

Chapter 16

HISTORY OF THE FEDERAL BUILDING IN BALBOA PARK

The Federal Building, in the Palisades section of Balboa Park, was constructed in nine weeks after the U.S. Congress had approved a bill, March 7, 1935, authorizing construction of an exhibit building for \$125,000 with another \$225,000 for exhibits at the California-Pacific International Exposition to be held in Balboa Park beginning May 29, 1935.(1)



Upon learning in February 1935 that the bill for the Federal Building has passed the U.S. Senate, Exposition art and architectural departments began drawing up plans. These replaced a Maya Revival style pyramid for Standard Oil, resembling El Castillo at Chichen Itza, that had appeared on a preliminary map of buildings in the Palisades. Plans were ready when construction began in April. Under the general direction of architect Richard Requa, Juan Larrinaga headed the art department and H. Louis Bodmer the architectural department. Due to the press of work on other projects, contractor M. H. Golden did the construction work rather than the State Employment Relief Association (SERA). Foreman O.B. Cole directed the labor and H. H. Barter supervised, as he did on other buildings in the Palisades.(2)

Requa had conceived an architectural plan for the Palisades showing how the forms of indigenous architecture in the American southwest and in

Mexico could be used to produce a distinctive American style of architecture . . . an architecture that was different from the architecture based on vernacular buildings in Southern Spain that Requa normally used. The industrial, gear-like Ford Building, at the southern tip of the Palisades, did not correspond to Requa's scheme; however, since it was not a copy of European buildings, Requa chose to regard it as the peak of an evolutionary progression in buildings from the pre-Columbian past to the enterprising 1930s, an era when many American architects were trying to divest themselves of European Gothic and Neo-Classical influences.(3)

Unlike most of the buildings on the Palisades and along El Prado, which were of frame construction with wood roof trusses and stucco exterior walls, the 30,335 sq. ft. Federal Building was a permanent structure with concrete walls and steel roof trusses. Ground dimensions were 150 by 170 ft. and the height was 35 ft. The large rectangular building was windowless with light coming from skylights on the roof. Windows puncturing the sides of the building that a State Historic Preservation officer should be preserved were added after the 1935-1936 Exposition.

Along with other buildings in the Palisades (except the Ford Building) Requa considered the Federal Building to be pre-Columbian in style because its horizontal mass clung to the ground. Though this chance resemblance may be questioned as it was not true of all pre-Columbian buildings, the ornamental detailing on the main entrance was unquestionably derived from the Palace of the Governor in Uxmal, Yucatan. Larrinaga, who was responsible for the design, was born in San Antonio, Baja California, in 1885. He claimed to have studied at the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City. He was a naturalized U.S. citizen who had worked as a set designer on Cecil B. De Mille's *King of Kings* and *White Gold*. The Exposition publicity department said he knew how buildings in Yucatan and Oaxaca looked. It is more likely, however, that he, along with American architects, who created Maya Revival style residences and theaters, got his ideas from George Oakley Totten's compendium of Maya architecture, published by the Maya Press, in 1926.(4)

The Palace of the Governor in Uxmal stands on a broad, high platform. The frieze on its upper zone is 11-1/2 ft. high and about 320 ft. long. It is filled entirely with ornament made of closely-fitted and carved stones. The main facade had two recessed corbel arches that reached to the roof and divided the composition into three distinct masses. The Palace in

1926 was in such poor condition that Totten included drawings, some in color, of how it would look if it were restored to its pristine condition. Larrinaga took one of the corbel arches, frets, lattice-like designs, and masks of Chac, the Maya rain god, from the Palace of the Governor. He extended these as a frieze across a protruding section with an offset terrace in the center of the main facade. He used a tripartite string course along lateral walls which stretched to the left and right of the rectangular mass of the building, giving the overall footprint the shape of a squat T.

Details on the frieze, were not copied directly from the Palace of the Governor because the frieze on the Federal Building was smaller both in height and width than the frieze in Uxmal. Key or fret designs on the Palace of the Governor were turned on their sides. Details on cornices and borders came from diagrams of unspecified buildings in Totten's book. The masks of Chac were, however, as accurate as Larrinaga could make them, considering that he used beaver board backed by 1/6" plywood as his medium rather than stone. As with the frieze in Uxmal he had used as his model, Larrinaga created a mosaic of inserts. He did not put up fabricated panels. The masks contained the indispensable hooked nose of Chac. Functioning as quoins at the corners, they created a stunning silhouette. Full Chac masks, between the quoins, included the wide-open mouth of the god with teeth as prominent features.

The pseudo corbel arch of the Federal Building was filled by a window with mullions on which had been painted a mural of a standing Maya priest in profile holding a ceremonial staff and receiving the submission of a crouching Indian. The standing priest was copied from the bas relief of a Maya priest on the rear wall of an altar in the Temple of the Sun, Palenque. (5) He and the crouching Indian were standard motifs that appeared on countless stelae, ceramics and paintings. Miscellaneous details on the painting came from Totten's book or from Larrinaga's imagination. The background of the painting was yellow. The Indians were painted in red hues with other colors being black and white. Green was used on feathered headdresses. Colors were based on drawings and observations in Totten's book.

In his *Inside Lights on the Building of San Diego's Exposition: 1935* (San Diego, 1937), Requa stated: "The design and treatment of the glass panel over the main entrance was suggested by decorative figures done in stucco on the interior walls of a building in Mayapan." (6) Mayapan was

sacked and burned in the middle of the fifteenth century with the result, according to curator Elizabeth P. Benson, that "there are no Classic Maya or Toltec-Maya buildings remaining there."(7) A check of "Images" on the Google Search Engine shows that there are several buildings, stucco paintings, reliefs and assorted relics in Mayapan, which make one wonder what Benson was referring to.

Beneath the painting a lintel above the door contained a carving whose central face was derived from a detail on the western facade, east range of the Nunnery Quadrangle in Uxmal(8) According to Totten, lintels in Maya temples were made of chico sapote wood, though, in this case, the detail on the Nunnery facade was made of stone.

While not as conspicuous as the front elevation, the rear or south elevation contained a recessed porch whose proportions and shape resembled the lower entrances to rooms in the north building of the Nunnery Quadrangle in Uxmal.(9) Unlike columns on the Federal Building that were plain and square, structural columns on the Nunnery Quadrangle were articulated by protuberant masses at top and bottom.

The Federal Building was ready for the May 29 Exposition opening at which time Secretary of Commerce Daniel Roper formally presented the building to the public. The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, the U.S. Army and Navy, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Treasury, the U.S. Postal Service, the U.S. Labor Department, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Institution mounted exhibits. A relief map of Washington, D.C. showed the location of important government buildings. An animated exhibit from the Department of Commerce clicked off changes in the United States population to coincide with the one birth that took place every 15 seconds and the one death that occurred every 22 seconds.(10)

The U.S. Government sent exhibits in the Federal Building to Dallas for the 1936 observance of the Texas Centennial. After Congress appropriated \$75,000 to continue federal exhibits, the Government sent in others so that the building was filled. The *San Diego Union* claimed the Tennessee Valley Authority exhibit was the crowd pleaser. Interest in the exhibit had increased after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the government's right to manufacture and distribute power. Commissioner Joseph W. Hiscox claimed more than two million people saw the exhibits.(11)

Following the Exposition the U.S. Government sold the Federal Building to the City of San Diego for \$100. H. Louis Bodmer, the building's original architect, had already drawn up plans to convert the building into a civic auditorium to seat 3,000. The auditorium would be 150 by 140 ft., 30 ft, shorter than the original, and would contain a sloping floor, an orchestra pit, and a 76 by 35-ft. stage. Bodmer planned to shear off the Maya facade and replace it with a streamlined moderne affair with three colossal pylons on each side of the center entrance. He justified this iconoclasm by claiming the existing "gingerbread" front was of temporary construction. So much for architect Requa's architectural history lesson!(12)

Between 1936 and the beginning of World War II, the Federal Building was occupied by various civic organizations including the Works Projects Administration (WPA), promoters of "one-night stands" and sponsors of dog and hobby shows while City officials and interested parties kept debating who would pay for the conversion to a civic auditorium. Wayne Daillard, operator of the Mission Beach amusement center, offered to lease the Federal Building for five years at \$200 a month, to keep the building from being used for "one-night stands" that competed with the Mission Beach ball room.(13)

A 1941 *Guide to Balboa Park* described the appearance of the Federal Building, which retained all its features from the 1935-1936 Exposition, including the main entrance window painting, but did not indicate who was using the building, the implication being that the building was empty.

The U.S. Navy took over the Federal Building (designated Building 41) and eleven other buildings on El Prado and in the Palisades in December 1941. The area where the Federal Building was located was called Camp Kidd after Captain Isaac C. Kidd, U.S.N., who fell at Pearl Harbor, December 7.(14) It was used as a Reception Center for the Naval Training Center whose main station was at Point Loma. Nearly 1,400 men slept in the building on double-decked bunks.(15) After the Training Center transferred its Balboa Park operation to Camp Elliott in 1944, the U.S. Naval Hospital used the Federal Building as barracks for hospital corpsmen, as a subsistence building, and as a ship service and recreation facility. The Navy relinquished the building to the City on May 10, 1946. It estimated its use value for 4-1/2 years at \$21,600 or 20 cents per sq. ft. per year. The Navy gave the building's sq. ft. as 24,000, or 6,335 ft. less than the City's figures.(16)

Leo Calland, City of San Diego Recreation Director, announced in September 1945 that the Federal Building would be used as a badminton headquarters after the war. (17) So it was. This remained the predominant use of the building until the building was converted into a sports museum in 1998. Not happy with Calland's proposal, members of the Chamber of Commerce kept resurrecting plans to convert the building and other buildings in the Palisades into a convention center until the construction of a convention center and a 3,000-seat civic theater in downtown San Diego in 1963-1964 rendered these schemes moot. (18) Chief arguments for locating the convention center in the Palisades were that parking spaces lacking downtown were available in Balboa Park and that converting the building would be cheaper than constructing a new building.

The City Council approved plans for conversion to a municipal theater at a cost of \$300,000 in August 1946, following which H. Louis Bodmer drew up a new plan, money for which came from a \$15,200 loan from the Federal Works Agency in Washington, D.C. This time the entrance facade became an arrangement of massive stepped unadorned blocks with a large round marquee in front of the entrance. A slanting theater floor and a 65 ft. high concrete stage were to be built for dramatic and operatic productions. Costs for conversion estimated at \$402,000 in 1948 mounted to \$1,300,000 in 1954.(19) Calland, who had seen this scenario many times, wisely said the Federal Building would be used for badminton and volleyball courts until such time as it was replaced by a theater.(20)

A photograph published in the *San Diego Union*, May 16, 1946, showed the painting on the main entrance window as intact.

In November 1949, a roller skate speedway was set up in the Federal Building for filming of skating scenes for *Dark Challenge*, a movie starring Mickey Rooney. This appears to have been a one-time use.(21)

Architect William Rosser prepared a model for a civic theater with a five-bay, largely glass central entrance that was published in the *San Diego and Point Magazine* in December 1955.(22) While Rosser's plan was for a new theater opposite the San Diego Zoological Society parking lot on Park Boulevard, it was surprisingly like the low horizontal shape of the Federal Building.

In 1958, Robert Peterson, president of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau, advocated turning the Federal Building into a Hall of Science and Industry with a planetarium. No one paid any attention to the plan at the time, but it became the precursor of the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theater established at the east end of El Prado in 1973. In his inimitable style, critic James Britton referred to Peterson's proposal as "a precious piece of petty opportunism that reflects credit on no one concerned."(23)

In September 1959, the Harland Bartholomew planners of St. Louis ruled out the use of the Federal Building as a municipal theater, saying it would cost too much, and suggested the building be used as the new quarters for the Museum of Man at an estimated conversion cost of \$335,000.(24) In their *Master Plan*, presented to the City in November 1960, the planners changed their mind. This time they wanted the Museum of Man relocated to a rebuilt Electric Building on El Prado and the Federal Building in the Palisades converted into an activities center and banquet hall to replace the Balboa Park Club, which they wanted demolished.(25)

A Greater San Diego Science Fair was held in the Federal Building in April 1961. Parents and bused-in groups of school children filed along aisles where exhibits ranging from mathematical studies to animal and insect studies had been set up.(26) This was the 7th year of the Science Fair. While most of them were located in the Federal Building, other venues were also used. The Fair continued as an annual feature until it, along with the badminton and volleyball players, was compelled to leave the building. Other seasonal uses included dog, hobby and electric shows and square dance conventions, the latter also including the Balboa Park Club and the Recital Hall (1935 Hollywood Hall of Fame Building).

Reversing his previous desire to use the Federal Building for a civic theater, critic James Britton wrote: "The Federal Building seems to be beckoning the Museum of Man because it wears on its front a set of sculptured decorations modeled after the Mayan."(27)

The City Council gave the San Diego Hall of Champions a 54-year, 11-month lease, offering rent-free space in the Federal Building, on September 24, 1991.(28) The move would take place after the City had erected a new municipal gymnasium for users of the Federal Building.(29) A U.S. Olympic Volleyball Team, that had been allowed to use the building, moved to a private gymnasium in Otay Mesa. The replacement gymnasium

was to be at the Nobel athletic area. This led to a game of musical chairs with each gymnasium site being opposed by surrounding neighborhoods and a site near the San Diego Community College being opposed by Councilman Ron Roberts who declared it was too grand and too expensive.(30)

San Diego newspapers in 1991 indicated that the new Hall of Champions would cost about \$5 million with \$3 million coming from the Stephen and Mary Birch Foundation and \$2.3 million from a City of San Diego Balboa Park Renovation Fund. Birch Foundation money would go toward a sports education and resource center. City money would be used for a new roof, handicapped access, and earthquake building standard modifications. By excavating a basement and adding a mezzanine the Federal Building would expand from 30,335 sq. ft. to more than 58,000 sq. ft. From 20,000 sq. ft. in the Casa de Balboa, the Hall of Champions would undergo an increase of 38,000 sq. ft. San Diego architect Walt Conwell planned the changes. He or the reporter who interviewed him referred to the front Maya frieze as a "Roman-style frieze" and promised that its "ornate classical figures" would be "replicated and replaced."(31)

Tom Emery of Emery Studios of Solana Beach, hired by the City of San Diego to access the ornament, recommended in January 1992 that the noses of Chac, the Maya rain god, "not be reintroduced" as "they would be most difficult to maintain." He claimed the noses were not Maya in origin, but an embellishment added by Larrinaga. Unlike the soon-to-be amputated noses, Emery regarded the glass mural painting, "removed sometime after 1946," as "a vital contribution" that "should be replaced by all means," in stained glass, rather than as a painting.(32)

Meanwhile, the Hall of Champions secured the services of Tanner Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects of Los Angeles. Jim Tanner of this firm stated that the Federal Building's entry facade was modeled after the Palace of the Governor in Uxmal, Yucatan.

David Look, chief of the Preservation Assistance branch of the National Park Service division of the U.S. Department of the Interior, based in San Francisco, offered advice to the new architects. This was necessary as the Federal Building was part of a Balboa Park National Historic Landmark, so declared in February 1978. Look's knowledge of the Exposition buildings in Balboa Park was based partially on information supplied to him by the architects. Since the National Park Service had established 1935-1936 as

cut-off years for historic preservation when the House of Hospitality was reconstructed in 1997 and since the Federal Building was a product of the 1935 California-Pacific International Exposition, it was logical that Look would restate that the building be restored to its 1935-1936 appearance. So he did in a letter to Craig Edwards of Tanner Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects, August 21, 1995:

NPS (National Park Service) is informed that the intent of all restoration work is to return the buildings and sites in the Park to their 1935-1936 condition and appearance. If this is the case, then the missing ornament and the painted glass mural over the main entry should be replicated.

The City of San Diego had the same opinion regarding cut-off dates for the historic preservation of the Federal Building. Its reimbursement agreement with the architects called for: "refurbishment of interior and exterior wall surfaces, replication and replacement of missing and damaged ornamentation, replacement of the roof, ADA compliance, construction of a new basement and new floor, installation of new restroom facilities, and improvements to utilities and services including plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems."

Seemingly the new architectural team accepted the 1991 Emery Studio recommendation to replace exactly "the Mayan Indian of Yucatan, Mexico design"..."on the two opposite ends of the Federal Building."

In a letter to Look, September 21, 1995, Edwards ruled out restoring the wooden decorative details and the painted glass mural:

In areas where decorative detail was removed in 1942 [sic] by the military, the intent of the restoration work is to restore the concrete profile . . . but not to restore the wooden decorative details which would have been missing for over 50 years. It is not our intent to restore the painted glass mural, which was also removed in 1942 [sic], but the shape of the wall opening will be retained and filled with clear glass.

In a letter to Michael Tudury of the City of San Diego, October 7, 1997, Thomas Silva of Tanner Leddy Maytum Stacy stated the objective of a

meeting with the San Diego Historic Sites Board, December 13, 1995, was to gain support for the concept of restoring ornamentation that currently exists on the building, but not to replicate ornament that does not exist. The Sites Board gave the architects what they wanted:

Motion by Caryl Iseman, seconded by Doug Austen:
APPROVE the proposed Hall of Champion modifications to the historic Federal Building due to their sympathetic and compatible design and the restoration of much of the primary historic fabric. Additional study should occur on the exit stairs from the below-grade portion in front of the facility and also on the skylights. Also, if it is not Council Policy, a salvage plan is to be prepared and implemented. The issue of the lawn sculptures is to be reconsidered.

At a meeting, October 22, 1997, the Historic Sites Board left the door open slightly regarding the re-creation of the 1935 mural painting:

If it cannot be proven that colors can be definitely identified from a black and white photograph and no color photo exists, staff recommends that since the mural could not be accurately reproduced, the applicant should not be required to provide it and the original clear glass clerestory is acceptable.

Look concurred:

We recommend that the triangular window over the main entrance remain in its current configuration, using clear or opaque glass, until documentation of the original colors used for the painted mural can be found.

We understand further that the missing ornamentation will be selectively replaced. If the building was being restored to its original 1935 appearance, replacement of all the missing ornamentation would be necessary, however, as this project is considered rehabilitation, the partial replacement conforms with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*.

The 1991 \$5 million relocation and renovation cost had increased to \$12 million in 1997, with \$3 million from the Birch Foundation, \$2.3 million from the City, and \$250,000 from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. A campaign drive for \$6.5 million, chaired by Alex Spanos, owner of the Chargers football team, was to pick up the slack. Tanner Leddy Maytum and Spacy Architects of Los Angeles were responsible for the overall design of the building and Acona Associates of San Francisco were to design the interior. Ninteman Construction was to do the construction at an estimated cost of \$6 million. Gene Quintana of Dimensional Building Concepts was to replicate the ornament. The new building would have 68,000 sq. ft., as compared to the 58,000 sq. ft. contemplated in 1991 and the 30,335 sq. ft. in the original structure. Construction began in 1997 simultaneously with the construction of a Balboa Activities Center for dispossessed athletes on the former grounds of the U.S. Naval Hospital, which had reverted to the City in 1988

The Hall of Champions wanted to acquire an additional 12,500 sq. ft. by expanding into an underground annex with 14 ft. high ceilings in front of the main entrance. As money for this addition was not forthcoming, officials asked the City to approve the plan "in concept."

This paper is not concerned with the operation of the Hall of Champions, which should be left to a sports enthusiast. It is concerned with the architectural, historical, and humane aspects of public spaces in Balboa Park. Since former Exposition structures in the park are not going away and since they represent not only themselves, but deeper themes that intrigue people, several points should be made about the miscarriage of the historic preservation process in regards to the partial renovation, partial reconstruction of the Federal Building.

The 1991 Central Mesa Precise Plan for Balboa Park has the following as its guidelines:

3. All architecture in the 1935 Palisades areas should exhibit the styles established by Richard Requa's original design concept.
5. Missing historic elements should be reconstructed whenever possible.

6. All exterior building modifications should preserve or restore original Exposition site relationships.

Recommendations for the Federal Building were:

Restore decorative friezes on the exterior

Restore the original artwork and lighting to the front facade to resemble the original design (33)

These guidelines and recommendations are clear enough. While a lawyer might find covert inconsistencies, on an overt level, they advocate restoring the Federal Building to its 1935-1936 appearance as did National Park Service historic preservation officials and the City of San Diego in its contractual agreement with the architects in charge of renovation. For various reasons, officials in the Hall of Champions and the architects in charge found it necessary to modify preservation requirements. These reasons were based on economic considerations (complete restoration would cost too much and divert money away from the exhibit focus of the Hall of Champions) and on difficulties anticipated by the architects in creating fiberglass plastic panels that would look like the original frieze. Tom Emery of Emery Studio claimed elongated noses did not exist in Puuc-style buildings in Yucatan (where they are hallmarks of the style) and the priest on the mural was Kukulkan, "the Feathered Serpent" (because he wore a headdress of feathers!)

Since the original entrance doors of the Federal Building did not exist, the Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation allowed their replacement with "non historic" doors as long as they were "clearly new and in character with the historic building." In other words, a way could be found to put new doors on the building (what would it be without them?), but a way could not be found to re-create the mural because colored copies of it did not exist, or, if they did, they were not 100 percent accurate.

The Hall of Champions serves a public purpose in promoting the history and the practice of local sports. The purpose of the Historic Sites Board and the historic preservation branch of the National Park Service is to protect public monuments from defilement and demolition, whether they be landscapes or buildings. By countenancing proposals from clients and

architects based on expediency and economics, these agencies failed to give the rehabilitation of the Federal Building the in-depth investigation that the matter deserves.

Some people may consider the aim of preserving Exposition settings and buildings in Balboa Park to be recondite and impractical. Professional architects and designers pay lip service to this purpose; then, they go about adding to and changing the appearance of El Prado and the Palisades without any idea of the damage they are inflicting on the composite picture they claim to admire. Politicians do not know that a composite picture exists; witness San Diego mayor Susan Golding's desire to demolish the Municipal Gymnasium (1935 Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries) in the Palisades (34)

The 1935-1936 Federal Building was not the finest example of Maya Revival architecture in the United States. Its decorative details are the only reason why the building is considered Maya Revival. At best, these are sparse. They were cribbed from source books or imagined by Larrinaga who had meager or no knowledge of Maya temples in their native settings. Temples in 1935-1936 were in a sad state of decay. Since that time many of these have been restored by archaeologists who did not comply with the severe standards of the National Park Service.

The Federal Building would be better looking if Larrinaga had extended his frieze around all sides of the building and given it the intricate and interlacing rhythms that exist in Uxmal and if he had painted the details in the iridescent colors that originally covered the limestone and stucco exteriors of Maya buildings in Yucatan. Fanciful versions of these colors exist in Maya Revival style theaters in Los Angeles, Denver and San Antonio. The *National Geographic Magazine* has published many articles illustrated by color reproductions of Maya murals inside and outside buildings. George Oakley Totten's book reproduced many colored drawings of Maya reliefs that became the source for Maya Revival style architects, among whom were Kirk McDonald and Robert B. Stacy-Judd. Unfortunately many of the colorful, humorous and lively buildings designed by these architects have disappeared. But the Federal Building in Balboa Park stands. Marjorie Ingle reproduced a photograph of the Federal Building in her study of the Maya Revival style, published by Peregrine Smith Books in 1984. It is the sole surviving representative of Maya Revival style

buildings that were put up at large fairs and sideshows during the Depression.

More than other long, bare, rectangular buildings Requa put up in the Palisades, the Federal Building gave to despairing Americans an exhilarating taste of the exotic. The Maya details excited the imagination as did movies of the time, some opulently decorated by Juan Larrinaga. Here was an opportunity to revel in the bizarre and the unknown. Beyond their garish surfaces, there was a deep meaning in the buildings and movies, as there was a deep meaning in the elephantine noses of Chac, the rain god, and in the mysterious priest who was receiving the supplications of an enigmatic worshiper or prisoner. What did it mean? There was, thus, a great curiosity value. A curiosity which could easily have been satisfied by a visit to the Museum of Man in Balboa Park, where archaeologists could have explained the symbolism of Maya details on the Federal Building.

Requa may not have known it, but there was a tie between the 1915-1916 and the 1935-1936 Expositions which was more substantial than the congruence of Spanish-Colonial buildings on El Prado and buildings with Maya garnishments in the Palisades. Dr. Edgar L. Hewett, who was in charge of the Museum of Man (also known as the San Diego Museum) had written a book about Maya civilization and had furnished the interior of the Museum with artifacts from Mexico and Guatemala. He gave Henry Lovins free studio space in the museum.⁽³⁵⁾ Lovins became an outstanding decorator of interiors in the Maya Revival style, about which he had learned under Dr. Hewett's tutelage.

Aside then from the charm of being in a re-created Palisades with all the buildings around the great Pan America Plaza resembling their animated and sprightly 1935-1936 appearance, the Maya veneer on the Federal Building is important because it opens eyes, minds and hearts to the civilized achievements of the indigenous people who inhabited the New World before Columbus and continue to inhabit the New World today. Many of the explorers who saw the Maya ruins thought it was impossible that American Indians could have created them. These interlopers made up weird stories of descendants from a vanished Atlantis and of visitors from outer space. Even George Oakley Totten thought the buildings showed the influence of Buddhist monks! The real story was more important than this. People whom Anglo-American newcomers regarded as “savages” created the great artistic and intellectual Maya civilization. In doing so they gave the lie to white

people who think of themselves as a superior race and as the apex of an evolutionary process.

NOTE; For records pertaining to the history of the Federal Building and its transformation into the San Diego Hall of Champions, readers should consult Book 57: Sources; Archives—California State and National (misc. records pertaining to activities of California State and U.S. Government in Balboa Park during the Expositions and periods of military engagement), and Book 147: Balboa Park Buildings: Federal Building/Hall of Champions. These records may be found in the “Amero Collection”, San Diego Historical Society Research Archives.

NOTES

1. U.S. Congress, 49, Statute 50; *San Diego Union*, February 26, 1935, 1, 3.
2. *San Diego Union*, March 10, 1935, 6; March 25, 1935, II-1, 2.
3. *California-Pacific International Exposition, 1935, San Diego, California* (Chicago, American Autochrome Co.)
4. W. B Courtney, “Tomorrow Comes to San Diego,” *Colliers*, June 15, 1935; Richard S. Requa, *Inside Lights on the Buildings of San Diego’s Exposition, 1935* (Richard S. Rewua, 1937) George Oakley Totten, *Maya Architecture* (Maya Press, 1926); Biographical information about Juan Larrinaga supplied by the Dallas Historical Society.
5. Totten, plate 25.
6. Requa, 56.
7. Elizabeth Benson, *The Maya World* (Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1967), 141.
8. Totten, plate 80.
9. Totten, plate 76.
10. *San Diego Union*, May 30, 1935, 2; June 22, 1935, 2; June 25, 1935, 5; July 21, 1935, II-1; Courtney, *Colliers*, June 15, 1935.
11. “California-Pacific International Exposition, 1935, Remarks on Continuance or Discontinuance of Exposition,” San Diego Historical Society Research Archives.
12. *San Diego Union*, August 29, 1926, 2; September 5, 1936, 1; September 27, 1936, A-2.
13. *San Diego Union*, March 7, 1937, II-1; July 12, 1938, 4; May 3, 1939, A-8; July 12, 1939, A-4; June 18, 1940, B-1; July 11, 1940, B-1; September 21, 1940, A-6.
14. Letter, December 10, 1941, from Byron McCandless, Captain, U.S. Acting Commandant, 11th Naval District, to W. W. Cooper, City Manager of San Diego, National Archives Pacific Southwest Region.

15. *San Diego Union*, March 20, 1942, A-2.
16. Letter, May 8, 1946, from Construction Quantities to City of San Diego Park Board, National Archives Pacific Southwest Region.
17. *San Diego Union*, September 17, 1945, A-6.
18. *San Diego Union*, August 28, 1946, A-1.
19. *San Diego Union*, November 14, 1946, B-14; June 25, 1947, B-1; June 8, 1948, B-1.
20. *San Diego Union*, January 9, 1947 A-14.
21. *San Diego Union*, November 30, 1949, A-10.
22. *San Diego and Point Magazine*, December 1955, 33.
23. *San Diego Magazine*, February 1959, 40-42.
24. *San Diego Union*, September 18, 1959, A-17.
25. *Balboa Park Master Plan*, Harland Bartholomew & Associates, May 17, 1960.
26. *San Diego Union*, February 26, 1961, A-1.
27. *San Diego Union*, February 4, 1979, F-1.
28. *San Diego Union*, December 1, 1991, F-1.
29. *San Diego Daily Transcript*, January 4, 1994, A-1.
30. *San Diego Union*, October 6, 1993, B-9.
31. *San Diego Union*, December 1, 1991, F-1.
32. All correspondence relating to the conversion of the Federal Building into the San Diego Hall of Champions can be found in files maintained by the City of San Diego Historic Preservation Officer. Copies of letters and incidental material cited in the text are also included in "The Amero Collection," San Diego Historical Society Research Archives.
33. *Central Mesa Precise Plan for Balboa Park*, 1991.
34. *San Diego Union*, April 23, 1994.
35. *San Diego Union*, June 29, 1917, 7.

Sources for most of the material cited can be found in the text. For records of all sources, readers should consult Book 57: Sources; Archives—California State and National (misc. records pertaining to activities of California State and U.S. Government in Balboa Park during the Expositions and periods of military engagement), and Book 147: Balboa Park Buildings: Federal Building/Hall of Champions. These may be found in the Amero Collection, San Diego Historical Society Research Archives.