

Chapter 19

HISTORY OF THE CASA DEL PRADO IN BALBOA PARK

Of buildings remaining from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, exhibit buildings north of El Prado in the agricultural section survived for many years. They were eventually absorbed by the San Diego Zoo. Buildings south of El Prado were gone by 1933, except for the New Mexico and Kansas Buildings. These survive today as the Balboa Park Club and the House of Italy. This left intact the Spanish-Colonial complex along El Prado, the main east-west avenue that separated north from south sections. The Sacramento Valley Building, at the head of the Plaza de Panama in the approximate center of El Prado, was demolished in 1923 to make way for the Fine Arts Gallery. The Southern California Counties Building burned down in 1925. The San Joaquin Valley and the Kern-Tulare Counties Building, on the promenade south of the Plaza de Panama, were torn down in 1933. When the Science and Education and Home Economy buildings were razed in 1962, the only 1915 Exposition buildings on El Prado were the California Building and its annexes, the House of Charm, the House of Hospitality, the Botanical Building, the Electric Building, and the Food and Beverage Building. This paper will describe the ups and downs of the 1915 Varied Industries and Food Products Building (1935 Food and Beverage Building), today the Casa del Prado.



When first conceived the Varied Industries and Food Products Building was called the Agriculture and Horticulture Building. The name was changed to conform to exhibits inside the building. In 1916, the building became the Foreign and Domestic Industries Building to coincide with its new use. Names have changed many times since then. Until 1935, however, the name that lasted the longest was Varied Industries and Food Products Building. After 1936, people called the building the Food and Beverage Building, except during a 12-year period when, owing to its use in September and October for county fairs, it was called the County Fair Building.

This writer will refer to the building by its chronological names, changing the names as the chronology progresses. Built at a cost of \$98,342.41, the Varied Industries and Food Products Building was the largest of the temporary Exposition buildings. Architect Carleton M. Winslow was responsible for the creation of the design with sculptural details executed by Henry R. Schmohl, after Winslow's sketches. It consisted of north and south wings joined by an extension between the wings. The plan took the shape of a right angle. The north wing—the Food Products section—included an annex north of a sumptuously decorated entrance. The style was Spanish-Baroque with lavishly garlanded columns, a centrifugal quatrefoil window and a climatic ornamental gable. The entrance was flanked on both sides by towers with open belfries and blue and yellow tile domes. This—the east façade—looked like the entrance to a church. The presence of a bishop in a medallion above the central door and a cross in a star-burst medallion above the quatrefoil window reinforced the resemblance. The church-like character of the north wing was further stressed by a bas-relief of Father Junipero Serra and a cartouche describing Father Serra's accomplishments beneath narrow, Romanesque-style windows at the apse or west end of the building. Visitors took to calling the north wing "the church."

The south façade of the Food and Beverage Building consisted of two pavilions whose decoration was made from the same molds used to create the façade of "the church." The bishop was removed, but the cross remained. Seeds, fruits, vegetables, Neptune faces, cherubs, crowns, shields, olive leaves and bunches of grapes were added. In place of the flanking towers, windows, with columns, wider at the top than at their base, balconies below, and simplified curlicues surmounted two arches to right and left of entrance pavilions. A loggia at top level with fluted columns and Ionic capitals, and

plain, sturdy arcades and walls on the lower level joined the two entrance pavilions. The elaborate decoration on east and south façade had the staggering effect of the finale of a grand fireworks display. Not being able to use San Simeon to backdrop his parable of the folly of acquiring riches in *Citizen Kane*, director Orson Welles used the east and south facades of the Varied Industries and Food Products Building to demonstrate Kane's passion for acquiring exotic objects.

It is probably an exaggeration and there is no indication that plasterers at work in San Diego knew of them, but the profusion of detail on the exterior surfaces of the south side of Casa del Prado recalls the jubilant polychrome detail that Indian craftsman executed for the Rosary Chapels in the Churches of Santo Domingo in Puebla and Oaxaca and in the Camarin of the Virgin In the Church of San Francisco Javier in Tepotzotlan. While condemned by some critics (including Bertram Goodhue and Eugen Neuhaus), as excessive and degenerate the piling up of ornamental motifs on the south facades exude an exuberance that architect Robert Venturi once described as "messy vitality." (1) No where else in Balboa Park, not even in the mannered restraints of the façade of the California Building or the cautious restraints of the church-like east façade of the Food Products Building, does the baroque in Balboa Park approach ultra-baroque or do the visual excess of this style become, in Ichiro Ono's phrase, "divine excess." (2)

Original drawings show that the east side of the south wing was to consist of a blank wall. To relieve the monotony, Winslow installed a sculptural group that looks like the backdrop for an altar inside a church. A figure at the top that rises above the roof line resembles Virgin Mary. She forms the apex of a triangle with figures on the second level forming the base. These consist of a large buxom woman in a center niche looming over a Caucasian and an Indian boy. A smaller-size woman with a crown on her head in a niche to her left wears a cuirass and holds a shield. Another woman in a niche to the right holds an orb.

An oral interpretation that has come down through the years maintains the ensemble represents agricultural fertility with the large woman in the center representing California who is protecting the Indian race, while women to the right and left represent Anglo-Saxon and Latin-American culture. (3) (It is difficult to determine which woman represents what.) The woman at the top may represent the spiritual emanation of the women

below, but this is a guess. For unfathomable reasons, reporters in the 1960's called her "Universal Religion." The whole can be taken as an allegory of the benefits of American acquisition. Again, it may represent Winslow's subconscious feelings about women, whom he visualized as stout, intimidating upholders of morality. (Shades of *Huckleberry Finn*!) Considering that planting obscures the tableau today, it would have been better if designers had left the wall blank in 1915.

Notwithstanding claims to the contrary facades on the Varied Industries and Food Products buildings were not copied from facades on buildings in Mexico. Winslow assembled details from copy books and prior knowledge.

David Gebhard and Robert Winter referred to the Spanish Colonial revival design of the Casa Dorinda in Santa Barbara as being "as in much of Winslow's work" on the "dry side." (4) It is, probably, not fair to measure the decorative skill of Carleton M. Winslow, as Gebhard and Winter did. by this one example. Winslow was an architect, not a decorator. His ornamental work consisted of medallions, seals and other details that recall exotic locales without reproducing them. His designs have a serviceable and symbolic quality that seems right for their place. There are, however—as Gebhard and Winter noted—misgivings. This is by way of a prelude to indicate what is lacking in the allegorical tableau on the southeast wall of the Casa del Prado. It is easier to say what the tableau lacks in skill, individuality, and expressiveness than to say what it has. So if one subtracts drama and dynamics, he or she is left with a minus object. The tableau seems inert... In this connection a comparison to the façade of La Merced in Atlixco, Mexico is illuminating. Both tableau and façade take the form of a conventional retablo facade. The arrangement of figures is hierarchical with a commanding figure on the top broken pediment and a triad arrangement below of a figure in a central niche with companion figures to right and left. The form is the same and the interpretation is similar—though La Merced is religious and the Casa del Prado secular. The difference is in the execution of detail on and around the figures. This difference stems from the skill of native craftsmen who while aware of European conventions, were also able to contribute a love for detail that came from their fertile imaginations and their knowledge of animated and intricate pre-Columbian designs. Also, one must not overlook the easy manner in which native artisans could shape stucco into interlocking and curvaceous shapes with the same skill with which they could knead dough or make marzipan... Most writers about

Spanish-Colonial architecture in Mexico ignore the façade at Atlixco, except for Pal Kelemen, who praised its “malleability.” (5) This can be translated as changeability for, like a river, it is on the move. The façade in Balboa Park is stiff. One could call it “kindly” because of suggestions of tenderness in the lower central (“California”) figure, but this is as far as one can go. It lacks the zestful qualities on the south (El Prado) façade of the Casa del Prado where Winslow, for once, released the ornamental ingredients to take whatever course they would.

The east façade of the Food Products Building faced Calle Cristobal (today Village Place) that led to Alameda Drive (today Zoo Drive), in a section where the citrus orchard, model farm and tractor field were located.

Unlike writers in 1915, who lumped the Exposition buildings together, Eugen Neuhaus, in *The San Diego Garden Fair* published in 1916, commented on the buildings individually.(6) He thought buildings on the east side of the Plaza de Panama represented a falling-off in artistic quality. But, because they were intended to be temporary, he was not upset by their flamboyant curlicues and flourishes. Supervising architect Bertram Goodhue, his assistant Carleton M. Winslow, and engineer Frank P. Allen, Jr. shared the same opinion regarding the meretricious quality of temporary Exposition structures.(7)

Reporters gave exhibits inside the building scant notice; because their attention was drawn away by government exhibits in the Commerce and Industries Building (today the Casa de Balboa) that faced the Food and Beverage Building on the south side of El Prado. Among exhibits in the Food Products section in the north wing, reporters singled out the Towle Maple Products Company exhibit in a log cabin showing how maple sugar and syrup were made; the California Cactus Company exhibit showing how cactus is used as the basis for candy confections; the W. H. Kellogg exhibit showing how cereal products were made; the Genesee Pure Food Company exhibit showing how brand-name produce was packaged; and the M. K. Fisheries Company exhibit showing how fish was cooked and crated.

Exhibits in the Varied Industries section in the south wing included the Bell Brothers Manufacturing Company exhibit showing the process of molding and of finishing glass jars; the Globe Milling Company exhibit showing how bread and cake were baked in ovens; the R. B. Bailey Company exhibit showing how leather goods were made; the Pioneer Paper

Company exhibit subjecting roofing material to heat and water to demonstrate its lasting qualities; and the Louis Rothe exhibit showing divers gathering abalone shells.

In 1916, the Exposition had to make room for exhibits that came to San Diego from the recently closed Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. These exhibits could not be sent back to Europe because of the outbreak of World War I in 1914, in which the exhibiting countries were involved.

Newspapers indicate that exhibits from the Netherlands occupied the Foreign and Domestic Industries Building (the 1916 name for the building). Since newspapers did not mention other exhibits, the inference is that the Netherlands exhibits took up all the floor space, which, considering the 5,000 square foot size of its exhibit as compared to 64,000 square feet of usable space in the entire building was unlikely. At any rate, exhibits, consisting of pottery, porcelain, tile paintings, carpets, old silverware and batik ware from Java, dazzled the curious and delighted the cognoscenti.

San Diegans were in a bind over what to do with the temporary Exposition buildings. Following the advice of professor Neuhaus, but not of architects Goodhue, Winslow and Allen, they wanted to keep as many of the buildings as they could for any use that might come along. Realizing that such widespread preservation was physically and economically difficult, an Executive Committee on the Preservation of the Exposition Buildings proposed, on September 18, 1916, that the Varied Industries and Food Products and the Commerce and Industries Buildings "be eliminated."

Before the removal of these buildings could be accomplished, World War I intervened which meant that the life of Exposition buildings was prolonged to accommodate the military. The Varied Industries and Food Products Building, referred to in Park Department maps as Building no. 10, became a barracks and a post office for sailors who were being trained to man United States naval vessels. The use of large, drafty Exposition buildings was not ideal and complaints from disgruntled sailors were published in newspapers which led to vigorous denials by U. S. Naval officers and naval recruits eager to advance their careers. During outbreaks of measles and mumps, sailors moved out of the building and slept in the open air, presumably on cots. The outbreak of the influenza epidemic in late

1918 caused the most alarm. Sailors were quarantined and many suffered from the disease.

After the war, the U. S. Navy paid the city \$5,085.24 for damages to the buildings. This money was not enough to go around so the Varied Industries and Food Products Building was in a perilous state. A campaign to preserve Exposition buildings was conducted after the city building inspector and fire chief announced they were structurally unsound firetraps. The campaign raised \$110,290.49, a sum sufficient to enable the City to patch up remaining Exposition buildings. The Varied Industries and Food Products Building got \$21,077.68, or approximately 19 percent of the total raised.

The San Diego County Farm bureau helped to determine the fate of the Varied Industries and Food Products Building when it began holding its annual fall county fair in Balboa Park from 1919 to 1930. The County Fair covered much more of Balboa Park than the Varied Industries and Food Products Building as it spread north to include an area now occupied by the San Diego Zoological Society parking lot. Special buildings were put up in this area to exhibit cattle, horses, poultry and pigeons. But the Varied Industries and Food Products Building was the main exhibit space where farm societies and civic organizations exhibited a variety of products.

At various times during the 12- year run of the County Fair, the Varied Industries and Food Products Building was called the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Building, the Agricultural Building, the Industrial Building, and the County Fair Building.

Exhibits over the years ran the gamut from a United States Forest Service exhibit in 1919 showing how careless campers cause fires, a display of custom-built automobiles in 1920; a display of live beneficial insects put up by the Bureau of Pest Control of the California Department of Agriculture in 1922; county schools exhibits in 1923 and 1924; an exhibit of clusters of grapes spelling out the name "Escondido" against a background of colored fruits in 1925; an exhibit of bee culture in 1926 in which a bee expert carried bees from one hive to another without benefit of gloves or smoke; an exhibit by W. J. Bush Citrus Products Company of National City in 1927 showing how oils, extracts, flavoring and perfumes could be made from waste fruits; a "Home of Electric Happiness" mounted by the San Diego Gas and Electric Company in 1928; an exhibit of the latest in radio by

the San Diego Radio Dealers Association in 1929; and a display by the San Diego Police Department in 1930 showing articles seized from criminals, fingerprinting equipment, and a model of an intersection with toy vehicles becoming involved in traffic tangles and problems.

In 1923, the entire fair was fenced with the main gate on the Alameda between the County Fair Building and the Civic Auditorium (today the site of the Natural History Museum). This move was necessary as too many people were slipping in without paying the 50 cents admission. Despite the fence, gatekeepers complained that enterprising youngsters were still getting in free.

It is not clear why the Farm Bureau discontinued the use of Balboa Park for its County Fair in 1931. It seems clear, however, that adverse factors were becoming distressingly evident. Balboa Park was not the ideal venue for such a fair. The park was surrounded by urban developments. Exhibits were scattered. Parking was inadequate. The Zoo, which bordered the open-air displays on the west, was making difficulties. Problems of sanitation, ground maintenance and rodent control vexed tenants and visitors alike. The Natural History Museum announced its intention to build a new museum on the site of the burned-out Southern California Counties Building and to build an extension on the site of the County Fair Building. One by one Exposition buildings used by the fair were moved away or destroyed, leaving the County Fair Building as the only Exposition structure left. For all the foregoing reasons the Farm Bureau desisted from holding county fairs and the 22nd Agricultural District took over. The District reopened the county fair in Del Mar on October 8, 1936, after turning Mission Bay down as a prospective site. In December of the same year, the District concluded a lease agreement with the Del Mar Turf Club for the operation of a race track. Annual fairs have been held at Del Mar since 1936 and races since 1937.

The decision of the 22nd Agricultural District to build in Del Mar rather than Balboa Park raises the question—what is the carrying capacity of Balboa Park? And should institutions in the park move out when that capacity is exceeded?

A second campaign in 1933 to restore temporary Exposition buildings raised approximately \$22,500 to purchase materials. Of this sum approximately \$16,300 was used to repair the Varied Industries and Food

Products Building. Towers on the north wing, which were leaning forward nearly a foot, were pulled back and concrete footings were placed under arcades. Expenditure totals given for repairs were not reliable as supplemental money and labor came from State and Federal agencies as part of work relief programs. Complaints were voiced that the out-of-work men doing the repairs were unskilled.

Aside from occasional uses by groups for auto, industrial and flower shows, the Varied Industries and Food Products Building remained unoccupied until the 1935 opening of the California Pacific International Exposition.

As it had been in 1915-1916 and during fall county fairs in 1919-1930, Building No. 10 was used as a major exhibit building during the 1935-1936 California-Pacific International Exposition, under its new appellation as Food and Beverage Building. Exhibits in 1935-1936 stressed foods; however, since many of the exhibits in 1915-1916 were also of foods the new use of the building was not substantially different from the old. Popular exhibits had been assembled by Standard Brands, stressing Fleischmann's yeast, Chase and Sunburns' stressing coffee, Tenderleaf Tea, Royal Baking Powder and Royal Deserts, Campbell Soup Company, and Hill Candy Company.

Visitors alive in 1998 mentioned the Beechnut Circus as a magnetic attraction. Here, in an animated model, clowns, acrobats and animals performed. Attendants gave sticks of Beechnut chewing gum to the audience at the conclusion of the five-minute shows. Visitors remembered savoring buttered scones filled with strawberry jam that were given away at one of the stands.

The building was mostly unoccupied from 1936 to 1941, when the United States entered World War II. For security reasons, newspaper releases during World War II were not as copious as those during World War I. The south wing of the Food and Beverage Building, then being called Building No. 212, was used by the Red Cross. The north wing and part of the east side, then being called Building No. 211, may have been used as wards for patients of the U. S. Naval Hospital as was stated in *Drydock*, a U.S. Naval Hospital magazine. Letters from R. S. Holmes, Commandant, 11th Naval District indicate, however, that the U. S. Naval Hospital planned to use the north wing as quarters for bachelor medical officers. At this late

date, it is impossible to reconcile the contradiction. While the U.S. Navy modified the interior to eliminate some of the problems encountered in the earlier war, it was required to remove these modifications or to give the City money to do it when the war was over.

On February 17, 1947, the U.S. Navy paid the City \$790,000 and 35 temporary wooden structures for their use of Balboa Park buildings. Some of this money went to patching and shoring the Food and Beverage Building.

After World War II, the Food and Beverage Building and its companion building on the south side of El Prado (1915 Commerce and Industries Bldg., 1935 Palace of Better Housing, today the Casa de Balboa) were in a state of decay. The Commerce and Industries Building was the site of electric and industrial shows for many years, thus calling for an Electric Building title for the building.

The San Diego Public Library moved into the Food and Beverage Building in June 1952 and stayed until June 1954. This was a temporary measure while a new library was being constructed in downtown San Diego. In *Turning the Pages*, Clara E. Breed, the head librarian, described the building as "a vast empty barn-like structure divided into three enormous rooms with very high ceilings. There was almost no plumbing, no heat, and limited lighting." Later in the same book, she stated: "The building was populated with an amazing assortment of wildlife—squirrels, bees, doves, flies, lost cats and dogs, lizards, fleas, termites, spiders and mice." (8)

The San Diego Aerospace Museum moved into the building briefly in September 1961 before transferring its exhibits across the street to the Electric Building in February 1963 where they stayed until a fire in February 1978 destroyed the building.

The Junior Civic Ballet made use of empty spaces in the Food and Beverage building for rehearsals, but put on their finished productions elsewhere. Folk dancers and round and square dancers also used the building when space was not available in the Balboa Park Club, Conference Building and Recital Hall, all in Balboa Park. City Inspection and Water Departments had offices in the building. In *A Tapestry of Time*, Civil Engineer Floyd R. Moor, who was in the building in 1959, recalled: "We had birds inside frequently and beehives in the walls, plus a leaking roof."(9)

In their 1960 *Master Plan for Balboa Park* the Bartholomew planners seemed to have determined the future status of the Food and Beverage Building. They announced:

"The Food and Beverage Building, a temporary building built for the 1915 Exposition, should be replaced as soon as possible by a new building. The master plan recommends that the present site of the Food and Beverage Building be used for the construction of a garden center."(10)

As planners indicated the condition of the Food and Beverage Building was deplorable. Resembling Oliver Wendell Holmes "One-Hoss Shay," the building was about to collapse. Great patches of the plaster on the outside had fallen off, exposing chicken wire and water-worn lath. Dry rot, termite infestation, rain damage, and falling masonry made it an eyesore. Bunya-bunya trees from Australia, Guadalupe palms from Mexico, and Senegal date palm from Africa on the outside of the building had grown into a wild jungle.

The City was anxious to do something to the building so it wouldn't seem embarrassing during the celebration of the City's 200th anniversary in 1969, when many of the events planned were to take place in Balboa Park. Plans to give the building a \$24,000 face-lifting were rendered moot after City Manager Walter Hahn closed the building to public use on April 9, 1968. At this juncture the Committee of 100 stepped in with plans to make molds to preserve the ornamentation on the decrepit building for use on an identical building on the same site. The City Council contributed \$5,000 to the preservation project with the \$10,000 balance coming from the Committee of 100's fund-raising efforts. The Committee, under the leadership of Mrs. Bea Evenson, secured the support of the San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation and of Mrs. Donn H. DeMarce, chairwoman of the San Diego Civic Arts for Youth League.

Profiting from advice by consulting architect Sam Hamill, architect Richard George Wheeler prepared plans which would re-create the Food and Beverage Building as a combination Garden Center and home for youth cultural groups.

On November 5, 1968 voters approved Proposition M calling for a bonded indebtedness of \$3,500,000 to construct a replacement for the Food and Beverage Building and other facilities as the money would allow.

Its new name having been suggested by George Worthington, a member of the Balboa Park Committee, the Casa del Prado was officially dedicated on November 14, 1971. The reconstructed building consisted of two separate north and south buildings separated by an open arcaded court. A 14,000 square foot annex to the north of the nave was removed as was the apse at the west end of the building. The annex was removed to allow for a more compact configuration and the apse because \$31,288 was not available for its re-creation. The north building was moved farther to the north to enhance the vista from Zoo Drive to the Museum of Man. Nielsen Construction Company did the construction and L. J. Ninteman Construction Company cast the ornament for the building. Christian Mueller, who claimed to have worked on the Fine Arts Gallery in 1924 as a lad of 17, directed the casting. As other technologies were not in common use at the time, the ornament was duplicated in concrete with metal reinforcement and with anchoring rods inserted. The cast concrete ornament weighed ten times more than the originals. Costs for duplicating the ornament and the need for load-bearing masonry to keep it in place were the primary reasons why construction costs came to approximately \$50 a square foot.

In addition to a 102 by 79-foot open-air patio between the two buildings, a second 112 by 84-foot patio was set inside the south building, which is lined by a two-story arcade. Pillars in both patios are rectangular and plain. They lack the lithe grace one finds in the patio inside the House of Hospitality and in patios in Mexico. Both patios provide open space for people to gather and offer a secondary avenue for people heading elsewhere.

Unlike the original building which spread over 64,000 square feet, the new building had 50,000 square feet of ground area, but possessed 100,000 square feet of usable space due to the inclusion of a second story in the south building. (Some accounts give the replacement building's square foot area as 60,000) Hamill wanted the foliage trimmed so that the ornament could be better seen, a problem that still besets the building.

During the course of reconstruction it was discovered that the bond issue did not allow for an expenditure of \$70,000 to rebuild the second-level fluted, striated columns with capitals of cupids and the ornate balustrade on

the outside loggia of the south building. The Committee of 100 raised the needed money with \$50,000 coming from Mrs. Jeannette Pratt, in whose honor the reconstructed gallery was named the "Jeannette Pratt Loggia."

The new building was of concrete with a sprayed-on, tan-tinted, off-white stucco veneer, a better load-bearing, and more durable material than the original plaster and hemp. Rooms were air-conditioned and equipped with acoustical walls and ceilings.(11)

Since the dedication of the building, the south building of the Casa del Prado has been occupied by club rooms, a library, a laboratory and exhibit rooms used by the San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation, a room for senior citizens, and rehearsal rooms for music, dance and dramatic groups. Among the latter are the San Diego Youth Ballet, Symphony, Chorale and Junior Theater. When not scheduled for other venues, performances are held in the 17,000 square foot "Church" building. A catering kitchen in the south building is used for special functions.(12)

Since its reopening in 1971 the Casa del Prado has served a wide spectrum of the San Diego community. The San Diego Garden Foundation and the San Diego Floral Society occupy four permanent rooms and comprise over 37 member organizations. These organizations promote floriculture in San Diego City and County. Adult and youth groups, under the umbrella of the San Diego Civic Arts Association and the sponsorship of the San Diego Park and Recreation Department, aggregate to over six member organizations. Memberships are open to people desiring to polish their skills. While fees are charged for instruction, they may be waived whenever circumstances require. As with the botanical groups, designated "nonprofit" organizations are not charged for the use of facilities. The Junior Theater, which had been part of the Civic Arts Association, became an independent, nonprofit corporation in 1984. Membership in creative youth groups keeps young people off the streets and away from bad company. After sufficient rehearsal time, they put on performances, concerts and theatricals in the auditorium. Admission to which is sometimes free, sometimes paid.

The general public can attend floral exhibits in the exhibit hall at the east end of the south building. They can also rent assembly rooms in the south building whenever designated groups are not using them. The outdoor

patio is used for major park events. It was the site of a chess tournament during the "Treasures of the Soviet Union" festival in the summer of 1989.

Objections to rebuilding the Casa del Prado, which surfaced after the voters approved a bond issue of \$3.5 million for this purpose in 1968, have been put to rest. Some members of adjacent facilities did not want the building rebuilt on site as they saw an opportunity to gain a parking lot close to their establishments. A few lovers of open space claimed that large-scale civic buildings did not belong in public parks. The City Council ruled against the protesters because voters had decided the issue. Architect Richard Wheeler gave utterance to the aesthetic reasons for rebuilding on site. This was that the building was part of an overall design that had been planned at the time of its construction. Not to rebuild it on site would destroy the mood and harmony of the original design and leave a void where a building had existed in thematic, rhythmic and proportionate relation to others.

San Diego could have done a lot worse if it had not put up a duplicate Exposition building on site. The question remains, could it have done better, and, by the same token, could it have done better if it had not rebuilt the Electric Building as the Casa de Balboa in 1981? Despite Goodhue's, Winslow's and Allen's admonitions, until such time as architects emerge who can create Spanish-Colonial Revival buildings as good as those of Goodhue and his associates, the 1915 temporary Exposition buildings—with all their missteps and grotesqueries—should remain as they are.

October 14, 1998

NOTES

1. Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art Press, 1966).
2. Ichiro Ono, *Divine Excess: Mexican Ultra-Baroque* (Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1996), 83-87.
3. Marie Stanton, "Casa del Prado – Fabric of a Dream, *San Diego Union*, October 17, 1971, F-1, F-6, F-13, Barbara Jones quoted; Barbara Jones, *Casa del Prado, Dedication Booklet*, November 14, 1971.
4. David Gebhard and Robert Winter, *a guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California* (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977), 586-587.
5. Pal Kelemen, *Baroque and Rococo in Latin America* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), 83.

6. Eugen Neuhaus, *The San Diego Garden Fair* (Paul Elder and Company Publishers, San Francisco, 1916),
7. Bertram Goodhue, *The Architecture and the Gardens of the San Diego Exposition*, introduction by (Paul Elder and Company Publishers, San Francisco, 1916), 7; Bertram Holmes, "Frank P. Allen Says Exposition Buildings Must Come Down," *San Diego Evening Tribune*, October 3, 1916, 1, 5.
8. Clara E. Breed, *Turning the Pages* (Kingsport Press, 1983), 93, 99.
9. Floyd R. Moor, *A Tapestry of Time*, edited by Betty Peabody (1997), 105.
10. Harland Bartholomew Planners. *Master Plan for Balboa Park* (City of San Diego, 1950), 50.
11. Robert Ward, "The Restoration," *San Diego Magazine*, January 1972.
12. "Casa del Prado – Operating Policies and Procedures," *City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department*, November 1971.