

Vistas

MONTE VISTA
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
San Antonio, Texas

NOTABLE RESIDENTS OF MONTE VISTA

By Gloria Kemper & Mickey Amacker

Nathan and Emily Jane Gould built the home at 128 W. French in 1882 and named it "Bella Vista" because of its location on the slope of a hill overlooking San Antonio, about two miles north of town - which may be the reason it faces town rather than W. French Place. Their daughter (also named Emily) and her artist husband Robert Jenkins Onderdonk moved in with them. Emily's diary notes that "The carpenter backed out of nearly everything besides not delivering up the house when he promised which put us to an additional expense of rent. We are to do the inside staining and oiling ourselves. I have pretty blue and white matting for my room. Mother has a red and olive for hers and a new Brussels for the parlor. The view is very fine and only for the lack of water for which we pay 20 cents a barrel, the place would be just what we desire, near town yet very retired". Robert Julian Onderdonk, their first child, was born in the home that same year. He lived there until he moved to New York in 1901 where he studied and worked as an artist. He lived in New York until he and his wife Gertrude moved into the Onderdonk home at 128 W. French in 1917 after his father passed away. Julian died in San Antonio in 1922 at the young age of 40 following an operation for intestinal obstruction. He is buried in San Antonio's East Side Masonic Cemetery. The home is thought to be the oldest in Monte Vista and is still a private residence. The studio Julian built in back of the house circa 1915/1916 was moved in recent years, virtually undisturbed, to the Witte Museum amid protest from the Monte Vista Historical Association.

Julian Onderdonk is considered one of Texas' finest landscape artists and was known as "The Blue Bonnet Painter". His legacy lives on.



MONTE VISTA HOME TOUR 2013

The Monte Vista Historical Association announces its 22nd Fall Home Tour, to be held on Saturday, October 26, 2013, from 10 AM to 5 PM. This is a rare opportunity to see a few of the finest homes in Monte Vista.

This bi-annual fundraising event is part of Monte Vista's many heritage-supporting initiatives to continue the preservation of our historic district.

Numerous volunteers will be needed for this project. Please volunteer to be a House Captain or Docent, or to help with other jobs.

Individual and corporate sponsorships are also welcomed at the following levels:

Arts and Crafts	\$ 250.00
Mission Revival	\$ 500.00
Colonial Revival	\$ 1,000.00
Beaux Arts	\$ 5,000.00

To volunteer or discuss a sponsorship, please contact Cee Parker at 210-732-8036, or email him at ecparkerarch@yahoo.com.

CONTACT US

Monte Vista Office
(210) 737-8212

Please leave a message and your call will be returned within a day or two. The office is not regularly staffed. Anyone who would like to be a full-time volunteer secretary at the office, please phone and leave a message!

Visit us at our website
www.montevista-sa.org

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OTHER IMPORTANT NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBERS

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1310 Vance Jackson Rd.
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Robert.Rodriguez@SanAntonio.gov

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SAPD SAFFE Officer Robert Rodriguez

THANK YOU

Vistas is made possible by a gift from the John Newman Family Charitable Trust of the San Antonio Area Foundation

Vistas

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Vistas

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John Agather

EDITOR'S NOTE

I am very pleased to be the new editor of Vistas. I also want to thank Julie Van Zandt for the wonderful job she has done while she held this post. Vistas has been an evolutionary method of communication since it started and has had a wonderful band of editors through the years. I am humbled to add my name to the roster.

I wanted to explain why I took the job. Simply put, Ruth and I love Monte Vista. The very first home we ever bought was at 129 West Agarita. We have since purchased another one on French Place. So, with the brief exception of living in Austin when Ruth was at UT Law School, our home has always been in our great neighborhood. We have been living in Monte Vista for twenty five years. Things have changed through the years but the allure has not dwindled.

When we first bought the house on Agarita, that block was a very different place from what it is today. Our next door neighbor was an elderly fellow named Earl. His house had not been painted in many a decade. Cars that had not moved in years were in his driveway on flat tires. And he had bags, and bags, and bags of aluminum cans all over the place. Earl turned out to be a very nice man and an excellent neighbor. When Earl died I had the sad duty of helping his brother, Milton, sell Earl's belongings and his home. Yes, there was an enormous amount of clutter in the house. But underneath all of the junk were some stunning antiques. It turned out that Earl used to be quite the collector. His brother also found an old car bumper in the crawl space under the house with an address taped to it. So he went to the house where the address was (two blocks away) and found an elderly widow. When he asked her why her address was taped to the bumper of a car she asked "has Earl passed on?" When she received the news she explained that Earl had been paying her \$10 a month to keep a car in her garage. The car didn't quite fit so Earl had to remove the bumper. The automobile turned out to be a very valuable Pierce Arrow.

I tell that story because you can't always judge a book by its cover. We have interesting, beautiful, and unique homes in Monte Vista. But even more importantly we have incredible people living in them. My hope is to bring you some of the stories about your neighbors and the fabulous homes they live in.

May is Landa Gardens Month!



The Landa Gardens Conservancy presents a series of free children's events, beginning at 10am each Saturday in May. The events take place at the Valero Energy Pavillion on the grounds of the Landa Public Library in Monte Vista, at 233 Bushnell Ave. The event is open seating on the lawn, no tickets or reservations required, just bring your own blanket or chair!

- | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------|
| May 4 | Folklorico Mestizo
Mexican Folklorico Dancing | 10:00 a.m. |
| May 11 | Magik Theatre
The Cat in the Hat | 10:00 a.m. |
| May 18 | Owen Duggan
Children's Singer & Songwriter | 10:00 a.m. |
| May 25 | Miss Anastasia
Children's Storyteller
with Pete the Cat in person! | 10:00 a.m. |



For more information go to www.landagardens.org

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MVHA Committees

- Architectural Review
- Block Captains/ Neighborhood Welcome
- Code Compliance & City Services
- Communications
- Crime and Safety
- Fundraising
- City Government & Community
- Historic Preservation/ Education
- Membership
- Neighborhood/Social Events
- Preservation Investment Committee
- Trinity University Liaison Committee
- Vistas



PRESIDENT'S SPRING MESSAGE

Linda Daniels

It is a privilege to serve as your President in 2013, the year we are celebrating our fortieth anniversary as a historical association. Many individuals past and present have given dedicated service to make the Monte Vista Historical Association (MVHA) and this historic district what it is today. We can all be proud of that legacy and proud of the place we call home. Our current officers and board are committed volunteers who stand ready to respond to our membership's concerns, expectations and aspirations as we begin a new year. The founding members had wise forethought to organize the Association with staggering terms for our board members, a past president position on the board, and an incoming president position, such that each new year gives us experienced board voices and new members with fresh voices. Throughout the year, we mentor each other and strive to build upon our past successes.

Some of you reading this edition of Vistas may be newcomers to our neighborhood, others such as me, have lived through our historic struggles to preserve the residential character of our neighborhood. Our Association has opposed institution use of residential homes. It has sought to prevent willful and/or negligent demolition of structures within our borders. These struggles are ongoing; all battles have not always been won. Each new board has new challenges, and sometimes compromises are determined to be in the best interest of the historic district as a whole.

The forty years past have brought us substantial revitalization, renovation and preservation of our area and its homes. We have seen young families with children choosing to make Monte Vista their home. We have also painfully felt the loss of many homes to institutional use

and, in some cases, to wholesale demolition or removal. Experience has taught us the value of banning together to protect and preserve our historic and neighborhood heritage.

The work of the Association is not all drudgery. We build community through neighborhood wide events as well: the children's Easter Egg Hunt on the Landa Library grounds, an old-fashioned Fourth of July Parade and Picnic, Third Thursday Socials each month, and special Holiday Parties. This year, we are planning a Hike and Bike Rodeo in May to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety on our neighborhood streets. The Association produces a Fiesta Medal (underwritten this year by Jefferson Bank) as a fundraising and neighborhood pride tool. (Look for the medal, commemorating our birthday, now on sale at On Main, Off Main.). Our History and Preservation Committee is actively researching and documenting the past history of our homes and their former residents for future educational purposes. If you have not seen the French Place brochure generated by this committee, you need to get your hands on one as soon as possible!

As a final word for now, 2013 is a Monte Vista Home Tour year. The Home Tour is our bi-annual campaign to raise funds for the operation of the Monte Vista Historical Association. I encourage each and every member to help make this year's tour a success. The Monte Vista Historical Association is only strong through membership participation. Encourage your neighbors to join us in our journey into a future built upon honoring the heritage of the place we call home. We are all co-creators and together we "rock the block!"

Warmest regards,
Linda Daniels



40 years of serving Monte Vista
Photo by John Agather



A wonderful party
Photo by Kathy Armstrong

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Support Monte Vista. Join today.

418 WEST FRENCH PLACE

By John Agather



Paul and Trudy Kinnison have been living at 418 West French Place since 1973. They are the quintessential Monte Vista residents. Both have been very active with the Monte Vista Historical Association through the years. Their home reflects the artistry of their preservationist dedication and the warmth of their personalities.

The home was built in 1906 by a Mr. O.D. Woesterman. Although the architect is unknown, Paul (a renowned Monte Vista architect himself) believes many of the architectural elements reflect a Chicago style of building. For instance, the house was built with eight fireplaces, with all but two being coal burning. The original property spanned all the way to Belknap over what is now the SAC parking lot. The interior has many Arts and Crafts features that reflect a finish out that still looks contemporary. One of the interesting details of the house is in the paneling. It is done in what is referred to as faux bois, or false wood graining. Although almost impossible to notice without being alerted to it, the grain on the paneling is actually painted on. As far as the Kinnisons know all of the paneling is original.

The Kinnisons purchased the home from Jimmy Hall who had lived there for about five years. Hall bought the home from the Dumas family where they had resided for thirty five years. Cornelia Vaughn, who grew up in a house just down the street (the southeast corner of San Pedro and West French Place), married Dr. Ed Dumas and moved into the home. She had moved down the street by one house. As a little girl



Trudy C. Kinnison with the former owners of the home, Dr. and Mrs. Ed Dumas (Cornelia Vaughn Dumas) in 1982 on the occasion of their only visit to the home after purchase by the Kinnisons

she rode her pony down French Place to visit the Onderdonk family's house two blocks to the east.

After Paul and Trudy purchased the home, he began using the downstairs as the office for his architectural firm. They welcomed a baby girl, Abigail, in 1974 and her brother, Paul Chance, in 1977. They brought them home to 418 W. French Pl. As the firm grew and the children grew, the office moved to another location in Monte Vista. In the seventies there remained many families on French who had been residents for decades. Abigail and Chance were the only children on the block. It is a serious testament to the love of this neighborhood that Paul and Trudy raised their children here at that time.

Paul and Trudy have fascinating backgrounds. Paul's grandmother was President Lyndon Johnson's aunt. Paul's great-aunt, Ovilee Baines (Mrs. Huffman Baines), was the neighbor who introduced Trudy and Paul to each other. Trudy grew up in the Jefferson High School area one block away from the Baines home. There are so many interesting artifacts in the Kinnison house that it is more like a historian's showplace. My personal favorite is a framed Western Union telegram sent to Paul's grandmother in 1967 from Air Force One. President Johnson notified her that he had Paul aboard Air Force One (the airplane) and was en route to the funeral for Olivee's husband, Huffman, in San Antonio. Huffman was LBJ's uncle and Paul's great-uncle. That was the same year that Paul and Trudy met and married.

Trudy's family has deep roots in San Antonio as well. When Trudy's father, Truett L. Chance, returned from World War II, he began his teaching career at the new San Antonio College. He retired 35 years later as President of the College and was honored in 1997 with the naming of an academic building in his honor.

Another interesting aspect of this story is Paul's relationship with Atlee B. Ayers and his son Robert. Atlee Ayers, a well-known architect, and his talented architect son Robert, had their business office in the first professional building in Monte Vista of which they were part owners. Robert's talent in architecture and his art work may not have gained deserved acclaim, although he is thought to have designed most of the Tower Life Building but was never properly credited. Paul worked for them early in his career and then in 1978 moved his office into their building on W. Woodlawn. Paul is able to claim a friendship as well as a professional relationship with both Atlee and Robert Ayers.

Paul and Trudy are special people. They have contributed to Monte Vista selflessly for many, many years. All of us are lucky that they chose 418 West French Place as their home because we have benefited enormously.



Paul Chance Kinnison, age 1 1/2 and sister Abigail Kinnison, age 4 1/2, in their decorated "float" ready for the July 4th Parade through Monte Vista 1978

New Year's Eve



Kathleen Eubanks, Andrew Eubanks, Stephanie Rebecck Rinaldi, Frank Rinaldi and Robin Kirschbaum Eubanks.

Photo by Diane Hileman



Seana Grady Simpkins and Jon Simpkins

Photo by Diane Hileman



Michael Rodriguez, Joe Jiminez, Joe and Esther Rodriguez

Photo by Diane Hileman

COUNCILMAN BERNAL

Dear Montevista Neighbors:

I am happy to have this chance to reach out to you through your neighborhood newsletter. As your city councilman, it is an honor and privilege to represent such a diverse district with such tremendous history.

Know that my staff and I are here to assist you on a myriad of City-related issues. You have my promise that you will have a representative from staff to be at your neighborhood association meetings. You can reach us by telephone, mail, visits in person, and email. You may get information from my office by signing up for the bi-weekly District 1 newsletter, which is sent by email, and on Facebook and Twitter (@SADistrict1). Also, we will continue to have a representative at every neighborhood association meeting.

We want to be as helpful as we can. In recent months you have talked to us about home and car burglaries. With the help of the

San Antonio Police Department, we compiled a list of helpful tips to keep you safe. The hints are listed for your convenience and will be mailed to a number of District 1 residents. SAPD officers have told me that by following these tips, it is guaranteed that you will see a decrease in crime. There's always more we can do, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Thanks for all you do for the community and let me know how we're doing.

Sincerely,
Diego

City Hall Office

P.O. Box 839966

San Antonio, TX 78283

Tel.: 207-7279

Email: district1@sanantonio.gov

District 1 Field Office

1310 Vance Jackson Rd.

San Antonio, TX 78201

Tel.: 207-0900

Fax: 207-0908

Tips to Protect Your Home

Don't Advertise That You're Away

- Make sure your answering machine message says that you cannot reach the phone, and not that you are away from home.
- Have your mail delivered to a temporary P.O. Box if you're going to be gone for a long period.
- Before traveling, stop newspaper/delivery services.
- If possible, keep your lights on. Give the appearance that someone is home.
- Maintain your lawn and alley; it reduces the amount of cover a potential burglar may use.

Secure Your Home and Belongings

- Invest in reliable locks and security systems.
- Keep a record of your valuables and keep them hidden and secure.
- Install a 190-degree door viewer or door scope on your front door. Always look before you open the door.

- Make sure all windows are covered and that all windows and doors are locked before leaving the house.
- Put bells on your gate and front door so you know when someone is entering.
- Take time to sit out on your front porch so people know you are observing your block.

Know Your Neighbors

- Have neighbors keep an eye out and report suspicious activity.
- If you suspect someone is in your home, get out immediately and go to a neighbor's house.
- Call 9-1-1!
- Get to know your neighbors by organizing an annual National Night Out event for your block.

Tips to Protect Your Car

Secure your Vehicle

- Lock your car and roll up the windows.

- If you are running errands and have valuables in your car, carry them with you or hide them before reaching your next destination.
- Keep all money, purses, wallets, valuables and electronics (including chargers) out of plain view, even while parked in front of your home or in the driveway.
- Invest in anti-theft devices for your car.

Avoid Danger

- Park in well-lit areas and as close to the door as possible.
- Learn your neighborhood.
- If you feel you are being followed, DO NOT GO HOME. Go somewhere safe, such as a gas station or other open business, a police sub-station or fire station. Call 9-1-1 immediately!

Sources:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/sapd/CrimePreventionTips.aspx>

<http://renotahoe.about.com/od/RenoQuickTips/qt/Tips-For-Keeping-Vehicles-And-Valuables-Safe-From-Theft.htm>

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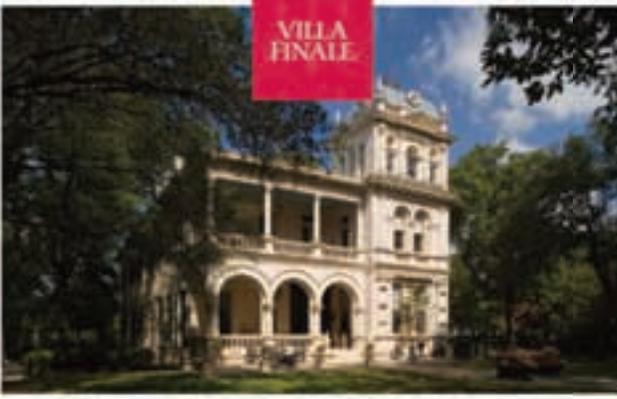
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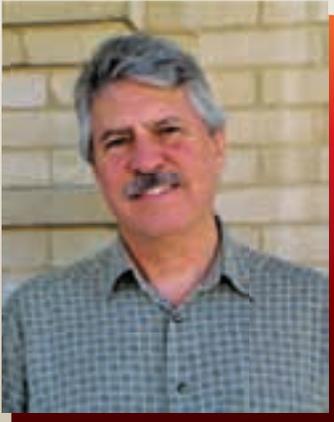
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CALENDAR

March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4

(First Tuesday of Month)

Architectural Review Committee Mtg.

Landa Library Annex @ 5:30 p.m.

March 12, April 9, May 14, June 11

(Second Tuesday of Month)

Monte Vista Historical Assn. Board Mtg.

Landa Library Annex @ 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 21

Third Thursday Social

Trudy & Paul Kinnison Home

418 W French Pl. @ 6:30 p.m.

(Bring an appetizer and wine to share.)

Thursday, April 18

Fiesta Third Thursday Social

Renee McElhaney Home

301 W Hollywood Ave. @ 6:30 p.m.

(Bring a Fiesta appetizer and wine to share.)

Friday, April 26

Battle of Flowers Parade

Thursday, May 16

Third Thursday Social

Location to be announced

Saturday, May 25

Hike and Bike Rodeo

Begins at Laurel Heights Methodist Church

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MONTE VISTA



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_____ MVHA Resident Dues \$30 Per Household

_____ Five Year Membership \$120

_____ Non Resident Dues \$60 Per Household

_____ Five Year Membership \$200

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New Year's Eve Third Thursday
Home Tour (2013) Fiesta Medal
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Total Amount Enclosed \$

Please remit by mail or at the MVHA website

Monte Vista Historical Association
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