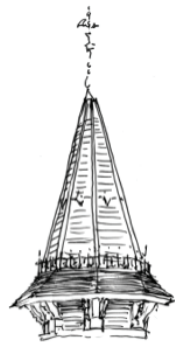


Thanks to our 2013-2014 Donors

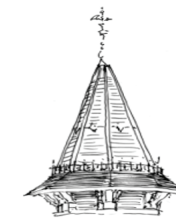
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Tustin Preservation Conservancy
350 South B Street
Tustin, CA 92780

Vol. 10, Spring Newsletter 2014

Newsletter



**Tustin Preservation
Conservancy**

*Working to make yesterday's resources
part of tomorrow's history.*



KIT HOMES

Did your house arrive here on the train? In the early 20th century, one of the most popular types of homes was the kit house, a home you built yourself from a shipment of lumber and hardware received at the rail yard. Each separate piece of lumber was shipped already numbered and cut to fit in the house. This eliminated the need for measuring and cutting, and likewise the waste of time in the days before power tools. Every nut, bolt, handle and pulley was included. Manufacturers, claimed the customer saved as much as 30% to 40% over traditional building methods.

Finished flooring, studs, rafters, sheathing, clap-boards, shingles, stucco, plaster, doors and windows, hardware, nails, and paint for two exterior coats were included in the order.

Plumbing, electrical, and heating systems were available for an additional charge. The lumber and hardware may have been standardized, but the designs were not.



Cover of a 1922 catalog from Gordon-Van Tine, showing building materials being unloaded from train.

The customers were encouraged to personalize their home design using one of the two or three floor plans included. The exterior could be clap-boards, shingles, stucco, or framed for brick. Walls, windows, and doors could be moved, added or eliminated. For an additional charge you could order porches, sun rooms, flower boxes, trellises, balconies, built-in cabinets, and a variety of door patterns.

Depending on the size and style of the plan, the materials for a typical house, including perhaps 10,000-30,000 pieces of lumber, would fill one or two railroad boxcars. The goods would be loaded at the company's factory and sent to the customer's home town, where they would be parked for unloading. Aladdin Homes of Bay City, Michigan premiered the idea of kit houses in 1906. It wasn't until 1908 that the largest provider of kit houses, Sears, Roebuck and Co. entered the market for complete kit houses. Sears went a step further, suggesting that buyers design their own homes and submit the blueprints to Sears, which would then ship off the appropriate pre-cut and fitted materials, putting the home owner in full creative control.

Kit Houses, continued from page 1

Over 100,000 kit homes were built in the United States between 1908 and 1940. Companies offering kit houses during all or part of their corporate existence included Sears and Montgomery Ward. Some kit house companies continued after World War II, but most homebuyers flocked to the new, inexpensive tract house sub-divisions springing up across the country. Here in Tustin, the houses along Myrtle just north of Main were most likely part of that movement.



In the 1920's, this home could have been yours for \$492 to \$1096 – and a lot of hard work!

How can you tell if yours was a kit house?

If it was built between 1908 and 1940, it may be a Sears kit home. Look for stamped lumber on the exposed beams/joists/rafters in the basement, crawl space or attic. The lumber was marked on the tall side of the lumber and can be found two to ten inches from the end of the framing piece. You may be able to see marks on the inside of the bathtub's plumbing access door. There is a lot of information on the web plus listings of books like "Houses By Mail" published in 1986.



This model would run the buyer from \$782 to \$1995.



**It's Art Walk and Wine Tasting Time Again
Black Marlin Bar and Grill to Host Event**

October 18th has been set by the City of Tustin for the annual Old Town Tustin Art Walk. Besides the work displayed by talented local artists, look for a new and exciting Wine Tasting, sponsored by the Conservancy.

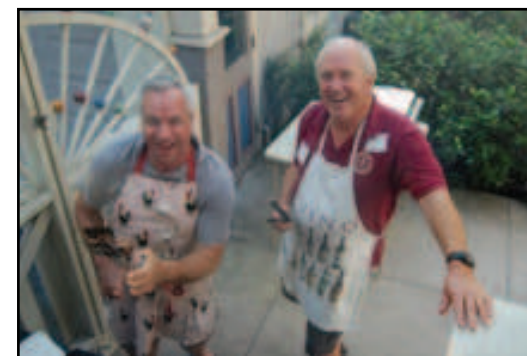
The newly opened Black Marlin will be hosting our wine tasting event this year. Owner John Moore has generously offered to host the event at his newly opened restaurant and bar, which seems to be the hot place to go in Tustin these days. The new location allows the Conservancy to offer a much better facility at less cost. Look for more wines, special beers and live music in the newly redecorated Tustin Garage.



**Conservancy Donors to be Honored at McCharles House
Mark your calendar**

September 20th is the date selected by the Conservancy Board of Directors to treat our donors to a well deserved picnic. The hamburger and hot dog affair will be held at the McCharles House again this year – a favorite of everyone! All of our current donors are invited to enjoy the event put on by members of our board.

Invitations will go out at the end of the summer, so renew your donation and join us in September.



Tustin Preservation Conservancy President Nathan Menard shares a laugh with Steve Jennings at the 2012 Donors' Picnic.

Tustin Preservation Conservancy Board of Directors

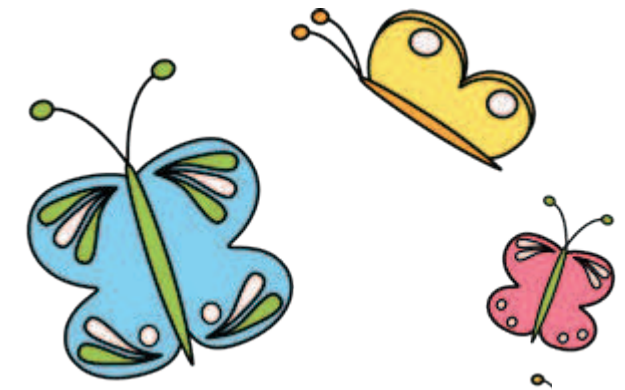
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Richard H. Dodd & Associates
Carol Tink-Fox-Architect, Stratosform
Chad Ortlieb, Senior Planner
City of Orange



Orange County Fire Authority to Present Workshop on Home Fire Prevention

*Come learn of the dangers on Saturday
October 11th*

There have been three house fires in Old Town Tustin in the past few years, some of which may have been due to old faulty wiring. Many of our homes have antique wiring or work done by owners without the benefit of professional electricians or permits.

Come hear a representative from the Orange County Fire Authority speak on how to avoid these dangers. We will also have a licensed electrician and a fire insurance expert there to answer your question.

Join Conservancy members at the the Tustin Unified School District's office, 300 South C St. at 10:30 am on Saturday, October 11th for this beneficial program. Coffee, doughnuts and social time will follow.

