



# Las Angelitas del Pueblo Newsletter— Winter 2013

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

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## Las Angelitas Celebrate the Holidays

On December 14th, members of Las Angelitas gathered at the El Paseo restaurant in Olvera Street to celebrate the holidays. We all enjoyed a wonderful Mexican style buffet supper.

Speakers included our President, Don Sloper, and El Pueblo General Manager, Chris Espinosa. Don told us about our new neighbors in the office next to ours, National Park Service and California State Park Service. The improvements they have made in their office also give our office central air and heating and internet connectivity during the hours that they are open. Chris spoke about the ongoing changes at El Pueblo. These include monthly events in the Pico House, long awaited opening of the Italian Hall in 2014, development of the Merced Theatre by the city's cable access Channel 35 and the many improvements being made to El Pueblo's infrastructure.

Our 2013 probationary trainees graduated to full fledged docents. Fred Robles, last year's Director of Education, assisted by Katy Phillips distributed the new striped lanyards and pins to our new docents. Pictured above are Anita Espinosa, Larry Boerio and Christine Cano. Terence Butcher also graduated but did not attend.



Associate Angelita, Rachel Almo, sent an email to me about the historical site of **Kuruvungna Springs** in west Los Angeles. It is located northwest of the 405 and 10 Freeways intersection next to Union High School. It is open to the public on the first Saturday of each month.

I went to see this small but amazing Native American center on November 2nd. The docent Angie Dorame Behrns told me the site was saved from development by the local Gabrielino/Tongva citizens just over 20 years ago. The artifacts in the museum were found at the springs and also uncovered during improvements at University High School. I know a few of our docents live on the Westside and I recommend a visit to see an unexpected California historical gem.

Website is [www.gabrielinosprings.org](http://www.gabrielinosprings.org)

Address: 1439 S. Barrington Ave.



## Las Angelitas del Pueblo 2014 Docent Training

Please invite your friends to join our wonderful group.

Classes will be held  
Mondays at 10:00 AM  
FEBRUARY 3, 10, 24  
MARCH 3, 10, 17

Fee of \$25 for  
Training Materials  
Notices and Flyers will be  
distributed in  
December and January

JANUARY 27, 2014  
10:15 am

Las Angelitas Visit  
Los Angeles Natural History Museum  
*Becoming Los Angeles*  
Free Entry & Parking  
Dr. William Estrada  
Curator and Head of History Dept.  
Former Curator at El Pueblo  
Author of  
*Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and  
Contested Space*  
will address our group  
before we tour the exhibit  
Please contact Katy Phillips  
to sign up for the tour  
626-833-3517 [katy@bnkphillips.net](mailto:katy@bnkphillips.net)



## Excursion to the Huntington Library



On Monday, November 18th, a group of Las Angelitas met at the Huntington Library in San Marino to visit the exhibit of *Junipero Serra and the Legacies of the California Missions*. The exhibit was a fascinating study of the life story of Fr. Serra.

Miguel Joseph Serra was born on November 24, 1713 in the town of Petra on the island of Mallorca off the eastern coast of Spain. His family were farmers and he was educated in a Franciscan school. His studies led him to the priesthood in the Franciscan order and when he was ordained he took the name Junipero after an early follower of St. Francis of Assisi. He soon became a professor of theology at the Lullian University in the Mallorcan city of Palma.

At the age of 36 he decided to become a missionary to Mexico. He joined a group of Franciscans who arrived in Mexico City in 1750. For eight years he worked in the Sierra Gorda area of northern Mexico administering at five pre-existing missions and erecting permanent buildings at those sites. In 1768 Fr. Serra was sent to oversee the missions in Baja California as the Jesuit order had been expelled from the area the previous year.

As most Angelitas know, King Carlos II of Spain, sent word to Mexico City to establish a foothold in Alta California to guard against foreign invaders (Russia and other European nations). The military expedition was led by Gaspar de Portola and Fr. Serra and a group of Franciscans were to establish several missions on the way to Monterey Bay. First mission was founded in San Diego in 1769 and one year later they founded a mission at Monterey. Fr. Serra Founded nine other missions before his death in 1784. By 1821 a string of twenty-one missions stretched between San Diego and Sonoma in northern California. Led by Fr. Serra the Franciscan missionaries sought to convert the Native Americans to Catholicism and teach European civilization and agricultural industry to them. The indoctrination at times used various types of coercion and punishments. The pervasive Catholic culture of those times saw humans as inherently sinful that could earn redemption through penance and hardship. Quite a number of the natives accepted the religion wholeheartedly, but some wanted to retain their own culture and spend time in their own villages. These individuals often escaped from the mission system.

There was a certain blending of the cultures at the missions. Many of the missions are decorated with native paintings. Liturgical music books included native rhythms. Native baskets and pottery decorated the mission buildings. But other problems pervaded the mission settlements. Spanish soldiers often took advantage of the native women and made alcoholic beverages available to the men. A few of missions were moved from their original sites away from the Spanish forts and communities. European diseases also spread to the natives who had no natural resistance. The clash of cultures resulted in the death of many natives.

The Mexican revolution (1811-1920) brought new government to California. In the 1830's the government decided to secularize the missions and their lands. Most of the mission's assets and properties were distributed to non-natives. The Mexican-American War ended in 1848; gold was discovered in northern California; and California became an American state in 1850. Any rights the natives had under Spanish and Mexican rule were lost after the American takeover and the ensuing 'gold rush'. California's native peoples were dispossessed of their original lands and villages and became second class citizens. They became the majority of laborers on the ranches, farms and in the towns.

In the late 19th and 20th centuries the missions became romanticized cultural icons of early California. They influenced architecture, literature (Ramona, The Mission Play), and the pervading Hispanic influence in California. The many native California tribes are re-asserting themselves into today's world. They are re-grouping and revitalizing their tribal languages, celebrations and artistry. While Fr. Serra is a somewhat controversial figure in today's world because of his methods of conversion and teaching, he remains a California icon as a symbol of our state's past.

## Los Angeles Arts District

As a member of the Los Angeles Conservancy I signed up for a self-paced walking tour of the Arts District on November 10, 2013. This area stretches from First St. to Seventh St., east of Alameda St. to the Los Angeles River. In the early 20th century the area was full of industrial buildings with railroad tracks and delivery truck access. We all received a full color booklet with a map on the back describing the area and each building where we were allowed access. I took a few pictures and I hope you enjoy looking at them here.



**Many Murals decorate the Arts District**



**An old Coca Cola distributing center.**



**Historic National Biscuit Company Building (seven story Beaux-Arts style) site of two bakeries until after World War II. It now houses many spacious lofts, an expensive restaurant and a pool on its west side.**



**The 1906 Santa Fe Freight house is a quarter mile long concrete building. The guided tour thru this facility told its history from trains & trucking, to a derelict building used by the homeless, and the renovation in 2001 by the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) into their permanent home.**



**A controversial new development across the street from Architecture Institute**

## ANGEL NEWS & NOTES



Colleen Paeff has joined the board as Director of Technology, in charge of the Las Angelitas WEB site and other computer activities. Elizabeth Fenner is now able to concentrate her time on docent scheduling. Both Colleen and Elizabeth have formed a subcommittee to add amenities to the docent office to make it a more inviting location for your tour days. A one cup coffee maker may be added and they will welcome any suggestions you may have for them.

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The holiday season brought record crowds to the plaza as both the Rose Bowl and BCS Bowl games were played in Pasadena. As a result El Pueblo opened their museums on New Year's Day.

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Las Angelitas' active docents will be proud to know that there was a total of 10,288 persons given tours in 2013.

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La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, the Mexican-American museum on the west side of Main St., will be the beneficiary of a long term lease of Los Angeles County land on the west side of Spring St., which at present consists of parking lots. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been issued to find a developer to build housing and retail space on the site. The new development will occupy 3.68 acres between Hill St. on the west and Spring St. on the east, Caesar Chavez Ave on the north and the 101 Freeway on the south. The existing La Colima restaurant on the southwest corner of Caesar Chavez and Broadway is not part of the development and will remain in place.

*Thanks to Don Sloper for contributing these News items.*

### RECENT TOUR STATS

#### Total Touring Stats

	2013	2012
<b>September</b>		
Docent Hours	138	141
Persons Toured	385	221
<b>October</b>		
Docent Hours	147	162
Persons Toured	903	1252
<b>November</b>		
Docent Hours	141	138
Persons Toured	679	809
<b>December</b>		
Docent Hours	120	114
Persons Toured	652	454



**HAPPY**



**NEW**



**YEAR!**



**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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