

Boletín



House of Spain



Casa de España
In San Diego

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SANTA MARIA DE MONTSERRAT MONASTERY



It is a Benedictine abbey situated on the mountain of Montserrat, province of Barcelona. It has become a point of pilgrimage for believers and a required visit for tourists.

Where's Balboa?

by Helen Ofield, President, Lemon Grove Historical Society

We are celebrating the centennial year of Balboa Park, but the park's namesake is missing in action. Among the various statues and sculptures in the park, nary a one represents the former Spanish explorer (he worked for a nobleman as a squire before coming to the new world), ex pig farmer, courageous soldier and first European to see the Pacific Ocean "silent upon a peak in Darién."

Why is that? Is nobody concerned about this obvious historical oversight?

Why would a 23-foot statue of the Spanish hero, *El Cid*, dominate the center of the park? He was a medieval soldier of fortune who died in 1099, four centuries before Vasco Nuñez de Balboa entered history by walking across the Isthmus of Panama, establishing a stable settlement named Darién, and finding the Pacific. True, Balboa Park is rooted in Spanish history and its impact on California. With help from architect William Templeton Johnson, *El Cid* was donated in 1930 by the Hispanic Society of America and its founder, Archer Milton Huntington, who had commissioned his wife, Anna Hyatt Huntington, to create the statue for them. The original stands outside the Society's building, 613 West 155th Street, New York, NY.

Our *El Cid* is one of four copies made for Valencia, Buenos Aires, San Francisco and San Diego.

Mrs. Huntington was a great sculptor and her billionaire husband influential. But *El Cid* has nothing to do with our park.

The real *El Cid* never left Spain, being engaged from age 14 in fighting Christians and Muslims alike (whoever had the upper hand in the chronically warring regions of disunited Spain). But Balboa's career was centered in the New World and the Americas, in particular.

In 1913, four centuries after Balboa's harrowing trek in 1513, the *San Diego Union* ran a story about the 1913 Carnival Cabrillo (he got a statue!), the third day of which was named "Balboa" to help herald the coming 1915 exposition in the park named for the maritime explorer. The article mentioned a plan to erect a colonnaded monument to Balboa at the east end of El Prado--where the fountain stands--at a cost of about \$15,000.

What happened to that plan? In the California drought, fountains are verboten. But a statue uses no water.

San Diego has correctly made much of Cabrillo, who sailed into San Diego Bay in 1542 on his flagship, *San Salvador*. A spectacular replica of that mighty Spanish galleon, built by San Diego's Maritime Museum, will soon make its maiden voyage on San Diego Bay, then sail northward along the California coast.

Cabrillo came here for the same reasons as Balboa: gold, territory, proselytizing, fame, fortune. We have honored Cabrillo in spades. But Balboa? Not so much. Surely, political correctness isn't the reason since we continue to honor the slave-holding Cabrillo, even to building a replica of his ship. But we ignore the explorer who walked through jungles, paving the way for the explorers (and canal) to come, and ultimately lost his life in the New World.

San Diego put Balboa on a one-cent stamp in 1913. And on Balboa Avenue (lots of traffic, no statue). And, of course, on the magnificent park (lots of culture, no statue). Just as millions of Americans have little or no idea who George Washington was, knowledge of what the name "Balboa" signifies is slipping away. You'd be surprised how many people think *El Cid* is Balboa.

Get out your checkbook if you want to see statues of the man. You'll have to fly to Panama City, which got it right in 1924 when they erected a statue of Balboa sculpted by Miguel Blan and Mariano Benlliure and donated by King Alfonso XIII of Spain.

Or fly to Balboa's hometown, Jerez de los Caballeros, Badajoz, Spain, to see the nine-foot bronze statue in the main square.

Here's the kicker: Four years ago, the House of Spain in Balboa Park's House of Pacific Relations brokered a tentative deal whereby the Spanish government would bankroll a replica of the statue at Jerez de los Caballeros and present it to San Diego as a gift. Shades of France giving us the Statue of Liberty.

The House of Spain had a visionary--and self-evident--idea. In the 2015 centennial year erect a statue honoring the park's namesake.

But, despite numerous pleas for help, i.e., approve a site in the park for Balboa and get the ball rolling with Spain, nobody in park or city management has lifted a finger. This kind of historical and bureaucratic obtuseness during the centennial year of Balboa Park is jaw-dropping. Pick up the phone, City Hall, and call Jesus Benayas, president of the House of Spain.

Mayor Faulconer? Council members? Historians? Who will take up the gauntlet tossed in 1913? The clock is ticking.

MONASTERIES OF SPAIN

Spain has a vast wealth of historical monuments and now we want to share with members one of them: the Monasteries, which are still preserved and visited.

Little by little we will explore these monuments and share with our readers photos, small stories and traditions.

SANTA MARIA DE MONTSERRAT MONASTERY

The legend is the discovery of the image of the Virgin of Montserrat towards the year 880. Then began the worship to the *Black Madonna*. However, the origin of the monastery is uncertain: it is known that, around 1011, a monk from the Monastery of María de Ripoli arrived on the mountain to take care of the Monastery of Santa Cecilia that did not accept this new situation, in which the abbot of Ripoll decided to found a monastery of Santa María in the place where there was a former chapel of the same name (1025). From 1082, Santa María happened to have its own abbot and no longer relied on the abbot of Ripoll. This chapel had become the most important of all that existed on the mountain thanks to the image of the Virgin that was worshipped since 880.

The monastery soon became a sanctuary; this fact necessitated an increase in donations and the alms received, and allowed a steady growth of both the religious compound as the influence in the territory. Between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Romanesque church was built, and from that time comes the carving of the Virgin that is venerated today.

In 1493 King Ferdinand the Catholic had sent 14 monks from Valladolid to the monastery and Montserrat became dependent on the congregation of this Castilian city. During the following centuries the abbots succeeded both in the Crown of Aragon as other areas of Spain. That same year of 1493, the minimum friar Bernat Boïl before hermit of Montserrat, accompanied Christopher Columbus on one of his trips to America, which led to the expansion of the worship of the Virgin of Montserrat on that continent, a fact reflected in the name given to one of the Antillean islands: Montserrat. In 1592 the present church was consecrated.

The nineteenth century was especially tragic for Montserrat: at the beginning of the century it was burned down twice by the Napoleonic troops, in 1811 and in 1812. The monastery was looted and burned, and lost many of its treasures. By mid-century, in 1835, the abbey suffered exclaustation due to the confiscation of Mendizábal. The exclaustation was short, and in 1844 the life in the monastery was restored. The congregation of Valladolid had disappeared, so Montserrat became again independent. The whole monastery had to be restored, since burning, looting and exclaustrations left little more than the walls standing. In 1880 the millennium of Montserrat was celebrated, and on September 11, 1881, Pope Leo XIII proclaimed the Virgin of Montserrat patron saint of Catalonia, noting April 27 as the date of its own commemoration.

During the Spanish Civil War the monastery became closed again and became dependent on the Generalidad de Cataluña (Government of Catalonia), presided by Lluís Companys. Between brothers and priests, a total of 23 religious of the Abbey were martyred in the three years that the religious persecution lasted.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the Santa María de Montserrat Monastery has not ceased to grow, and today, contains one of the best libraries of Spain. The current community consists of approximately 80 monks, which makes it one of the most important monasteries of the world. In addition, in the monastery there reside children who make up the Escolanía de Montserrat (Montserrat's Boys' Choir) considered to be the oldest school for singing in the West, since it was founded in the thirteenth century.

ACTIVITIES OF APRIL

April 18: Reception for the Consul General of Spain in Los Angeles

The Board of Directors and members of the House of Spain offered a welcoming reception to San Diego to our Consul General of Spain in Los Angeles, the diplomat Mr. Javier Vallaure. It gave members an opportunity to speak with the Consul and him the opportunity to get to know our Spanish community in San Diego and our House of Spain, Casa de España in Balboa Park. Like always, great tapas, exquisite wines and enjoyable conversations were offered. We welcomed him with a wish for him to return many times to San Diego, where he will feel like home.



The Consul, Angelines Olson, and attendees



We enjoyed delicious foods

April 19: 212th anniversary of the Battle of San Diego Bay

On Sunday, April 19, at the *Naval Base Point Loma*, San Diego, we celebrated the 212th anniversary of the Battle of San Diego Bay, a skirmish that took place between the American merchants and the small Spanish fort, which today is San Diego, on the smuggling of otters skins. "There was not much battle, it was a peaceful skirmish" said the Consul General of Spain in Los Angeles, Mr. Javier Vallaure.

Jesus Benayas, President of *House of Spain*, was the host of the afternoon. He and Captain Howard Warner III, Commander of the Naval Base Point Loma, gave the welcome to the Consul General Mr. Javier Vallaure, civil and military authorities and the general public. Representing Spain and the United States were present Naval Officers of the two countries, Honorary Consul of Spain in San Diego, María Ángeles Olson, members of "*Sons of the American Revolution*" wearing their military uniforms of that time and also Iris Engstrand, Professor of History at the University of San Diego.

Ms. Ángeles Leira delivered the keynote address. Ángeles, a student of maritime history since her childhood, gave an interesting presentation on the discovery and exploration of the Pacific Ocean known at that time as the "Spanish Lake" and a brief overview of the four centuries of maritime history of Spain.

Attendees enjoyed the music of the *Point Loma Navy Band*, National Anthems of Spain and the USA, while the flags were hoisted. The arrival of a group from Los Angeles, members of the Order of Santiago, dressed in the style typical of the seventeenth century was a pleasant surprise.

The activities in the afternoon were crowned by the traditional paella prepared by our "chefs" and by the recital of dances of the Ole Flamenco Group of Juanita Franco that was spectacular.

It was a special afternoon at San Diego Bay. Thanks to all the volunteers who with their work and goodwill contributed to this celebration being a success and an opportunity to reinforce the friendship of the two countries.



Jesus, giving the welcome



Ángeles Leira giving her speech



A pretty dancer



A view of the attendees



Wearing their Spanish finery



Members of the Order of Santiago from Los Angeles



Ángeles and Jesús, talking with the officials



CULTURAL NEWS

CERVANTES PRIZE 2015:

Juan Goytisolo Gay (Barcelona, January 5, 1931) is a Spanish writer and intellectual. Considered as the most important narrator of the generation of the mid-century, his work includes novels, books of short stories and travel, essays, poetry. He is a contributor to the newspaper *El País*. On November 24, 2014 he was awarded with the Cervantes Prize, the highest award of the letters in the Castilian language.

In his acceptance speech he said: "Let us say that we can"

"Simply and bluntly". With this Cervantine phrase they wanted to headline

Juan Goytisolo one of the most brief speeches in the history of the Cervantes Prize and, without doubt, one of the most political. In just 10 minutes, the writer, of 84 years, claimed on two main things: social justice and the less glamorous side of the inventor of the ingenious hidalgo. "Return to Cervantes and assume the folly of his character as a superior form of sanity, this is the lesson of *Quixote*. In doing so we do not avoid the iniquitous reality that surrounds us. We seat the feet upside down in it", he stressed.



FILMS FROM SPAIN - SAN DIEGO

May 12, 2015

7:30 PM

Museum of Photography Arts (MOPA)



Sleep Tight

It is a Spanish film of the genre suspense thriller released in Spain on October 14, 2011

Director: Jaume Balagueró

Duration: 1h 48m

Music composed by: Lucas Vidal

Screenplay: Alberto Marini

César is the caretaker of an apartment building and would not change this work for any other, because it allows him to know in depth the movements, the most intimate habits, the weaknesses and the secrets of all the tenants. If he wanted he could even control their lives, influencing them as if he was God, open their wounds and poke around in them. And all without raising any suspicion. Because César keeps a very peculiar secret: he likes to do damage, move all the necessary pieces to produce pain around him. And the new neighbor of 5B does not stop smiling. She enters and leaves every day radiant and happy, full of light. So that soon she will become the new objective of César's game. This is a personal challenge, of an obsession.

**Tickets: On location: \$10:00 donation
(\$7.00 House of Spain & MOPA members)**

OPENING OF THE CASITA

Our thanks to Puri Rodríguez, Mary Goldbeck, Stefie Cerqueira, Bayardo De Murgía and Laura McWhorter, our "ambassadors" of April who cared for the large audience who visited our Casita.

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE DAY OF DON QUIXOTE IN THE PARK

Saturday May 9, 2015

CENTRAL COURTYARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL COTTAGES

From 9:30 a.m.

In the morning (9:30 to 12:30) : *Read-a-thon* of pages and chapters of Don Quixote

In the afternoon: (3:00 to 4:00) theater "*Clown Quixote*" in English.



Saturday May 23 and Sunday May 24, 2015

ETHNIC FOOD FAIR IN BALBOA PARK

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Come and enjoy the atmosphere of the park where you can find different ethnic cuisines from numerous countries associated with the *House of Pacific Relations*.

As in previous years, House of Spain, Casa of España will be serving our traditional paella



RULES OF HOUSE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS (HPR) FOR ELECTION OF QUEEN AND PRINCESSES

According to the requirements of the Committee of Queens and Princesses of *House of Pacific Relations*, (HPR) the candidates to be elected as Queen and Princess(es) of each of the countries that belong to this institution must have attained before October 1:

Queen: 14 to 19 years; Princesses: 10 to 13 years.

To represent us, of course, they must be members of the *House of Spain*, Casa de España in San Diego, (waiting for their collaboration in some of the activities of our association).

In addition, they must commit themselves to attend each and every one of the monthly meetings of the HPR "*Queens*" organization.

For more information, contact Asunción Lusti, (619-295-2979)

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To read the Bulletin in English, visit the web page of House of Spain/Casa de España in San Diego: <http://www.casadeespanasd.com>

House of Spain, Casa de España in San Diego is a private non-profit organization, whose purpose is to preserve and disseminate the Spanish culture in the San Diego community. The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the thinking of House of Spain, Casa de España in San Diego.



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