



LANTERMAN HOUSE

NEWSLETTER

SPRING ~ 2020

LANTERMAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM FOUNDATION

4420 Encinas Drive
La Cañada Flintridge,
CA 91011
(818) 790-1421
lantermanhouse@gmail.com

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tuesday/Thursdays
Sunday (1st and 3rd)
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

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Photo courtesy of the Lanternman House Archives

The Lanternman House during the first phase of restoration in the early 1990s.

THE LANTERMAN HOUSE... 30 YEARS OF PRESERVATION & COUNTING

More than thirty years ago, the city of La Cañada Flintridge received an unexpected bequest from the last surviving member of the city's founding family. Lloyd Lanternman, grandson of founder Jacob Lanternman, left his family's home to the city. Constructed in 1915, the house was architecturally unique, and remarkably, still contained almost all of the furnishings purchased by its original owners. It offered a peek back in time to the days when the city was still a tiny agricultural community.

This donation was not without controversy. Neither Lloyd nor Frank Lanternman ever married and they had no direct heirs to leave the house to. Initially, Lloyd's brother Frank Lanternman intended that the house be left to his beloved alma mater, the University of Southern California. However, Frank passed away in 1981, and Lloyd came to feel that he wanted the house to be preserved for the community. With no small effort, he broke the terms of his brother's will, and redirected the donation to the city.

What to do with such a generous gift?

The city of La Cañada Flintridge was uncertain at first. The original graceful façade of the house had been altered in 1964 to incorporate a massive addition of an organ room to house a Wurlitzer pipe organ. The organ room extended almost to the street and was not consistent in nature with the rest of the house. Plus...it was inadequately sound-proofed, and the organ was LOUD!

(continued on page 5)

Letter from the Director

Did you know that there are nearly 15,000 historic house museums in the US alone, according to the National Council on Public History? To put it in perspective, that means there are as many house museums as there are McDonalds! Not every house museum has an identity as large as Mt. Vernon or the Gamble House. Most are small - 65% have no full-time paid staff. But the house museum clearly plays an important cultural role in our country.

Like most of the house museums in this country, the Lanterman House is small too. But we've accomplished so many big things! The house was accepted on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994, and was recognized by the California Preservation Foundation and Los Angeles Conservancy for its outstanding historic preservation efforts. We've created a local history archives and received grants to digitize and preserve oral histories of significant La Cañada residents. Every single third-grade student in La Cañada has participated in our educational program for the last twenty-five years. And we continue to seek ways to serve the local community by preserving our shared history and offering relevant cultural programming and events. If you'd like to be a part of our efforts to preserve and share local history, consider joining the Lanterman Historical Museum Foundation -- all memberships are applied towards our preservation and education efforts. You can find a membership application on the back page of this newsletter.

~ Laura Verlaque

Spring 2020 Calender

(For more details, see pages 9, 10-11. All events are free, unless otherwise noted)

Sunday, February 2

FAMILY FREE DAY:
Radio Roundup
1 to 4pm

Saturday, February 15

FREE LECTURE:
Built for Health
2pm
La Cañada Public Library

Sunday, March 1

FREE BOOK TALK & SIGNING:
Dr. Joe Puglia
2pm

Sunday, March 22

RAGTIME TEA DANCE
Dance Class: Noon to 1pm
Dancing and Tea: 1 to 5pm
\$50 a ticket, reservations required

Sunday, May 3

THEREMIN RECITAL
AND PRESENTATION
2 to 3:30pm
Free for members;
\$5 for non-members

Sunday, May 24

SUMMER WHITES PICNIC
Noon to 4pm

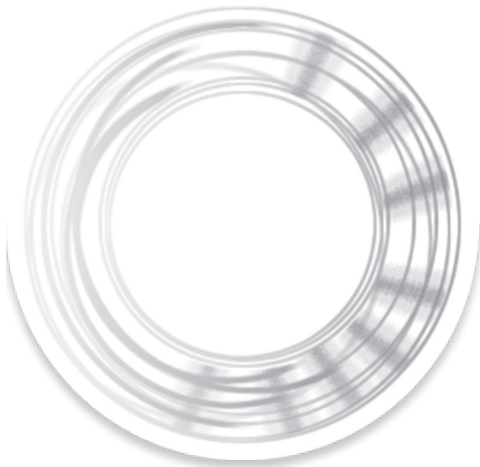
LANTERMAN ORAL HISTORIES:

Preserving the Community's Voice

In 1979, shortly after La Cañada Flintridge became a city, the Historical Society of La Cañada Flintridge began interviewing residents and recording stories which might not otherwise have been told. These conversations provide diverse eyewitness accounts of a growing city, its community, and its institutions. These oral histories help to bring to life details provided by other primary sources, like photographs, manuscripts, and other historical materials in the Lanterman Archives.

The Lanterman House has carried on the tradition of collecting oral histories for future generations. In addition, the Lanterman Archives has been busy ensuring that these stories can be accessed for many years to come. Over the past two years, the Archives has been working on an initiative to digitize all forty years of oral histories and make them available online.

CALIFORNIA REVEALED



www.californiarevealed.org

The California State Library has generously awarded the Lanterman House three grants to catalog and digitize its oral histories through the *California Revealed* program. Information about each oral history and how it was recorded is noted in preparation for digital preservation. The interviews, recorded on audiocassette, VHS, and DVD are sent to Sacramento to be digitized at a lab following strict archival preservation standards. A new, digital master file is made for each oral history, and the original media is returned to the Lanterman Archives.

Seven of the almost forty oral histories have completed the digital preservation process and are now accessible online through the Lanterman House website, California Revealed, the Internet Archive, WorldCat, the Home Movie Registry, and Digital Public Library of America.

Speakers and topics include:

- Bob Covey and Peter Breckheimer talk about the history of JPL from its beginnings to the NASA era.
- Bob Neilson and Claire Slaughter describe the process of building a La Cañada city float for the Rose Parade.
- Melissa Patton and Tim Gregory discuss the development of the Lanterman House as a museum and archives.
- Patty Compeau and Mary Lou Langedyke reminisce about teaching in La Cañada Schools.
- Joy Wilson talks about the La Cañada Historical Society and saving the city's history.

-Julie Yamashita, Archivist



Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

Tim Gregory, former Lanterman House archivist, interviewed Bob Covey in 2008.



Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

Mary Lou Langedyke and Patty Compeau talk about the La Cañada schools in 2007.



Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

Peter Breckheimer interviewed by former archivist Tim Gregory, 2017

How can you view and listen to the oral histories? Visit the California Revealed website at www.californiarevealed.org and type "Lanterman House" into the search screen. Or visit the Lanterman House website at www.lantermanhouse.org, where you can find the link in the Research section of the website.

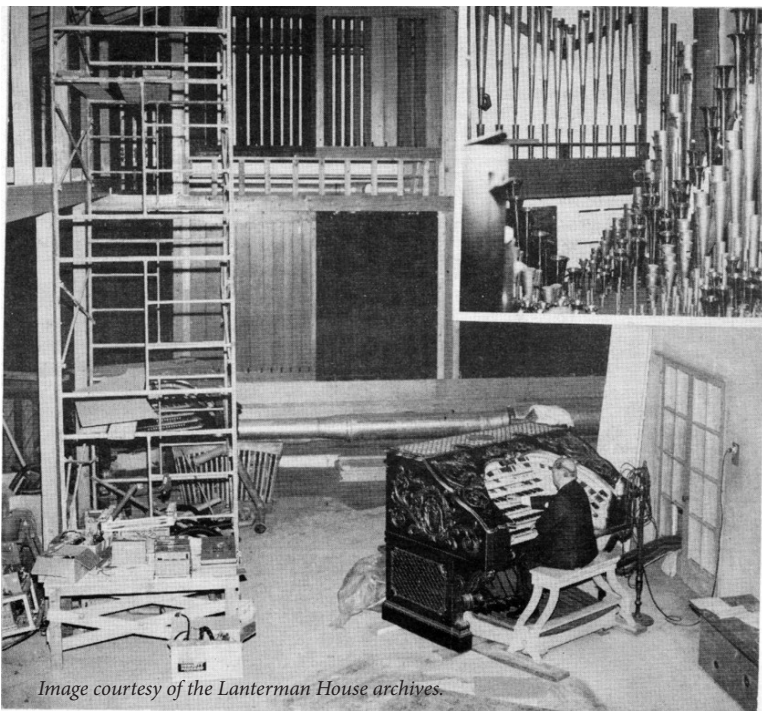


Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

Frank Lanterman playing a 1929 Wurlitzer pipe organ that he installed on the central courtyard of the Lanterman House. The inset photos shows some of the organ pipes

dense aircraft paint had been applied in later years) and returned to the original color and texture. By 1993, the major exterior restoration was complete. The old garage was adapted into a Visitor Center and offices, and a parking lot created on the site of the old swimming pool.

The restoration of the interior of the house took much longer. All of the painted ornament in the house was quite grimy--the residue of coal heating, gas lighting and fireplace use. There were also major areas of water damage to almost every room. The distinctive painted walls and ceilings in each room required painstaking, individualized restoration. Room by room, wall by wall, the interior of the house was slowly restored to its original glory over a period of about twenty-five years by Ed Pinson and Bob Burchman of Landmark Painting and Design of Monrovia, CA.

But the care of a historic house is never finished. In order to

preserve the house and furnishings so that future generations can enjoy and learn from them, the city and Foundation has to continuously monitor and care for them. Last year, the Lanterman Historical Museum Foundation received a national grant called CAP (Collections Assessment for Preservation). The grant program sent a team of preservation specialists to the Lanterman House to assess the condition of the house and its collections, and make recommendations to improve collections

Tentative plans to turn the house into a recital venue and offices for City Hall were met with protests from the neighbors. Soon, an alternative solution arose. Led by resident Sue Schecter, plans were made to turn the house into a historic house museum and local history repository. The Lanterman Historical Museum Foundation was created and the first executive director, Melissa Patton, hired to manage the foundation.

The city and the foundation collaborated on an intensive period of restoration. The organ room was removed, and the organ donated (it can be heard today at Disney's El Capitan Theater in Hollywood). The roof was replaced. Seven of the distinctive concrete columns that surround the house had to be replaced entirely. As much as possible of the original redwood pergola was saved, and the rest replaced. Paint layers were analyzed to determine original colors. The exterior walls and walkways were sandblasted to remove layers of stain and paint (many layers of a particularly



Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

A team of volunteers, under the direction of painting restoration experts Ed Pinson and Debra Ware, carefully clean the ceiling of the dining room.

(continued on next page)

care. This report that the team of specialists produced gives the Lanterman House a road-map for the future care of the house and its collections.

Next up in the preservation of the Lanterman House? This year, the city will repair and repaint the pergola and wood trim of the house with the appropriate period paint colors. The Foundation has been working on an inventory of the house furnishings, with condition reports for tens of thousands of objects. Once this is complete, we can begin to prioritize our conservation needs. With careful stewardship, the Lanterman House and its wonderful collections can continue to inspire and educate future generations.

FALL 2019 Happenings at the Lanterman House



In October, the Lanterman House hosted the monthly Chamber of Commerce mixer. The festive evening party took place in the courtyard in front of the Visitor Center. Board president, Adam Ralphs is shown here with two members of the Miss La Cañada Flintridge Court.

Jane's Cakes sponsored a Family Free Day at the Lanterman House in November, and sent master baker Paula Scott to decorate a gingerbread house, with the help of local children.



FALL 2019 Happenings at the Lanterman House



The Lanterman House vegetable garden received a makeover in November, with the help of several partner organizations. The Theodore Payne Foundation worked with Eagle Scout Alex Higa to install a native plant garden in a defunct area of the vegetable garden. Community volunteers assisted on the planting day. And Girl Scouts from Troop 7102 took over the maintenance of four vegetable beds for a year.



The Lanterman House sponsored a Gingerbread House Contest in December. Mayor Len Pieroni poses with the winner of the Mayor's Choice Award, Nini Ong. Jane's Cakes provided gift certificates to all of the winners.



The Audience Choice Award in the Gingerbread House Contest went to The Tiny Chef, who created a miniature masterpiece. The YouTube and Instagram star visited the Lanterman House to accept his award in person.

Riding the Wild (Air) Waves

When Roy and Emily Lanterman returned to La Cañada to build their dream home, El Retiro, in 1914, they brought with them a passion for being on the cutting edge of science and technology. This passion manifested itself in many ways:

- In 1914 the Lantermans built a three car garage, not a barn or carriage house.
- The house is built using steel reinforced concrete for the basement, ground floor, and walls. It is the first private residence west of the Mississippi River to use that technology.
- The house is designed to collect sunlight for heating and capture the prevailing breezes for cooling and ventilation.
- The California Cooler cabinets in the butler's pantry utilize thermal ventilation to draw cool air up from the basement while venting warm air out through the roof, keeping canned goods cool.
- The icebox in the kitchen contains a copper cooling core in the center partition, allowing the family to get ice-water "through the door" in 1915.
- The Lanterman family were early to embrace the brave new world of wireless electronic communication in the years after World War I....the radio!

Commercial radio broadcasting began in the 1920s and soon became a popular form of home entertainment. In addition to music, radio broadcasts included news, quiz shows, variety shows, comedies, mysteries, soap operas and more. This golden age of radio lasted through the 1950s, when television gradually took over.



Philco television set in Lanterman House collection

The permanent collection at Lanterman House includes five radios and one early television. The radios include a 1930s Philco model with a small, detached tuner and a large cabinet style speaker. There is also a cabinet-style radio made by General Motors Radio Corp, which produced radios for a short time between 1928 and 1931. A third cabinet-style radio is made by Pioneer, Champion of the Air. There is a kit-style radio, likely assembled by

Lloyd Lanterman, that would receive short-wave and marine band broadcasts. Lastly, there is an RCA Victor High Fidelity console including AM and FM radio as well as a phonograph player, which dates to the 1950s or 1960s.

The television is a 1948 Philco set. Family lore tells us that Frank and Lloyd purchased the television so that their mother, Emily, could watch Friday night Wrestling from the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles. Wrestling was broadcast by KTLA Television, Channel 5 and featured the famous announcer, Dick Lane.

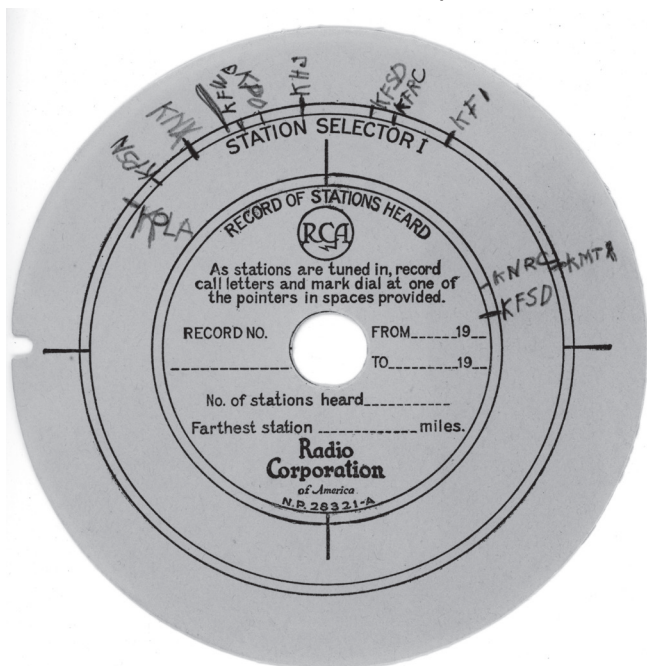
There are documents in the Lanterman House Archives referring to another early radio, an RCA Radiola



Pioneer cabinet radio in Lanterman House collection

Riding the Wild (Air) Waves (continued)

Super Heterodyne, made in 1924. Alas, this radio is not to be found in our collection. There is also a station selector, a radio dial cover that indicates which stations the family enjoyed. The family listened to stations from all over the West, as evidenced by their hand-written notes on the station selector.



- KPSN - Pasadena, California
/ A Pasadena Star News affiliate
- KNX - Los Angeles, California
/ A CBS affiliate
- KFWB - Los Angeles, California
/ A Warner Brothers station
- KPO - San Francisco, California
/ An NBC affiliate
- KHJ - Los Angeles, California
- KFI - Los Angeles, California
/ An NBC affiliate
- KFRC - San Francisco, California
- KNRC - Denver, Colorado
- KMTA - Miles City, Montana
- KFSD - Escondido, California

Photo of the Lanterman family's "station selector"
Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

- Robert Moses

Spring 2020 - Calendar of Events



Image courtesy of the Lanterman House archives.

FAMILY FREE DAY: Radio Roundup

Sunday, February 2

1:00pm - 4:00pm

Lanterman House Ballroom

Come listen to radio theater as it used to be performed! The Lanterman House will reenact several old radio shows, complete with sound effects, commercial breaks and lots of audience participation. Also enjoy a Radio Show and Tell, with collectors from the Southern California Antique Radio Society, exhibiting some of their treasures. The event will be held in the Lanterman House ballroom, and is only accessible via stairs.

Spring 2020 - Calendar of Events



Photo credit: Health House by Richard Neutra, completed 1929. Photo: Julius Shulman. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10)

FREE LECTURE: *Built For Health*

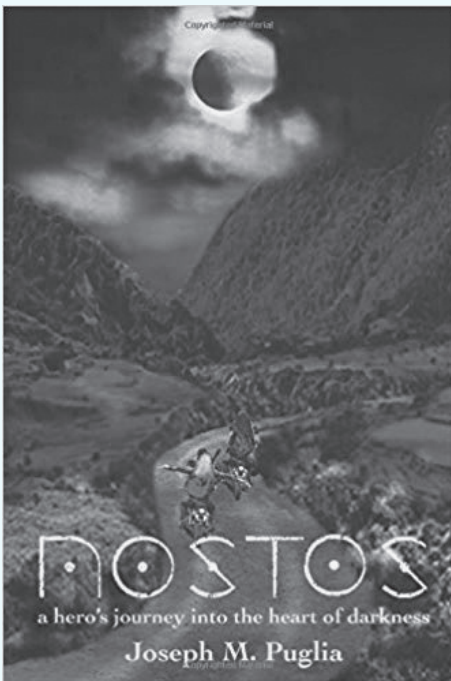
Saturday, February 15

2:00 pm

La Cañada Public Library

Writer Lyra Kilson will explore the evolution of building for health and its influential export to sun-drenched California. Sunlight used to be considered medicinal, a substance doctors prescribed in measured daily doses. Such early 20th-century ideas about health also impacted architecture. As doctors and architects began collaborating on European sanatoriums, the results ranged from eccentric sun-chasing devices to sleek modernist landmarks. These health-focused designs soon shaped housing and even furniture.

Lyra Kilston is a writer in Los Angeles focused on architecture, urbanism, and lesser-known histories. Her recent book is *Sun Seekers: The Cure of California* (Atelier Éditions, 2019).



FREE BOOK TALK & SIGNING: *Dr. Joe Puglia*

Sunday, March 1

2:00 pm

Lanterman House Visitor Center

Valley Sun columnist and local author, Dr. Joe Puglia, will discuss the Vietnam War, as seen through the evolution of his novels *Girl with a Purple Ribbon* (2018) and its sequel *Nostos: A Hero's Journey into the Heart of Darkness* (2019). Puglia draws upon his experiences as a Marine during the Vietnam War. Books will be available for purchase at the event.

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Spring 2020 - Calendar of Events

RAGTIME TEA DANCE

\$50 a ticket

Sunday, March 22

Dance Class: Noon to 1:00 pm

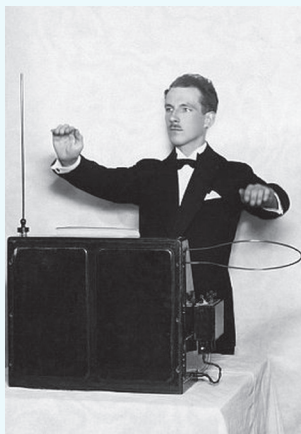
Dancing and Tea: 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Join us for an elegant Downton Abbey style afternoon of tea, music and dancing in the ballroom of the historic Lanterman House. Music by Ian Whitcomb, Sheila Murphy-Nelson, and more. A full afternoon tea will be served.

No experience necessary. Historical attire from 1918 (or thereabouts) is suggested, but not required. If you lack historical attire, ladies will do fine in a loose cotton blouse and an ankle length skirt. Gents will be fine in a coat and tie (especially a bow tie).

To reserve a ticket, visit <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4324029>

Proceeds will benefit the Lanterman Historical Museum Foundation.



INTERACTIVE THEREMIN RECITAL & PRESENTATION

Free for members; \$5 for non-members

Sunday, May 3

2:00 pm to 3:30pm

The Lanterman family was no stranger to the latest technology, and owned many musical instruments and the latest radios of their era. But did they ever hear a theremin? Invented in 1920 by Russian Leon Theremin, this unusual musical instrument is played without touching it. Join musician Ed Sussman for a recital of period theremin music and a presentation about its unique history...and then, audience members will be invited to give it a try!

SUMMER WHITES PICNIC

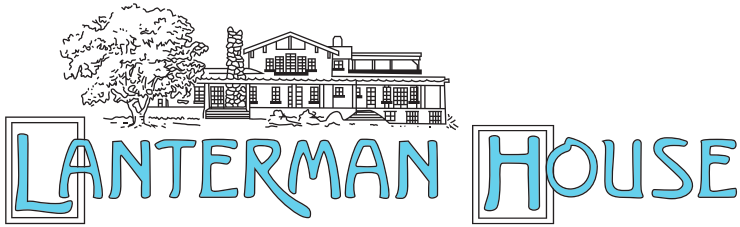
FREE

Sunday, May 24

Noon to 4:00 pm

This annual, family-friendly event celebrates the arrival of summer on the grounds of Lanterman House. Dress in your summer whites (any style or era) and bring a picnic. Picnic-goers can dance to live music in the ballroom, enjoy an exhibit of local artists, refresh with cookies and lemonade, and play croquet on the front lawn.





4420 ENCINAS DRIVE • LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE, CA 91011
(818) 790-1421
lantermanhouse@gmail.com

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL HISTORY!

The Lanternman Historical Museum Foundation, a non-profit organization, was founded to preserve, restore, operate and display the Lanternman House and Archives for the historic and cultural education and enjoyment of present and future generations of the City and State of California.

The Lanternman Historical Museum Foundation is eligible for Corporate Matching Gifts as a 501(c)(3) organization.

**Contact our Executive Director
at (818) 790-1421.**

LANTERMAN HOUSE

4420 Encinas Drive
La Cañada Flintridge, California 91011

**(818) 790-1421 • lantermanhouse@gmail.com
www.lantermanhouse.org**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sustainer | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sponsor | \$35 |

*Please make checks payable to
the Lanternman Historical Museum Foundation*

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Yes! Send my newsletter via email!