



To: San Diego Tourist Marketing District Board of Directors

From: David Lundin

Re: April 11 & 12, 2015 Panama-California Exposition Centennial Events for Balboa Park

Date: August 22, 2014

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After the mission failure and total collapse of Balboa Park Celebration, Inc. ["BPCI"], City political leadership, the business community, The Chamber of Commerce and other traditional sources of "leadership" failed to do anything to coherently conceive and plan any appropriate activities recognizing and celebrating the Centennial of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition that created the core of San Diego's treasured and beloved Balboa Park.

A large group of motivated, talented and energized volunteer residents of the City and County of San Diego have risen to fill that void. No one has been appointed by any political official. No one is being paid thousands of dollars a month from public or donated funds. No production companies or public relations firms have been retained at great cost.

What has now been planned?

***** 1915 - Panama - California Exposition – 2015 *****

***** SPRING TO THE PAST™ *****

A Community- conceived, planned and organized long weekend event, April 11 & 12, 2015, to celebrate the Park's past and work to secure its future.

Turn the clock back to 1915 for this one very special weekend. Come in period costume, or to see those who do. Think creative SteamPunk garb. Enjoy events, tours and exhibits featuring the look and feel of the original 1915 Panama-California Exposition that created the core of the Park we all know, love and treasure. Free whenever possible. Very low costs if some fees are necessary.

Walk about the Park with a knowledgeable docent in period costume. Ride in a reproduction of the wicker Electricquettes used in 1915. Enjoy free mini-performances by talents from the San Diego Opera and Symphony. Celebrate the Centennial and the Park! View period automobiles. Live Rag-Time music. STEAMPUNK Bands! Dancing! Enjoy free performances from SD Opera, Symphony and very special performing artists in the 1915 Spreckles Organ Pavilion space Saturday at 10 AM, 2 PM and in the evening. On Sunday, the Spreckles Organ Society and City organist Carol Williams will perform a special, expanded program at 2 PM.

Working with the San Diego History Center, SOHO and specific neighborhood groups, there will be stations in the Park with a trained docent, showing via large Images what North Park, South Park, Mission Hills, Hillcrest, Banker's Hill, University Heights looked like in 1910-1915; what changes were happening, what issues faced City government, what challenges were presented by growth, transportation, water and electric infrastructure, population expansion and diversity.

Reflect on San Diego in 1915. The Great War had begun, but the US would not enter that horrible fray until 1917. Women were working to obtain voting rights. And San Diego had fewer than 40,000 residents. Yet that tiny city imagined, designed, financed, constructed and celebrated what we now know as the historic core of Balboa Park. Ninety-Nine years later the City and County have nearly four million residents. And we don't even maintain the Park properly. We hope this Event may change some priorities

Perhaps music from live performances of period-appropriate Brass and Woodwinds and vocal groups will be filling the air from 5 or more specially-created Band Stands throughout the Park will aid in that long-term process.

The core of the Park will NOT be filled with vendors, promoters of time shares and sellers of everything. The Park would remain a PARK for this weekend, and will not be converted to a Mall. Carefully vetted Food Vendors and Food Trucks will be conveniently located between the Natural History Museum and Science Center, as well as near the Auto and Air and Space Museums. Vendors of complementary goods will be encouraged.

Twenty or more pre-1915 Horseless Carriages will move under their own power throughout the Park. Brief rides will be encouraged. Owners/docents/drivers will be in period costume, pleased to answer any and all questions and pose with you for photographs.

No Political speeches. No political ribbon-cuttings.

One and perhaps two Beer Gardens, featuring great locally-produced Craft Brews together with special menu items.

One and perhaps two large dance floors for all to enjoy. Special times will be reserved for period dance and costume groups from throughout the West who will travel to San Diego for this weekend. They will create a great show for all to enjoy.

Here are some additional concepts that have become reality thanks to an amazing early core group of volunteers. These are reality, not “aspirational”.

1. The weekend will look back to 1915. It will NOT be a carnival, or Park full of vendors and food booths like December Nights. The Park will be the Park;

2. The San Diego City Guard Band ---they played at the 1915 Exposition---will be featured with 8-10 other similar and affiliated groups from throughout Southern California at five Band Shells in different Park venues. Think Jazz, Rag Time, Marches, Scott Joplin [All volunteers];

3. Attendees will be encouraged to wear period clothing--or a few simple accessories for fun--think hats and vests. Our Website and the San Diego History Center will post patterns on-line for those who want to sew their own authentic pieces. Talented individuals can create your dream outfit for a fee--- links to them will be posted at the Event Website “Resources” links. They will be totally independent, but the information would be available;

4. Stations hosted by well-trained volunteer Docents would be in the Park for Hillcrest, North Park, South Park, Bankers' Hill, University Heights & Mission Hills with blow-up Images and more detailed photo notebooks to show what these emerging neighborhoods looked like in 1900, 1910, 1910, 1920-- they were being designed and built as the Park was created ;

5. A Smart Phone APP incorporating Images from the great collections of San Diego History Center and C100 and GPS technology will enable you to stand anywhere in the Park and see Images of your location from 1914-1915-1916. A virtual tour of the 1915 Exposition has been created. This has already been produces by amazing and talented volunteers and is complete and operational. No \$400,000 for some LA based design team needed;

6. Most Park institutions already have plans for many 1915- themed exhibitions. Those will be fully integrated and promoted with this weekend event;

7. We HOPE to be able find a way for all Museums to be FREE for this weekend;

8. San Diego Opera and other groups will do free mini concerts in the Organ Pavilion and other venues on Saturday, and on Sunday will integrate with the 2 PM Organ Concert hosted by the Spreckles Organ Society;

9. A more robust group of BUSKERS will be recruited and located throughout the Park, including Plaza de Panama and Plaza de California, ideally presenting talents that may have been seen in 1915;

10. We will close the Cabrillo Bridge for these days and nights;

11. Enhanced shuttle service from perimeter parking areas to the core of the Park;

12. A working fleet of Electriquettes available for hire by the hour or half-day;
13. A Community Picnic with FREE Centennial Cake both Saturday and Sunday;
14. Scavenger hunts for different age groups---find "hidden secrets" in the Park from your entry sheet-- first to return a finished and accurate form wins the PRIZE; and
15. And many more great thoughts to come from the each of YOU, our volunteers and the public.

We are working now with editors of Sunset Magazine, other California and Arizona regional magazines, The Automobile Club of Southern California and local and regional newspapers to generate free publicity and interest in the Event. Participant groups and volunteers will come from the entire Southern California region and beyond. They will generate their own effective and credible excitement and “Buzz” for the Event. This Event will produce hundreds of thousands of dollars of free press and media coverage for San Diego, the 2015 Event and Balboa Park as a visitor destination.

City of San Diego and Park and Recreation Department experts tell us now to expect attendance exceeding 100,000 people for each of the two days.

While costs will be held to a minimum, there are unavoidable and significant costs. Donations, corporate underwriters, advertising program sales, revenues from Centennial merchandise and other sources will all be developed. But we hope to do more than pay the bills. We hope to also be able to fund significant “Legacy Projects” for the long-term benefit of the Park and its visitors.

One of the significant objectives of the Event is to raise the profile of Balboa Park. We hope to encourage visitors from California, the West and the world to visit and enjoy the Park and its multiple and diverse assets and attractions. When prospective visitors think of San Diego, they should think of the weather, the coastline and beaches, the Zoo and Balboa Park.

We also hope the Event will open the eyes and ears of City and County governments, so they will give greater and appropriate priority to the unmet infrastructure, repair and deferred maintenance needs of the Park.

We look forward to an exciting and productive 2015. We thank you for your interest and will encourage your active participation and support. Please reserve April 11 and 12, 2015 on your calendars. And—giving away a small secret—also reserve October 3 and 4, 2015.