



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: October 16, 2012

REPORT NO. HRB-12-055

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board
Agenda of October 25, 2012

SUBJECT: **ITEM #5 – Dr. Roger Revelle House**

DESCRIPTION: Correspondence

SEE LETTERS BELOW...

Development Services Department

1222 First Avenue, MS 512 • San Diego, CA 92101-4155
Tel (619) 235-5200 Fax (619) 446-5499

August 27, 2012

From: Bill Revelle
Professor Department of Psychology
Northwestern University

To: Cathy Winterrowd

I do not believe that our house at 7348 Vista del Mar is historic. It was remodeled multiple times during my lifetime to make it more livable, and our father certainly did not do much work there. His primary work was done at SIO, Harvard, or Washington, D.C.

Bill

8/27/2012

515 North Street
Sausalito, CA 94965
August 27, 2012

Cathy Winterrowd, Senior Planner
Historical Resources Board
1222 First Avenue MS 512
San Diego, CA 92101

Item: 7348 Vista del Mar, La Jolla

Dear Ms. Winterrowd:

On behalf of the Revelle family, I am writing to support the view that it is not appropriate to designate our family home at 7348 Vista del Mar in La Jolla as "historic."

It is my understanding that the Board may consider designating the home historic under National Register Criterion B, associated with a Person. My siblings and I are naturally gratified that the San Diego community values the contribution our parents made to the city and that our father, in particular, made to the larger community in his professional life. However, we do not feel it is necessary to acknowledge their civic and professional contributions by designating the family home "historic." There are several reasons for this view:

First, our father, Roger Revelle, did not conduct his professional work-- for which he became a figure of international stature-- in the house. Though it contains a book-lined "den," this room did not serve as our father's office nor did he have a desk of his own in the house. (For many years, a family secretary supported family business investments from an office in the guesthouse, but she was not involved in his professional work.) He did his work at his place of employment:

During World War II, as a Naval Lieutenant Commander, he worked long hours at the Bureau of Ships and as the war ended at the Office of Naval Research, both in Washington, DC. (1942 - 48). After the war, when he was Associate Director and Director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (1948 - 1961), he worked from an office at Scripps. As a teenager, I remember him coming home late for dinner and returning after dinner (and a nap on the couch) to his SIO office for a few more hours of work. When he was not appointed Chancellor of the new UCSD campus he had worked so hard to create, he accepted the position of Science Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, working in an office in the US Department of Interior in Washington, D.C. from 1961 - 63. Returning to California, he served for a short time as University Dean of Research, dividing his time between offices in La Jolla and Berkeley. Then he accepted a more challenging position in Cambridge Massachusetts as Director of Harvard University's Center for Population Studies (1964-74) and Richard Saltonstall Professor of Population Studies (1964 -78),

working in an historic structure at 9 Bow Street in Cambridge. On his return to UCSD, he worked from a couple of offices on the upper campus and, at the end of his life, in an office at the Scripps Institution. He traveled so much during all those years that a grandchild said, "I think Nonno lives [we can add "works"] in an airplane!"

A second argument against designation of the family home is that our parents, and in particular our father, have already been recognized by having several buildings or physical spaces--and even a ship, the US Naval Vessel R/V Roger Revelle--named after them: At UCSD there is Revelle College, the first college of the new campus, named to honor his role as the "father" of the University, and also Revelle Plaza, Revelle Bench, Roger's Place, Roger's Table, a research lab at SIO, and a pavilion at the International Center named for our mother. There is the Roger and Ellen Revelle Room at San Diego's Symphony Hall and a Roger Revelle conference room at the American Association for the Advancement of Science headquarters in Washington. At Scripps College, our mother's alma mater, the President's house is the Ellen Clark Revelle House, and at Harvard the historic structure housing the Population Center is the Roger and Ellen Revelle Building.

In addition to structures or spaces bearing their names, our parents are already associated with other buildings in La Jolla: the Wisteria Cottage, Virginia Scripps guest house, which the family donated to the La Jolla Historical Society, and the Grace Scripps Johanson house at 1540 Virginia Way, our grandmother's home, designated a historic structure (Historic Site #431).

The most important argument against designation of our parents' house, in my opinion, is that they themselves preferred to be remembered by their activities in support of science, education and the arts, not by buildings. With this philosophy, they donated funds to institutions they cared about. Thus there are several fellowships and scholarships bearing one or both their names (at the AAAS, at UCSD, at the Scripps Institution, at Scripps College) to support young scientists. The La Jolla Chamber Music Society delights summer audiences with the Revelle Series. Future scholars can research our parents' roles in science, education and philanthropy at the UCSD library, which houses the Roger Revelle papers and at Scripps College where Ellen Revelle's papers are now housed. There are extensive oral histories of each of them.

The family home at 7348 Vista del Mar was never a monument. Our mother undertook numerous remodeling projects of the original Spanish Mediterranean beach house to adapt it to changing needs and styles. It was a house full of life: we four children grew up there, returning regularly over sixty/seventy years with spouses, twelve grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren for large and small family gatherings. Nothing could be a greater testimonial to our parents' love of this house than to see another family move in, remodel it to their needs, and continue to enjoy life in their new home for many more decades. The house does not need to be designated "historic" to continue to celebrate the lives of a vital and involved pair of San Diegans.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Revelle

Carolyn Revelle
for the Revelle family

Appendix I: Locations where Roger and Ellen Revelle Lived and Worked from 1941 - 1991/2009

1941-1942:

Residence: 7348 Vista del Mar, La Jolla

Office: the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (La Jolla), and the Naval Radio and Sound Laboratory (Pt. Loma)(Naval Reserve, then active duty officer)

1942- 1947/48

Residences: Silver Spring, MD and Washington, D.C.

Office: Bureau of Ships, US Navy, and Office of Naval Research, Washington, D.C. (Lt. Commander and Commander)

1947/8 - 1961

Residence: 7348 Vista del Mar, La Jolla

Office: the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, La Jolla
(Professor, Associate Director and Director)

1961 - 1963

Residence: Georgetown, Washington, D.C.

Office: U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. (Science Advisor to Secretary of the Interior)

1963 - 1964

Residences: 7348 Vista del Mar, La Jolla, and Berkeley, CA

Office: the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and Cal Berkeley (University Dean of Research)

1964 - 1974/8

Residence: 40 Larch Road, Cambridge, MA

Office: the Center for Population Studies, School of Public Health, Harvard University (Director until 1974 and Richard Saltonstall Professor of Population Studies until 1978)

1974/8- 1991

Residence: 7348 Vista del Mar, La Jolla

Office: Campus of UCSD and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography
(Professor of Science and Public Policy)

1991 - 2009

Residence (Ellen Revelle): 7348 Vista del Mar

APPENDIX II: Selected Examples Honoring the Revelles

US Naval Vessel R/V Roger Revelle

Buildings or Spaces Named after Roger and/or Ellen Revelle

UCSD and Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO)

Revelle College

Revelle Plaza (future site of sculpture of RRDR)

Revelle College Room (Price Center)

Revelle Bench (where RRDR took prospective faculty candidates and said
“Can’t you see a great campus arising all around here?”)

Roger’s Place (Student eating spot at Revelle College)

Roger’s Table (Faculty Club)

Roger and Ellen Revelle Laboratory for Geophysics (SIO)

Ellen Revelle Pavilion, International Center

La Jolla Playhouse: plaque honoring Ellen Revelle in library

San Diego Symphony Hall: Ellen and Roger Revelle Room

Scripps College

Ellen Clark Revelle House (President’s Home)

Harvard University

Roger and Ellen Revelle Building (the Population Center)

American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington, D.C.

Roger Revelle Conference Room (Center for Science & Engineering)

Chairs, Fellowships or Scholarships

UCSD

Roger Revelle Chair in Environmental Science (SIO)

Ellen and Roger Revelle Fellowship Fund for Graduate Students

Ellen and Roger Revelle Undergraduate Merit Scholarship Fund

Roger Revelle SIO Leadership Fund

Scripps College

Ellen Clark Revelle Scholarship

American Association for the Advancement of Science

Roger Revelle Fellowship on Global Stewardship

Programs, Lectures, Concert Series

UCSD

The Revelle Forum (UCSD Extension)
The Roger Revelle Commemorative Lecture (SIO)

National Academy of Sciences
The Roger Revelle Commemorative Lectures

La Jolla Chamber Music Society
The Revelle Series

August 27, 2012

From: Anne Shumway

To: Cathy Winterrowd

I agree completely with my sister Carolyn's letter to you, asking that our family home not be designated "historic" for all the reasons she outlines. Our father did the vast majority of his work elsewhere, and our parents have been amply recognized for their contributions to science and philanthropy in other ways, both by the number of buildings and rooms named after them, and by the scholarships which they have established.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Anne Revelle Shumway

8/27/2012

August 27, 2012

From: Mary Revelle Paci

To: Cathy Winterrowd

I agree with the views expressed in the letter you wrote to the members of the Historic Resources Board that our house at 7348 Vista del Mar in La Jolla should not be designated historic.

Mary

(Mary Revelle Paci)

8/27/2012