



# The INNsider



MISSION INN FOUNDATION & MUSEUM

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October/November 2006

## Coming Events:

Docent Training  
Book Signing  
Mission Inn Run  
Holiday Party

Every Wednesday Night 7PM  
Sat/Sun October 7 & 8, 1-4 p.m.  
Sunday, November 12, 2006  
Monday, December 11, 2006 6 p.m.

## Goodbye to Norman and Milly Gilbert

On Thursday, August 17, 2006 approximately 60 Mission Inn Foundation members gathered in the yard of **Jane & Don Morabito's** home to say "Thank You and Best Wishes For the Future" to **Norm & Milly Gilbert**, who are moving to Huntington Beach.

As Milly explained, "we came to Riverside 15 years ago, not knowing a soul and found many friends when we entered the docent program". Both were in the class of 1994.

Milly has served on the Docent Council, was Chair person for the year 2000-2001 and earned her "Oscar" as Docent Of The Year 2001. Between the two of them they have given or assisted very close to a thousand tours over the years. For the Mission Inn Run in November you could always count on seeing their smiling faces at 5 AM to greet and help process the runners.



And we shall always remember Milly's portrayal of **May Spiller**, with the high heels, the wig, the large hat and even the lorgnette. She played the part to perfection. They were always ready, willing and able to step in on short notice to give a regular or a school tour.

A special thank you to Norm for providing his beautiful roses when needed for some special occasion. We wish them well and certainly hope they will grace us with their presence from time to time.

The Special Events Committee wishes to thank Jane & Don Morabito for graciously offering their home for the party. Also a thank you to all who help provide the party with the great food and drink.

Donna Grossman

## Book Signing

On Saturday, October 7 & Sunday, October 8 (1-4 p.m. both days) it is our privilege to host a book signing for **Images of America –Riverside's Mission Inn** by Mission Inn Museum Docents **Steve Lech** and **Kim Jarrell Johnson**. Their book is certain to become a "must have" for Riversiders and guests to the Mission Inn.

# I'd Like To Buy A Vowel Please

Be sure to mark your calendars for Wednesday, October 11, 2006, 7 PM to watch Wheel of Fortune, ABC, Channel 7. Our own **Susan Deering** will be one of the contestants that evening.

While working the first class flight from Los Angeles to Denver last December, Susan was approached by the contestant coordinator of Wheel of Fortune to appear on the show. Sounds like a fun thing to do, however it is not as easy as it may sound or as it appears to viewers.

She was asked to arrive at the Culver City studio in February very early in the morning for an audition along with about another hundred people. First step was a rather lengthy application, which eliminated all but 13 applicants. Next Susan completed a written exam, then an oral exam, then photo sessions and a chance to play a trial game. When all finished for the day, the 13 potential contestants were dismissed with the infamous Hollywood exit line, "I'll call you, don't call me." Informed the application would be kept on file for 18 months, Susan thought she may even have a second opportunity. About two weeks later a letter arrived telling Susan she had made the cut and to appear for taping on August 10, 2006.

The production company tapes 4 to 5 shows in one day, each show taking approximately 45 minutes. During the 45 minutes the contestants are given a couple of breaks, where their makeup is refreshed and they are given water.

The last puzzle to be solved was "kitchen item". Susan readily admits she is not an expert on knowing her way around a kitchen and when you are watching Susan try to complete the puzzle, see if you can tell that she was really thinking... "Why couldn't it have been on aircraft safety equipment?" She missed the big prize, but came home with an extra \$4,000 for her efforts.

Congratulations Susan. You are our "STAR" and we didn't have to buy a vowel to figure that out.

Donna Grossman



## Release of Docents

It is getting to be the busy season for tours, which is a perfect time for a reminder about releasing of docents. The RULE is, has been, and will continue to be that the assisting docent (and lead docent) remains for 15 minutes after a tour start time, even if it appears that their services are not needed. The responsibility of releasing a docent earlier than this 15 minutes resides with the staff person at the front desk of the museum (or as delegated by a staff person to the museum desk volunteer). **THE LEAD DOCENT AND/OR ASSISTING DOCENT DO NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO RELEASE THEMSELVES OR ONE ANOTHER BEFORE THIS 15 MINUTE LIMIT.** The rationale is simple. Almost all of you have experienced a late-arriving tour party that needs to be caught up to the tour that has already started. Or, a group arrives 10 minutes after a tour is supposed to start and the docents have already left.

John Worden

## The Mission Inn Run Needs You!

It's that time of year again, the 29th annual Mission Inn Run is taking place on November 12, 2006.

We need volunteers to help with set-up, work in the registration area, the volunteer refreshment area and the awards booth, just to name a few.

Look for the sign-up sheet at the museum desk or contact Virginia in the Foundation office or email ([info@missioninnmuseum.com](mailto:info@missioninnmuseum.com)) if you are interested in helping.

It's always a fun day and helps a great cause: US !!

## EVENTS COMMITTEE

The holidays are approaching faster than some of us would care to think about. This means that after Thanksgiving, our Mission Inn will light up like a firecracker, and festivities will begin for the season. One event in particular, is the Events Committee Holiday Party on December 11 at 6pm. This is always a fun time with good friends, good food, entertainment and door prizes. One you do not want to miss. Invitations will be going out in November, with RSVP deadline on December 4th. See you all there!

Gretchen Cheney, Chair  
Special Events Committee

### Nadine Shell Remembered

Nadine's goal in life was that she would make a difference with her family and in her career. Her daughter, Jeri, wishes that Nadine be remembered as a real, fallible, and dynamic person: Tricia, Jeri's oldest daughter, wants her to be remembered as having "a real grandmother's heart"; Lindsey and Beth, her middle and youngest daughter remember their grandmother was always there for them.

Both parents, Nadine and Bill were so well known that the family joke was, "We didn't have an identity when we grew up, we were Nadine and Bill's children and therefore special to their parents' friends".

Nadine was a career Senior Certified Escrow Officer and was very well known in Riverside and was a lady with a twinkle in her eye. "She was Ms. Riverside".

Retirement, going from high gear to low, was difficult for Nadine. Her children basically pushed her out the door and told her to "get a life". She then became involved in volunteering at the Mission Inn and was Docent of the Year in 1998; the Habitat for Humanity, the United Way, and her Church's Missions, to name a few, and the smiles reappeared.

Nadine was a very special lady who was dearly loved by her family and will be remembered fondly by those who know her. I am happy to have been her friend.

Docent P.S.

Barbara Burn's favorite memory is of Nadine wearing a short black, shiny, tight-fitting, flapper dress with beads around the hem, prancing down Main Street in an Orange Blossom Festival Parade. She was having a great time!

Jean Digati remembers she was always going from one meeting to the next. Often when Jean would pick her up to go to a meeting she would have just finished another...rushed home and was ready for the next....plus she looked great. She will truly be missed.

The operative instruction, “a docent must be flexible,” was never more needed than when DIT Jo Turner and DOT Walter Parks met tour guest Jack McDonald and his wife Betty. Jack let us know right away that he had been a bus boy and waiter at the Inn between 1953 and 1956.

Before the tour, Walter and Jo had worked out a plan. She would lead, and he would follow, lending support if necessary. Jo began in the conventional manner, but quickly learned that our guest Jack not only had worked at the Inn, but he had grown up in Portage, Wisconsin not far from Tomah, Frank Miller’s birthplace. Portage’s claim to fame is that it is the hometown of Zona Gale – novelist, playwright, Pulitzer Prize winner, feminist, political activist, and biographer of Frank A. Miller. Jack’s mother had even played bridge with Zona Gale. A museum exists today in Portage devoted to her life and writings.

At this point, it was not clear who was conducting the tour. Jack told story after story while Walter furiously scribbled notes on the back of an old receipt. The McDonald’s for their part were fascinated by what they saw. The Inn’s cleanliness and physical condition particularly impressed them – a hint of the deterioration that must have been evident in the 1950s. They now live in Tacoma and had come down to visit their son in Orange County. They checked in to the Inn for old time’s sake. Walter and Jo just let it happen, and the walk through the Inn became more of an excited conversation than a formal tour.

Jack had served meals to the Hutchings in their suite in the days before they passed away. Probably the suite was in the Mission Wing on the ground floor on the Orange Street side. He also served sequestered jury members, who regularly ate their meals at the Inn in those days. Sometimes he delivered sandwiches to the jurors at the court house. His most vivid memories revolved around the movie stars who stayed at the Inn during filming or on their way to Palm Springs. The hot weather forced everyone into the Inn’s one air-conditioned space – the bar (this must have been the El Mundo Room). There Jack, dressed in a tuxedo, served and rubbed elbows with Robert Taylor, Cesar Romero, Ralph Edwards, and other stars working on keeping cool inside and out. He once delivered a recipe from Ralph Edwards to the *sous* chef. Whether that had any effect on the Inn’s cuisine is unknown.

Jack’s best story concerned Zona Gale. This prolific writer and political activist won the Pulitzer Prize for best play in 1921. She had adapted the play from her novel “Miss LuLu Bett.” Three years later, she worked with Progressive Senator Bob LaFollette on his famous campaign for the presidency in 1924. In one 30-day stretch in the campaign, she gave 28 speeches. Unfortunately, Calvin Coolidge overwhelmed her man at the polls. She continued her activism in pacifist and feminist causes, and she continued to write. Through these busy years she never married.

While staying at the Mission Inn in 1927, she ran into wealthy factory owner and banker Will Breese from Portage, her home town! At 60, Will was ten years older than Zona. In spite of the age difference, they had been acquainted as youngsters in Portage. He even had taken her tobogganing once. However, their lives had taken separate paths as Zona had gone off to her busy life and Will had married, developed his businesses, and later lost his wife to illness. The accidental reunion evolved into romance. The Inn cast its spell, and before their stay ended, Will proposed. They returned to Portage for the wedding and lived together for ten years. Zona passed away in 1938. Her biography of Frank Miller was published that year, the last book on her long list.

After returning home, Jack emailed Walter about his son’s attempted scam. While on the tour, his son had called the Inn’s desk to pay Jack and Betty’s bill. He told the clerk to say that because Jack was so important to the history of the Inn, there would be no charge for their stay. Unfortunately they had checked out early and already paid the bill. The son really knows his father. If the scam had worked, Jack never would have stopped telling the story of how fifty years after he quit working at the Inn, he was “comped” as a VIP.

## Penrhyn Stanlaws – Author’s Row #406 by Joanne Hershey

Penrhyn Stanlaws was a portrait painter, playwright, and movie director, and while at the Inn painted several portraits of the Miller-Hutchings family. If you look in the reader rail under the original Anton Clock face in the Museum, you will see photo copies of the pastel portraits he did of Allis and DeWitt Hutchings, in the mid-1940s.

An important story involving Stanlaws at the Mission Inn also dates to 1940s. In December of 1943 a short circuit in the electric wiring in the chimes tower caused a fire that spread through the elevator shaft. The fire destroyed not only the tower but damaged a billiard room and at least four guest rooms. It took firemen two hours to contain the fire which caused \$75,000 in damage. According to Esther Klotz in her book *The Mission Inn*, there were no injuries although two Camp Haan Military Policemen had to carry out a woman who refused to leave her room. Esther thought that perhaps the woman knew that rooms were scarce in the Inn and didn’t want to take a chance of losing hers!

Not only was there fire damage but when water from a broken water pipe cascaded down the main lobby staircase it poured over the William Keith painting, “*The California Alps*” which was hanging near the elevator. Penrhyn Stanlaws cleaned and restored the painting assisted by a local art shop owner Bert Pachke. Apparently the work not only took care of the water damage but it improved the painting by restoring the snow and clouds to their original colors.

Born in 1877 in Dundee, Scotland, Penrhyn’s given name was Penrhyn Stanley Adamson, the Stanlaws added on at a later date. At the tender age of 13 he arrived in the United States and by 1893, at age 16 he was an illustrator for the Chicago Daily News. He was able to put himself through Princeton University with the money earned from his art work. In 1901 he enrolled in the Academie Julian in Paris.

Returning to New York in 1907 he became an artist for a number of magazines and was one of the most successful cover artists of his day. On the internet I found a number of copies of his delightful magazine covers for sale with dates ranging from 1913 though 1934. Some of the magazines he worked for included the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier’s*, *American Magazine*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Life* and *Hearst’s Magazine*. In 1915 Stanlaws opened an art studio on West 67<sup>th</sup> Street in New York at the Hotel Des Artistes which became a fashion enclave for New Yorkers and he became a portrait painter for high society. The tenant roster for the Hotel Des Artistes, which is still in business at 1 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street, has included painter Norman Rockwell, director Mike Nichols, actor Gary Oldman, playwright Noel Coward, writer Fannie Hurst and dancer Isadora Duncan.

Penrhyn Stanlaws also had a talent for humorous and satirical drawings which were published in the magazine *Yellow Kid* (later called *Yellow Book* and *Ainslee’s Magazine*). The *Judge*, a rival of American’s first successful humor magazine *Puck*, also used Stanlaws ability in drawing political cartoons. During my research about his art work I found that in 1872 E. Butterwick & Co. (remember their sewing patterns?) founded a fashion magazine called *The Delineator* and Stanlaws was one of their illustrators around 1910. A bit of trivia – in 1911 the magazine’s short story contest was won by another Author’s Row guest, Zona Gale, Pulitzer Prize winner and Frank Miller’s biographer.

Apart from his work as an artist Stanlaws directed films and wrote plays in Hollywood. In the early 1920s he directed motion pictures for Famous Players Lasky Corporation. Most of his portrait work was done later in life. He died in 1957 at the age of 80 in Los Angeles.

### References:

*A History of American Magazines* Vol. III, 1865-1885; Vol. III, 1885-1905

*Docent Training Handbook*: Section 9: The Penrhyn Stanlaws Room 406, Author’s Row

Internet sites: – Art Net; EBay; Rare posters

*The Mission Inn: Its History and Artifacts*, Esther Klotz, page 105

## **SHEILA McMAHON: STILL WATER RUNS DEEP** by Dauris Slaughter

Sheila McMahon, the quiet, smiling little lady you encounter at the Museum desk on Sundays has led a fascinating life and is a bundle of energy and enthusiasm. This writer had no idea what she would share. A delightful story unfolded, which is the following:

Sheila was born and raised in Riverside, as were her parents. Her grandfather, Roberts Leinau, built the first house on Pachappa Hill in 1927, a Spanish style home. Sheila's mother introduced her to Mrs. Hutchings (Allis) while enjoying the Mission Inn pool. When visiting the Inn, she loved to talk to the Inn's parrot when he was perched.... and admire the doll collection. She remembers seeing the Vatican Court as a small child, walked around the corner and there it was, life-size!

Her father owned 50 acres from the hill to Arlington, (across from the School for the Deaf), a machine shop, and a flower shop. He raised flowers on the property and sold them at his flower shop. She reminisced how fun it was when DeAnza Days came around. Attendees would dress in costume and participate in the long awaited parade. She would sit in front of her Dad's Flower Shop and enjoy the parade.

She would go swimming at Sulpher Springs Pool on Strong Street. "It smelled like rotten egg." Judging by her facial expression, the memory lingers. A big event, while a youngster attending school, was the annual picnic at Fairmount Park for family and fellow students. She loved watching the mini race car drivers as they sped around the racetrack.

She received her education in Riverside at the following: St. Francis Desales K-6, Central, Poly, RCC, and UCR majoring in Social Science, Sociology, Anthropology, and Education. After graduation, Sheila taught elementary school grades first, second, and third from 1960 to 1995. Since retirement, she has taught Kindergarten through the sixth grade, plus adult school. She subs at Alcott and Jackson Elementary schools. "I love the little ones and it is such fun to be with them".

We have all heard the expression still water runs deep. This more than fits the description of Sheila. She shared she has climbed three of the highest peaks in California: San Jacinto....over 10,000 feet; San Gorgonian....over 11,000 feet, and San Antonio over 10,000 feet. I'm impressed!

Sheila is the contact person for the Native Plant Society which encourages use of California native plants in gardens and has done so for four years.

The Curtain Raisers, is another one of her choices.... for 7-8 years. This organization puts on opening night receptions for the Riverside Community Players. When it was fairly new, she helped choose its name. For a couple of years, she has been involved with the Fire Education Program. Those involved take out a large trailer to an assigned area and explain fire safety.

Another was the San Gorgonian Wilderness Association which is a large Group of Forest Service volunteers. Only one paid ranger protects the wilderness at a time ....there are 120 volunteers. It is located at Highway 38. She also works at the visitor station. Jobs are varied and volunteers find out where they are assigned upon arrival. All hikers must obtain a permit in the Wilderness Area and only so many are issued each day. Sheila was officially trained to become an interpreter for the National Interpretive Association as a tour guide. She has participated in the Wilderness program for 14 years.

As a change of pace, she has been a volunteer in the Museum for 14 years. She saw an article in the paper, it sounded fun, and the rest is history. "We get to act as hostesses for our city and pass this excitement on to others." She is presently attending Docent Training

She loves to travel and work with the University Expedition Group helping with research. She has been in the Solomon Islands, Easter Island, New Caledonia, and Kenya....where she counted and studied different types of monkeys to see how they lived....researched their diets to learn how it affected their energies and how much territory they needed.

While on expedition she collected shells and stored them on a shelf. In the middle of the night she heard a clump, clump, clump sound.... there were hermit crabs in the shells and were walking off the shelf!

What a fascinating life Sheila has had. Some people really follow their dreams, and she certainly does. She just returned from Alaska and is now off to tour Canada and the East Coast. Thank you for sharing; you are certainly a cut above!

## PEER REVIEW

Have you received your postcard yet? Or a telephone call? Many of our docents will receive a message through one of these methods or maybe both during the next several months. Six-month reviews are currently being scheduled for the twenty-two graduates from last April. It was one of the largest classes to complete training. Reviewers will meet with these newest docents over the next three months. Plan to spend one half hour before your tour begins and remain one half hour after the tour has been completed to complete forms, ask questions, and give feed-back. The aim of the committee is to be a helpful tool to all docents, enabling paying customers to receive a factual and entertaining 75-minute presentation. "Old-timers" who have been reviewed at least twice before, will be scheduled two years from their last review. Twenty-two reviews were scheduled for September and thirty-six remain for the next three months. This year's Peer Review Committee consists of the following members: Sharyl Lee-Chair, Joyce Lyons, Margaret Benner, Dauris Slaughter, Judy Hadcox, Jean Digati, Barbara Burns, Cora Lee Brown, Donna Grossman, and Merwyn Schwartz. The committee welcomes new members. If interested, fill out an application available from the Museum staff.

Sharyl Lee

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Your membership support is essential to our purpose of preserving the unique collections of the Mission Inn and helping others to learn about this extraordinary site. We invite you to join us in supporting this historic landmark. Please remember that members are entitled to a free museum publication and a 10% savings on Museum Store purchases. We ask that all volunteers with the Mission Inn Foundation & Museum maintain a current membership. Membership is for a year from renewal date - \$15.00. Please send your check payable to the Mission Inn Foundation, 3696 Main Street, Riverside 92501. **Questions about your membership status? Call Virginia, (951) 781-8241 Also please review your mailing label for accuracy. Include any necessary changes. THANK YOU!**

Name:	Date:
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# Mission Inn Foundation - Mission Statement

The Mission Inn Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the public trust in the Mission Inn, a privately-owned National Historic Landmark hotel in Riverside, California. The Foundation interprets and promotes the cultural and social significance of the Inn and its collection within the context of local, regional and national history.

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