



La Campana

SUMMER/FALL 2024 | VOL. 50, NO. 2



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La Campana is a publication of the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Members of SBTHP receive *La Campana* as a benefit of membership.

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Frederico Viscara poses with a Chevrolet in Pismo Beach. Courtesy of "Central California Coast Manongs" project of Clarito "Bing" Aradanas.

BACK COVER

Presidio Archaeology Camp Volunteer Assistant Counselor, Fiona Brodie (center), helps two campers screen dirt and soil to recover artifacts during their excavation of the Presidio Northern Second Defense Wall in early July 2024. Photo by Nicole Caldwell.

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OUR MISSION

The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation stewards the past and present of the Presidio Neighborhood and inspires preservation advocacy throughout the County in order to create a more vibrant community.

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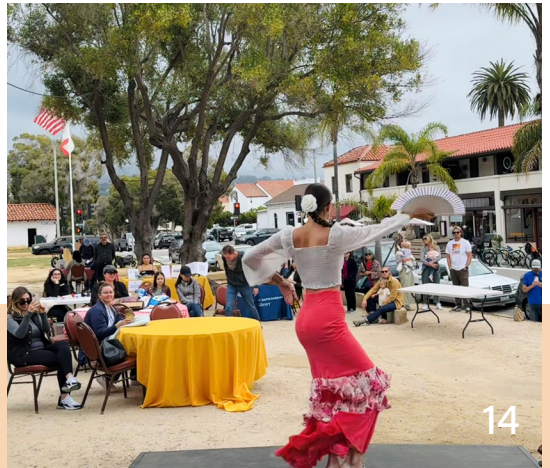
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Letter from the President



The popular image of Santa Barbara is that of a Spanish Colonial city of white stucco buildings with red tile roofs. Santa Barbara is also known for the Mission, the Presidio, and our annual Fiesta community celebration. Of course, this is accurate only up to a point.

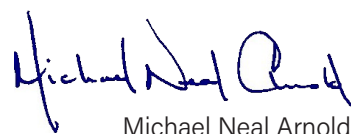
The Spanish Colonial period only lasted for forty years beginning with the founding of the Presidio in 1782 and ending with Mexican Independence in 1821. The Mexican period was less than 30 years; that ended with California becoming part of the United States. These combined eras were a period that dramatically altered the Chumash communities that had existed here for thousands of years prior to the European settlement. While culturally Hispanic, the presidio soldiers were somewhat racially mixed. Some were, in fact, of African descent. A few Presidio soldiers married Chumash women. During the Mexican period, there was a trickle of American influx. These early Yankee settlers often married into already settled Mexican period families and were somewhat assimilated.

In the late 1840s, Santa Barbara was “conquered” by Fremont and shortly thereafter absorbed, with the rest of California, into the United States. After that, there was a flood of new settlements. The population of the city doubled in a decade. From that time on, there have been wave upon wave of new settlers. There were the prosperous Anglo Americans from the mid-west and east who were attracted to Santa Barbara because of the climate and setting. There were Italians and Spaniards who came for work as craftsmen and artisans. There were Asians—Chinese, Japanese, Fili-

pino—who came for farming and other work. The African American community has never been large, but it is hearty. It grew significantly in the period right after WW II. There were Mexicans who came, and come, in various waves. Some escaping political unrest in Mexico, some coming for work or enterprise potential. And, all the while, there were Americans and others attracted to the city for its beauty but also because of growth of opportunity around the university and tech industries. All of these added to the Chumash, Spanish, Mexican base.

I am sure the tapestry metaphor can be applied to many communities. It certainly applies to Santa Barbara. The strands of our tapestry include Native American, Spanish, Mexican, Anglo Americans, Southern Europeans, Asians, African American and many others. And each strand is itself made up of thousands of individuals who have lived in, and contributed to, the culture that is Santa Barbara.

What Santa Barbara is today is a direct result of the influences of the many people who have gone before us. And, today, every person who lives here is continuing to help form our ever-evolving culture. Our history is not without tragedy and error. No history is. But it is a rich history that is much more diverse, much more complicated, than might be readily apparent on the surface.


Michael Neal Arnold



Courtesy of The SPACE.

Su'nan, The SPACE

SBTHP's Associate Director for Public Engagement, Kevin McGarry, recently sat down with Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation Member, Cultural Educator and SBTHP Board Member, Mia Lopez, about her new role as Founding Director of The SPACE, her organizational plans, including The SPACE's recent move to new educational headquarters in Casa de la Guerra.

Can you please share a little bit about yourself and your personal story/background?

I always feel so uncomfortable talking about myself, I'm never sure what others think are important things to know, so I'm just going to let you know what feels right for me. My name is MariaElena Lopez, many people know me as Mia Lopez. I'm ok with either. I'm a mom of three, who are all adults now. When my kids started school, I found

out that the information provided in school about our Chumash culture was either very limited, nonexistent or always seemed to be told in the past tense. I started creating relationships with some of my kids' teachers and coming in to share during classes. Soon, these visits to my kids' classes turned into return visits. I'd go in the next year for the same teachers, and then gradually this turned into calls and visit requests from other teachers, schools and parents of other Chumash students.

I have now been providing cultural education throughout our tribal community for over twenty years. I am also a representative for my tribe, the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, as needed for different projects to protect our lands, waters, coastal areas and ocean, and have sat in several positions on our tribal council over the last several years. I am proud to help my community protect our lands and communities. I have had the opportunity and privilege to work at the Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation as an administrative assistant and cultural educator, helping to provide educational programs in the Malibu, Ventura and Santa Paula areas. I have been involved with the American Indian and Indigenous Students Association at UC Santa Barbara since 2013, providing support and community connections for our incoming student residents. Other hats I wear in the community have included being on the advisory council for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary nomination

process supporting our Northern Chumash Tribal Council and being on the board of our local American Indian Health and Services clinic.

What is The SPACE?

The SPACE is an organization created through the dreams and wishes of many people who just wanted a space to sit together, share their knowledge and craft skills and be with each other. The SPACE is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and celebrating the rich indigenous culture of the Chumash people through education and art. Through empowering both the local indigenous community and surrounding communities, we will create a future of cultural preservation and environmental stewardship where history, wisdom, and traditions are respected and celebrated.

You have been involved with so much important community-centered work — as a cultural educator and community leader — in the Santa Barbara area for many years, what inspired you to create The SPACE, and why now?

For the last several years, my community (including my cousins) and I have been talking about how great it would be if we had a place to do our crafts such as: baskets, weaving, plant, medicine, abalone, painting, and other hands-on work. We thought it would be great if we just had a place that we could go and sit and be together, too. Recently, when I quit work to stay home and take care of my grandson, I decided that maybe I could be the one to find that place for us; find that space for us to make all these dreams happen. Find a space to sit with community and my grandson, and do this together.



Courtesy of The SPACE.

Tell us about the new location, your future plans for The SPACE, and the emerging partnership with SBTHP.

Currently, The SPACE is being housed at 15 E. De La Guerra St. at the Casa de la Guerra, and it's right in the heart of Santa Barbara which is great location. Historically, there hasn't really been a lot of foot traffic here during the week so I'm looking forward to helping people learn that there's something happening here that it is a good place to come and be and join in. I'm excited to partner with SBTHP, and look forward to helping incorporate more of the Chumash history and story into the Presidio story, I hope to bring more opportunities for our Chumash artists and educators to be highlighted, so having the space here at SBTHP's Casa de la Guerra seems like the right place to be at this time. I'm excited about the possibilities!

What do you hope The SPACE's impact to be?

I think the biggest impact that I want The SPACE to make is to help everyone in our community have a better understanding of who we are as Chumash people, the importance of caring for our Lands and why it is important to us, and the special things about our area that people don't know about- so they can find a deeper connection. I hope that The SPACE can be a hub for education of all our people, from young to old, so that all our kids can learn together, grow together and be seen. I hope that The SPACE will inspire others and become a vibrant cultural center where we can come together as people and share our knowledge and stories of our families, and our history in this place. I also hope to bring a better understanding to



Courtesy of The SPACE.

the community, at large, about the impacts that we have faced here in our beautiful city but also the many different groups of Chumash people that there are in our territories from Ragged Point to Topanga Canyon, and inland to Bakersfield. It's a really large area and I think there should be more visibility for all our Chumash people. I want others to understand how many groups of us there are, and that we are all working really hard in our own areas to protect our spaces, our histories and our stories.

Anything else we should know?

The SPACE is for everyone. This is a place where everyone is welcome, and we can all be together as a community to share stories about all of us, our families and all our beautiful histories. Come by to visit, talk and learn a new skill. ●

SBTHP's New Exhibit, *Manongs on the Central Coast: Forming Communities Across Generations*, Explores Santa Barbara's Filipino American History

by Dez Alaniz, Director of the Presidio Research Center
and Kevin McGarry, Associate Director for Public Engagement

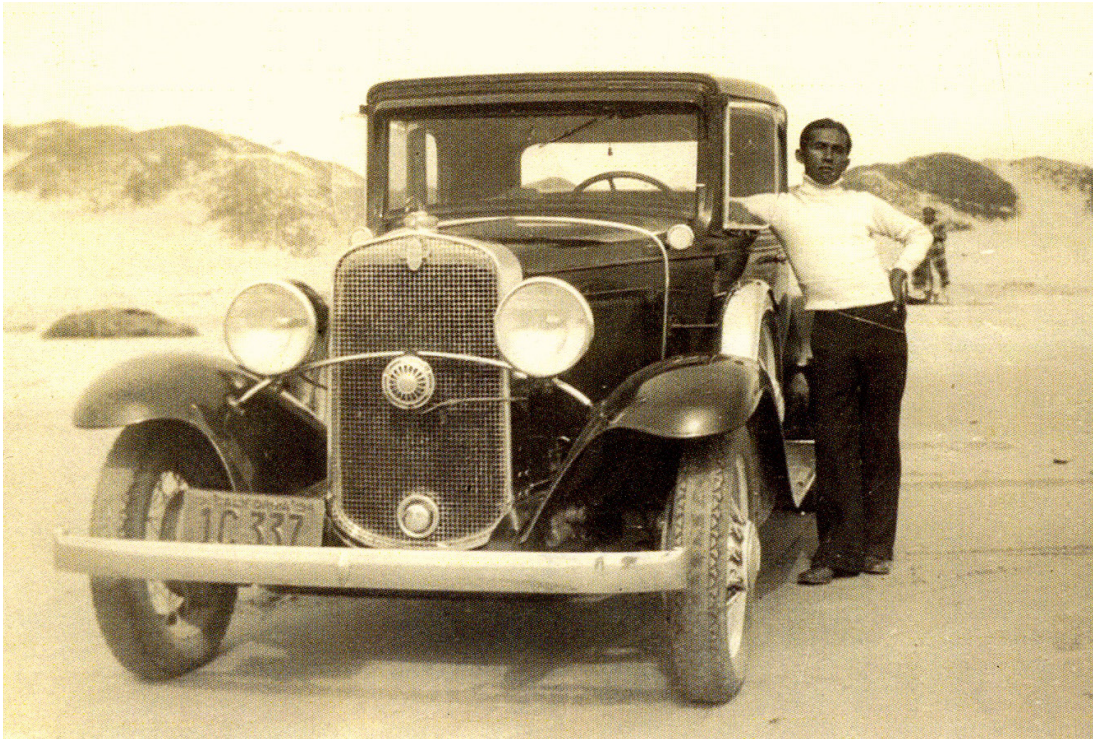
The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) works to document, interpret and promote the diversity of cultures and layered history of the Presidio Neighborhood. *Manongs on the Central Coast: Forming Communities Across Generations* epitomizes this organizational effort by highlighting the multigenerational contributions and lived experiences of Santa Barbara's Filipino American community.

Manongs on the Central Coast was curated by Shannon Toribio, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Religious Studies at UC Santa Barbara, and a former SBTHP intern. Shannon's academic research focuses on Asian and Asian American religion, specifically Filipino New Religious Movements, and indigeneity, diaspora, identity, race/ethnicity, and post-colonial critique.

In 2023, SBTHP received a grant from the state of California aimed at preventing hate crimes. The Stop The Hate program, administered by the California Department of Social Services in partnership with the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs, is part of ongoing efforts in California to provide direct support for communities impacted by hate incidents and support victims.

Manongs on the Central Coast: Forming Communities Across Generations is currently on display at Casa de la Guerra (15. E De La Guerra Street) and viewable during regular museum hours, Thursday – Sunday, 12:00 – 4:00pm.

For more information, please visit: sbthp.org/manongs



MGA MANONG SA CENTRAL COAST

MANONGS ON THE CENTRAL COAST

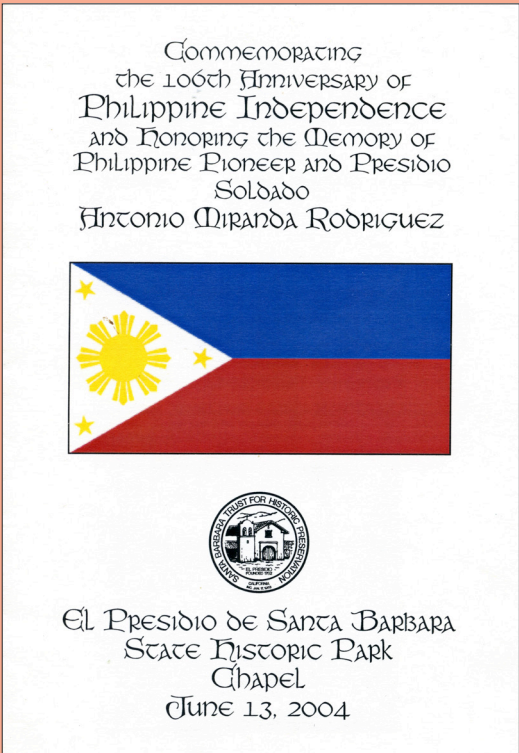
FORMING COMMUNITIES ACROSS GENERATIONS

EXPLORE THE RICH HISTORY AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF
OUR LOCAL FILIPINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY; AS TOLD
THROUGH MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY STORIES,
PHOTOGRAPHS, ORAL HISTORIES, AND DOCUMENTS.

NOW ON DISPLAY AT CASA DE LA GUERRA (15 E. DE LA GUERRA STREET)
THURSDAYS THROUGH SUNDAYS FROM 12-4 PM

SBTHP.ORG/MANONGS





Top: A plaque in the Presidio Chapel, donated by the FCA in 1986, commemorates the first known Filipino to be buried in California, Antonio Miranda Rodriguez. Photo by Dez Alaniz.

Bottom: Program cover for celebration of life event for Antonio Miranda Rodriguez and the 106th anniversary of Philippine Independence, where scholar and librarian Eloisa Gomez Borah delivered a short lecture. Her remarks are included in the Fall 2004 issue of La Campana.

If you have ever strolled along the 400 block of State Street in downtown Santa Barbara, you most likely walked past a white sign with black lettering that reads, "FILIPINO COMMUNITY BLDG." Indeed, most passersby view the sign without context and may wonder about the building's cultural and/or historical significance. In 1955, Santa Barbara's Filipino Community Association (FCA) raised the funds and purchased 425 State Street to be its main headquarters in Santa Barbara. Often referred to as "the club" by its members, the FCA became a major cultural hub and social center for Filipino Americans living across the Central Coast. Today, many Santa Barbara residents know of the FCA; however, most likely do not know that the Filipino community's roots in Santa Barbara extend back much further. In fact, the FCA's purchase of 425 State Street occurred nearly half a century after the first wave of Filipinos arrived in the region. The Filipino migrants that came to California in the early 1900s are now commonly referred to as the *manong* generation.

The Filipino community's history in Santa Barbara can, in fact, be traced all the way back to the late 1700s. Although there are sources dating the presence of Filipino sailors arriving on Spanish Galleons as early as the late 1500s, the first documented Filipino to be buried in California was Antonio Miranda Rodriguez. A *soldado de cuera* (Spanish soldier), gunsmith and eventual armorer for the Santa Barbara Presidio, Rodriguez was buried in the Presidio Chapel on May 26, 1784. A plaque donated by the FCA remains in the Presidio Chapel today to commemorate not just Rodriguez's incredible journey and story, but to highlight the often-overlooked ethnic and cultural diversity of Spanish and Mexican-period Santa Barbara (1782-1849). SBTHP and the FCA have



Patria Fuentes Van Tassel (left), Manuel Crisostomo (center) and Clarito "Bing" Aradanas (right) were community panelists at SBTHP's exhibit opening program at Casa de la Guerra on August 25, 2024. Photo by Gary Colmenar.

collaborated in other ways over the years. For example, the Presidio Chapel's altarpiece, or *reredos*, was purchased with funds donated by the FCA, and there are also numerous mentions of Filipino Americans and the FCA in SBTHP's archival collections, including in the John and Jeremy Hass Papers.

Despite these earlier, small-scale collaborations between SBTHP and the FCA, the real impetus for the project that would become *Manongs on the Central Coast* did not occur until 2017, when Patria Fuentes Van Tassel donated a small collection of her family papers, photographs and ephemera related to the establishment and operations of the FCA. However, the Fuentes Van Tassel collection sat on the processing shelf in SBTHP's Presidio Research Center (PRC) until the summer of 2022, when Shannon Toribio, a Ph.D. candidate from UC Santa Barbara's Department of Religious Studies and Public Humanities Graduate Fellow, started his sum-

mer internship at SBTHP. Shannon's academic research and cultural background in Filipino communities and cultures combined with SBTHP PRC director Dez Alaniz's experience with recording and cataloging oral histories, created a unique opportunity to take off the shelf and finish processing the Fuentes Van Tassel collection.

By the fall of 2022, it grew apparent that the opportunity to create more interest and knowledge around the histories of Filipino communities in Santa Barbara had grown exponentially. SBTHP applied for and received a Community Arts Grant through the Santa Barbara Office of Arts and Culture. The funding increased SBTHP's resources and expanded the project. Shannon continued as SBTHP's PRC intern and continued collecting and cataloguing Filipino oral histories, photographs and documents. This concerted effort led to SBTHP working more directly with Santa Barbara's Filipino American community



SBTHP staff and Filipino American community members after the Manongs on the Central Coast public program on August 25, 2024. Photo by Gary Colmenar.

members, included other local descendants of the *manongs*. One common theme in the oral histories collected is the significance of the *manong* generation's role in growing the communities on the Central Coast, particularly in Santa Barbara and Lompoc. Clarito 'Bing' Aradanas, *manong* generation descendant and scholar, brought in with him over two decades of significant research about the Central Coast *manongs* that included interview notes, field research and photographs.

As our team learned more from community members, we were also inspired by the work of other regional projects, including the University of California Santa Cruz's *Watsonville is in the Heart* a digital community archive focused on Filipino communities in the Pajaro Valley addressing similar gaps in local and regional history in Central California, Monterey Bay region. What started with a simple oral history interview with Patti Fuentes Van Tas-

sel the opportunity to record her stories about her father and great-uncle's work in organizing the Filipino community in Santa Barbara, grew into the beginning of a two-year public history project. It is now a robust archive of digital and physical materials documenting the activism and careers of local Filipino Americans in areas such as service in the military, state and county government, education and academia, and community activism.

By early 2023, through continued community gatherings and introductions, more oral history interviews, and the sharing of hundreds of family photographs and documents, SBTHP had easily collected enough material for a full-scale community history exhibit. Seeing this momentum, SBTHP Executive Director Anne Petersen then applied for and secured state funding for the creation of such an exhibit. SBTHP received a grant administered by the California Department

of Social Services in partnership with the Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs. The funding put the exhibit project into high gear, allowing for the necessary allocation of SBTHP staff time and resources, and making it possible for SBTHP to hire then-intern, Shannon Toribio, to compile SBTHP's research and resources and curate the exhibit. With the funding, SBTHP also hired talented graphic designer, Terry Duffy (Glyphics Design), outsourced the exhibit panel fabrication, and had dedicated resources for marketing and public programming surrounding the exhibit's opening to the public.

With SBTHP staff support, Shannon developed an impact statement focused on the scope of the project and key takeaways for exhibit visitors. He then began drafting an exhibit script identifying specific themes while sifting through hours of oral history testimonies, hundreds of photographs and documents, and three-dimensional items including clothing and family heirlooms. As Director of the Presidio Research Center, Dez's role was to support Shannon's efforts by helping him identify authentic materials, track the items he was selecting for the exhibit, and ensure that there was correct attribution and permission of use records for those materials being selected. Throughout this year-long exhibit creation process, Shannon and Dez held regular meetings with the community of donors to verify dates, names, and keep the donors and their families informed about approaching project milestones. We also, more informally, shared project developments through emails and phone conversations.

Filipino American communities are among the most under-documented groups in the United States, and ultimately, *Manongs on the Central Coast* is just one community

exhibit that highlights a handful of individual and family stories. However, as Clarito 'Bing' Aradanas so eloquently asserted to an audience at the exhibit opening event held on August 25, 2024, at Casa de la Guerra. Filipinos then and the Filipino American community today, "from the war that created them as colonial subjects to their collective struggles and collective triumphs and their collective contributions to building of this country, their stories have yet to be more fully told in the public sphere...and so, the existence of this exhibit is a wonderful step in the right direction."

Manongs on the Central Coast: Forming Communities Across Generations will be on display at Casa de la Guerra through spring 2025. After this, SBTHP hopes that this special exhibit will travel to other regional museums and public spaces across the Central Coast, so more can learn about the contributions and resiliency of the *manongs* and the generations that have followed and today call Santa Barbara their home.



SBTHP members and exhibit donors explore the exhibit at a special unveiling reception on Thursday, August 22, 2024. Photo by Celina Garcia.



SBTHP's Director of the Presidio Research Center, Dez Alaniz (left), and exhibit curator Shannon Toribio in front of Manongs on the Central Coast introductory panel at Casa de la Guerra. Photo by Celina Garcia



Santa Barbara Filipino American community members pose inside SBTHP's Manongs on the Central Coast exhibit. Photo by Gary Colmenar.

SBTHP's Director of Programs, Rae Mottus, sat down with Shannon Toribio and Dez Alaniz to ask them about their experiences in putting together *Manongs on the Central Coast* exhibition. See their conversation below.

How did you approach the exhibit planning and curation?

Shannon: We were fortunate to have generous community members who were willing to donate photos and other materials to the Trust. I chose different materials from different people including photographs, passports and other documents, and even some old crates from the PI Market. Each of these items tell their own stories about the *manong* and *manang's* experiences.

Dez: There's so much opportunity for creating additional programming or other kinds of learning outcomes because the themes in this exhibit are really built on the collections themselves. So, I don't want to think of the exhibit as the only educational tool of this project. Being able to support research and further research in these areas is another component of making these materials visible to people in our community.

What aims and narratives did you want to highlight in this exhibit?

Shannon: I chose to center the exhibit on community and the role that places and spaces played in forming the community. These are all informed by our conversations with community members through the Filipino Oral History Project. For example, they talked about the Filipino Community Building on State Street and how instrumental it has been for the community; and there is also the PI Market chain, although they are no longer around, the community built around that space is still there. So, there's different ways of looking at the continuance of these communities and how later generations also benefit from having these communities around.

Dez: I think this is a feature of working in a historic preservation context. This naturally guided our scope towards using physical structures as sites for having these conversations. There are so many other structures that are associated with non-white communities in Santa Barbara that don't exist anymore. So how do you make those histories visible, absent of these physical structures? Exhibits are just one way to do that.

What challenges did you face in curating an exhibit about a community that has been often overlooked within California history?

Shannon: Because these Filipino communities, especially on the Central Coast, have been largely invisible, I was worried about the process of making them more visible. Since I was taking on the responsibility of how they will be represented through this exhibit, I tried to be careful with that. I don't want to over-romanticize things. These are all in the context of U.S. imperialism, right? While we're not using that exact language, it's implied. I also don't want to make this appear representative of the entirety of the *manong* experience because Central Coast is just one geographic location, but what I'm trying to do is to add to that broader conversation—that there's another layer to this history that we have not read about.

Dez: Making the choice to focus this exhibit on the materials donated to the Research Center, and the communities we have developed because of those relationships, has also meant that there are many perspectives that are missing from those collections too. No exhibit, including this one, is completely comprehensive. We hope that community members who see this exhibit are excited to learn more and that this is the first of many Filipino-focused community exhibits in Santa Barbara! ●

Programs Update

by Kevin McGarry, Associate Director for Public Engagement

In the spring and summer of 2024, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) welcomed thousands of people to the historic Presidio Neighborhood with a robust and diverse slate of educational programs, events, tours and activities.

On Saturday, May 4th, 2024, we held our third annual Community History Day at El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park (El Presidio SHP). Each spring, SBTHP invites community members and visitors to a free, educational and family-friendly program that celebrates and commemorates Santa Barbara's diverse cultural history. With inclusive cultural activities and offerings including live

performances, hands-on learning stations, arts and crafts tables, booths from local organizations and history tours and exhibits, Community History Day sheds light on the layered histories and communities of Santa Barbara's Presidio Neighborhood, over time. SBTHP's 2024 Community History Day was made possible thanks to generous support from The June G. Outhwaite Charitable Trust. With over 400 attendees and participants this year, SBTHP's Community History Day celebration continues to provide a special space for historical dialogue, understanding and reflection.

To learn more about SBTHP's Community History Day, visit: sbthp.org/chd



Photos from left to right: 1. SBTHP staff and Asian American Affinity Group members with filmmakers, Jennifer Takaki and Linda Hattendorf, at the July 5th screening of "Photographic Justice: The Corky Lee Story." Photo by Dr. Paul Mori.

2. Flamenco dancers from Zerneno Dance Academy performed at the 2024 Community History Day on May 4, 2024. Photo by Kevin McGarry.

3. SBTHP Director of the Presidio Research Center, Dez Alaniz, facilitated a Community Zine-making booth in front of SBTHP's Year of the Dragon Mural at Community History Day. Photo by Kevin McGarry.

Programs Update

In July 2024, SBTHP's Asian American Affinity Group (AAAG) welcomed over 600 people to the historic Alhecama Theatre for our fifteenth annual Asian American Film Series (AAFS). Now an enduring public program rooted in the history of the Asian communities that once thrived in the Presidio Neighborhood, SBTHP's AAFS screens poignant, contemporary films that are hand-selected by our AAAG members and illuminate the diverse cultures and lived experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities across the United States. 2024 AAFS selections included four feature-length documentaries; each of which spotlights significant societal and cultural contributions made by AAPI individuals; the 2024 selections

were: "Photographic Justice: The Corky Lee Story," "Nurse Unseen," "Like a Rolling Stone: The Life and Times of Ben Fong-Torres," and "Finding Her Beat." Filmmakers Jennifer Takaki, Linda Hattendorf, Michele Josue, Suzanne Joe Kai, and Doug Blush traveled to Santa Barbara for the screenings of their films, to meet our community members and to answer their questions. SBTHP staff thanks these incredible filmmakers, our AAAG members, and our generous sponsor, the George H. Griffiths and Olive J. Griffiths Charitable Foundation, for making the Series a great success! ●

To learn more about SBTHP's Asian American Film Series, visit: sbthp.org/aafs



4. AAFS audience on July 19th screening of "Like a Rolling Stone: The Life and Times of Ben Fong-Torres." Photo by Kevin McGarry.

5. Female taiko drummers from Togen Daiko performed before and after the screening of "Finding Her Beat" on July 26th. Photo by Kevin McGarry.



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JANUARY 1 - JUNE 30, 2024

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation counts on the support of its members and donors. SBTHP gratefully acknowledges the membership gifts and donations received between January 1 – June 30, 2023. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy; please contact SBTHP at (805) 966-5378 to report an error or omission.

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