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CALIFORNIA



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DANIELLE BRAZELL
GENERAL MANAGER

June 3, 2020

The Honorable Eric Garcetti, Mayor
City of Los Angeles
City Hall, Room 303

The Honorable City Council
Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 303

RE: ANNUAL REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS TRUST FUND – FISCAL YEAR 2018-19 HOLLYHOCK HOUSE RECEIPTS

In accordance with Ordinance No. 183821, the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is submitting this report on fees charged for admission to Hollyhock House to be “allocated for programming, staffing, maintenance and restoration of Hollyhock House.” This report reflects revenues and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

BACKGROUND

Frank Lloyd Wright’s (FLW) Hollyhock House, a significant part of Los Angeles’ architectural history and a National Historic Landmark, is managed by DCA. Hollyhock House and Barnsdall Park were given to the City by Aline Barnsdall in 1927 as a memorial to her father. In 2010, the House underwent extensive restoration of vital infrastructure systems (drainage, roof membranes, mechanicals) and the visual impact of interior surfaces and architectural details that had been altered or lost over the past 50-75 years and was reopened for public visitation in February of 2015.

VISITATION

In FY 2018-19, a total of 36,219 visitors experienced the Hollyhock House of which 6,009 experienced it through special programs such as, the Virtual Accessibility Experience. This is a 42% increase from FY 2017-18 total of visitors (25,498).

HOLLYHOCK HOUSE UPDATES

- **UNESCO World Heritage List:** In July of 2019 the UNESCO World Heritage Committee inscribed “The 20th-Century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright” on the World Heritage List. This serial nomination, comprised of eight FLW structures, includes Hollyhock House and is now among only 24 sites in the U.S. The collection represents the first modern architecture designation in the country. A Mayoral press event was held on July 31, 2019 to celebrate the honor.



- **Hollyhock House Virtual Accessibility Experience:** Funded by a grant from the Innovation and Performance Commission, and in collaboration with Department on Disability, Hollyhock House created and launched a virtual tour as a creative solution to make the historic house more available to visitors of all abilities. Available both onsite and remotely through a web browser, this unique approach to the creation of a commensurate experience for those with disabilities while also increasing remote access for users around the globe through the use of new technology significantly expands the visitor experience.
- **Hollyhock House Digital Archive:** DCA applied for and received a California Arts Council award in the amount of \$32,300 to support the “Hollyhock House Collections Digitization Project,” to digitize historical documents related to FLW’s Hollyhock House, located at Barnsdall Park, and create online access for academic and general public benefit. This initiative preserves artistic and architectural documents dating from 1919. This project will serve as a prototype for digital collection management at DCA-operated galleries and neighborhood arts centers. **Conservation:** As part of the digitization process, documents were treated by a paper conservator to preserve their integrity.
- **Hollyhock House FLW Furniture:** Two tables, part of FLW’s monumental suite of living room furniture designed for Hollyhock House, were offered as part purchase/part gift by the owner. The whereabouts of the two tables, which were removed from the house most likely in the 1950s, were unknown. Hollyhock House is fundraising to acquire the two pieces which are now on loan and installed in the living room. This exceptional opportunity to repatriate two original pieces of furniture is extraordinary.
- **Hollyhock House FLW Art Glass:** Four original art glass panels from the living room fireplace laylight have been given to Hollyhock House by a private collector in exchange for the four reproductions panels currently installed. The panels are thought to have been removed by the architect’s son (Lloyd Wright) when he renovated Hollyhock House in 1946-48.

HOLLYHOCK HOUSE IMPROVEMENTS

Highlights of significant improvements implemented include:

- **South Terrace Restoration:** Returning this exterior garden area to its 1921 appearance included replicating plant beds and reinstating two trees as well as the application of artificial turf to imitate the original design. Substituting artificial turf for natural sod eliminates the need for irrigation in this area helping to preserve the concrete sills and stucco of the garden walls
- **Computer Systems Upgrades:** The addition of the Virtual Accessibility Experience and the implementation of the Digital Archive required replacement of decades-old computer equipment. The equipment purchase also provided computer equipment for two authorized positions that have been newly filled.

FINANCIAL STATUS

Admission Fees

As revised in 2007 (Ordinance No. 179189), the current general admission fees for entrance to Hollyhock House are \$7 per adult, \$3 for senior/students and \$2 for persons under 17 years of age. An operational expense analysis reveals that the cost per visitor to keep the House operational is approximately double the \$7 admission fee.

DCA has requested to increase the admission fees to \$12 for adults and \$6 for senior citizens and students as part of the proposed budget submission for FY 2020-21 to tour Hollyhock House. These potential increases in revenue could help offset the cost for operational needs.

TOTAL REVENUE IN FY 2018-19:

\$160,660

(From admission ticket sales)

Expenditures

Fund expenditures focused on preventive maintenance not included in basic City service contracts and conservation of the structure. Art/artifact restoration and research documentation for restoration are also critical need expenditures to maintain the integrity of this historic site. Computer software and hardware was also required for administrative efficiency and to operate the Virtual Accessibility Experience and the Hollyhock House Digital Archive.

These expenditures included:

- **South Terrace Restoration = \$33,731**
(See description in previous section: Hollyhock House Improvements)
- **Computer Systems Upgrades = \$17,543**
(See description in previous section: Hollyhock House Improvements)
- **Frank Lloyd Wright World Heritage Council Dues = \$2,024**
The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy is the umbrella organization for the serial inscription and the liaison to the National Park Service. Each of the eight sites pay an annual assessment for administration costs associated with the monitoring and reporting required by the World Heritage Centre.
- **Visitor Center Security Upgrade = \$3,996**
A camera system and panic button were installed in the Visitor Center to protect staff who typically sell tickets solo. Hollyhock House also had a panic button installed at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery reception desk.
- **Conservation = \$7,070**
Preservation and life of the hardwood floors and rugs is aided by requiring all visitors/staff to wear disposable shoe covers. These are typically recycled for a second use. This equates to approximately 18,000 shoe covers annually.
Roller blinds are used for the replication of historic window shades and to block UV rays when the house is not open for public tours.

- **Objects/Art Glass Restoration = \$1,858**
Restoration of art glass windows by Judson Studios, the Highland Park company that created them in 1921, was needed in three instances to restore damage.
- **Museum Display/Museum Education = \$1,818**
The Virtual Accessibility Experience allowed additional rooms to be opened to public view. This required new methods for protecting artifacts, managing the path of travel, and display items.
- **Kitchen Door Replication = \$13,312**
The failing modern door was replaced with a faithful replication of the original door based on an archival drawing.
- **On-going Conservation/Maintenance Materials = \$1,277**
Physical monitoring of Hollyhock House (especially concrete decorative elements), hardscape features, garage, and visitor center to erase the effects of pollution, vandalism (graffiti removal from historic surfaces) and restore finishes is accomplished by a part time conservator.
- **Living Room Upholstery Restoration & Fabric Replication = \$5,238**
A project initiated in this fiscal year extending into the next is the restoration of the original FLW upholstered club chair. The deconstruction/analysis by a furniture conservator, replication of missing wood trim, and the investigation for recreating the original fabric, begin a larger restoration campaign to recover the existing upholstered furniture and recreate draperies in the living room.
- **FLW Replica Furniture = \$12,350**
Three side tables and two dining room chairs were crafted replicating FLW furniture designed for Hollyhock House. The additional pieces enhance the interpretation of Hollyhock House as well as the visitor experience as visitors may now try a dining room chair to test its comfort.
- **Object Acquisition = \$2,200**
A period appropriate bronze vessel that closely approximates one owned by Aline Barnsdall and used in the original furnishing scheme at Hollyhock House was acquired to enhance the interpretation and visitor experience.

TOTAL EXPENDITURES IN FY 2018-19

\$102,417

As a result of the increase in visitorship, all of the Hollyhock House total expenditures have been paid from the revenue collected within the same fiscal year. Remaining funds (totaling \$58,243) were rolled over to meet the following fiscal year's expenses.

RECOMMENDATION

Note and file this report.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund; therefore, this report is for informational purposes only.



DANIELLE BRAZELL, General Manager
Department of Cultural Affairs