



The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society
Winter 2026

SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS:
AUTHOR DANNY JENSEN



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the Winter 2026 edition of The Grapevine. As we begin a new year, I'm happy to share that we have an exciting year ahead at the San Marino Historical Society.

Our speaker programs are set for 2026, and we're looking forward to a wonderful lineup. Please read more about our upcoming February program, when we welcome Danny Jensen. We hope you'll join us for what promises to be an engaging evening.

Our archival work continues to be an important focus. We remain committed to preserving and organizing our collections so they can be enjoyed for years to come. Our Centennial Home Recognition project is also ongoing, as we continue to acknowledge and celebrate the historic homes throughout the city.

We are excited about the launch of our Book Club with the first selection about the family of the first mayor of San Marino, *The Pattons: A Personal History of an American History* by Robert H. Patton. You can read more about this on page 2 of the newsletter.

We appreciate our members support and ask that you renew or join for 2026 by either returning the enclosed blue envelope or scanning the QR code on page 2. Thank you to the many members who have already renewed for 2026.

The Society is guided by an active and dedicated board and we always welcome new volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved-whether through. special project, events, or archival work-please contact us at info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org.

Thank you to our members and to the community for your continued support.

Christa Lakon, President

Join local author Danny Jensen for an interactive talk that will help you see San Marino and Los Angeles in new ways as you locate under-the-radar and iconic architectural landmarks. Set off on an exciting journey to uncover some of the more than 300 locations in neighborhoods across L.A. featured in his book *LA Scavenger: The Ultimate Search for Los Angeles's Hidden Treasures* using photos and rhyming clues.

Danny is also the author of *Secret Los Angeles: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*; *100 Things to Do in Los Angeles Before You Die*; and the upcoming *Unique Eats and Eateries of LA* (Spring 2026, Reedy Press). He is also the Programs Chair for the Los Angeles City Historical Society.

As a writer and photographer his work has been published by Time Out, Thrillist, KCET, and others. He's also the Managing Editor of Cheapism, a national site dedicated to travel, food, and more. Danny has spent well over 15 years exploring and writing about the hidden corners of Los Angeles. He's always on the lookout for unusual landmarks, obscure histories, and under-the-radar restaurants.

Please join us on
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026
7:00 - 8:00 P.M. (doors open 6:30)
SAN MARINO COMMUNITY CENTER
1800 HUNTINGTON DR.
Kindly RSVP to
info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org
Public is welcome, admission is free

2026 BOARD AND COMMITTEES

Executive Officers

President - Christa Lakon
Vice President - Ed Tom
Treasurer - Isaac Hung
Secretary - Pat Salvaty
Immediate Past President - Isaac Hung

Board Members

Joyce Batnij, Judy Carter, Wayne Carter,
Michael Mancini, Michael Moran, John Morris,
Gretchen Shepherd Romey, John Ryan

Emeritus Board Members

Marilyn Peck
Jim Elliot

Volunteer Archivists

Judy Carter, Katie Manning, Sylvia Uriarte

Hospitality Committee

Nicole Basseri, Shelley Boyle, John Dustin, Made-
line Gutierrez, Katie Manning, Sylvia Uriarte

CENTENNIAL HOME PROJECT

We want to celebrate your
100-year-old house.

Was your home built in 1926 or earlier?
Historical Society invites San Marino residents
to request a yard sign by sending an email
with your address, year built and a house
photo to info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org



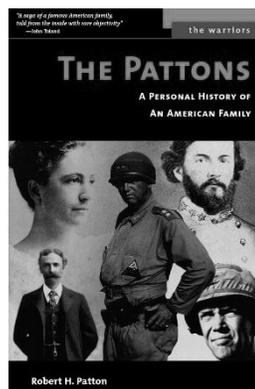
You will be contacted by our project chair,
Hector Gutierrez, to make further arrange-
ments. If you are not sure when your house
was built, email us to find out
info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org

JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB

New! Historical Society Book Club

We are pleased to announce the launch of the
San Marino Historical Society Book Club, a new
way for members to connect through local his-
tory and thoughtful discussion. A featured book
will be highlighted in each issue of The Grape-
vine, along with details for an in-person gather-
ing.

Our first selection is *The Pattons* by Robert Patton.
We invite members to join
us for a book club discus-
sion on Sunday, April 19,
from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., at
the historic Thurnher
House in Lacy Park. Light
refreshments will be
served.
We hope you'll read along
with us and take part in
this new Historical Society
offering.



BECOME A MEMBER



Single – \$25.00
Family – \$30.00
Sponsor – \$50.00
Patron – \$100.00

Be a Benefactor with your donations of \$250 or
more!

Please support your local Historical Society!
Scan the QR code with your camera, which will
take you to our website, then click on membership
to join.

**Your contributions keep the memories of
San Marino alive!**

SAN MARINO CITY CLUB

Founded - 1926

By Dan Downer

Reprinted from The Grapevine 2000

In memory of Dan Downer

Celebrating 100 years of the San Marino City Club

In 1926, the 13-year-old City of San Marino had a population of about 2,100 and 400 or so homes, one public school, a city hall, a one-man police department and a new organization called the San Marino Civic Improvement Association.

While, at the time, there was a public disagreement regarding initiation of garbage collection or continuing to practice it (incinerators) in backyards, the founding of the association speaks not so much of a citizenry displeased with their city as of San Marinians' attitude then, as now, that there's nothing so good that can't be made better.

The San Marino Civic Improvement Association was inspired by South Pasadena's Oneonta Club, founded years earlier and from which several San Marino residents left to form the new association. One of these was Maurice Veronda, founder and headmaster of Southwestern Military [then] Academy where the San Marino group met.

The amiability of the separation is attested to by the fact that one of the Association's first projects was the construction at Mission Street of the first bridge across the gully that previously separated the two cities.

A year after its founding the association incorporated under the name San Marino City Club with civic improvement still its goal as set forth in the statement of purposes: "To encourage and promote the highest standards of citizenship among its members; To secure . . . the best civic, educational and cultural services and facilities possible; to encourage sociability, good fellowship and cooperation among its members and the citizens of the San Marino Community".

Throughout the years City Club activities have been directed to these goals. The regular monthly dinner meetings features speakers in positions of leadership sharing their expertise in government, business, science, law, sports, education, finance, arts, or being a Tournament of Roses Queen or Princess. Each November the Rose Queen and Members of the Royal Court are the featured guests, delighting members' daughters and grand daughters at a pre-dinner reception, autographing programs and answering endless questions.

In pursuing its purpose of gaining and maintaining the high quality of San Marino's educational and community programs and facilities, the City Club provides major financial support through its program of annual gifts and awards. The gifts go for such things

as computers for the high school's technology center, an electronic scoreboard for the Little League Field, a mobile radar sign for the police department, the San Marino School Foundation, and audio visual equipment for the Public Library.

Past Presidents

2026 Ed Tom	1979 Paul Foreman
2025 Hunter Chang	1978 Lynn P. Reitnour
2024 Pete Loeffler	1977 John B. Young
2023 Kaili Chang	1976 Fred W. Soldwedel
2022 Isaac Hung	1975 Harry F. Booth, Jr.
2021 Kelly Ryan	1974 Richard T. Cooper
2020 Loren Kleinrock	1973 George F. Elftman
2019 James N. Angelos	1972 Herbert M. Worcester
2018 Richard C. Pearson	1971 Forest W. Foster
2017 David S. Wang	1970 John P. Andrews
2016 Frank W. Chen	1969 George S. Fawcett
2015 Daniel E. Biles, Sr.	1968 Frank W. Dessel
2014 Jeff E. Fadley	1967 Frank S. Donant
2013 Andrew C. Yip	1966 Nick T. Ugrin
2012 Peter A. Loeffler	1965 Thomas S. Batson
2011 Janice Lee-McMahon	1964 John M Podlech
2010 Alfred J.W. Boegh	1963 John B. Wilson
2009 Kent A. Halkett	1962 Ernest M. Speedy, Jr.
2008 Thomas R. Billings	1961 J. Gerald Ross
2007 William H. Gunnell	1960 Roy E. Maginnis
2006 Wendell R. Mortimer, Jr.	1959 Wayne E. Payton
2005 John T. Morris	1958 Myron Thomas
2004 Thomas S. Santley	1957 Richard W. Sprague
2003 Wallace L. Rosvall	1956 Ugene Blalock
2002 Allan K. Yung	1955 Allan Laws
2001 Eugene Sun	1954 Paul Cunningham
2000 George R. Baffa	1953 E. M. Peterson
1999 Frederick D. Seares	1952 David H. Fiscus
1998 William P. Barry	1951 Beach D. Lyon
1997 Jack G. Hamilton, Jr.	1950 J. Bart Easley / Beach D. Lyon
1996 Charles R. Adams	1949 Norvale I. Ulvestad
1995 Ken Riley	1948 Frank E. Jorgensen
1994 William L. Payne	1947 Maurice Jones
1993 Jack C. Brown	1946 Mahlon Arnett
1992 Berkeley W. Johnston	1945 Boyd Gibbonst
1991 George W. Johns	1944 Jack Carrington
1990 Winston R. Fuller, Jr.	1943 Ralph I. Houle
1989 Richard J. Ward, Jr.	1942 Joe Henderson
1988 Benjamin F. Hammon	1941 Chris E. Beardsley
1987 Emile J. Bayle	1940 Martin I. Scott
1986 Lew E. Coppersmith	1939 William B. McKesson
1985 Claire D. Johnson	1938 John P. Hoffman
1984 Paul Crowley	1937 Palmer Conner
1983 William G. Steele, Jr.	1936 Carleton B. Tibbets
1982 Ben L. Schmid	1935 Hugh Gordons
1981 Kenneth R. Veronda	1934 C. W. Cornell
1980 Sheman J. McQueen	1933 P. I. Cowherd
1984 Paul Crowley	1932 Chesney W. Carver
1983 William G. Steele, Jr.	1931 George Hooper
1982 Ben L. Schmid	1930 L. B. Gibbs
1981 Kenneth R. Veronda	1929 R. A. Podlech
1980 Sheman J. McQueen	1928 N. D. Huntoon

THANK YOU, AARON GIL



We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Aaron Gil, who recently stepped down from the Board after many years of dedicated service.

During his time on the board, Aaron played a key role in the continued sales success of the San Marino Centennial Book. He oversaw book

sales to Vroman's Bookstore and The Huntington Library, helping to ensure the book reached a wide audience in our community. In addition, Aaron planned and supported many of the engaging programs hosted by the Historical Society at the San Marino Community Center, contributing greatly to our public outreach and educational mission.

Aaron's commitment, professionalism, and enthusiasm made a lasting impact on the work of the Society. He did an excellent job in every role he took on, and his contributions will be felt for years to come. We will truly miss him on the board and are deeply grateful for his time, energy, and service.

Thank you, Aaron, for all that you have done for the San Marino Historical Society.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR 2026

February 15, 2026 (Sunday, 12-3 PM) Thurnher House docent-led tours with John Morris and John Ryan

February 23, 2026 (Monday, 7-8 PM) San Marino Historical Society presents author **Danny Jensen** at the San Marino Community Center, see page 1 for details

March 1 and 15, 2026 (Sunday, 12-3 PM) Thurnher House docent-led tours with John Morris and John Ryan

March 17, 2026 (Tuesday, 5:30 PM) SM City Club presents Elizabeth Pomerooy author of *San Marino A Centennial History*

April 5, 2026 (Sunday, 12-3 PM) Thurnher House docent-led tours with John Morris and John Ryan

April 19, 2026 (Sunday, 12-3 PM) Thurnher House docent-led tours & (2-4 PM) **Book Club** at Thurnher House

May 3 and 17, 2026 (Sunday, 12-3 PM) Thurnher House docent-led tours with John Morris and John Ryan

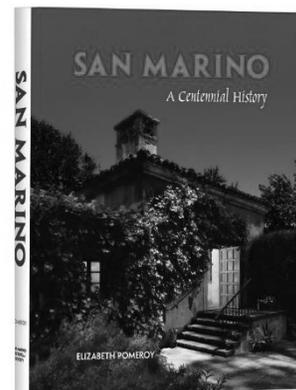
May 18, 2026 (Monday, 7-8 PM) San Marino Historical Society presents author **Paul Haddad** at the San Marino Community Center

FROM THE ARCHIVES

We would like to thank the **Flynn** family for donating to the archives material from the late **Jack Flynn** and **Rockwood Nelson**.

City Club member and past president **Wally Rosvall** has been exploring the archives to re-search the history of the **San Marino City Club** in preparation for the club's Centennial celebration.

Jeffrey Thurnher, grandson of **Armin Thurnher**, has left some items from his grandfather on loan. Included in the collection is the photo below of **Margarete Hertrich**, wife of **William Hertrich**, admiring the hydrangeas at the Huntington Estate. There are two scrapbooks here, one from the Garden Club to Armin Thurnher and one dedicated to the work of William Hertrich along with the original drawings of Thurnher's designs for the city's medians.



Order the San Marino Centennial Book
online via PayPal at
www.sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org
Also available at
The Huntington Store
and **Vroman's Bookstore**