



Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

PRESS RELEASE

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July 22, 2009

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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“Touring Santa Barbara through the Magic Lantern: Images from the Pearl Chase Collection, 1915–1926”

*New exhibit at Casa de la Guerra invites visitors to step back in time
and imagine Santa Barbara as an early twentieth-century tourist*

The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation invites you to explore Santa Barbara through the eyes of an early-twentieth-century tourist with the newest exhibit at Casa de la Guerra, ***Touring Santa Barbara through the Magic Lantern: Images from the Pearl Chase Collection, 1915 – 1926***. Opening July 29 and featuring prints of forty-one rarely seen hand colored lantern slides, these images offer an extraordinary glimpse of Santa Barbara as seen by visitors almost a century ago. How would you get here? Where would you stay? What would you see and do? You will be surprised at what has changed and how much remains the same.



Cabrillo Boulevard, circa 1926.

Likely taken or collected by an affluent family who visited Santa Barbara over a series of cross-country train trips during the early twentieth century, the images include scenes of transportation, luxury hotel accommodations, summer celebrations and local attractions. Downtown commercial buildings, the 1925 earthquake and its aftermath, as well as the 1926 Old Spanish Days Fiesta are also depicted. Images of

prominent Santa Barbara sights no longer in existence include the famous Arlington Hotel and charming cottages at El Mirasol Hotel, now the site of Alice Keck Park Memorial Gardens.

The collection of 680 color and black and white lantern slides, dating from 1878 to 1926, was donated to SBTHP in the 1980s by leading citizen activist Pearl Chase who most likely added images to the original compilation. Over 200 photos from the collection feature events and places of interest in Santa Barbara. Additional photos were been taken in other parts of California and the U.S. and depict popular tourist destinations.



Old Spanish Days Fiesta Character, 1926.

This past spring, volunteers from SBTHP’s Research Committee and student interns cleaned all 680 slides and placed them in acid free paper sleeves for protection. SBTHP research center librarian Laurie Hannah and local photographer William B. Dewey then began scanning the images to create a preservation copy of each and to reproduce a number of slides for the new exhibit. Copies of the remaining slides are available for viewing as part of the Pearl Chase Collection at the Santa Barbara Presidio Research Center (by prior appointment only).

Lantern slides are positive film images sandwiched between two pieces of glass. Popular in the early twentieth century with armchair tourists and educators, the images are often colored by hand and show a range of painterly skill. The 3.5 x 4-inch slides were designed to be projected on a wall or screen through a variety of “Magic Lantern” projectors. With the advent of cinema and the first motion-picture machine the popularity of lantern shows and slides slowly dwindled. Magic Lantern slides were still used in schools and institutes into the 1940s when the smaller more compact 35mm slide format finally replaced them.

“Touring Santa Barbara through the Magic Lantern: Images from the Pearl Chase Collection, 1915–1926” is made possible by a grant from the Henry W. Bull Foundation.

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CALENDAR LISTING

Opening Reception:

“Touring Santa Barbara through the Magic Lantern: Images from the Pearl Chase Collection, 1915–1926”

Wednesday, July 29 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM

Casa de la Guerra

15 East De la Guerra Street

Santa Barbara, California 93101

Public Welcome

Exhibition Dates:

“Touring Santa Barbara through the Magic Lantern: Images from the Pearl Chase Collection, 1915–1926”

August 1, 2009 to January 31, 2010

Saturday - Sunday, Noon to 4:00 PM

Casa de la Guerra

15 East De la Guerra Street

Santa Barbara, California 93101

Museum Admission \$5 (children 16 or under are free)

Free for SBTHP members

For more information: www.sbthp.org or call (805) 965-0093

ABOUT Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP)— Since 1963 the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation has worked to protect, preserve, restore, reconstruct, and interpret historic sites in Santa Barbara County. SBTHP operates El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park under a unique agreement with California State Parks and recently purchased the building that housed Jimmy’s Oriental Gardens restaurant, providing an opportunity to interpret the history of Santa Barbara’s Asian American community. SBTHP owns, has restored and operates as an historic house museum Casa de la Guerra, the 1820s home of Presidio Comandante José de la Guerra and his family. In 2008, SBTHP signed an agreement with State Parks to operate and develop the Santa Inés Mission Mills, located near the town of Solvang, as a future California State Park. Learn more about SBTHP at www.sbthp.org.

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