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:


For more information about Claremont Heritage please email: info@claremontheritage.org, call: (909) 621-0848, or visit our website at [www.claremontheritage.org](http://www.claremontheritage.org).
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 NEIUBER
President
In 2018, America celebrated the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act. With the passage of the National Trails System Act in 1968, America was given a gift – the creation and protection of some of Americans' favorite places to discover the great outdoors by identifying and mapping our Historic National Trails. Claremont has two such trails that intersect our foothill community – the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail. Please join Claremont Heritage in recognizing this little known aspect of our history.

Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

Hundreds of horses and cattle from the interior of Mexico to establish a fort and mission in what became San Francisco. On January 2, 1776, they camped at a spot along San Antonio Creek in what is now Montclair, and on a cold, rainy January third they made their way along a northwesterly route through what is now Claremont. Two days later they arrived at the San Gabriel Mission; on March 28, an advance party reached the Golden Gate.

Old Spanish National Historic Trail.

This trade route between Santa Fe, New Mexico and the Los Angeles Plaza was used from 1829 into the mid-1850s. Mule pack trains carried blankets and other woolen goods westward; these were traded for California horses and mules, which went in the opposite direction. From Santa Fe, several routes converged in Cajon Pass. In terms of present-day landmarks, this single trail passed through Claremont south of Interstate 10, along Bryn Mawr Road and Auto (no remnants of the trail in Claremont.)

Other local routes.

Historic Route 66, which passes through Claremont along Foothill Boulevard, could be included in this. Currently the National Park Service has a Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program. The route of the proposed, commemorating a stage service that operated from 1858 to 1861 between St. Louis and Memphis and San Francisco, passes through Pomona just south of Claremont.

Facing up to controversy. The idea is to recognize, rather than celebrate, the National Historic Trails as part of Claremont's and California's history. The Anza expedition led to the founding of a Spanish Franciscan mission and military outpost, and on Native Californians and their cultures. The Old Spanish Trail facilitated the capture and sale of Indian slaves, mainly by Indians from rival tribes, but also by Mexicans and Anglo-Americans. Rather than trying to encourage discussion about them.

https://www.trails50.org/the-trails-act/

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 Vortox 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.
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 Cyrcle 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
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 into 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!
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.
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