



West Adams Matters

Ahn Family Home Celebrates Legacy of Korean Freedom

by Laura Meyers

One of the first Korean immigrants to America and Los Angeles was also Korea's inspirational independence leader – and, for a time, a West Adams resident. Now his landmark home is being relocated to a new site on the University of Southern California campus, with plans for an eventual restoration.

Ahn Chang Ho, also known as *Dosan* ("Island Mountain," a nickname he gave himself), was born in Gang-suh, South Pyongahn Province, in Korea. He immigrated to this country as a farm worker in 1902, moving south from San Francisco two years later to Riverside. There he found work picking oranges but soon realized that Japanese consortiums controlled the labor market – just as they did in his native Korea, which was under Japanese control in the first decades of the 20th century.

With the help of a local grower, Ahn organized his fellow workers into a successful labor consortium of their own. By the time he moved to Los Angeles, in 1914, Ahn had also founded the U.S.-based Korean independence movement.

By then, the Japanese had asserted Imperial rule over Korea. Ahn spent the rest of his life
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WAHA's February Meeting: Second Annual Preservation Forum

WAHA's first Preservation Forum a year ago was such a success that we decided to do it again, featuring different groups. Ever wonder what other preservation organizations are doing? How do they handle threatened tear downs of historic buildings in Long Beach? How do they raise money in Altadena? What's the history of similar groups in Highland Park? Do they have graffiti in Pasadena?

Our WAHA forum will be held on Saturday, February 28, at 7:00 pm. It will give you an opportunity to meet representatives over a potluck supper. Meet allies and share strategies, successes and challenges. So often we work in isolation and don't exchange ideas and experiences. We'll be able to do so now.

The venue is the most recently restored Craftsman house in the Adams-Normandie HPOZ. This big, beautiful home will be making its public debut. Come see the great work our hosts, Mario Chavarria and Ruth Bloomfield, are doing! Location: 2618 S. Raymond Avenue, just south of Adams Boulevard.

POTLUCK DINNER: Bring a favorite dish to share, beverages provided. Let's show our guests, leaders from the other preservation groups, what a nice spread WAHA can provide! ●

CRA Holds Hearing on USC Galen Center and Athletic Pavilion Draft EIR



At the early hour of 8 a.m. on Thursday, January 15, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) held a public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Galen Center and Athletic Pavilion, a project proposed for the east side of Figueroa Street north of Jefferson Boulevard, adjacent to the Radisson Hotel. Several WAHA members were in attendance to address community concerns.

The proposed project consists of:

1. The Galen Center, a 245,000 square foot arena with seating for 10,260;
2. An athletic Pavilion of 55,000 square feet of space for USC's athletic program, consisting of three gymnasiums with seating for approximately 2,000 persons, staff offices, including a conference room and classroom; and
3. Construction of a 1,200 space parking structure.

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Save The Date! **The Garden Conservancy's Los Angeles Open Days**

*Visit Some of the Most Beautiful Private Gardens
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 Sunday, April 25, 2004, 10 am to 4 pm*

Ten gardens in Windsor Square, Larchmont Village, Hollywood Hills and West Adams will be open for private touring. Proceeds from three of the gardens will be shared with the West Adams Heritage Association.

For more information or to purchase discount ticket booklets and Open Days Directories, call the Garden Conservancy 888-842-2442, or log onto www.gardenconservancy.com. Additional local Open Days: Saturday, May 8 in the West Los Angeles area and Sunday, May 16 in Pasadena, San Marino and Arcadia.

The Open Days needs volunteers for all three days. If you'd like to volunteer in West Adams please contact Jennifer Charnofsky at 323-734-7391 or jcharnofsky@earthlink.net. If you'd like to volunteer in West L.A., Pasadena or, on April 25 in Larchmont or the Hollywood Hills, please e-mail Judy Horton, jmhorton@earthlink.net.

In Memoriam:

Chet Miller, A Pioneer Remembered

by Jim Childs

The Yule long burned less brightly and the holidays songs more distant this year for many of us in University Park as we reflected on the death of our neighbor, our friend and compañero in preservation, Chet Miller.

Most of us will gladly settle for four-score-and-seven but for a life lover like Chet another twenty years seemed probable. Even after the devastating loss two years ago of his beloved wife and life partner, Dorothy, he marched forward. It was only after suffering a paralyzing traffic accident that he gave up his crippled form on December 1 and passed on.

Born in Schenectady, New York to Russian Jewish refugees on July 14, this Bastille Day baby was destined for a French connection. U.S. Army Sergeant Charles Miller served in France during World War II, was wounded, and fathered a son who he sadly outlived. Chet's joie-de-vivre was dance, ethnic dance. He was world renowned for his Middle Eastern repertoire. He performed dance and taught dance. On Broadway, in nightclubs, on television and along the college circuit throughout the '40s and '50s, he danced and danced and danced.

Chet came to Los Angeles to get his Ph.D. at USC in 1957. He got more than that when he met Dorothy Manley at the Cap & Gown graduation tea. Doctors Chet and Dorothy married and bought an old Victorian house on Bonsallo and 23rd Street near campus. The old house in the old neighborhood soon became a cause and before either of them noticed they had become urban pioneers. Eventually they rallied other concerned homeowners including Don Ferguson, Sergio Gutman and Ralph Garcia and formed the North University Park Community Association. In 1981 along with the newly formed LA Conservancy they gave the first historic home tour in West Adams.

Over the following decades their commitment for the preservation of our neighborhood served as a benchmark. The certification of my designation of their "old house" as a Los Angeles Historical-Cultural Monument was a shared special monument. My lasting memory of Chet will be the image of him walking one of their beloved Rhodesian razorbacks through St. James Park, the dog smartly at heel, walking-stick a-swagger, Chet's military-air, back straight, head high, with brisk-paced long dancer's strides.

Adieux. ●

Mid-City PAC Update

by Corinne Pleger

As WAHA's representative on the Mid-City PAC (a Community Redevelopment Agency Project Area Committee), I monitor the commercial development in a portion of WAHA's boundaries. Over the last few years the Pico-Plaza development (corner of San Vicente and Venice and Pico - Old Sears and Metro turnaround site) has been slated to have a Home Depot and another large tenant as well as a sit-down family style restaurant. The prior negotiations with Costco have broken down and the new developer/owner CIM Group is looking for another big tenant.

A few neighbors think a Whole Foods would be a good choice and are asking for letters to go to Whole Foods Market inviting them to the project. If you want to see Whole Foods in our neighborhood or any other then you need to write to these companies. (See the accompanying sample letter, but please do write your own original words). The demolition of the old Sears building is slated to start this month so please respond quickly. The project can be stalled again if another tenant is not found soon.

You can send an e-mail to comments@wholefoods.com or send a letter to:

Mr. Michael Besancon
President Pacific Division
Whole Foods Market, Inc.
601 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78703

We had our December 2003 meeting on the 23rd and celebrated the Holidays with food. The CIM Group representative was asked

questions as we reviewed their preliminary plans and then we voted for the project to proceed. We were then visited by Nate Holden as well as Martin Ludlow and council staff members. ●

SAMPLE LETTER

January 5, 2004

Mr. Michael Besancon, President
601 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite 300
Austin, Texas 78703

Dear Mr. Besancon:

I am writing you to let you know how much our entire neighborhood enjoys shopping at Whole Foods. It is the best market we've ever shopped at with an amazing selection of fruits, vegetables, fish and meat. Unfortunately we hardly get to enter your store. Although we are 4.5 miles from your nearest store on Fairfax and 3rd Street, we live in Los Angeles and 4.5 miles means at least 30 minutes. Except for rare occasions we shop at Pavillions and Ralph's. Even on the rare occasion that I am in the Whole Foods area, the parking lot there never has an empty spot. I would like to suggest a solution.

A large project located in Los Angeles between Pico and Venice Blvds at San Vicente Blvd is looking for a second anchor store. Currently Home Depot is set. A store which would occupy its own level in a 45,000 square foot space along with an entire floor of 600 parking spots (there will also be two other parking levels comprising an additional 850 spaces) is being sought. The project is Mid-Pico Plaza. The second anchor entrance will be level with Venice Blvd so that traffic can enter and patrons can park right in front of Whole Foods. Please contact Jeff Kreshik, who is representing the developer Simms, at 323-860-4900 for more information. Another possibility is the Ranch Market at 4020 Washington Blvd just east of Crenshaw. This would be a great place for a Whole Foods store.

We live in a thriving community. We need to have a better food store. Whole Foods would be a welcome addition to our community and would be heavily patronized by the surrounding residents. The population density in this area is thick. In a recent neighborhood survey, the number one service residents feel is lacking is a good grocery store. 80 percent of the residents wrote Whole Foods as the store they would like to see come into the neighborhood (Trader Joe's got the other 20 percent).

Please consider opening a store near us. Thank you very much.

In the Garden

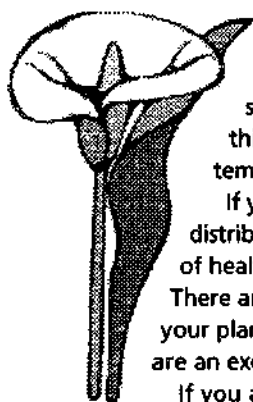
The Garden Guy by Steve Rowe

Winter Greetings, Gardeners! Winter Indeed! For the last few days I have taken full advantage of our glorious winter weather. Can you believe it is January? With azure-blue skies and a gentle breeze, it doesn't get any better than this. For me, it's Heaven On Earth.

The winter pruning chores were calling my name. I cut back the rose bushes and all my vines. Weeded, weeded and weeded some more. I was like a man possessed. Oh, how I adore the feel of the earth between my fingers. While in the midst of this feverish passion of mine, I received a phone call from my sister, Michelle. Michelle still lives in our beautiful hometown of Mystic, Connecticut. I asked Michelle, "So, how has your weather been?" - knowing full well how brutally cold New England weather can be.

"Oh, Steve!" she responded. "When I first woke up this morning I could not believe my eyes. The outside temperature was minus 9 degrees Fahrenheit." Ugh! I almost didn't have the heart to tell her of the glorious weather we were experiencing. I could hear the envy. Oh, how we Southern Californians suffer so!

So, my fellow gardeners, please take full advantage of these warm sunny winter days. You will not be sorry you did. It is good for the body, the exercise, and good for the soul. There are many winter garden chores that can be done now to secure your garden's health and beauty in the spring and summer. Although your garden is resting now and the temperature may be warm, plants respond to daylight length by slowing down. It is the ideal time to do a thorough pruning of all trees, shrubs and vines. This will ensure their optimum health and beauty. Remember to prune all dead and diseased branches and stems. Now is also the best time to plant bare-root trees, plants and roses. There should be an abundant supply at your local garden center. Be sure to carefully follow all instructions listed on your plant or tree specimen. On roses in particular, don't forget to soak the roots in water before planting. This will allow the plant to successfully thrive when planted correctly.



This month is also a great time to mulch around all existing plants and trees as well as any new plant specimens you decide to add to your garden. Doing this will not only help insulate the plant from temperature extremes but will effectively help fertilize it.

If you have a wood burning fireplace, it is a good idea to distribute the ash throughout the garden. Wood ash is full of healthy nitrogen and will fertilize your plants quite nicely.

There are other environmentally friendly ways of fertilizing your plants and trees as well. Egg shells, and coffee grounds are an excellent source of beneficial nutrients to add to the soil.

If you are in need of an idea for a new plant specimen to add to your garden, why not try the common Calla lily. It has wondrous green leaves and spectacular white blooms. The Calla lily does well in both semi-shade and sunny locations and is readily available at your local garden center at this time of year. Plant it in groupings for best overall effect.

I hope that I have given you a little inspiration and some good ideas for your garden, my West Adams friends. Keep on gardening! Make it green! ●

Natalie Neith & Ken Catbagan

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WAHA COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND STANDING MEETINGS

All WAHA members are encouraged to join a committee.
(All committee meetings begin at 7 pm on the days noted below.)

Community Relations

Meets the second Tuesday of each month -
Contact Jennifer Charnofsky if you'd like to get
involved with this activity 323-734-7391

Historic Preservation

Chair: Jean Frost 213-748-1656

Zoning & Planning

Chair: Eric Bronson, 323-737-1163 and Thomas Florio,
213-749-8464. Meets third Mondays at City Living
Realty 2316 1/2 South Union

Newsletter

Chair: Laura Meyers 323-737-6146.

Meets second Mondays

Publications

Director: Jean Frost 213-748-1656

Holiday Tour

Chair: Jacqueline Sharps 323-766-8842

Membership

Chair: John Kurtz 323-732-2990.

Meets Wednesday before the WAHA Board Meeting

By-Laws

Thomas Florio 213-749-8464

Web Site

Thomas Florio 213-749-8464

Programs and Events

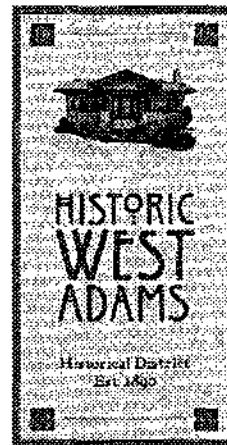
SeElcy Caldwell 323-291-7484 and
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The WAHA Board meets on the fourth Thursday of
each month. Contact Jacqueline Sharps for location.

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Around the House

Resources by Suzie Henderson

Hi. I am Suzie Henderson. As an interior designer and former real estate agent, I have been an informal resource connection here in West Adams for 20 years, so it is time to make it official. I will be the new Resources columnist for the WAHA Matters newsletter. Believe me, these years in West Adams include lots of household projects. Last year, I was the designer and general contractor on our own extensive (and my friends tell me, fabulous) kitchen remodel. So, I have my experience – now I need your experiences to share with our readers. Exceptionally good or exceptionally bad, your neighbors want to know. If you can't be a good example, you can be a stern warning.

Please e-mail a brief paragraph, including the name and telephone number of your resource, to me at Westadamsgoddess@aol.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

I have a couple of resources for my first column.

Steve Rowe highly recommends Clouston Sash & Door. They are very reasonable and were able to perfectly match the original windows and doors for their duplex at 1617-19 5th Avenue. He invites you to take a look. Replace your aluminum Home Depot windows with beautiful double hung custom windows. Stock also available. In addition, they have wood French doors in many period designs.

In that kitchen remodel I mentioned, I personally refinished all the woodwork. When I was getting very weary of stripping, I treated myself to some dip stripping of doors and moldings. The two young men that own Los Angeles Stripping are charming, helpful and do a great job very quickly.

I'll be waiting for your great finds! Thank you. ●

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Elegant Spanish in Wilshire Park - 945 3rd Avenue - 3 BD - 2 BA - upgraded one-story hacienda on large lot - 14 offers pending - David Raposa - \$595,000

IN ESCROW:
Lafayette Square Mediterranean - Restored Estate with pool & spa - David Raposa (Buyer)
Great Hollywood Hills Condo - Nick Mercado (Seller)

SOLD:
Adams/Normandie Transitional 2626 Dalton - Multiple offers - \$60,000 over list price! David Raposa (Seller) - Welcome, Matthias and Kimberly Lenz
Grand Victoria Circle Colonial - 4424 Victoria Park Drive - David Raposa (Seller) - Welcome, Beverly Wood
Spanish Fixer - 1323 Victoria Avenue. Jerry Mendelsohn (Buyer and Seller) - Welcome, Howard Hintz and Jivaro Ray
University Park Craftsman - 2706 Menlo - David Raposa (Seller) - Welcome, Ron and Tracey Pattani
Out-of-area Duplex - Nick Mercado (Buyer and Seller)
Jefferson Park Bungalow - 2056 W. 29th Place - David Raposa (Buyer)
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1920's Condo in Fab Mid-City Bldg - David Raposa (Seller)

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USC Galen Center Draft EIR

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At the hearing, two people spoke of the EIR's adequacy; the great majority of those present providing public comment (individuals and organizations from the neighborhood) identified a variety of issues that they suggested required additional study. A common thread by most of the speakers was about impacts to the surrounding community to parking, traffic, historic resources, and housing. One resident offered that even now, without these new buildings, USC impacts parking and traffic. He gave anecdotal testimony of impacts: on game days his driveway is at times blocked, and parking demands are beyond what the neighborhood area can absorb.



Below is a list of the many points made by the speakers who believed further study was necessary for an adequate EIR:

- Information requested about USC parking and traffic expressed in the Notice of Preparation meeting has been ignored, such as the number of actual attendees on any given day when USC is in session, and the number of actual available parking spaces within all University parking; since it was brought up in meetings before the preparation of the DEIR, this information ought to have been included in the draft document;
- The failure of the project to meet housing needs and the cumulative effect of the student rentals displacing residents;
- The failure to recognize any impacts on the neighborhood historic resources and the quality of life of its residents;
- The absence of mapping of cumulative impacts showing projects that include the many residential lots that have involved demolition of houses for surface parking;
- Absence of meaningful mitigations such as a traffic mitigation plan;
- The failure to provide a reasonable range of alternatives which might include housing or mixed use development;
- The absence of any analysis of the conflict between the existing C2 zoning of the project's site and the chosen project plan of an area, pavilion, staff offices and a parking structure.
- That alternatives to the proposed project should have included housing and mixed use, and alternative sites; the alternatives that were studied were dismissed in a cursory manner rather than seriously studied;
- That the DEIR offered a very narrow and isolated view that ignored the environmental context in which this project is being placed;
- At this time, USC should provide a master plan so that impacts can be recognized, understood, and mitigated.

In summary, since the impacts were not adequately evaluated in the DEIR, there were no significant mitigating measures provided in the DEIR.

The former project manager for Hoover Redevelopment, Oscar Juaregui, and Pauline Lewicki, CRA's environmental planner, stressed that the purpose of the public hearing was to obtain comments on the draft EIR as opposed to arguing the merits of the project. Nevertheless, questions arose regarding land use, signage, parking, and building orientation.

The public comment period ended January 23. The next step is that CRA staff responds to comments made. A final EIR is then issued and, if deemed adequate, certified by the CRA Board of Commissioners; if found inadequate, a revised version or a supplemental EIR can be issued and circulated.

Lunch & Dinner, Sunday Brunch

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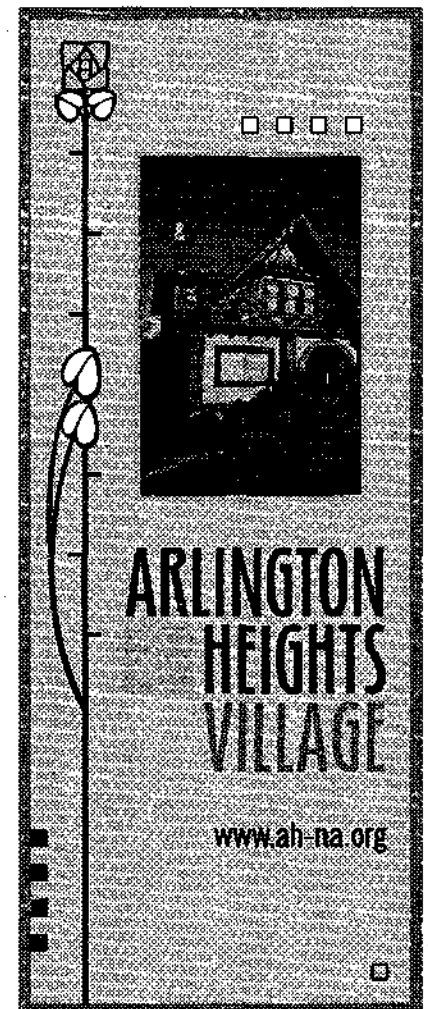
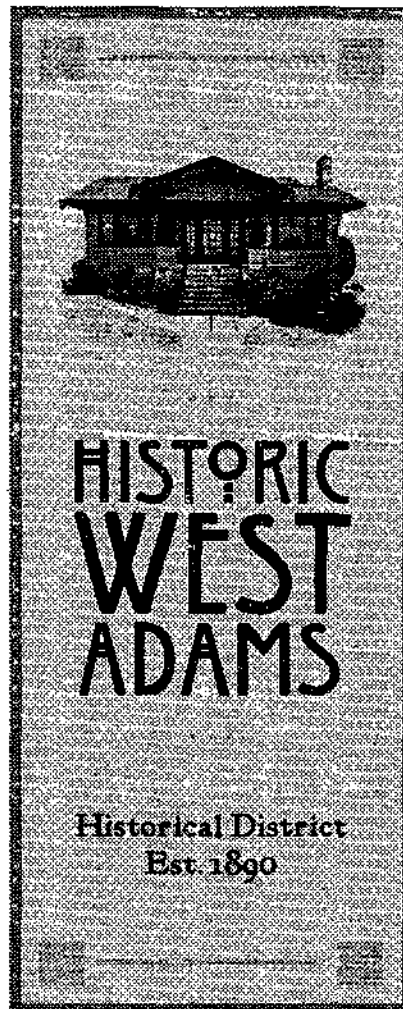
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Community Matters

Around the Blocks: Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association

The Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association had its most recent meeting just before the holidays. At the meeting we came up with several ideas of how to raise funds for our neighborhood improvement projects. One of our ideas was to create something beautiful for all residents of the Historic West Adams District and raise project funds at the same time. We have come up with a truly beautiful Home Flag Banner (Thanks, Linda Frost Design) which we are now taking orders for. Please take the time to view the Banner Design which will be shown in this issue of the WAHA Newsletter. All proceeds go to the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association, and its many neighborhood improvement projects. We hope that you will love and show your new Flag Banner proudly on your home. Thank you very much for your support. Our Website will be up soon. www.ah-na.org. (Thanks, Alex). We also have a new P.O. Box (Thanks, Hope): Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association P.O. Box 191918 Los Angeles, Calif. 90019. For more information about our next meeting, please contact either Alex and Linda Frost at 323-735-9639 or Steve Rowe at 323-733-9600 or e-mail: alex@sunflowerproduction.com or rowesb@aol.com. ●



A West Adams Art Festival

For those of you with an eye for art, we are looking to establish a standing committee to oversee the design and implementation of an Arlington Heights Outdoor Art Festival. The festival will take place along the Washington Boulevard Commercial Corridor, between Crenshaw and Arlington. We'd like to create an annual Art Festival that will coexist with all businesses and residents, and which will contribute to the wonderful atmosphere that already exists in our Historic West Adams community.

Whether you have working knowledge of art shows, or just a desire to help, we need you. If you'd like to become involved, please contact either Steve Rowe at 323-733-9600 (rowesb@aol.com) or Melody Jackson at 323-737-4849 (islandhousegallery@sbcglobal.net). Thank you. ●

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Ahn Family Home

continued from page 1

advocating Korean freedom from the Japanese Empire. He traveled throughout the world, including China, to lecture, garner political support, and raise funds for the independence movement. After an escape from Japanese-occupied Korea, he composed the song "Rise Up for Korea" (guh-gook song), which starts with the words, "I am leaving, I am leaving, I am leaving you behind" and ends with, "Do not feel sorrow over my leaving, my beloved Korea." It was so popular with Korean political refugees that the song later was known as the "Song of Exiles."

In 1932, Japanese authorities in Shanghai, China arrested Ahn Chang Ho. Accused of a bombing incident he said he was not involved in, Ahn was taken to a prison in Korea and died at a hospital in 1938. He had left Los Angeles for the last time in 1926, and never even met his last-born child.

From the time the family acquired the property, Ahn's two-story circa-1900 home near the USC campus became a center for the Korean community. Ahn himself seldom stayed in the house because of his travels, but his wife, Helen, and his children Pil Lip (born in 1905), Pilson (1912), Susan (1915), Soorah (1917) and Ralph (1926) called this modest West Adams residence home for many years. "The house was kind of a central house located for all the second-generation Koreans to gather," Susan Ahn told the USC *Daily Trojan* last year. She remembered the warmth of its interior. "It was a golden brown, shiny wood," she said. "The library was mahogany. It had all the family books and my father's books and historical books printed in rice paper with Han-mun [Chinese characters]."

In later years, visiting Koreans would knock at the door. Susan Ahn recalls a boatload, literally, of Korean sailors journeying from Long Beach harbor to pay respects to the patriot they never met. "Almost every diplomat that comes from Korea wants to see the Dosan house," she commented in the interview. "I'm very happy for [the house remaining on campus] because as Koreans, we have to know the history, mainly because we wouldn't have a country today if it weren't for my father."


Ahn Chang Ho's eldest son, Pil Lip, was the first American citizen born of Korean parents in the U.S. As a young man, he Westernized his name as "Philip," and became a hard-working character actor who appeared in more than 200 film and television roles, often playing Japanese heavies. He was cast as the romantic lead opposite Anna May Wong in "Daughter of Shanghai," and is perhaps best remembered as the character Master Kan in the ABC series, "Kung Fu."

Philip Ahn was also a USC student in the 1930s, studying foreign commerce. He was president of the Cosmopolitan Club, chairman of the All University Committee on International Relations, and assistant to Dr. Francis M. Bacon, the dean of men, as advisor for foreign student affairs. He was chairman of planning for many multicultural events, including an international dinner in 1934 that hosted thirty-two different countries at the USC campus.

After Philip's death in 1978, the Ahn Family donated the actor's collection of scripts, photograph stills, correspondence and awards to USC. The plaque commemorating Philip Ahn's Hollywood Walk of Fame Star (which is on Hollywood Boulevard near Argyle) also found a home on the USC campus.

Now the Ahn Family House itself will have a new home on the USC campus. The university acquired the property when the campus expanded west, but last year the Ahn residence was slated to be removed to make way for the new School of Engineering building on McClintock. USC officials were at first seeking an off-campus site, but in January, Steve Lohr, director of USC's architecture office, presented plans for an on-campus move instead. The Ahn House will be relocated next to the JEP house, another historic residential structure, on the north side of campus. Its hipped roof, clapboard siding, inset porch and bay window will all be preserved, Lohr said. "One of the objectives we were trying to accomplish was appropriate siting and setback, which we'll be able to do in this location," he said. ●






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Calendar ✓

WAHA February Calendar

Week 2

Tuesday, February 10 - Community Relations Committee

Week 3:

Monday, February 16 - WAHA Planning & Zoning Committee

Wednesday, February 18 - United Neighborhoods Planning & Zoning

Week 4

Wednesday, February 25 - WAHA Membership Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 26 - WAHA Board Meeting

Saturday, February 28 - WAHA General Meeting

Second Annual Preservation Forum

WAHA's second annual forum will be held on **Saturday, February 28, at 7:00 pm.**

This forum and roundtable discussion will give you an opportunity to meet representatives from other historic preservation organizations, including Altadena Heritage and Willmore City Heritage Association over a potluck supper. Meet allies and share strategies, successes and challenges.

Location: 2618 S. Raymond Avenue, just south of Adams Boulevard

Potluck: Don't forget to bring a favorite dish to share

The WAHA Newsletter is a publication of the West Adams Heritage Association. Members and supporters of WAHA are invited to submit articles to the Newsletter. Letters will be published subject to space constraints and will be cut for length if necessary. Articles will be published subject to acceptance by the editors of the WAHA Board. Advertising is subject to the approval of the publishers. Although the Association appreciates its many fine advertisers, the Association does not accept responsibility for claims made by advertisers. Services and products are not tested and appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute, endorsement by the West Adams Heritage Association. Copyright 2004. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission.



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