

Tustin Preservation Conservancy

Working to make yesterday's resources

part of tomorrow's history.

The Post-War Box in a Nutshell

"Hey, your house is just like mine, except my front door is on the left side of the house!"

Most people who have lived in a neighborhood built in the 1950's are all too familiar with this phrase. Marked with a garage as half of the front façade, stucco exterior, and dummy shutters on the windows, the same house might fill an entire city block with only four slight variants. The Post-War Box neighborhoods are still a dominant typology in Southern California suburbia.

In the middle of the 20th century, WWII was coming to an end and there was an unprecedented demand for single family detached homes. Old construction methods of houses like the Bungalows *Continued pg.2*



This photo shows a perfect example of a post-war box home. Built in the 1950's, these homes often feature a stucco exterior, a rectangular box shape, and dummy shutters on the windows. These homes were affordable for young families after the conclusion of World War II.

National Recognition for Old Town Tustin

Tustin has over 400 homes and buildings listed locally as historic properties. **Over 50 of them are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places but to date, only 2 sites in Old Town Tustin have that honor** and the Tustin Preservation Conservancy wants to change that!

The City of Santa Ana has 22 listed sites on the National Register of Historic Sites and Orange has 15. Right now, Tustin's two sites that are listed on the National Register are the Stevens Mansion and the Artz Building (Rutabagorz Restaurant). We hope you will join us in the effort to make our buildings national treasures!

In the next few weeks, we will begin raising funds to proceed with a project to do *Continued page 3*

Tell Us Your Thoughts on TPC's Digital Survey

We want to hear from you! What would you like to have the Conservancy offer the community? Do you have a special request for us? Is there a special program you would like to be a part of? Or would you just prefer to socialize with your neighbors in an Old Town setting?

Well, here's your chance to let us know via the internet. The Conservancy has created a survey on the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KQTW3LH>

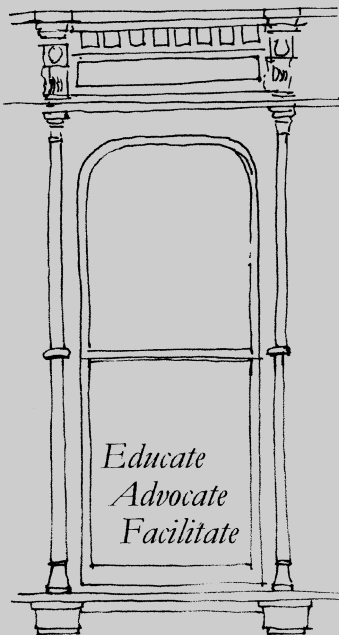
The survey is divided into three areas of interest that we would need feedback: historic preservation and education, conservancy *Continued pg. 2*

**Tustin Preservation
Conservancy**

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Post-War Box, Continued

gave way to newer methods that allowed for much more reproducible construction. Whereas bungalows were typically built in smaller groups of around 3 at a time, the newer homes of the 40's and 50's were built hundreds or even thousands at a time.

The stylistic housing of the Arts and Crafts movement gave way to a simpler, mass reproducible style of home that had more of an emphasis on the appliances within than the identity previously reflected on the outside. Ranges, ovens, dishwashers, clothes washers, and air conditioning were the center of attention for the new wave of homes being built. Often times almost all ornamentation was left off the house, save for maybe a fascia board covering the rafter tails and a small covered porch with a decorative wood railing.

So what makes the post-war box special? Many would argue there's no significant historic value to it, except for some of the surviving original appliances within. But will people always feel this way? Since there are still such a large number of them around, many in their original configuration, it may seem that they are a dime a dozen. However, as time goes on and the houses are slowly adapted to new styles or replaced altogether, they will become a rare commodity.

The best analogy I can think of is Depression glass. At the time it was mass produced in the 30's, it was so cheap it was often given away for free. As soon as families' economic conditions improved, the glass was promptly tossed and replaced with something fancier. Today, Depression glass is so rare and fashionable that some single pieces sell for hundreds of dollars. *Continued page 3*



The picture above is another outstanding example of the Post-War Box homes that can be seen on the west side of Myrtle Street between Main and First Streets. These homes are not yet listed on the City of Tustin's Historic Survey.

**Digital Survey
Continued**

social events, and conservancy fundraising projects. Each of these areas will also have an "Other" category, so that if an idea of yours is not listed, you have an opportunity to write in your own idea.

On top of making your voice heard, we want to reward those of you who take the time to complete this short survey. **Every household that completes the survey will have their name entered in a raffle for one of our local downtown giftcards.** Surveys must be completed by Thursday, March 31st. Winners will be contacted by email by mid-April.

So what have you got to lose? Tell us your thoughts for the conservancy's upcoming events in 2016.

Tustin Preservation Conservancy

TPC's Newest Board Member

New to the Conservancy Board of Directors is Brian Sjoberg, long time Old Town Tustin resident. Brian served on the historic districts Cultural Resource Advisory Committee until it was disbanded by the city. Brian is employed by Flour. We are pleased to have him on our board.



Ours is a working board, always looking for more people who are dedicated to preserving Tustin's historic resources.

If you are interested in becoming a member of our Board of Directors, send us an email at preservetustin@yahoo.com.

National Recognition, cont.

the research and writing to have more of our homes and buildings recognized nationally as important historic sites. We want our history, and the contribution that Tustin's early settlers made to Orange County and California's settlement, to be recognized on a national level. You will be hearing from us in the next few weeks about how you can help.



Save the Date:

The Tustin Art Walk and the Conservancy's Wine Tasting will be on Saturday, October 15th this year. Plans are for more artists and some exciting new events.

Post- War Box, continued

Although a house is a much bigger investment to 'toss and replace', the same trend may occur over a longer period of time.

What's so bad about the post-war box anyway? Contemporary development tracts tend to be constructed just like post-war boxes, except with some foam trim on the cornice and around the fenestrations to make it look 'fancy'. Why not drop the superfluous décor on the façade and go back to the root of the style: the post-war box? It wouldn't be the first time there was a movement back to a simpler style.

-Chuck Thrash, A.I.A.

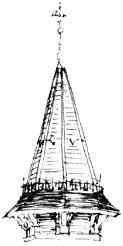


This lovely example of a post-war box style home is located on Myrtle Street in Old Town Tustin.

Did You Know...

The Tustin Preservation Conservancy was formed by a group of Old Town Tustin neighbors to preserve and protect our historic neighborhood. All of our projects are funded by donations from friends like you. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help keep Old Town Tustin the vibrant unique place that it is.

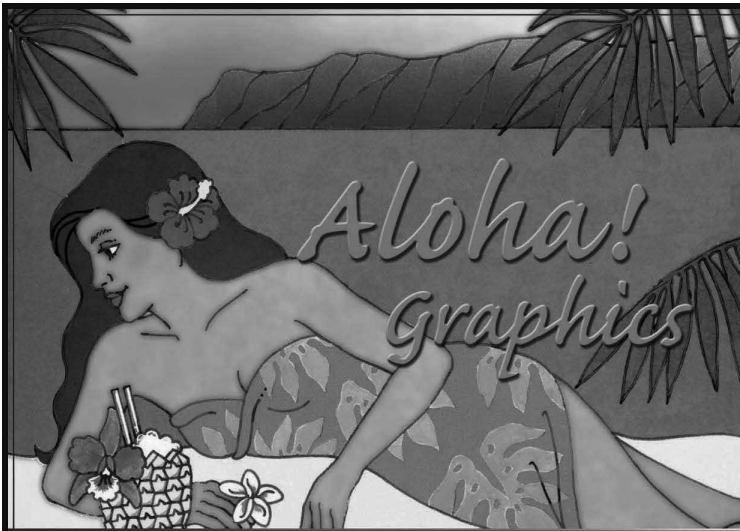
If you prefer to donate online, go to our website, www.tustinconservancy.org and click on the donations tab.



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