

## Tim Grobaty: LB Heritage gala to help keep past present

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Above: Home of Wendy Harn and Interior Designer, Sasha Witte.

Efforts of Long Beach Heritage help the city's fine old houses restore their glory and keep their places in the local streetscape. A Feb. 17 awards dinner pays tribute.



Long Beach Heritage Preservationists of the Year winners Rick Hobbs, left, and Brad Seeley, have been active since the group's earliest days organizing the first awards dinner.

Listen. Just because Long Beach has let a couple of years go by without rearing up and tearing down a downtown shopping center doesn't mean that it's gotten all preservation-y all of a sudden. Any day now, the town could wake up and start thrashing around, deciding to knock down the Villa Riviera to make room for a three-story MegaMcQuizways's sandwich shop or tear down the Belmont Pier because that's where a high-speed monorail to the oil islands would look good.

Somebody needs to pitch in in the battle for our city's heritage, and we're just the kind of guy with the integrity to type up a little something about who needs to do that. And, as is so often the case, that person is you.

It's not hard work. The heavy lifting will be done by the incredibly admirable people at Long Beach Heritage. All you have to do is spend an enjoyable evening on Feb. 17 in the Queen Mary's Grand Salon, having cocktails and a banquet dinner while paying tribute to some of the most stellar preservationists of the past year in Long Beach Heritage's annual awards benefit.

The Preservationists of the Year award will go to Rick Hobbs and Brad Seeley. Hobbs has been active in Heritage since its earliest days - he helped organize the first awards benefit back in the 1980s. Hobbs and Seeley own an apartment in Mid-Century Modern Galaxy Towers and have been involved with promoting restoration of buildings from that era.

Charlotte Mitchell, who has served as chair of the Berridge Historic Homesite Committee since 2005, will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award for more than two decades of working for preservation and restoration in the city.

Preservation awards for the year will be given to Olan and Aida Hafley for their homes designed by Richard Neutra (and who would've ever thought the middle of last century would end up being cool one day? We're still awaiting traction of the Tract Home Movement.) and the Mount Carmel Cambodian Center for its continued maintenance of the early 20th-

century church's exterior.

Scoring Restoration awards will be Wendy Harn and Sasha Witte, for the ongoing (it's always ongoing) restoration of their 1914 home, which they picked up and moved from Ocean Boulevard to East Second Street to save it from demolition; and the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation for the relocation and restoration of five of its barns and agricultural buildings, as well as protection of the landscaping on its grounds.

Rehabilitation awards recipients will be Gary and Margarita Severns, for the fixing-up of a 1927 apartment on Hermosa Avenue near Bixby Park; and Xenia Renatta Izzo, for sprucing up a residence that was moved from the Temple Lofts site on Locust Avenue downtown to West Fourth Street.

The architectural firms Studio One Eleven and Interstices will be given the Adaptive Reuse/Sustainability Award for transforming the Courtyard Lofts on Pine Avenue from two derelict downtown buildings and a parking lot into "a striking contemporary structure with a verdant community courtyard."

And a tip o' the Heritage hat will also go to the Historic Preservation element adoption to the Long Beach General Plan, which will help preservationists identify and protect areas, sites, and structures with architectural, historical, cultural, or archaeological significance to the city.

A no-host bar (we used to think that meant "free," because, well, there's no host around, so just grab some drinks and hightail it. It doesn't mean that.) and silent auction of gift certificates and assorted artifacts of historical interest starts at 6 p.m., with the dinner beginning at 7:15 p.m. Tickets/reservations are \$115 for Long Beach Heritage's major fundraiser for the year. Deadline for reservations is Feb. 11.

You can buy them online at [www.lb](http://www.lb)

[heritage.org](http://heritage.org), or call 562-493-7019.

FRIDAY PLAYLIST: We thought about some nice house-related tunes from the Art Deco days, but then we had a hard time finding any, plus the music from the Art Deco days is a little too goofy for our taste, even though it's certainly no goofier than our No. 2 tune on today's list. Anyhow, here's what we're hearing:

1. "Our House," Crosby, Stills & Nash
2. "Our House," Madness
3. "Burning Down the House," Talking Heads
4. "Tearing Down This Place," Freedy Johnston
5. "Home Somewhere," Jules & the Polar Bears

6. "Houses of the Holy," Led Zeppelin
7. "This Old Porch," Lyle Lovett
8. "Workin' on a Building," David Bromberg
9. "Brick House," the Commodores
10. "Red House," Jimi Hendrix.

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