering the hidden beauty of this century old gem.

It was a bit unnerving to watch as subcontractors cut out sections of walls and ceilings but we had to remind ourselves that it had to get worse before it could get better and sure enough it did. A new roof went on and all new electrical, heating, and plumbing went in along with an additional new bathroom off the master bedroom. A new 2-car garage was added and the house was fully wired for data thanks to the donated services of Mark Perry and his brother-in-law John Laurie.

Some of the molding downstairs had been torn out after the first move before the house was secured and thus had to be milled to match the rest of the house. The stairs banister also had to be recreated but fortunately we had a picture of what it originally looked like, thanks to the Hunter sisters who lived there years before, and through the amazing craftsmanship of Tim O'Shea, the replicated banister looks as outstanding as the original. The front porch had been closed in at some point and was re-opened back to its original design.

While the painter was stripping and sanding layers and layers of paint from the molding, Ernie Villa and Tim Curtin worked with the contractor to re-design a gutted 1904 kitchen to accommodate a 2008 life style and Sherron Leno and Shoshanah Siegel (The Color Diva) worked on selecting exterior house colors appropriate for a Foursquare style house.

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New foundation



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"The Unromantic Gardener"

The Transitional bungalow owners are a lucky bunch. Borrowing from Victorian, Arts and Crafts and Spanish Revival styles with the occasional smattering of Colonial accents, a Transitional bungalow can have either a Victorian or Arts and Crafts Garden, or be a little zany with a California Eclectic garden. Choose a style that goes with whatever motif seems to be most prevalent on your home. As always, consider the paint color of your house. In any garden, there should be no harsh transitions between home and landscape. Ideally, as you gaze through your antique lace curtains, out the wavy glass, your landscape should reflect the colors and style of your interior. Don't block the view by planting overly large shrubs or trees against the house - you've spent all that time sanding, show off the wonderful renovation! Make sure things look just as lovely from the house as they do from the street.

Next month:
Mid-Century Modern

Kathleen Irvine

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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.

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- Cheryl Perry, President* 436-2815
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- 1st District Council Office 570-6919

visit us at our website: <http://www.willmorecity.org>