



2020 THEME

Our Town

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2020

ANNOUNCING
THE TREASURY *of*
CLAREMONT MUSIC



Claremont Heritage is proud to present *The Treasury of Claremont Music* archive project. This project was conceived a number of years ago by Tom Skelly, an artist, radio DJ, and avid music fan, in order to document Claremont's expansive music community and the musicians who have called the Inland Empire home over the years. These artists and musicians have made an indelible impact on our cultural history and we hope to document and share this legacy for future generations to experience.

The Treasury of Claremont Music website is an online digital "Living Archive" that will showcase the rich cultural heritage of Claremont's musicians both past and present, providing context for the vibrant musical scene that still exists to this day. The Treasury of Claremont Music will continually be updated to highlight some of the regions most notable and important musicians by collecting biographies, images, and music clips to offer a glimpse of the diverse musical talent that has impacted so many. We hope to introduce and inform you about new musical artists and upcoming events, while providing a platform for further discovery of the music of Claremont. Contact us for more information about this exciting project and continued events! Please visit the website at:

www.TreasuryOfClaremontMusic.com

For more information about Claremont Heritage please email: info@claremontheritage.org, call: (909) 621-0848, or visit our website at www.claremontheritage.org.

CALENDAR

EVENT UPDATES

Due to COVID-19 many upcoming events are CANCELLED or POSTPONED

MURIEL O'BRIEN SPEAKER SERIES

THURSDAY, March 26, 2020 | FREE

JONATHAN CASPABELL | 7 - 8:30 pm

Ginger Elliott Center for Garner House
840 N Indian Hill Blvd.

Lecture - "Liturgical Music in Claremont 1880s to the Early Twenty-First Century"

HERITAGE WALKING TOURS

CLAREMONT VILLAGE

Historic Sites Guided Walking Tour
1st SATURDAY every month | 10:00 - 12:00

Meet at Old Depot, 1st & Harvard

Next Tours will be held

Saturday, March 7, April 4

Fee: \$5/person - RSVP 909-621-0848

CLAREMONT COLLEGES

Historic Sites Guided Walking Tour

Meet at Seaver House, Anita & College Ave

Next Tour will be held

Saturday, March 28, 2020 | 10:30 - 12:00

Fee: \$10/person RSVP 909-621-0848

EARTH DAY

Annual Earth Day Celebration

April 18, 2020 | 9 am-1 pm

Celebrate at Memorial Park

The
50th
Anniversary
of Earth Day
1970-2020

BY APPT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

CLAREMONT HERITAGE OFFICES & GIFTSHOP

Open Mon - Fri 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Historic Garner House

840 N Indian Hill Blvd.

Claremont, CA 91711 | 909-621-0848



Our mission is to advance, preserve and celebrate the historic architectural, natural and cultural resources of our community through collaboration, education and advocacy.

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CLAREMONT HERITAGE

Open Monday-Friday 9:00-3:00
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www.claremontheritage.org

2020 THEME

from the president

Our Town



JOHN NEUBER

With apologies to Thornton Wilder, "Our Town" is the Claremont Heritage theme for 2020.

In the play Our Town, Wilder hints that Grover's Corners, the town in which the play is set, is not just the small town that exists in the boonies of New Hampshire, but that it is an "every-town", with themes that are universal to all. Albeit Claremont is much larger than the two thousand plus population of Grover's Corners, the themes resound. Like the Stage Manager in the play, we are in the present, looking back at the people, events and traditions that have made Claremont, our town, a very, very, very fine town . . .

With apologies to Graham Nash also, whose lyrics from Our House I co-opted, our town is a very, very, very fine town, although I do believe our lyrics would need to be "with two dogs in the yard!"

During the year, we will explore our town in terms of what makes Claremont, Claremont. What makes Claremont so fiercely loved by the citizens, admired by outsiders and what makes it such a cultural heritage tourism destination in Southern California.

In keeping with our theme, Claremont Heritage will also kick-off the second phase of the "Our House" capital campaign to continue the restoration of Garner House, so that it may remain a City treasure to be enjoyed now and by generations to come.

Heritage also celebrates the kick-off the "Treasury of Claremont Music" that honors the musicians who have contributed to the cultural heritage of not only Claremont, but have made impacts far beyond the city limits, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Heritage will also be offering and promoting its small business memberships, designed to drive customers to businesses where they may not only shop or avail themselves of services, but find information about the town and history to help make their stay more informative and enjoyable, and to bring them back to explore more.

We invite you join with Claremont Heritage by participating in the many events that are offered throughout the year and to enjoy the things that make "Our Town" special.

JOHN NEUBER
President

Our Town



Save The Dates

2020 Gala

Please join us on

Saturday, May 9, 2020
5:30 - 10:00 pm

at the historic Padua Hills Theatre for the
Claremont Heritage Annual Awards Gala

Celebrating

Our Town

*enjoy an elegant evening for libations, hors
d'oeuvres, 3-course dinner, live & silent auction
and much, much more!*

Tickets: www.claremontheritage.org

STAY TUNED TBD

2020 Home Tour

Please join us on

Sunday, Oct 11, 2020
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Check in at the Historic Garner House
in Memorial Park

*One of Claremont's premier annual events
that is not to be missed!*

*Docent-lead Tours of six-historic homes!
This year's focus is on smaller homes and
includes an exhibition of Accessory Dwelling
Units (ADUs) at the Garner House*

Tickets go on Sale September 1st

PRESERVATION

VILLAGE SOUTH SPECIFIC PLAN - is currently being reviewed by the City and community input is welcomed.

The remarkably intact, historic Claremont Village is unique and very valuable based in large measure to the fact that the buildings have been preserved. As the VSSP Plan seeks to extend "more Village" to the south of the railroad tracks, Claremont's historic buildings continue to inform the development, in particular the historic Vortex building. All properties in the Plan Area shall be reviewed and assessed by a historic preservation professional regarding their potential as local, regional or national historic or cultural resources. Those found to be significant historic resources will be preserved, either adaptively reused or appropriately relocated in a manner that will serve to retain the history of Claremont and contribute to the future "sense of place" of the Plan Area. Join Claremont Heritage and stay informed! You will be glad you did.





Photography Steven J. Cahill

Long before recording as a solo artist in the 1970s, multi-instrumentalist Chris Darrow was a well-known musician and trusted sideman in Los Angeles' tightly knit music scene.

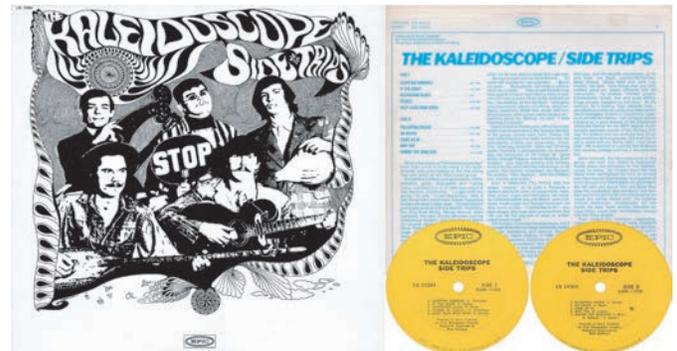
Proficient on guitar, bass, fiddle, violin, banjo, Dobro, lap steel, and mandolin, Darrow never actively sought employment as a musician, but the work always managed to find him. Darrow's fingerprints remain in conspicuous corners of the public consciousness. His early career was spent playing in bluegrass combo, The Dry City Scat Band, with David Lindley and fronting rock 'n' roll group, The Floggs. Together with David Lindley, Darrow would go on to found revered psychedelic outfit Kaleidoscope, hailed by Jimmy Page as his "favorite band of all time."

A stint with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band led to the formation of The Corvettes, which later resulted in long-term touring relationships with Linda Ronstadt and John Stewart. He contributed to pivotal session gigs with Leonard Cohen, James Taylor, and Hoyt Axton while crossing paths with Sly Stone, Sonny and Cher, Gram Parsons, Gene Vincent, Jim Morrison, Frank Zappa, and even Walt Disney and Hugh Hefner.

Son of artist, cartoonist, and Scripps College professor, Paul Darrow, Chris was born on July 30, 1944 and raised in the Los Angeles suburb of Claremont, California. Chris came of age with the sounds of Ritchie Valens and the Everly Brothers on the radio and was encouraged to explore his musical curiosities at a small, family-run music shop, Claremont's Folk Music Center, where he purchased his first guitar at age 13. "The Folk Music Center was a godsend to a kid like me who wanted to play guitar and learn about folk music," marveled Darrow. "You could take an instrument home and play it while you were paying it off." Ben Harper, grandson of shop owners Charles and Dorothy Chase, would later record a cover of Darrow's "Whipping Boy" as the lead single for his major label debut. After graduating from Claremont High School in 1962, Darrow attended

nearby Pitzer College, where he spent two years assisting respected folklorist Guy Carawan, who was teaching an American Folk Life Studies course. Carawan is responsible for introducing the world to iconic protest anthem "We Shall Overcome."

Kaleidoscope was formed in 1966, and included Darrow along with band mates David Lindley, Solomon Feldthouse, and Max Buda. The group pioneered an adventurous blend of Middle Eastern, country, folk, blues, and psychedelic musical styles that introduced Western ears to the intriguing instrumentation like that of the Turkish oud and bağlama (saz). The genre-defying sound of Kaleidoscope's 1967 debut, *Side Trips*, was recorded on some of the first eight-track recording machines in America, with its musical content anticipating the Worldbeat movement by decades. The diverse nature of Kaleidoscope's music allowed them the opportunity to perform with a wide spectrum of artists including Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, Taj Mahal, The Byrds, Ike and Tina Turner, Bo Diddley, Steppenwolf, The Grateful Dead, Mississippi John Hurt, Lightnin' Hopkins, The Impressions, and Procul Harum. Kaleidoscope even gigged outside of the Monterey Pop Festival, playing to the Hells Angels.



Booked for a week of gigs at Steve Paul's chic midtown Manhattan club, The Scene, Kaleidoscope had their gear stolen almost as soon as they arrived in town. Fortunately, the band was able to perform with loaner gear borrowed from fellow Southern Californian, Frank Zappa, who was in town recording with The Mothers of Invention. That night, Kaleidoscope opened for German singer, Nico, (whom Darrow had previously met in Los Angeles), who performed accompanied only by her Hammond B3 organ. "There were very few West Coast groups that had played in the east yet, and we 'long haired hippies' were the antithesis of the New York vibe at the time," said Darrow while reflecting on that particularly pivotal night. "Warhol and his minions showed up, The Cyrle was there, the Chambers Brothers, Leonard Cohen, and a pre-Blood Sweat Tears David Clayton-Thomas were all hanging out." Following Kaleidoscope's set, Leonard Cohen approached the band about playing on his forthcoming album and they agreed to help. The next day, Darrow, Lindley, and Buda sat in Cohen's apartment learning to play compositions that would ultimately become his debut masterwork, *Songs of Leonard Cohen*.

"Boy you guys really saved me when I did my first album in New York," remarked Leonard Cohen upon meeting Chris Darrow face to face for the first time in 34 years. Playing bass on the sessions with Cohen, Darrow appears on album tracks "So Long Marianne" and "Teachers." The Kaleidoscope/Cohen collaborations that didn't make Songs of Leonard Cohen's final cut were later resurrected for use in Robert Altman's film, McCabe and Mrs. Miller, including alternate versions of "Sisters of Mercy" and "The Stranger Song."

After seeing them perform in New York City, Chris Darrow next joined the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and returned to Los Angeles as an official member of the group. Chris recorded two albums with the Dirt Band including 1968's Rare Junk, also appearing in a cameo with the band in the 1969 western musical, Paint Your Wagon, starring Clint Eastwood.

In late 1969, Darrow and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's Jeff Hanna broke off and started their own group called The Corvettes, releasing two singles for the Dot record label, which were produced by Mike Nesmith of The Monkees. At the same time, Linda Ronstadt, a regular at Los Angeles clubs, the Ash Grove and Troubadour, was in immediate need of a backing band and the hard driving country sound of The Corvettes was a perfect match for the young singer's voice. While backing Ronstadt, Darrow and Hanna requested that they be able to keep their own identity, performing a Corvettes song or two per set. Hanna eventually returned to his full-time gig in the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and was replaced by (future Eagle) Bernie Leadon.

While playing with Ronstadt in New York, Chris Darrow spotted Peter Asher checking into the band's hotel. It was 1969 and Asher was fresh from his gig at Apple Records where he had given a young James Taylor his first record deal and was about to take on the position as Director of A&R for MGM Records. In addition to performing in Ronstadt's band, Darrow had also done occasional work as her road manager and seizing the opportunity in front of him, Darrow extended an invite to Asher to come see their show at The Bitter End. Five years later, Asher would go on to produce hit records for Linda Ronstadt.

Asher had also extended the offer to produce The Corvettes for MGM, but by the end of the band's stay in New York, several members had already moved on to other projects. Though an MGM deal for the Corvettes never transpired, Asher later called on Darrow to provide fiddle, as well as help curate the studio musicians on James Taylor's wildly popular second album *Sweet Baby James*. Darrow suggested that bassist Randy Meisner, then in Poco, and drummer Russ Kunkel be included on the project. He also made the suggestion to use Sunset Sound Studios and engineer, Bill Lazerus, to complete his contribution to Taylor's seminal album.

In 1972, Chris signed to Fantasy Records as a solo artist and released his first LP, Artist Proof. He moved over to the United Artists label for his next two releases, Chris Darrow (1973) and Under My Own Disguise (1974). Recorded in England and California with members of Fairport Convention, arranger and harpsichordist Dolly Collins, pedal steel genius B.J. Cole (Scott Walker, Elton John), and a host of others, these two albums pair Darrow's raw California twang and taste for experimentation with the crisp English production of the emerging UK folk-rock scene.

"I chose to go to England to record my second solo album," Darrow reminisced. "I had recorded a real American album with Artist Proof. To move to the next rung, I felt that it was necessary to expand and search out new territories. In the early seventies there was a movement around the world to return to the roots. Groups like Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span were exploring the English tradition, and there were movements in France and Ireland pushing for the return of indigenous traditions. These people were like minds to me and I sought to meld the various traditions on a pan-world level."

In the mid-'90s, Darrow started recording for Germany's Taxim label, releasing a two-CD collection entitled Coyote: Straight from the Heart in 1997 that included a 40-minute instrumental suite and 20 original songs. Taxim also re-released a majority of Darrow's solo back-catalog, which also included the albums Fretless (1979) and A Southern California Drive (1980). Artist Proof was re-released by the Drag City record label in 2013.

In retrospect, during the late 1960s and 1970s, there seemed to be a delicate balance of relationships that would influence the evolution of country rock music for the remainder of the 20th century and beyond. Chris Darrow was right in the middle of all of this and played an integral part of the formation and ultimate success of more than just a handful of his contemporaries.

Chris Darrow passed away at the age of 75 on January 15, 2020



Photography Steven J. Cahill



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE PADUA HILLS THEATRE & MEXICAN PLAYERS

2020 marks 88 years since the Mexican Players first took stage at the Padua Hills Theatre, a small dinner theatre in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains above Claremont. The Padua Hills were named after the region in Italy that has similar physical characteristics. Herman and Bess Garner owned the land and commissioned the Theatre in 1930, designed by noted Pasadena architects Marston and Maybury.

The Padua Hills Theatre was the longest running theater in the United States to feature Mexican-theme musicals and was even featured by Walt Disney in *The Three Caballeros* movie, a result of the Good Neighbor Policy of 1933, an initiative to improve relations with the nations of Central and South America. Founded by Herman and Bess Garner, the Padua Hills Theatre operated under the Padua Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of intercultural understanding between European Americans and those of Mexican descent.

The Theatre opened in 1931 as a home for the Claremont Community Players who performed one-act British plays in a dinner theater atmosphere. The kitchen and wait staff was primarily composed of Mexican Americans who had moved to Claremont with their families who worked in the booming citrus industry. After a trip to Italy where the Garners experienced singing waiters and waitresses in a local restaurant, Bess Garner thought the concept might add to the atmosphere at the Padua Hills Theatre.

This was an immediate hit and the close association with the Community Players provided a constant stimulus, so finally the young people decided to experiment with acting, just for their own amusement.

Mrs. Garner wrote in her journal the episode early in 1932 that gave impetus to the ideas of using these entertainers in regular plays. She related that one day the assistant chef was discovered in the kitchen “directing a particularly gory Spanish tragedy with a cast of every available bus boy, waitress and dishwasher.” This incident revealed the enthusiasm for acting and the undeniable talents of the group, and it prompted the Padua Hills management to consider channeling their energies in to a more suitable type of production, one which would combine acting with their wonderful abilities as musical entertainers.

As this idea developed, Mr. and Mrs. Garner had an inspiration which ultimately hastened the organization of the Mexican Players. Why not produce a musical play that would be an attraction for visitors from all over the world attending the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Performers for the Mexican Players were recruited from the Claremont barrios, particularly Arbol Verde, the East Barrio. Soon a troupe of singers and dancers were presenting plays, songs, and dances drawn from Mexican and indigenous Native American traditions.

The Theatre soon became a cross-cultural experience for millions of visitors who travelled along famous Route 66 for many years to come. The Mexican Players performed at the Padua Hills Theatre until 1974, and the theatre closed in the early 1980’s.

Please

HELP US COMPLETE THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT!

Claremont Heritage is working on a Documentary that tells the stories of the Mexican Players and the Padua Hills Theatre. The project has been in development for over three years and we have just received a grant to help fund the film. We still need to raise approximately \$30,000 to finish the documentary. You can help with this very important project that offers new scholarship and history that would probably be lost if not documented. if you would like to contribute to this important project Please contact David Shearer at (909) 621-0848 or email: director@claremontheritage.org All donors will be given credit in the film. Thank you!



Norma Tanega (1939 - 2019)

a California native and Claremont resident, was a publicly revered soul. Her influence reverberated through the Claremont community during her life, and more recently, in her passing. Norma was a Claremont fixture—her smile and affable personality filled rooms with joy and creativity. Known primarily for her work "Walkin' My Cat Named Dog," art filled every part of Norma. She did not reserve her creativity for one outlet—in addition to songwriting, proficiency in multiple instruments, and outstanding performing skills, of which she practiced even into her last months of her full and joyous life, she also loved painting and drawing. Poetry found its way into her everyday language. Norma was a force of creativity and inspiration.

Nerdy

and down to earth, she let it be known "anything I learned was from Star Trek or Star Wars." That or from her teachers she honored to her last days. She waited tables for years while living in various cities, all before embarking on her fulfilling career as a teacher. Her biggest concerns were the lack of regard for the importance of the life-changing impacts teachers have on their students, and their underappreciation in society. That is not to say Tanega did not receive formal appreciation for her work with schools—she was the recipient of various recognitions and trophies in honor of her dedication.

Norma

dedicated most of her life to others, and the pursuit of teaching. A teacher in high school took interest in her and changed her life course. She attended Scripps College per their recommendation and was successful in her academic career, graduating in 1960 with a degree in Fine Arts. She followed her time at Scripps with attending Claremont Graduate University, obtaining a Master's degree in Fine Arts. After a life of music-making and extensive performance, during which she garnered the adoration of Bob Dylan, Morrissey and other greats, she settled in Claremont in a house fitting for her artistic sensibilities, a studio-house—designed by Claremont architect Foster Rhodes Jackson—known for its proximity to Mount Baldy and the Claremont Loop. Norma's art and life was very much integrated into Claremont's history and spirit.

The studio was built by Scripps ceramicist, Lindley Mixon, in a way exchanging property between generations via the connection of great art, as she lived and breathed the work of other Claremont greats.

Norma

was simultaneously a public figure yet an introverted person. She appreciated her time alone, yet consistently engaged with those around her impacting lives with her love, hope, and art. She was so busy pouring her life into others and the community, that she made her last painting in 2015. Tanega wanted more time for her creativity, but she always put others first. Her work explored a wide range of things, and investigated topics very relevant to crises today, such as the pharmaceutical industry's impact on the individual. She saw things in society that weren't obvious to the public at the time, always ahead of the curve, and poignant in her analyses and depictions. Her observant nature was a result of her brilliance and empathy, the ability to tune into the soul of a community and the collective struggles of others.

The

values Norma ascribed to were virtuous—love, kindness, compassion, patience, and the exchange of knowledge. She spent over twenty years as a schoolteacher, after she concluded her successful musical campaigns. She chose to engage with younger generations over pursuing celebrity.

I only met her from her work this past year at Claremont Heritage. In this time, she gave me patience and kindness, small moments and feelings I will take with me forever.

Claremont

will miss her. We lost a beautiful soul, but rest assured, her impact on the city and her bright influence lives on. She gained inspiration from nature, from the wind whistling through chimes in courtyards.

Now she is that wind.

words by evie kaufman



CLAREMONT HERITAGE

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Our Town

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EVENT SPACE
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property at claremontheritage.org
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or email us at:
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MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS:
Claremont Heritage has been working to document and preserve our history for over 45 years. We have created educational programs, films, publications and exhibitions that celebrate our heritage and create scholarship for future generations to learn from. As a small non-profit that depends on our members for support both financially and as volunteers, we are grateful for your commitment to "Keeping Claremont's History Alive".

With recent reductions in funding from the City and the current COVID-19 outbreak, we have had to cancel or postpone upcoming venue rentals and events that generate a large part of our annual revenues. Although we have cut back on staffing, we will continue to provide the best possible service to our community. Please stay informed and visit us virtually online:

www.ClaremontHeritage.org

Thank you to our Business Supporters



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