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DON'T MISS THE  
MILLS ACT WORKSHOP  
FOR  
NATIONAL PRESERVATION WEEK

MAY 16, 2002  
CHULA VISTA PUBLIC LIBRARY AUDITORIUM  
6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Learn the benefits of historic preservation from  
Mills Act Advocate Louise Torio  
of Historic San Diego Marketing & Consulting

- How to tell if your home is eligible for historic designation and how to get designation
- What the Mills Act benefits can do for you and how to apply for a Mills Act contract
- Your responsibilities as the owner of a historic home



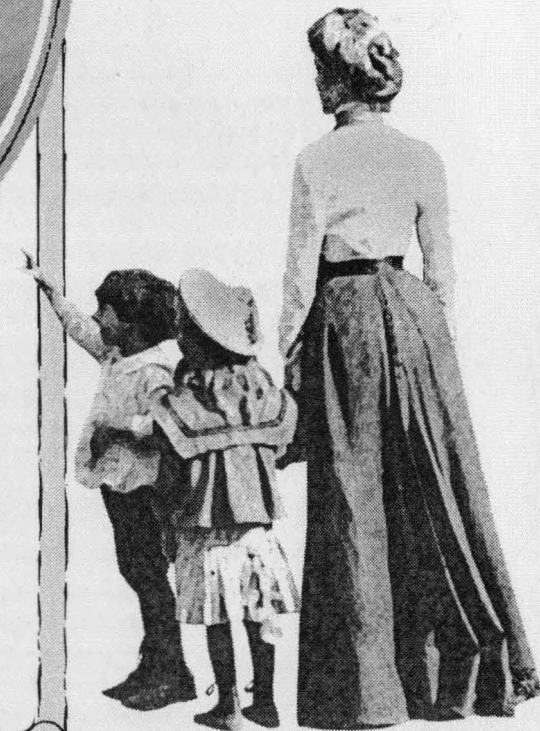
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IF YOU ENJOYED THIS TOUR YOU'LL ENJOY SUNDAY WALKING TOURS  
OF THE VICTORIAN SHERMAN HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT  
AND THE VILLA MONTEZUMA MUSEUM  
(NEAR DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO).

CALL LOUISE TORIO AT  
HISTORIC SAN DIEGO FOR MORE INFORMATION.



— ○ ○ —  
EVENTS ON  
MAY 10, 11, 12  
& 16, 2002



—  
IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL PRESERVATION WEEK AND THE  
SUCCESS OF THE MILLS ACT IN CHULA VISTA

May 2002

Welcome to our celebration of National Preservation Week!

Last year was a strong one for historic preservation in Chula Vista. We worked hard to show that our historic resources are of value and must be protected. Historic homeowners asked for - and received - the Mills Act property tax reduction incentive for historic property ownership. To date, over 25% of the eligible historically designated buildings in our city are now covered by a Mills Act contract, and more applications are waiting to be processed.

Our 2001 historic home tour was a success beyond our dreams and encouraged us to have another this year. (We don't promise this to be an annual event!) Our goal is to broaden awareness about preservation and educate about the Mills Act while raising funds to update the 1985 survey of our historic buildings.

This year we welcome the participation of our Honorary Co-Chairs, County Supervisor Gregory Cox (former mayor of Chula Vista) and Chula Vista City Council Member Mary Salas, who helped the historic homeowners champion the Mills Act. New this year: an Antique Show and Old Home Fair at the Woman's Club, with wonderful exhibitors and a fundraising Preview Party on May 10. This year you'll see six different historic homes on view, allowing you a glimpse of Chula Vista's past. Some are highly designed works of art, others are works in progress. Each home shows the love the owners have for historic Chula Vista.

We are grateful for the amazing community and local business support, and have been blessed with generous sponsors and volunteers, without whom this event would not have been possible.

Thank you for choosing to celebrate National Preservation Week with us in Chula Vista.

**The 2002 Chula Vista Heritage Museum Executive Committee**

Frank Roseman, Museum Manager • Ann Diffley, President  
Glenda de Vaney, Secretary • Peter Watry, Treasurer  
Nora McMartin, Advisor  
Pamela Bensoussan • Corinne McCall  
Susan Painter • John Parks • Ed Weidlich



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SEE THE MAY 2002 ISSUE FOR TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

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## THANK YOU

### To the homeowners and residents:

Pamela Bensoussan, Margarita & Michael Dowdell,  
Jane Dunham, Laura & Alberto Guerra, Corinne McCall,  
Imozelle & Jim McVeigh, and Laura Smith

### To the Organizing Committee and Others:

In addition to the historic homeowners listed above,  
Carlos Fox, John & Nancy Parks, Louise Torio, Steve Veach,  
Historic San Diego Marketing & Consulting,  
Bruce & Sharon Asakawa, The City of Chula Vista,  
The South Bay Cruisers Car Club, and  
The Chula Vista Woman's Club.

To our generous sponsors and our wonderful volunteers.  
We could not have done this without you.

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### **Congratulations to 2002 Chula Vista Preservationists of the Year John & Nancy Parks**

John and Nancy, owners of the Leo Christy House  
(C.V. Historic Site #25) and members of the  
Heritage Museum and Library Boards,  
have given tirelessly to the community  
through their leadership and generous dedication,  
working to record the cultural history and  
preserve the architectural heritage of Chula Vista.

They were selected as this year's  
recipients of the prestigious award by the  
Resource Conservation Commission in Chula Vista  
and will be honored at the City's  
Annual Awards Ceremony to take place this summer.

THE WEST COAST

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## A BRIEF HISTORY OF CHULA VISTA

The Chula Vista area was part of a Spanish land grant known as Rancho del Rey, the King's Ranch. Under Mexican rule in 1821, this ranch became known as Rancho de la Nacion. It encompassed National City, Chula Vista, Bonita, Sunnyside, and the Sweetwater Valley. In 1845 the ranch was granted to Juan Forster, son-in-law of Mexican governor Pio Pico. Ten years later Forster sold it to F.A.L. Pioche, a Frenchman from San Francisco, who sold out to the Kimball brothers (Frank, Warren, and Levi).

Frank Kimball, a real estate developer, built the towns of National City and Chula Vista. In 1885 he brought the Santa Fe Railroad to Southern California, with its first terminus in National City. Several directors of the Santa Fe Railroad and Colonel W.G. Dickinson, a professional town planner, formed the San Diego Land and Town Company. They began developing the area by subdividing a 5000-acre portion into five-acre lots with avenues and streets 80 feet in width and a steam motor passing through the center. During the boom of the 1880s these five-acre lots sold for \$300 per acre. The purchaser was required to build thereon, within six months, a modern style house costing not less than \$2000.

The Sweetwater Dam was built by the San Diego Land and Town Company to bring water to Chula Vista; a railroad was built to connect Chula Vista and Otay with National City and San Diego. The people coming to Chula Vista raised lemons, and in time the area became the largest lemon-growing center in the world.

The city was incorporated in 1911 with a population of 550. After its incorporation, Chula Vista continued to be a leading lemon-growing center. Other important crops were tomatoes, celery, and salt. The Western Salt Works has been operating on the Chula Vista bayfront since the beginning of the century. From 1916 to 1920, Chula Vista had a kelp processing plant that produced potash and acetone to make cordite used by the British to make bombs in World War I. This plant, now known as Gunpowder Point, had the largest kelp harvesting fleet and tank farm in the world at that time. Just after World War II, Rohr Aircraft Company was established on the bay front.

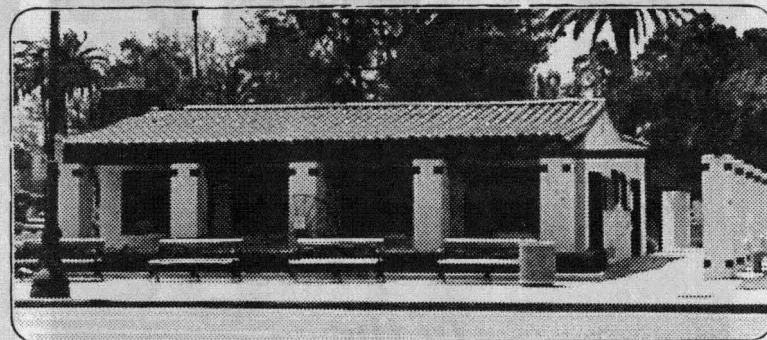
The current rapid population growth and activity in Chula Vista is such that could not have been imagined in 1911 and now the city is looking back in the hopes of recording and preserving its history for future generations.

(Excerpted and edited from a 1993 Heritage Museum publication, "A Brief History of Chula Vista.")

## T O U R S T O P

### THE CHULA VISTA HERITAGE MUSEUM 360 THIRD AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

YEAR BUILT: 1946 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: SPANISH REVIVAL



The Chula Vista Heritage Museum is dedicated to preserving the history of Chula Vista. Exhibitions presented in the museum display historical photographs and artifacts from the area. Brochures, maps, and videos are on hand for you to view. Also available is a history of Chula Vista's Third Avenue Business District. Step back in time as you learn about the changing businesses of the past -- the merchants, their products, and the people who worked here. Free printed information is available about our surviving historical buildings and native plant life.

The Heritage Museum now incorporates the Chula Vista Historical Society, which has published a number of historical journals. Use this material as you travel through our city to identify local historical landmarks, trees, and vegetation.

The museum recently installed a Walk of History featuring twelve displays of historic photographs depicting the colorful past of Third Avenue. In some cases, the buildings are the same as those pictured 70 or 80 years ago; in others, the historic buildings are long gone, offering viewers a "then and now" experience. In addition to the displays, the Heritage Museum researched and printed a Walk of History self-guided tour booklet that provides more detailed information. The free guide is available at the museum.

The museum opened January 31, 1993. It is part of the Chula Vista Library System and a Chapter of the Friends of the Library. The building it occupies was built in 1946 for use by the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce.

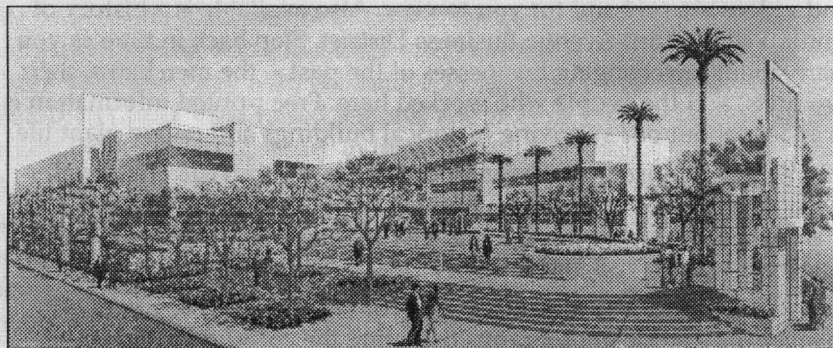


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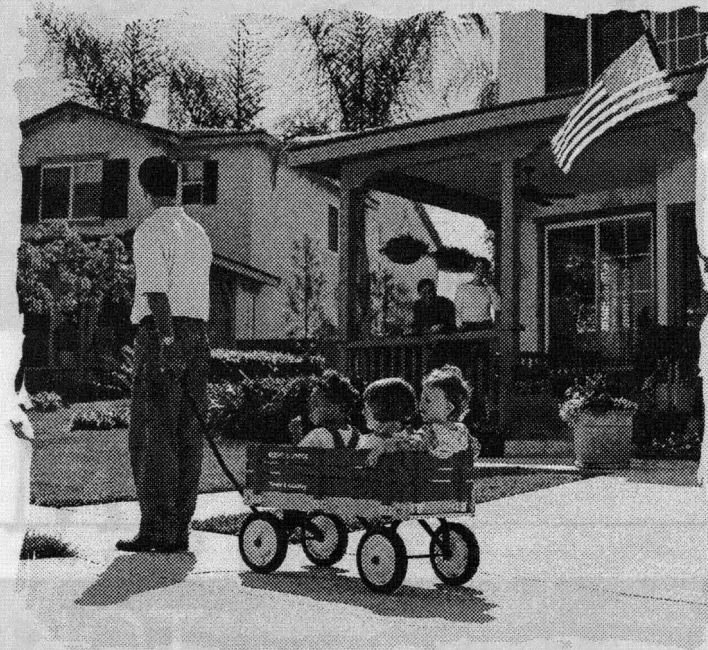
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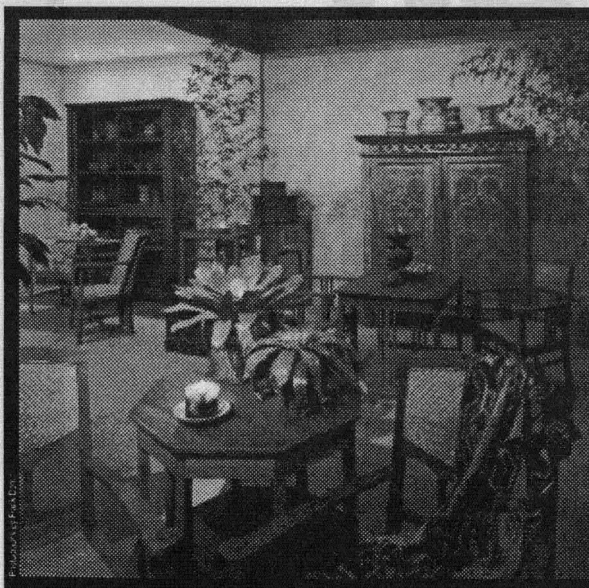
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COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSION WITH YOUR HOME TOUR TICKET

THANKS TO ALL OUR EXHIBITORS  
PLEASE SEE OUR EXHIBITORS' ADS THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM

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Samia Rose Topiaries  
Toko Designer Furniture  
Wednesday Quilters

THE CHULA VISTA WOMAN'S CLUB  
357 G STREET, CHULA VISTA

(BETWEEN THIRD & FOURTH AVENUES) C.V. HISTORIC SITE #12  
YEAR BUILT: 1928 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL



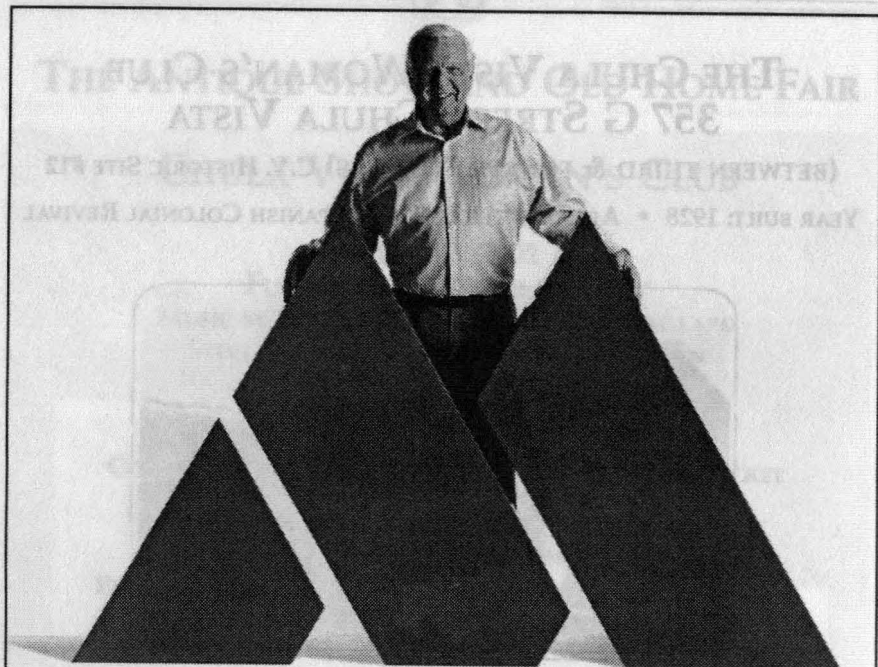
Founded in 1913 as the Chula Vista Improvement Club, the Chula Vista Woman's Club has provided valuable service to the community by raising significant funds for charities. In 1921 the Chula Vista Garden Club held its first flower show at the club, and spectacular flower shows were held annually through 1947. The Literary Group was active until just a few years ago, and Fiesta de la Luna started here in 1930.

By 1927 the Woman's Club needed a larger space. Thomas Howe offered two lots on G Street, Arthur Done was selected as contractor (he later became mayor in 1930), and the distinguished Edgar V. Ullrich was chosen as architect.

The G Street clubhouse is Spanish in style, with stucco walls, a tile roof, and an interior courtyard with Spanish tile fountain. The main structure is an auditorium that opens into a wide tile-covered loggia. The mortgage-burning party for this historic building was held in 1945.

This year we will have an Antique Show and Old Home Fair at the Woman's Club. The Preview Party is on Friday, May 10, from 6-9 p.m. On Saturday, May 11, and Sunday, May 12, your home tour ticket will admit you to the Antique Show and Old Home Fair at the Woman's Club from 10 to 5 o'clock. Please take this opportunity to view the wonderful items for sale, to say hello to the vendors, and to relax and refresh yourself in this lovely setting.

A portion of the Chula Vista Historic Home Tour admission price will be donated to the nonprofit Woman's Club.



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## TOUR STOP

### THE JENNIE MACDONALD HOUSE 644 SECOND AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

C.V. Historic Site #44

YEAR BUILT: CIRCA 1888 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: FOUR SQUARE VICTORIAN



This Orchard House was built by the San Diego Land & Town Company in 1888 ("House #13" on the 1894 map of Chula Vista). Note the hipped and gable roof, decorated frieze, and carved brackets. In 1908 Ms. Jennie MacDonald relocated to Chula Vista from Leavenworth, Kansas, with her husband William and paid \$3,000 for the house and lot. Jennie traveled extensively and collected exotic plants. In 1911 Jennie built another home you will see on the tour that is known as the Nadine Davies House at 615 Second Avenue.)

Husband William passed away by the early 1930s (you'll see where he was "laid out" in the parlor), and by December 1948 the home was sold to the McCall Family, who raised six daughters here (when it had only one bathroom!). Purchase price in 1948: \$10,000. It was the McCall Family who saved and restored another of Chula Vista's architectural gems, the Garrettson-Frank House (see next page). This house was one of the 1986 Designer Showcase Homes to benefit the San Diego Historical Society.

The current owners of this home, Imozelle and Jim McVeigh, believe that when you take on an old home, you are its custodian and must be sensitive to preserving its integrity, and that the opportunity of owning a historic home comes with a responsibility to the community. You'll agree that our community is enriched because "House #13" has been cared for so well.

## TOUR STOP

### THE GARRETTSON-FRANK HOUSE 642 SECOND AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

C.V. Historic Sites #43

YEAR BUILT: CIRCA 1889 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: QUEEN ANNE VICTORIAN



This magnificent Victorian wasn't built at this address. In December 1888 Garrettson bought a five acre lot on Third Avenue near E Street from the San Diego Land & Town Company for \$1,500 and built this Orchard House on it in the following months. (Notice the gable roof, the three types of wooden shingles, and the incised decoration on the barge boards.) In 1892 it was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Frank of Santa Barbara, who then ran into financial difficulties (as did many people in the economic downturn of the 1890s). In 1899 the house was sold at auction to the highest bidder, which happened to be the Garrettson Investment Company (Mr. Garrettson had died in 1895). The company paid \$3,600 for the house and five acres.

By 1982, the 93 year old home was scheduled for demolition to make room for condos. By all accounts, this house was past its prime, but wise eyes saw the beauty and potential in it. Corinne McCall, who grew up in the Jennie MacDonald House and whose family still owned that home in 1982, made a deal to save the house by moving it to the back of her family's property on Second Avenue. (Cost to buy the house: \$1.) In October 1982 the move took place, followed by several years of intense restoration, with help from architect Marc Tarasuck, AIA.

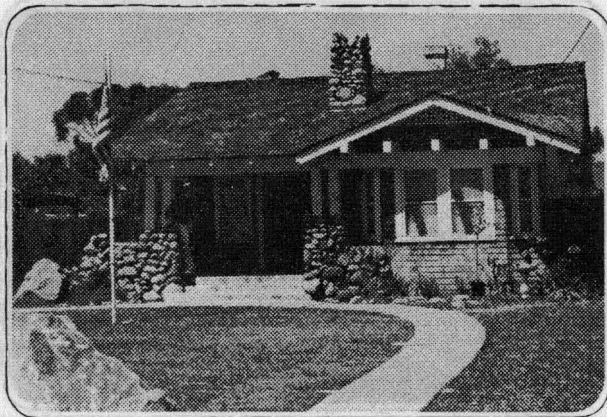
In 1986 this house was also decorated as a Designer Showcase house. It has recently been beautifully redecorated by Corinne and her designer, Benjamin Garduno, with furnishings from Corinne's store, TOKO.

## TOUR STOP

### THE NADINE DAVIES HOUSE 614 SECOND AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

C.V. Historic Site #41

YEAR BUILT: CIRCA 1911 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: CRAFTSMAN



This is an excellent example of a transitional home of modest means built in the "teens," reportedly built by Jennie MacDonald (she lived down the block). By 1920 Jennie sold it to Eugene and Anna Adrian. You'll recognize that name if you attended the 2001 tour: the Adrians built the large, lovely 1926 Spanish Eclectic house on Palomar Drive that was on the tour last year. In 1928 the Adrians sold this home to Nadine and Ernest Davies. Mrs. Davies lived here for over 50 years and died in 1981.

This Craftsman Bungalow is an interesting mix: Craftsman exterior and details like the beautiful fireplace, the built-ins, and the sleeping porch, with a more typically Victorian layout to the rooms. This home has exposed rafter and beam ends (including above the bay window), wood shingles, and pier posts supporting the porch that are covered in cobblestones (also note the cobblestone chimney).

The home's owner, Pamela Bensoussan, also owns the historic Greg Rogers house, which was relocated behind this home to save it from demolition and was on the tour in 2001. Michael and Margarita Dowdell reside here and love historic homes. Margarita made the Craftsman-inspired shades, and the Dowdells are working with the owner to continue the ever on-going restoration process to keep this historic home looking as good as the day it was built in 1911.

## TOUR STOP

### THE WILLIAM SALLMON HOUSE 435 FIRST AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

C.V. Historic Site #38

YEAR BUILT: 1916 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: PUEBLO REVIVAL



Built in 1916 by L.E. Smith for William and Alice Sallmon, this house is constructed in the very unusual Pueblo Revival style. Mr. Sallmon was born in Ontario, Canada, and graduated from Yale in 1894. He supervised Yale's college at Chang Sha, China, for a year, and when he moved to Chula Vista he became the First Vice President of the San Diego Land Corporation and the Sweetwater Company. When he died in 1938, he left the Chula Vista Public Library a \$1,000 endowment (a great sum then.)

This home is an important late Orchard House for several reasons. First: this stucco home has a flat roof with stepped parapets and a small curved "Mission style" parapet centered on the facade, with large vigas (the wooden poles that appear to be supporting the roof.) Looking for the influence? The highly successful Panama-California Exposition of 1915-1916 has a series of Native American-inspired buildings. [Check out the Balboa Park Club to see the style interpreted for the Exposition.]

Next reason: this house retains much of the original orchard grounds! Third reason: this home has been owned by Laura Smith since 1950, when Mrs. Smith and her Navy hero husband bought the home for \$14,000 because their Pt. Loma home had too few bathrooms for their growing family!

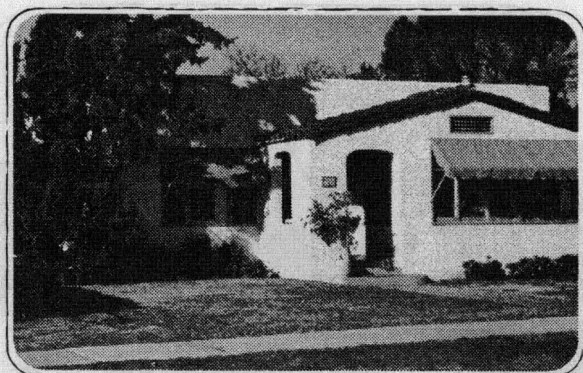
Inside you'll see a classic interior where all doors open to the interior court, tall ceilings, built-ins in the kitchen (including the mechanism to summon the servants!), and wonderful memorabilia from a proud Navy career. Out back, you may see some of the beautiful birds in Laura's aviaries.

## TOUR STOP

### THE CHESTER SUMNER HOUSE 209 I STREET, CHULA VISTA

Awaiting confirmation by City Council as a C.V. Historic Site!

YEAR BUILT: 1926 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: SPANISH ECLECTIC



Some homes get their names from who built them, some from who lived in them. This historic home is known as the Chester Sumner House because Chester both built and lived in the home. He created this subdivision of the five acre orchard lots and built other houses along I Street. Chester lived in Chula Vista from at least 1913 when he served as City Marshall and Tax Collector. He became a carpenter, and by 1930 he officially listed his occupation as "Builder." He and his wife Ethel lived here through the 1920s.

This is an example of a modest home of the 1920s that has charm and character. The quaint Spanish Eclectic home has a flat roof with parapet and red tile roof over the front porch. (The front sun porch was remodeled early on as interior space, possibly by Chester himself.) Inside, look for the very charming built-ins in the dining room – details that convinced the current owner, Jane Dunham, that she had to have this house!

Another surprise: this house has a sensitive, large addition done about 15 years ago by the late Kenneth Lee, longtime owner and member of the C.V. Planning Department. The addition is not visible from the street, preserving the historic feel and character of the streetscape (and giving owners of vintage and historic properties an example of how an addition can be done while still qualifying for the Mills Act). This home was reviewed by the Chula Vista Resource Conservation Commission for historic designation and passed with flying colors. It will soon come before City Council for final approval as a C.V. historic site.

## TOUR STOP

### THE MARY DREW HOUSE 840 FIRST AVENUE, CHULA VISTA

C.V. Historic Site Application Pending

YEAR BUILT: 1927 • ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: TUDOR



The "newest" home on our tour is this splendid Tudor Revival home, built by Harold Doan in 1927 (along with the neighboring Tudor house) as part of a five acre lot. This Tudor has the high cross gable roofline, the stained timbers, the multiple pane leaded glass casement windows, and the corbelled brick chimney in front. Harold sold it in 1928 to Mary Drew, who then sold it to Dr. Ivan Jagger in 1933. Dr. Jagger was a federal plant pathologist who did experimental plant research in Chula Vista from 1922 to 1936. (He died in 1939 at the young age of 49.)

The builder divided the lot when he sold it to Mary Drew, but the park-like setting with mature trees is still impressive. Of note: the current owners, Laura and Albert Guerra, were looking for almost two years for a home in Chula Vista when they came across their dream house, which had already been sold at auction! A last minute bid led to the previous high bidders stepping aside so this young couple who loved the house so much could have it! And the previous owner, who was residing in a nursing home, passed away on the day escrow closed for the Guerras!

When you tour the home, you'll see how the current owners are learning about Tudor style and approaching the restoration of this fine home. Over the years this house was not as well cared for as others on the tour, but it is a "work in progress" that will inspire you to play detective with your own old home and give you ideas how to blend historic style with your own personal taste. The Guerras have applied for historic designation and wish to encourage other young Mexican-American families to preserve and restore Chula Vista's historic past.

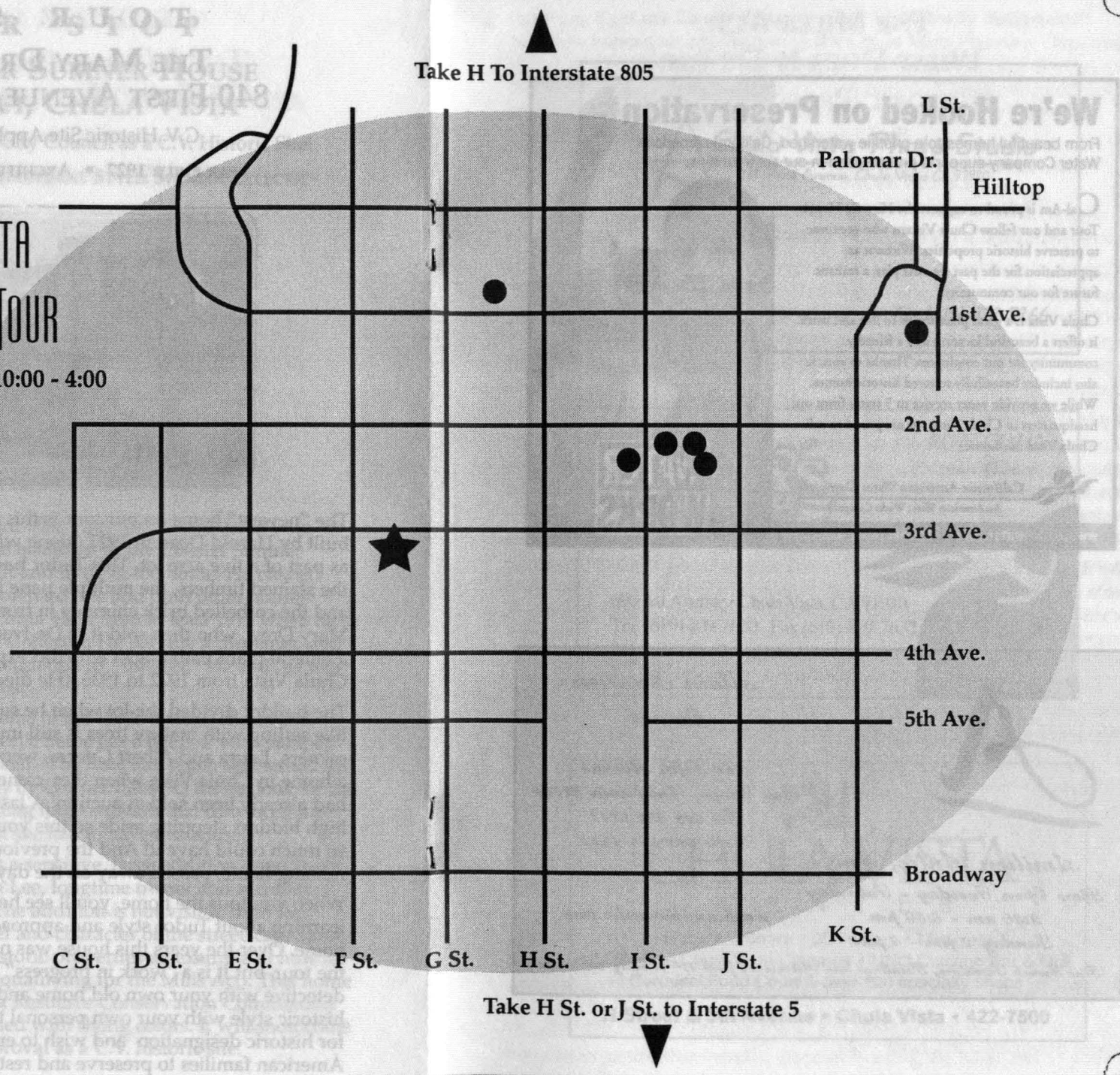
# 2002 CHULA VISTA HISTORIC HOME TOUR

May 11 & 12, 2002 • 10:00 - 4:00



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in any order.  
The addresses  
are with the text.



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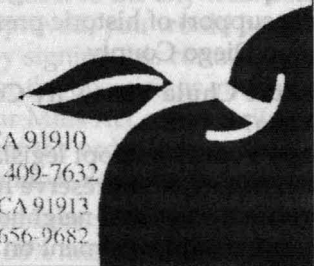
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## THE MILLS ACT: WHAT DOES IT DO FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION?

BY LOUISE TORIO

LEARN MORE AT THE NO COST  
MILLS ACT WORKSHOP ON MAY 16, 2002  
CHULA VISTA PUBLIC LIBRARY, 6:00 - 8:00 P.M.

### What is the Mills Act?

The Mills Act is property tax reduction for designated historic properties. The tax savings can be used to help maintain the historic property. Each city must vote to adopt the Mills Act and write the local ordinance.

### Why is it called the Mills Act?

It's named for the author of the legislation -- historian, statesman, and writer James Mills. Senator Mills is well known for being an advocate of mass transportation, for creating our San Diego Trolley system, and for his strong support of historic preservation in our region. Senator Mills lives in San Diego County.

### Why did the Chula Vista City Council vote to bring the Mills Act to Chula Vista?

Because by voting to adopt legislation that gives tax incentives to designate, restore, and preserve historic properties, owners reinvest in their own properties and neighborhoods benefit from the restored buildings. A small investment on the part of the city can yield big benefits for everyone.

### What other cities in San Diego County have the Mills Act?

The cities of San Diego, Escondido, La Mesa, and Coronado have the Mills Act. Recently the County of San Diego made the Mills Act available in the unincorporated areas of the county. Historic San Diego Marketing and Consulting has worked with the historic homeowners of National City to bring the Mills Act before that city council this month. In May 2002, over 300 historic properties are covered by Mills Act contracts in the County of San Diego, more than any other county in the state! The Mills Act is a successful preservation tool that more cities are discovering.

### Will any old building qualify for the Mills Act?

No. A building must be historically designated, on at least the local level, to qualify. Currently, there are about 50 historic sites (mostly homes) designated in Chula Vista.

○ ○

### How can I get my Chula Vista property historically designated?

You may submit an application to the Chula Vista Planning Department for review by the Chula Vista Resource Conservation Commission and then approval by the Chula Vista City Council. Your home need not be on the incomplete 1985 Historic Property Survey to be eligible for historic designation.

### In Chula Vista, do historic commercial buildings or multi-unit buildings qualify for the Mills Act?

Yes, so inappropriate remodels of once lovely vintage buildings can be corrected and the buildings returned to their original historic exteriors.

### If I apply for a Mills Act contract, what am I committing to doing?

You are making a legal contract that shows you believe in historic preservation and want to keep and protect your historic building for future generations to enjoy. The contract stays with the building, so future owners get the benefits of the Mills Act and in return must obey the same rules and conditions as the original applicant.

### Tell me more about the Mills Act contract.

The Mills Act is a 10-year, endlessly renewable, legally binding contract with the city. After your building is designated as historic, you would fill out a Mills Act application and submit it to the city with a minor fee. When your Mills Act application is approved, you would be sent a contract to sign and have notarized. By signing this contract, you are agreeing, in principle, that in return for the tax savings you are going to preserve your historic structure. Your Mills Act contract, if you are in good standing and not in violation of the ordinance, is "endlessly renewable." You will always have ten more years on the contract.

### How much property tax can I expect to save with the Mills Act?

The tax savings can be large, often 30-60% and sometimes higher. The County Assessor's Office determines the tax savings by applying a complex formula to the current amount of taxes being paid to determine the new amount.

### Under a Mills Act contract, do I have to open my home to the public?

No, but if you'd like to open your home for a future historic home tour, please call the Heritage Museum!

### What happens if I sell my historic building?

The contract stays with the property, not the owner. The new owner assumes the benefits of the Mills Act. Lucky for the new owner!

### I live in a city that doesn't have the Mills Act. How do I go about lobbying my city council for this preservation tool?

Attend the Mills Act workshop on May 16, 2002, at 6:00 p.m. at the Chula Vista Public Library or call Mills Act advocate Louise Torio of Historic San Diego Marketing & Consulting at 619-233-8833 to see how you can organize like-minded citizens to bring the Mills Act to your city.

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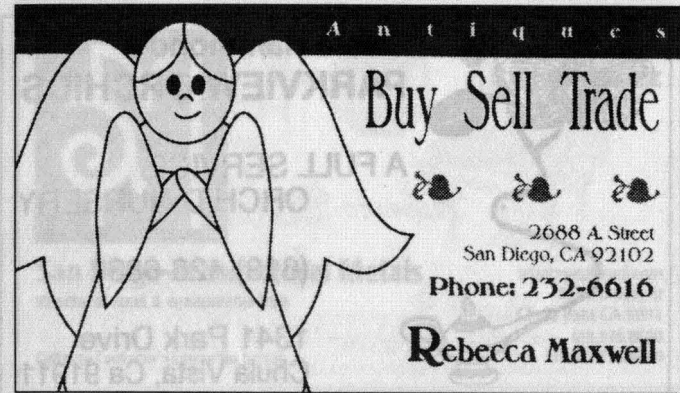
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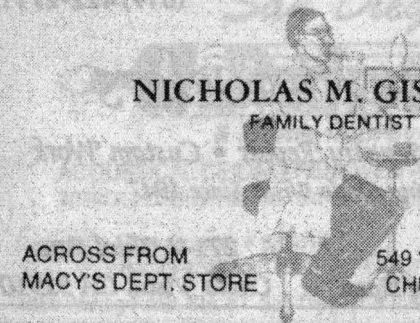
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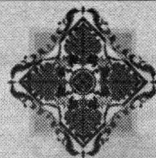
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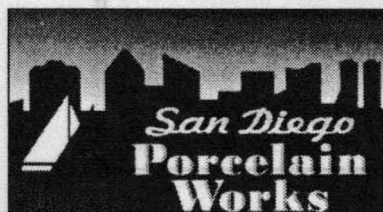
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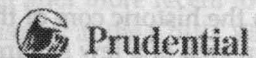
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## CHULA VISTA'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

BY PAMELA BENSOUSSAN  
CHULA VISTA HERITAGE MUSEUM

It's San Diego County's best-kept secret: Chula Vista is blessed with wonderful old houses, hundreds of them! They are nestled along pepper tree-lined avenues within the historic core of the city, on the northern bayfront boundary. In an area of a few square miles, you'll find Chula Vista is an eclectic mix of architectural styles revealing layers upon layers of the city's past.

Chula Vista was originally laid out and subdivided into five-acre lots, facing 80'-wide streets, which sold for \$1,500 in 1887. According to this master plan, the city was conceived as a gentleman farmer's suburban resort community. Purchasers were required to sign contracts stipulating they would build a house of a modern style "of approved plan and taste" within six months. The houses were to cost not less than \$2,000 (over \$200,000 today) and have at least a 125' setback. The earliest homes were built in a variety of traditional Victorian styles, many of which still survive today and are fondly referred to as Chula Vista's "orchard houses." After 1900, a transitional style emerged featuring large houses of Victorian proportions and early Craftsman-styled interiors.

In 1908 the first subdivisions were created within the original five-acre lot areas. These newer, smaller parcels measured a generous 165' x 291, and were offered as "villa lots" for \$1,000 each. The new streets were planted with tropical trees, continuing a landscaping theme started in the 1880s. By this time Chula Vista was a bustling farming village and the self-proclaimed "lemon capital of the world," boasting eight packing houses and thousands of acres of orchards. Inexpensive "folk" cottages, precursors to the bungalows, were built for farm managers and trades people. These cottages featured front porches, swept dormers, and hipped-roofs, sometimes using river rock for visual interest. By the time the city incorporated in 1911, construction of the popular bungalow style houses had begun in earnest.

An Eclectic Spanish style followed the bungalow trend. A large number of "mission revival" cottages were built to supply an increasing demand for individual homeownership, and large tile-roofed "Monterrey-style" mansions were designed for the flow of affluent newcomers migrating to California from the East Coast.

Eventually many of the villa lots were subdivided into parcels approximately 80' x 291', and post WWII box-like houses sprouted up in between the bungalows. These deep lots still exist, contributing to the area's unique quality. Today most of the bungalows sit on 70 to 80' wide lots, generously set back from the street, with huge back yards and mature landscaping. The orchard houses dotting the landscape are set back even further, sometimes almost hidden from view by homes built closer to the street after more recent lot splits. Early views of the community on display at the Chula Vista Heritage Museum show these majestic orchard houses perched on the highest mounds surrounded by vast acres of agriculture.



CHULA VISTA TURKEY FARMING ON I STREET.

[To find the old houses, look in the areas between Interstate 5 and 805, framed by Broadway and Hilltop (east and west) and C Street and L Street (north and south). First and Second Avenues have a large number of old houses, as do the alphabet streets running east and west. Delmar Avenue between I and J Streets has a large number of wonderful old bungalows on generous lots. On your ride, look for the graceful palm tree-lined Seavale Street and the quaint Church Street running parallel to Third Avenue between E and G Streets.]

In 1985, coinciding with preparations for Chula Vista's 75th anniversary as a city, a group of homeowners, Chula Vista Historical Society members, and historians began walking the streets of Chula Vista to inventory the city's old houses. As a result of this grassroots survey,

an inventory was compiled and adopted by the City of Chula Vista containing more than 200 houses and commercial buildings singled out as historic resources. At that time, approximately 40 homes were designated as Chula Vista Historic Sites and given corresponding numbers. This inventory, which can be viewed at the Heritage Museum, serves as an important resource for those who've just purchased an old house. Now, seventeen years later, the inventory needs updating. The City of Chula Vista and the city's Resource Conservation Commission are revisiting the historic designation process and, with the assistance of the Heritage Museum, are gearing up for a new, more complete survey. And now that the Chula Vista City Council voted to adopt the Mills Act, Chula Vista offers this important historic preservation incentive for historic buildings.

Led by a preservation-friendly city government and an energetic group of homeowners, the community hopes to increase public awareness of the large number of these wonderful old houses remaining in the city's historic core. The Chula Vista Heritage Museum is fulfilling an important role in this goal and is fast becoming a model example for historical societies around the county. The eagerness of this all-volunteer group to speak out on preservation issues, and to sponsor tours and educational workshops, shows a willingness to take a proactive stance. While historical societies and museums do important work in preserving artifacts, documents, and photos, they seldom lend support to controversial preservation issues. Recently, when a small downtown park was threatened by proposed expansion of the police station, the Heritage Museum worked together with its umbrella group, the Friends of the Chula Vista Library, to create a grassroots movement that has permanently saved the site.

Meanwhile, efforts are being made to revitalize Third Avenue, the historic commercial center. In 1907 the National City and Otay Railroad line, built to accommodate small steam engines, was converted to an electric streetcar line running north and south along Third Avenue through the heart of this historic district. Third Avenue at F Street is still the commercial and civic core today, only a landscaped meridian has replaced the streetcar line. The Heritage Museum installed a "Walk of History" along Third Avenue. Vintage photos are placed along the avenue to show "then and now" views of this historic business district. Plans are proposed for a performing and cultural arts center in the heart of the district.

The historic homeowners of Chula Vista encourage you to see some of the county's finest historic homes and to visit our downtown museum.

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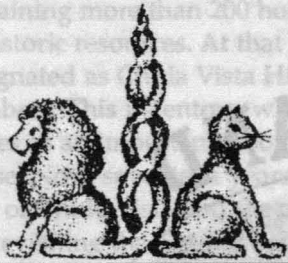
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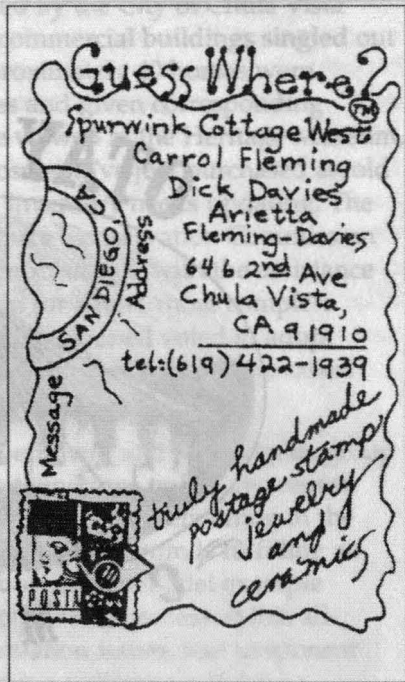
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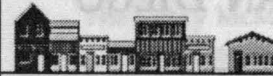
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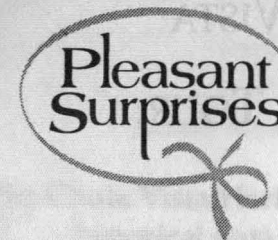
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The Chula Vista Heritage Museum collects and preserves historical data pertaining to Chula Vista and the South Bay in order to document the history, growth, and development of our area.

Call the museum at 619-427-8092  
Join the Heritage Museum today!  
The Heritage Museum is a nonprofit organization and a Chapter of the Friends of the Chula Vista Library.