

Artist and author Leo Politi captured the heart of Los Angeles

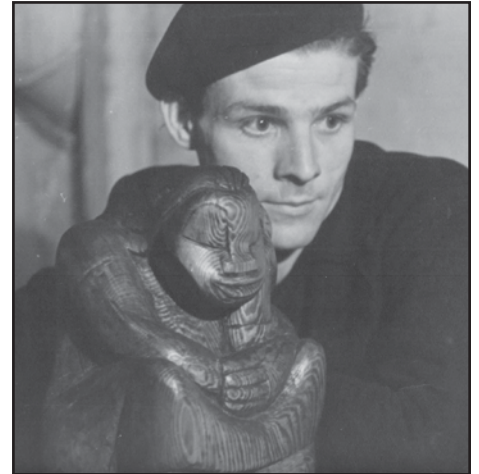
By Jim Schneeweis

This year is the centennial of one of Echo Park's best-known historic figures – the artist Leo Politi, who lived in Angelino Heights. In addition to a variety of events around Los Angeles celebrating the centennial, the city is naming the intersection of Sunset Boulevard and Echo Park Avenue Leo Politi Square. Politi is also the subject of the Echo Park Historical Society's February Quarterly meeting (please see box, this page, for details).

Hailed as the "artist of Olvera Street," Politi captured the heart of Los Angeles through his paintings, sometimes sold for as little as a quarter or less to make ends meet. In the Depression era 1930s, Politi and his wife, Helen, would set up an easel on Olvera Street (often staying

until midnight) and sketch tourists and children using charcoal, pencil or brush, examining ethnic diversity long before it was fashionable. With a concentration of artists, crafts people, merchants and puppeteers, the early 1930s Olvera Street was more of an alley than a street, attracting motion picture actors, producers and directors at night. Politi, who was born in Italy, fell in love with the Latin American culture and the importance of family, creating characters along the way that would evolve into more than 20 books and countless sculptures paintings and murals.

His first book, *Little Pancho*, was based on a child who never smiled, someone he noticed on Olvera Street. That



Leo Politi was a sculptor as well as an illustrator and painter. Photo courtesy of "Leo Politi: Capturing the Heart of Los Angeles," Angel City Press.

led to his second book, *Pedro, the Angel of Olvera Street*. Considered a true innovator in children's literature, in 1950, he was honored by the American Library Association with the Caldecott Medal for

Politi continued on page 6

EPHS Quarterly Meeting

The Art and Legacy of Leo Politi

Wednesday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m.

Barlow Library
2000 Stadium Way

The late artist and author, who lived in Angelino Heights, wrote and illustrated numerous children's books and also painted scenes of the faded Victorian-era neighborhood that once crowned Bunker Hill. His son, Paul Politi, will discuss his father's life and creativity as part of a year-long series of events to celebrate the centennial of Leo Politi's birth.

A new century of boating

By Martin Cox

Many of our readers will remember that last year the city twice suspended paddle boating on Echo Park Lake (as well as in MacArthur Park). An upwelling of support for the historic recreation convinced the Recreation and Parks Department to restore the concession. The successful save-the-boats effort was organized largely by Martin Cox, a photographer who lives in Echo Park and who refused to watch the boats go quietly. The following is Martin's account of his effort.

I'd say it all started in June 2007, the story of how I got involved in "this boats thing." I live opposite Echo Park Lake, and was walking in the park when I saw a small sign indicating that the boathouse would close on June 24. I immediately



Paddle boats dock at the boathouse on Echo Park Lake. Photo credit: Martin Cox, 2007

knew three things, (1) that I had not heard a shred of this from my partner Thomas DeBoe, Chair of the Echo Park Advisory Board, (2) Isa Meksin, local activist and close friend had not mentioned it and (3) I knew that half a million dollars had been spent on refurbishing the boat house just months earlier. I sensed that a very dramatic decision had been made on behalf of us park users, without any community input and that there was a whiff of possibly mismanaged resources.

Boating continued on page 6

Stairways tour peak event for 2007

The skies were gray, the ground was damp and the forecast said there was a good chance of rain. But the threat of rain was not enough to keep away the more than 300 people who attended last year's Historic Echo Park Home Tour on Nov. 11.

The cool, damp weather actually helped many tourgoers as they climbed steep hills and then trekked up and down our neighborhood's stairways to tour the nine homes scattered from Echo Park Lake to the far north end of Elysian Heights. One intrepid participant actually completed the entire tour on foot!

There was certainly a lot of huffing and puffing on the 2007 tour. But that should not have been a surprise given the theme, "Flights of Fancy: The Stairway Homes of Echo Park."

The fifth-annual event featured a wide variety of styles, from a 1920s Spanish-Colonial compound with views of Echo Park Lake to a mid-century home of wood and glass. For the first time, a recently constructed structure was included on the tour, an eye-catching post-and-beam style house located on the Landa Stairway. It's the first home built on an Echo Park Stairway in decades.

The home tour committee, headed by Holly Hampton, worked on the event for nearly 10 months and, on the day of the event, was assisted by more than 100 volunteers. Proceeds from the event will go to supporting the historical society's ongoing preservation and historic research programs.

NEWS/UPDATES

Echo Park moratorium flouted

The city last year temporarily banned exterior remodeling and demolition to buildings located north and west of Echo Park Lake while it studies the creation of a historic district. But, ironically, since then demolitions, illegal construction and remodeling projects have continued – sometimes with the city's permission in violation of its own law.

Windows and porches have been ripped out on Echo Park Avenue. Wood siding has been removed in preparation for a coat of stucco on Montrose Avenue. Entire buildings have been bulldozed on Lemoyne Street and Glendale Boulevard.

In some cases, such as the demolished apartments owned by Angelus Temple, the necessary permits were obtained before the construction moratorium (also called an interim control ordinance, or ICO) went into effect.

EPHS members and city officials who looked into potentially illegal exterior renovations have been surprised to discover that the permits were granted in error. These projects have been stopped as they are reported.

While some building owners are getting away with illegal changes, others, notably the owners of a new pizza restaurant on Sunset Boulevard, have been subject to intense city scrutiny as they seek to actually restore their building.

What's the point of studying Echo Park's historic resources if the moratorium is not being enforced or undermined by the city itself? Similar problems have been reported with similar moratoriums and historic districts around the city.

The EPHS has contacted city officials about this problem to prevent the further

destruction of historic features until the historic survey is completed.

EPHS board elections

Feb. 13

The Echo Park Historical Society will hold a board of directors election during its quarterly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 13.

The following are the board seats and directors that are up for election: Kevin Kuzma, Seat #1; Mary-Austin Klein, Seat #3; Jenny Burman, Seat #5, Jim Schneeweis, Seat #7.

Individuals can nominate themselves to serve for a two-year term. Nominations should be received or postmarked no later than February 9.

Nominations can be submitted by calling (323) 860-8874 or sending email to ephs@HistoricEchoPark.org or by mail to P.O. Box 261022, Los Angeles, CA 90026.

Eligible candidates are those who are paid members of the society and who have been members for at least one year previous to the nomination.

If there are more interested candidates than available seats, EPHS members will cast ballots during the quarterly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held at Williams Hall at Barlow Hospital, 2000 Stadium Way.

Echo Park Historical Society
P.O. Box 261022 - Los Angeles, CA 90026
(323) 860-8874
email: ephs@historicechopark.org
www.HistoricEchoPark.org
Founded 1995

The Echo Park Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of diverse cultural and architectural heritage of our community.

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Hopi culture inspired design for Atwater bungalows

By Rebecca Kuzins

The EPHS would like to thank American Bungalow magazine for allowing us to reprint this story, which originally appeared in the Fall 2006 issue.

Perched atop a hill next to Elysian Park, Robert Stacy-Judd's Atwater Bungalows combine the features of a Pueblo Indian kiva with the fantasy of a Hollywood stage set. The two bungalows are built of thick, unfinished stucco, with Pueblo-style windows, doors, stairways and other features.

"There is a surrealistic atmosphere to this design, with its undulating parapets ... oversized wooden drain spouts, projecting wood balconies and rows of vigas," David Gebhard wrote in a 1993 monograph on Stacy-Judd. And Christopher Hawthorne, architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, has written that "To wander through Robert Stacy-Judd's neo-adobe Atwater Bungalows ... is to be convinced that you are, first, completely isolated from city life and, second, that you are in a place that could only be Los Angeles."

"A Socialist and a Peacenik"

The story of the Atwater Bungalows, located at 1433 & 1431 Avon Park Terrace, begins near the turn of the last century. Sometime around 1910, ten years or so after he began a dentistry practice in Los Angeles, Dr. H. Gale Atwater and his wife, Beulah, began buying up what eventually amounted to more than 20 lots along sloping Avon Park Terrace, high atop one of the many steep hills of Echo Park. ... Echo Park had been the site of the city's first housing boom, in the 1880s, and later was the first seat of the Southern California movie industry.

The Atwater family home soon rose near the top of the property. But Dr. Atwater, described by his grandson, Ronald Atwater, as "a Socialist and a peacenik" with an apparent penchant for exotic architectures, wanted to continue building. He had developed an avid interest in Native American culture, perhaps influenced by Charles F. Lummis and others who had begun promoting American

Southwest indigenous culture in the latter years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth.

"He was quite taken with the philosophy of the Hopis, whom he considered a peaceful people," Ronald says. "He was intrigued by Indian kivas and made trips to New Mexico to collect Indian blankets." Not long after the family home was completed, Dr. Atwater designed two Hopi-style bungalows for the property. The construction of those two bungalows was completed around 1922, but Ronald says his grandfather "wasn't satisfied with the outcome. He thought they were too plain."

A Mayan "Revival"

In the Los Angeles of the 1920s, Dr. Atwater wasn't alone in his fascination with unusual architectural styles. Native American and "Hispanic/Mediterranean" motifs were finding "a warm and appreciative audience" in the region, Gebhard wrote in *Robert Stacy-Judd: Maya Architecture and the Creation of a New Style*. The mid-to-late 1920s were also the heyday of interest in Meso-American archeology and the idea that Native American styles could be the basis for a new all-American architecture. Proponents of the Meso-American (or pre-Columbian) style viewed it as a welcome return to the folk-like and primitive, and Stacy-Judd became a prominent exponent of the Meso-American idiom.



The interior and exterior of the Atwater Bungalows feature Meso-American style arches, shapes and textures.

Photo credit: Alexander Verticoff Photography

Stacy-Judd was born in London in 1884. His first architectural commissions were in England, where he designed homes and hotels in the Beaux Arts style that was popular in the early years of the twentieth century. He emigrated to the United States in 1914, settling and working in Minot, North Dakota, until 1918, when he moved to Alberta, Canada.

Stacy-Judd designed "Californias" and other homes when he moved to Los Angeles in 1922. His most famous commission, however, was not a residence but a commercial building—the Aztec Hotel, built in the city of Monrovia and completed in 1925. The hotel, which is currently being restored, was designed in a Mayan style, which Stacy-Judd touted as the logical form for twentieth century architecture. A flamboyant publicist and

Atwater bungalows continued on page 7

Thrill or terror: They don't make 'em like Baxter anymore

We all know that Echo Park is richly endowed with architectural landmarks and a wide array of historical personalities. But the neighborhood has its landscape distinctions, too – largely in the hillside streets, which are among the steepest in the state of California. Baxter Street, for one, offers an amazing rollercoaster ride that is a thrill for some, a terror for others. They don't make 'em like Baxter anymore – literally, as its no longer legal to create a public street at even half the grade of Baxter or Fargo or some of the others that we all know and often avoid, particularly in Elysian Heights. It seems everyone has a story regarding their first drive on Baxter, between Cerro Gordo and Lemoyne. They've seen motorists freeze on the hill, semi's stall at the bottom. In honor of this community conversation piece, we've gathered some tales of the hill – older accounts discovered by Mary Garrison (who got the ball rolling), and modern memories by Becky Koppenhaver and Martin Cox.

Over the Top

What do you get when you impose an old-fashioned grid of streets on top of one of Los Angeles' hilliest neighborhoods? You get some dramatic, rollercoaster-like roadways that have challenged—and terrified—motorists for decades.

Nearly 90 years ago, Echo Park was a popular proving ground for automakers to show that their newest models could ascend such daunting streets as Baxter, Fargo and Quintero. Fargo, between Alvarado and Allesandro, is the site of an annual endurance test by a Los Angeles cycling club.

So, what are L.A.'s steepest streets?

- A small stretch of 28th Street in San Pedro captures the top spot with a grade or angle of 33.3%.
- However, a much long section of Eldred Street in Highland Park comes in a close second at 33%.
- Sections of Fargo and Baxter Street in Echo Park are not too far behind with a 32% grade.
- Since the 1950s, street grades in Los Angeles have been limited to about 15%.

Source: Los Angeles Times and City of Los Angeles

PEEK AT THE PAST

Who needs Magic Mountain? We've got Baxter Street!

Longtime resident Mary Garrison explores our archives for interesting historical nuggets that connect Echo Park Past and present.

What the May 11, 1919, *Los Angeles Times* called “the most spectacular hill-climbing performance ever made by a motor truck” took place on Baxter Street when a Mack truck hauled four times its rated load of horseshoes up the hill, even stopping midway to snap the picture accompanying the article, then geared up and climbed to the summit of the hill.

If you think that was a long-winded introductory sentence, think how winded this 1919 stake-sided truck must have been! Probably the driver was drawing his first deep breath as well when he made it to the top!

According to the *Times*, in June 1921 the new Lexington stock car took up the challenge. Never before conquered by a stock model automobile, the Baxter Grade was used to demonstrate the ability of the highly touted stock car when the Amsted motor flaunted the steep grade in high gear (20mph).

Not to be outdone, the Kissel 55 raced up Baxter in 1923 with the gear box sealed in high after first disabling

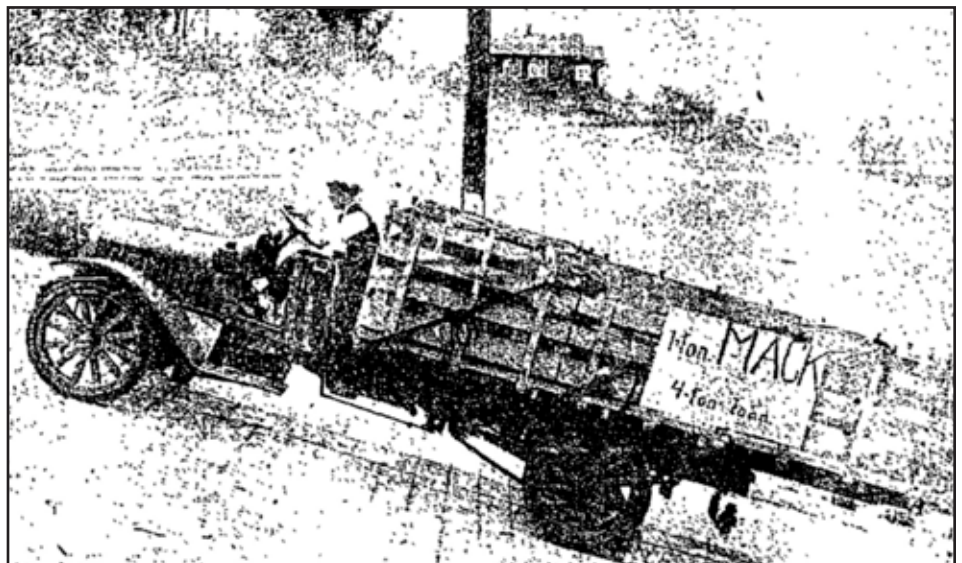
the clutch pedal, thus accomplishing the ultimate test for the Kissel. Apparently, this added (or should we say subtracted) feature of disabling the clutch was because one observer had commented that previous hill-climbing tests included popping the clutch so the tests weren't truly high gear only.

Don't know much about early automobiles (other than remembering my father “cranking” our old Ford) but I seem to recall popping the clutch going downhill was a sneaky way of starting my recalcitrant Volkswagen. I didn't know one could (or wanted to) pop the clutch going uphill.

And on the subject of my Volkswagen, my first encounter with Baxter came as a BIG SURPRISE! I gave a fellow employee a ride from Chinatown to Echo Park during a bus strike and didn't realize how steep Baxter was! After that, who needed Magic Mountain or the Matterhorn!

Martin Cox tells an amusing story of deliberately “scaring” himself when he roared up the hill in his huge, gas-guzzling 1974 gold Cadillac, then up and over the crest, as the “bonnet” (hood) seeming to hang in midair with nothing but sky and space ahead.

Do you have tales to tell about finding Baxter “by accident” and screaming in terror? Or did you use it to momentarily stop the hearts of the unsuspecting? And are they still speaking to you?



*Original caption: This ought to convince 'em that the truck can climb hills.
Photo credit: Los Angeles Times, May 11, 1919*

Drivers (misguided) to Baxter by map services on web

By Becky Koppenhaver

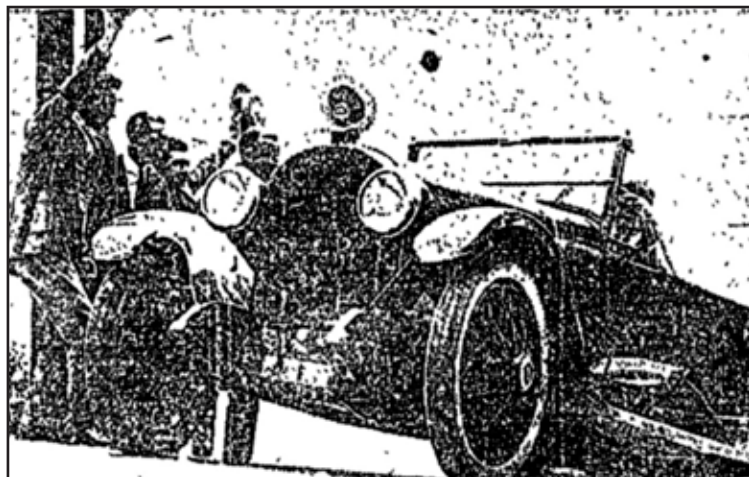
My husband, Anthony, and I have lived on Baxter Street for almost 14 years. Like a lot of long-time Echo Park residents, we've been witness to a lot transformation in the neighborhood— some good and some bad. Not only has the face of the neighborhood changed, so has the routes people choose.

I think that things have gotten worse since GPS and MAPQUEST have come along. They don't let drivers know what they are in for until they've driven to the top of one of the Baxter Street hills. It is so common to see a driver at the top of one of the hills, rubber necking over the steering wheel, wondering if the street actually continues – or if it is a straight drop into oblivion. Big rigs and moving trucks don't even make it up the hill before dis-

covering they are stuck- can't move forward- can't backup without gashing the pavement with their bumper.

Some people would do better to avoid old, steep, narrow Baxter Street. Frequently, our house windows and doors will rattle and the floor will start to vibrate, Anthony and I will stop what we're doing, look at each other and wonder: Earthquake? Or over-sized mega truck coming down the hill?

Still the allure of our street is too much for some. And others are simply too opti-



Original Caption: Baxter grade is conquered!
Photo credit: Los Angeles Times, June 12, 1921

mistic: Take the poor gardener who lost his equipment on the hill after his brakes went out between Vestal and Lemoyne. His truck fish-tailed backwards and almost flipped over on the two cars that had followed him up the hill, equipment rolling out onto the street behind him.

Leap of faith in an old gold Caddy

By Martin Cox

In the '90s when I used to lived on Avon Park Terrace in a little back house, I would drive my huge 1974 gold Cadillac Calais up and over Baxter for the fun of it.

I loved the roar of the huge engine and it gulped down gallons of gas to climb the hill, but the fun part was cresting at the top—the hood was so long that there was nothing but sky and space ahead. It was a leap of faith that there would be road before me. Whenever I had visitors from England or Germany, I would always take them on the Baxter thrill, the crest of the hill always enticed an international shriek as we plunged into the nothingness. (Now I am appalled at such gas guzzling and always avoid the hill, even in my new gas-sipping car, but I was new to L.A. and to giant American cars back then.)

There was a second utility to The Baxter Thrill. My Cadillac's corroded fabric roof cover would soak up rainwater (it used to rain back then) and

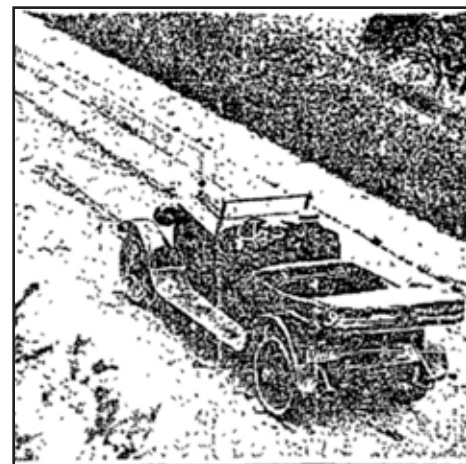
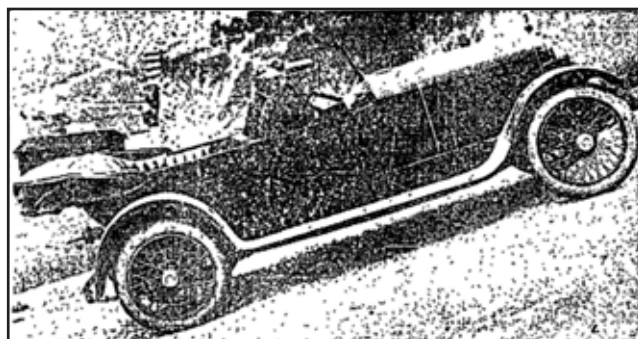
the rainwater would leak through rust holes into the trunk (the boot) from which there was no outlet. I'd collect perhaps 150 gallons over the winter in the vast steel trunk, a private tank, which would slosh about as I drove and cause the windows to steam up at night.

One day I bought a drill and made two holes in the bottom of the trunk to drain it, but the best way to get all the water out was to drive up Baxter really slowly and watch the torrents of water from my Cadillac's reservoir gush out of the trunk and run down the hill behind me. Sometimes it took two goes up the hill.

Share your own Baxter story

Send your favorite Baxter St. story and photos to ephs@historicechopark.org.

We will post them on a new Echo Park Hills page created for the web site.



Original caption:
Hills? –Why it simply eats them alive.
Photo credit: Los Angeles Times,
June 12, 1921

Politi

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his most famous book, *The Song of the Swallows*.

The Politi family rented a series of bungalows on Bunker Hill, which at that time was a large, hilly area of steep, narrow streets and alleys that formed the heart of Los Angeles with Victorian houses and bungalows. In 1961, the family moved to 415 East Edgeware and lived there for 12 years, then moved to 845 Edgeware in Angelino Heights. The changing neighborhoods of the city inspired Politi's watercolor illustrations for the adult reader, in books that include *Bunker Hill*, *Los Angeles: Reminiscences of Bygone Days*, *Tales of the Los Angeles Parks* and *Angeleno Heights*.

Leo Politi is remembered today with the Leo Politi School (near Hoover and Olympic), dedicated in 1991, Montecillo de Leo Politi, an area of Elysian Park

close to Dodger Stadium was dedicated to Leo Politi in 1994 and, later this year, the corner of Sunset and Echo Park will be dedicated as Leo Politi Square.

Commemorative events marking the centennial of Leo Politi's birth are scheduled throughout California and beyond in 2008. Please check leopoliti-2008centennial.org for details.

Just in time for the 2008 Leo Politi Centennial, Angel City Press is publishing, *Leo Politi: Capturing The Heart of Los Angeles* by Rob L. Wagner with Suzanne Politi Bischof, Paul Leo Politi and Larry Bischof. This full-color monograph examines his life and work showcasing his paintings, illustrations and sculptures. For more information, check leopoliti200@centennial.org.



The artist in his studio at Olvera Street
Photo courtesy of "Capturing the Heart of Los Angeles," Angel City Press

Boating

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About the same time, a friend mailed me a 1910 postcard of an Edwardian couple in a rowing boat in front of the (previous) Echo Park Boat House. She had found the vintage postcard in a swap meet in the New Mexican town of Truth or Consequences. That's when it all came clear to me. A local and historic community activity, boating on Echo Park lake, that has been going on for over a century, enjoyed by generations of Angelenos, was about to be snuffed out without so much as a discussion. I just could not take it without doing something.

I began madly emailing every person and press outlet and blog that I could think of with the dramatic, but accurate, headline, "One hundred years of boating ends tomorrow." I must have reached the right people as the next morning the *L.A. Times* contacted me. I later met with staff writer Tami Abdollah and a *Times* photographer at the lake. A small piece appeared in the paper about the overcast future of the boats, and the word was out. It drew immediate ire from people far and wide, some of whom had moved away but once enjoyed the park. Articles began to appear in "Chicken Corner" on LAObserved.com and other L.A. blogs, and more and more people began expressing their outrage at this drastic cut of a community resource, a fond memory.

Councilman Eric Garcetti's office was very responsive to the public's loss and after a few rounds with L.A. Parks and Recs, who run the boats, came up with enough money from the council budget to keep boating going at least for the summer weekends, until September 9th.

As a photographer my response was a visual one, and I began making many images around the lake, of the activity of the boating, using a number of cameras. Meanwhile, a few members of a photographer's group that I am involved with, called the Los Angeles League of Photographers (LALOP), saw the *L.A. Times* piece and grew interested in the lake and its boat loss. Soon an exhibition was planned and some 12 photographers descended on the lake. We were in shooting both Echo Park and MacArthur Park lakes (MacArthur was suffering the same fate) during the summer weekends.

We LALOPs assembled our best photographs of the lakes and the boating, pertinent to each lake and approached both Sandi Romero of Mama's Hot Tamales in MacArthur Park and Dan Drozdenko of The Downbeat Café in Echo Park. Both café owners were very enthusiastic and



Eric Garcetti and a parks employee at the lakeside press conference, announcement of the restoration of boating services. Photo credit: Martin Cox, 2007

helpful in letting us mount exhibitions in October and November near each lake. (Sandi had previous experience with saving the boats herself.) The LALOP photographs were a crowd draw, and two buzzing receptions brought hundreds of people to the exhibits, both called "Without a Paddle"; many visitors also signed a petition asking L.A. Rec and Parks to rethink the issue.

In November, the *LA Weekly* ran a detailed piece by David Ferrell on the issue of the loss of the boats, the LALOP exhibition and meaning and function that a century of boat rentals has to this community.

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CALENDAR

EPHS WINTER & SPRING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Echo Park Lake & Downtown Walking Tour

Saturday, Feb. 9, at 10 a.m.

This tour features many of the neighborhood's most prominent landmarks, including Echo Park Lake, Angelus Temple and Jensen's Recreation Center.

Starting Place:

Echo Park Boathouse, 751 Echo Park Ave. Reservations are required. Please call (323) 860-8874 or visit the Walking Tour section of www.HistoricEchoPark.org for more details.

Quarterly Membership Meeting

Wed., Feb. 13, at 7 p.m.

The Art & Legacy of Leo Politi
Please see Page 1 for details.

EPHS Board Meeting

Monday, Feb. 18, at 7 p.m.

Our monthly board meeting is open to all members.

Please call (323) 860-8874 for location information.

MARCH

Elysian Park Walking Tour

Saturday, March 15, at 10 a.m.

The Elysian Park Tour, which is co-sponsored by Citizens Committee to Save Elysian Park, focuses on the lesser known but historically rich eastern edge of the park.

Starting Place:

Fremont Monument at North Broadway and Elysian Park Road. Reservations are required. Please call (323) 860-8874 or visit the Walking Tour section of www.HistoricEchoPark.org for more details.

EPHS Board Meeting

Monday, March 17, at 7 p.m.

See February events for details.

APRIL

EPHS Board Meeting:

Monday, April 21, at 7 p.m.

See February events for details.

Echo Park Stairway Tour

Saturday, April 26, at 10 a.m.

The walk includes the Baxter Stairs as well as Fellowship Park, Red Hill and the modernist Harwell Harris house.

Starting Place:

Elysian Heights Elementary, 1562 Baxter St. at Echo Park Ave. Reservations are required. Please Call (323) 860-8874 or visit the Walking Tour section of www.HistoricEchoPark.org for more details.

Atwater bungalows

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showman as well as an architect, Stacy-Judd wrote and lectured about Mayan architecture and traveled to the Yucatan jungles to explore Mayan pyramids.

By 1930, public interest in both Meso-American architecture and Stacy-Judd had waned. But his writings and lectures, and his Aztec Hotel in particular, had captured Dr. Atwater's fancy, and the dentist commissioned him to build two more Hopi-inspired homes on the Avon Park Terrace property.

He could not have selected a more appropriate person for the job.

Completed in 1931, one bungalow is on the lower part of the hill while the adjacent bungalow is at a slightly higher elevation. The hill continues to climb eastward to the end of the street, where

a dirt driveway leads to the Atwater family's former residence and a one-unit apartment building— yet another Hopi-influenced project—designed by Ronald's father, the late Eugene Atwater.

Ronald says that the cost of building the two bungalows and two garages Stacy-Judd designed far exceeded the estimate of \$7,800. Although he doesn't know what the total cost was, he recalls "there was such an overrun that my grandparents had a falling out with Stacy-Judd. They loved the houses but not the architect."

You can read the full version of this story and view additional photos in the History & Landmarks section of www.HistoricEchoPark.org

Boating

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By late November all seemed lost, despite a great deal of frustration in the community and support for the boats. Then things turned around: I got a call from Eric Garcetti's office about a press conference in the park. The boats were saved. At least for now. Weekend boating until June 30, 2008, is promised, and then a new budget battle will begin just before the Lotus Festival. Jon Mukri, general manager of L.A. Parks and Recs, mentioned during the press conference that he had received more

calls and emails "on this boats issue than any other matter." It made me proud to be a member of the famously outspoken Echo Park community. I thank everyone who called a politician, emailed Parks and Rec, signed a petition or even just "got it" as to why this innocent pastime is worth preserving. We have a new century of boating beginning, and I hope we the years well.



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