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Electric Fountain's Historical and Cultural Significance Draws Hundreds to Restoration Unveiling



Pictured: Gaby Reims Alexander (FOBGP), Vice-Mayor Nancy Krasne, Councilmember Julian Gold, Mayor John Mirisch, Julia Bovany (Tongva tribe representative), Councilmember Lili Bosse, Recreation & Parks Commission Chair Frances Bilak, Recreation and Park Commissioners Robert Anderson and Susan Gersh.

Beverly Hills, Calif. – The City of Beverly Hills and the Friends of Beverly Gardens Park (FOBGP) unveiled the restoration of the Electric Fountain at a Ribbon Cutting and Dedication ceremony at Beverly Gardens Park on Tuesday, April 5, 2016. Hundreds attended the event while Beverly Hills High School Marching Band provided music. Residents, past and present, city and civic leaders echoed nostalgic sentiments and defined the historical and cultural significance of the Electric Fountain.

Mayor John Mirisch said, “The City of Beverly Hills is honored to celebrate the dedication of the restored Electric Fountain which is brought back to its full beauty and glory and is one of the City’s most treasured

landmarks. I want to emphasize that while our Electric Fountain is a water feature, the City of Beverly Hills maintains its dedication to water conservation and filled the fountain using water trucked in from the Cabrillo Reservoir area. The fountain uses recirculated water to operate so we can continue to admire it in its full glory featuring an eight-minute water show timed to lights.”

The Electric Fountain was designed by architect Ralph Carlin Flewelling. The sculpture of a Tongva Native American tribal member kneeling in prayer on top of the fountain was designed by Robert Merrell Gage and is symbolic of an Indian rain prayer and pays homage to the area’s early inhabitants. The fountain was a gift to the City of Beverly Hills from the mother of silent-screen star Harold Lloyd and with the assistance of the Women’s Club of Beverly Hills, the fountain was installed in 1931 at a cost of \$22,000.

The Electric Fountain restoration effort cost \$1.5 million and is part of The Beverly Gardens Park Restoration project. The City of Beverly Hills matched funds raised by FOBGP for restoring the fountain.

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Mayor Mirisch said, “We will continue to restore and maintain our treasured landmarks for future generations so they can appreciate the vision of our forefathers and understand the historical and cultural significances of times past.”

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About Beverly Hills

Centrally located in greater Los Angeles, Beverly Hills is home to approximately 34,000 residents who live in a 5.7 square mile radius. Its business and commercial base ranks next to cities with a population of several hundred thousand and is a premier business and leisure travel destination. The beautiful year-round weather, luxurious hotels and vast dining and shopping establishments attracts visitors from all over the world. Throughout the City, over fifty pieces of public art are on display and a diverse range of architectural sights can be found in the buildings, houses and historical landmarks. The City’s eleven parks, including Greystone Mansion & Gardens: The Doheny Estate and Beverly Gardens Park which houses the iconic Beverly Hills Sign and Lily Pond, provide green space for relaxing, walking and leisure activities.

About Harold Lloyd

Harold Clayton Lloyd, Sr. (April 20, 1893 – March 8, 1971) was an American actor, comedian, film director, film producer, screenwriter and stunt performer most famous for his silent comedy films. Lloyd's Beverly Hills home, "Greenacres", was built in 1926–1929, with 44 rooms, 26 bathrooms, 12 fountains, 12 gardens, and a nine-hole golf course. The estate left the possession of the Lloyd family in 1975 after an attempt to maintain it as a public museum. Harold Lloyd was a visionary and pioneer of the City of Beverly Hills and was a prominent member of Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce Advisory Board when it was established in 1923. He helped promote the economic, commercial, industrial, civic and social welfare of the people of the city of Beverly Hills.

About the Tongva Native American Indian Tribe

The Tongva Native American Indian tribe were early inhabitants in settlements along the streams that flowed from the canyons in the Southern California Region, now known as Benedict, Coldwater and Franklin Canyons. Settling in this area they called “Gathering of the Waters”, the Tongva tribe’s year-long access to fresh, flowing water without being too far from the marshy flood plain which contained a rich supply of plants and animals that sustained them. The Tongva’s lived a peaceful agrarian life, until 1769 when Spanish explorers stepped foot on their land and established Franciscan missions and colonies.