



# Las Angelitas del Pueblo Newsletter— Winter 2014

El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument  
[www.lasangelitas.org](http://www.lasangelitas.org)

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## Las Angelitas Celebrates the Holidays



What a wonderful time we all had at this year's Holiday Party. Our Board arranged with the park's Assistant General Manager, Lisa Sarno, to utilize the Pico House as the party's venue. Decorated by Katie Phillips and Carmela Funicello with help from other members it was a festive atmosphere. The meal was catered by Stonefire Grill with an excellent variety of dishes: tri-tip beef, boneless chicken breast, garlic mashed potatoes, macaroni with cheese, two salads and breadsticks. Dessert was a decadently rich brownie for each diner. Wine, soft drinks and hot cider were available for a small fee. The party had 47 attendees, who moved around freely visiting each other in groups. President Bruce Phillips conducted the yearly door prize raffle and we all enjoyed watching each other open their prizes. Our board was very impressed with the venue, its setup and the food. We plan to hold the 2015 Holiday Party at the Pico House too. Bruce also asked all our members to invite friends and neighbors to join Las Angelitas. Our next training class starts on Monday, February 9, and runs for six weeks.

On December 9, Las Angelitas enjoyed a tour of the Route 66 exhibit at the Autry Museum conducted by our fellow docent, Robert Wagner, who also docents at the Autry. The exhibit explains the beginning of U.S. highway system and Route 66. These basic highways served the nation through the 1930s and 1940s. President Eisenhower initiated the interstate freeway system in the 1950s which led to the demise of the original highways. The exhibit covers many facets of American history: various automobiles that traveled the route, tourist travel and its kitsch, dust bowl migrants (*Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck), Disney's movie *Cars*, the song *Get Your Kicks on Route 66*, TV show *Route 66*, Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road*, and much more.

## Our Visit to Union Station



Los Angeles Union Station celebrated its 75th Anniversary in 2014. A docent of the Los Angeles Conservancy gave our group a tour of the Union Station on November 3rd. Most of us are familiar with Union Station as it is the center of our local transit service, Metrolink, which continues to grow and develop each year. The history of the building is fascinating. It was built in 1939 to give a central rail depot to the three railroads serving the city: Southern Pacific Railroad, Santa Fe Railroad and Union Pacific Railroad. Our tour guide met us at the front of the station and we walked out toward the street to see the full façade. He told us about the architects and designers involved in the development of the building and its combination of Moderne and Spanish Colonial Revival styles which helped depict the romance of Southern California. (Please refer to Summer issue of this newsletter for details of the architects and interior designers.)

When we entered the basically concrete building through the vestibule he pointed out the decorative materials used for the walls (Spanish tile with wainscot of travertine tile topped with acoustic tile), ceilings (beams painted brown to look like wood) and floors (Spanish tile with marble inserts). We turned left into the ticket concourse which is now closed to the public and walked the full length of it to the beautifully tiled restrooms. Windows throughout the building almost reach to the ceiling, some decorated with stained glass and Spanish grillwork. Back to the vestibule and into the waiting room with many rows of comfortable wooden and leather armchairs. Back to the vestibule we turned south to the wing originally containing the Fred Harvey Restaurant which was decorated in a southwest motif. It was closed for refurbishment with hopefully a new vendor to open in the future. Turning east we entered the south patio, a beautiful formal garden with flower beds and small trees. The area is paved with Spanish brickwork and a 16-pointed star in the center. Crossing through the waiting room again we went into the north patio, which is paved with flagstones, planted with lawn and trees with some benches and a fountain on the north wall.

Returning to the building we walked through the tunnel under the train tracks and platforms to the East Portal which serves the Metro and Bus systems of the city. Many artworks (posters, murals etc.) decorate the interior and exterior of this area. The plaza on the east side leads to the 28-story Metro Gateway Headquarters.



## Italian Hall with Marianna Gatto

Our Fall General Meeting took place in the restored Italian Hall with a presentation by Marianna Gatto, Executive Director of Italian American Museum of Los Angeles, who explained the history of the Italian community in early Los Angeles. Southern California was an easy transition from Italy for many Italian immigrants. Our Mediterranean climate, Latin (Spanish) culture and basic agricultural industries all felt pretty much like home to these new settlers during the late 19th century. Olvera St. was originally named Calle de las Vignes, Wine Street, because of the Italian wineries there. Los Angeles was the wine center of California by 1869. The Italian immigrants also became merchants, opening Italian grocery stores and other businesses, and entered the financial and political arenas of the growing city.



In 1910 there were 3,800 Italians in Los Angeles. By 1930 the Italian community reached 12,000 with their own newspapers, churches and benevolent societies. In 1908 the community built the Italian Hall. The hall was the center of social and cultural events and many charitable fundraisers. The building also was the site of free-speech and labor movements. During WW II some of the Italian community were designated as 'enemy aliens'. But many of their young men joined the armed forces, too. During the 1950's the Italian population spread throughout Los Angeles. The Italian Hall was no longer used by the community and began falling into disrepair.

The property was bought by the city and became a part of El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Park. By the 1980's the Italian community had a renewed interest in their history and formed the Historic Italian Hall Foundation. They have raised over 1.5 million dollars to restore the building. The museum is planning to open its doors in 2015. The main entrance will be on Main St. with staircase and elevator access to second floor. The large second floor has been subdivided for different purposes. Half of the area is dedicated to the museum which will house moveable and interactive exhibits. There will also be a meeting room, a small classroom and a kitchen to accommodate different events. IAMLA will host film screenings, language classes and visual and performing exhibits. Marianna took us on a tour and showed us the facility. Then she allowed us access onto the roof to view the wonderful historic Siqueiros Mural up close. We also had a tasty buffet luncheon.





## ANGEL NEWS & NOTES

### NEW DOCENT TRAINING CLASS

**Begins February 9, 2015**  
**6 Weeks of Training Classes**  
**Mondays 10:00 — 12:30**

**Please contact Kate Probst for  
detailed information**

**818-761-6480 or  
katemprobst@aol.com**

### Attention

#### Special Request

Las Angelitas del Pueblo has signed up with **Volunteer Match** to recruit new docents. You can help by reviewing us on the Volunteer Match website.

Visit <http://www.volunteermatch.org/search/org52500.jsp> and write about how much you love being a Las Angelitas Docent!

### RECENT TOUR STATS

#### Total Touring Stats

	2014	2013
<b>October</b>		
Docent Hours	204	147
Persons Toured	1259	903
<b>November</b>		
Docent Hours	117	141
Persons Toured	580	679
<b>December</b>		
Docent Hours	114	120
Persons Toured	756	652

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**Congratulations to all active tour docents — we toured a grand total of 11,447 tourists in 2014!**

**\*\* \*\* \***

We are expecting at least 9 new trainees in the new docent class starting February 9, 2015. If you know anyone interested in joining please invite them to sign up.

**\*\* \*\* \***

After a discussion on computer security the board has decided to implement regular periodic backups and investing in a McAfee security system for our office PC.

**\*\* \*\* \***

El Pueblo has many events scheduled for the new year. To find out what's happening go to <http://elpueblo.lacity.org> and click on Sights & Sounds and Events.

**\*\* \*\* \***

Next General Meeting will be Monday, April 13. Look for upcoming details in your emails.

**\*\* \*\* \***

Terence Butcher has several new ideas for events in the new year. Please look for new announcements in the near future. If you need to contact him:

626-639-9507 / warakurna67@aol.com

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### Editor: Eileen Mendoza

**Ideas for the Newsletter? Contact me with history tidbits, news or notes, and interesting articles written by you!**  
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