



Juan Matias Sanchez

THE ADOBE DUST

Montebello Historical Society

SANCHEZ ADOBE HISTORIC SITE & MUSEUM

www.montebellohistoricalsociety.org

December

NEWSLETTER

2014



Message from the President

As 2014 draws to a close, I would like to reflect on what has been a very successful year.

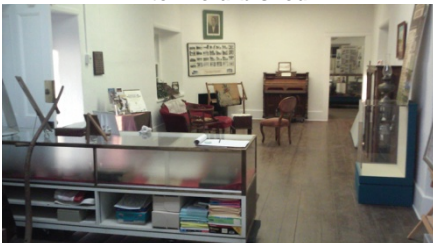
Over 200 supporters attended this year's Montebello Historical Society's An Evening in Italy fundraiser in support of ongoing efforts to preserve Montebello's Juan Matias Sanchez Adobe and Museum. The funds raised from this event have been designated for capital projects to refurbish the Adobe, including a fresh coat of paint and the establishment of a 20th century Montebello history collection to capture even more of Montebello's memories. I want to thank everyone who attended, as well as our sponsors, for making this year's event such a success. We would not have been able to accomplish this without your support.

We continue to make strides towards the refurbishment of the Adobe. To date, we have renovated the upstairs and built a much needed storage area with shelving and proper lighting. Broken doors have been repaired and the furniture rearranged. The entire Adobe has been cleaned and the inside painted. The City of Montebello will assist us beginning with the outside pillars as we continue the restoration process.

Before Refurbished



After Refurbished



We are grateful to the Montebello Rotary Club for their assistance this past year with projects ranging from painting to cleanup of the grounds. (See story, page 2).

And the long awaited 20th century history collection is under development. (See story, page 2).

In November, we were pleased to host 35 guests from the Banning House Museum as they toured the Sanchez Adobe. The guests enjoyed our museum greatly.

Banning Museum Visitors



As you can see, it has been a very busy year. Time certainly does fly when you are having fun. However, much more needs to be done. Many challenges have been met with many more yet to come.

I want to thank the Montebello Historical Society Board of Directors and its members for their support as I look forward to working with you in 2015. Yes, I am hoping for the privilege of serving as your president for another year.

According to our bylaws, the deadline for slate of officer candidates is December 8, 2014, no later than 5 pm. Contact election committee meeting members Ed Vasquez at 323-646-6606, Mary Jordan at 323-721-2799 or Maria Halpern at 323-724-9288, email chavarriainsuranceagency@gmail.com. Election of officers is January 8, 2015.

However, we still have some business to attend to before the current year comes to an end.

Due to the holidays, on December 11 at 7 pm, we will have a general membership meeting followed by a Christmas potluck at the Montebello Senior Citizen Center (downstairs), 115 South Taylor Ave. For our potluck, those members with last names beginning with A – G, please bring a dessert, H – Q, a side dish or salad and R – Z, a main dish. Please remember to bring a toy for a needy child, three to four years of age.

Again, I thank you all for your support this past year. I wish you and your family best wishes for a blessed holiday season and a wonderful new year.

All the best,

Rosie Vasquez, President



President Rosie Vasquez and board members Maria Halpern, Gary Brougher, Marsha Ehlers and Kathleen Rabago decorate Adobe Christmas tree.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- 12/08/14** Slate of Officer Candidates Due
- 12/11/14** General Membership Meeting & Christmas Potluck at 7 pm
- 01/08/15** Annual Meeting & Election of Officers at 6:30 pm

Society to Establish 20th Century Montebello History Collection

by Anne Donofrio-Holter

The Montebello Historical Society revealed plans to establish a 20th century Montebello history collection to showcase even more of Montebello's memories.

"This new 20th century collection will include highlights of Montebello's early beginnings when it was known as the City of Flowers because of its many nurseries," said Montebello Historical Society President Rosie Vasquez. "We want this collection to highlight individual contributions as well as the City's oil-rich history through pictures and artifacts."

The collection will be housed at the museum located in the Juan Matias Sanchez Adobe, which currently showcases architecture of the mid-1800's with furnished rooms from the time period.

"The Historical Society took immediate action on moving forward with its plans to establish this collection," said Vasquez.

Currently, Sanchez family artifacts, along with historical photos of the City, are on display. The Adobe, located just north of the intersection of La Merced and Lincoln Avenue in the heart of the old Rancho La Merced, is the City's oldest standing structure, dating back to 1845.

"For now, we will begin the new collection with Simons brickyard memorabilia," said Vasquez.

Simons Brick Company Plant Number 3 opened in 1905 with general boundaries of Vail Avenue on the northwest, Greenwood Avenue on the southeast, the Santa Fe rail line on the southwest, and Date Street on the northeast. At its peak in the 1920's, the brickyard expanded to 350 acres with a population of over 3,000 residents.

"We are looking to tell the story of the families that lived and worked there," said Vasquez. "The complex had its own church, school and Mexican baseball team and we are working on obtaining a uniform worn by a student in the Simons brickyard school band."

Vasquez feels much of Montebello's history has been overlooked and perhaps, even neglected.

"We should be proud of our contributions, achievements and progress," she said. "Our history needs to be recorded and preserved for future generations."

Vasquez would like to see more people get involved with the Montebello Historical Society.

"All organizations need new members to help the organization get to the next level. New members bring enthusiasm, knowledge and fresh ideas," she said. "We need caretakers of the Adobe and museum for years to come. As Montebello Historical Society members, we protect the Adobe, its history and our organization."

Vasquez encourages everyone to come and visit the Adobe along with their families.

"We have a priceless gem in our own city and yet many people do not know we exist," she said. "Everyone needs to experience the oldest existing house in Montebello."

The Sanchez Adobe Historic Site and Museum is committed to expanding the public's sense of community through understanding Montebello's history by collecting and preserving artifacts and historic archives that document the City's history and heritage.

Museum hours are Saturdays from 1 pm to 4 pm with docent tours available.

For additional information, contact the Montebello Historical Society at 946 Adobe Avenue or call 323-887-4592.

Rotary Club Continues to Support Adobe

by Anne Donofrio-Holter

In 2005, in celebration of 100 years of Rotary International, Montebello Rotarians adopted the Sanchez Adobe as their centennial project. The club's goal is to enhance Montebello's oldest standing structure by improving the grounds, courtyard and interior of the historical landmark which was built in 1845.

"The historical roots of our community need to be protected and secured," said then Montebello Rotary Club President Gabe Garza. "Montebello Rotarians are excited to help improve the greater Montebello community through this ongoing project."

Built in 1845 by Dona Casilda Soto de Lobo and her three sons, the Adobe has also been occupied by Juan Matias Sanchez, with his first and second wife, and the W. B. Scott family. The property was donated to the City in 1972 with the stipulation it be maintained as a historical site.

For the past nine years, Rotarians, and other volunteers, have participated in cleanup days as they fanned out canvassing the grounds of the structure pulling weeds, cutting tree limbs, collecting cans, bottles and other debris. Inside, they dusted display cases and swept floors. Recently, club members and others pressure washed, sanded and painted handrails and wood decks.

"We have been proud to partner with the City of Montebello and the Montebello Historical Society in helping preserve this great city landmark," said Montebello Rotary Club President Bernadette Hensel. "The exhibits inside the Adobe gives the community an opportunity to appreciate examples of past architecture and many historical relics from the local area."

Located at 946 N. Adobe Avenue, the Adobe and museum showcases architecture of the mid-1800's with furnished rooms from the time period including Sanchez family artifacts and historical photos of the City.

"We greatly appreciate the support we have received from the Montebello Rotary Club," said Montebello Historical Society President Rosie Vasquez. "Working together, we will continue to keep Montebello's history alive."

