



A Labor of Love

THE SAN DIEGO UNION  
 C2 Sun., Aug. 2, 1964  
 SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

EDITORIALS

# Balboa Park: A Jewel That Will Not Tarnish

DESPITE ITS constant greenery, San Diego's Balboa Park in a sense is nearly as ancient as the American Revolution.

The area first was referred to, in writing, in 1789. A survey made for the King of Spain classified the sector as part of "communal lands held by the people in common for pasturage and for recreational purposes."

It wasn't until 1868 that the Board of Trustees of San Diego officially set aside the acreage as a public park. The land was barren, except for scrub growth and chaparral. The Ladies Annex, then an auxiliary of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, finally decided to improve the desolate area. It sponsored the park's first tree-planting project at a cost of \$500 in 1889. The now widely-known Kate Sessions at the same time was permitted to operate a nursery in the park in exchange for her talented efforts to beautify the area.

By 1902, early day San Diego

residents foresaw the park could become one of the greatest recreational facilities of any community in the world. They planned ahead. Samuel Parsons, a New York City landscape architect, in 1905 submitted a basic plan for the park. In 1910 the area was officially titled "Balboa Park" in memory of the famed Spanish explorer, Vasco Nunez de Balboa. The park came into its own in 1915 with the observance there of the Panama-California International Exposition celebrating completion of the Panama Canal.

In the years since, Balboa Park has become a world-known landmark, associated in the minds of millions with relaxation in an atmosphere that would be difficult to duplicate, anywhere.

San Diego citizens, all of whom have more than average pride in their fabulous park, today are planning for the area's further development.

Under construction is the \$1

million Timken Art Gallery to house old masters and a new wing of the Fine Arts Gallery that will provide for continuous exhibition of the gallery's \$10 million collection. Presently, only part of the collection can be shown because of inadequate space. Construction is scheduled later this year for the \$1.5 million San Diego Hall of Science and Planetarium. In the years ahead, according to present plans, many of the buildings built for the 1915 Exposition will be replaced.

Balboa Park is not a natural advantage, such as our beaches. It is the result of detailed planning, carried on by one generation after another of San Diegans who have pride in their community. Much of the current improvement program is financed through private contributions.

Balboa Park is San Diego's particular jewel, a jewel which never will tarnish because of civic negligence.