Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 1 San Diego, Alta California, September 12, 2008 Price: Free

THE DEMO MUSEUM.

Niloufar Minovi.

San Diego Coast District Archaeological Project Leader.

I first ate at the Casa de Bandini when I was nine years old. I remember my mom ordered a drink that was the size of a small birdbath, all frothy and green with salt crystals around the edges of the blue rimmed glass. I remember the fountain; I wanted to play inside it and I knew I was not allowed.

More recently I watched the removal of that very fountain. I was the archaeological monitor witnessing and documenting as a large piece of equipment tore apart the tiles around the fountain. I gathered pieces of the remaining tiles and labeled them for the Demolition Museum of the Cosmopolitan Hotel. Each item of the Demo Museum has a label noting where they were found, and what era of this buildings dynamic history they represent. Walking in the wake of destruction collecting rubble, photographing where these items once were, and creating photo documents with arrow and circles showing their initial location in and around the building, is part of creating this little museum. Parts of this Demo collection will be exhibited in the Cosmopolitan once it is completed.

As layers of the walls and floors are removed, samples are collected. My office is filled with random objects: doors, pieces of wood, lamps, tile, a fire place mantel and chunks of concrete. The samples range from when this building was the residence of Juan Bandini's family ca. 1829, through January 2008 when the restaurant ceased operation in preparation of this grand undertaking.

Every act of destruction was followed by an act of creation so that any attachment to anything destroyed was replaced by diligent documentation on my part. Then, on September 8th 2008, the Bougainvillea was cut down. Over the past year and a half that I have been working at this building I have marveled at how many tourists pause for photos before the expansive backdrop of the Bougainvillea's magenta floral leaves. This plant graced almost the entire Mason St. side of the building extending in every direction. It wove its way through the 1950's wrought iron pot holders hanging off the rusticated wooden railings of the second story. Here, in the Demo museum, a single wrought iron pot holder has a piece of this Bougainvillea grown thickly through its circle. Here it remains as material evidence of that plant's existence. The Bougainvillea was the last, very literally, living element of the building's most recent era.

Jallaludin Mohammad Rumi, a 13th century poet wrote: "One whose garment is torn on the road to love becomes free at last of all defects." Existentially speaking, the garment is the body and abandoning attachment to it, one is freed and rendered essential again. Now the building is naked, striped; its garment has been torn. In the spirit of this poem, the removal of the plant is an unveiling of the building's true nature. Admittedly, the destruction of this once living relic has been difficult to endure, yet the creation that lies ahead is unparalleled.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 2 San Diego, Alta California, September 19, 2008 Price: Free

WHO STAYED AT THE COSMO?

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

Most of the guests staying at the Cosmopolitan Hotel during the 1870s were passengers traveling on Seeley's stages to and from Los Angeles or local visitors from the outlying areas with business and personal ties to Old Town.

Buildings are often links to living memories of the past. This was certainly the case with the surviving members of Juan Bandini's family, who often stayed at the hotel when visiting Old Town. They included his wife and widow Refugio, his sons-in-law Cave Couts and Charles R. Johnson, his daughter Arcadia, and sons José María and Juan Bautista. On June 12, 1874, members of the extended family gathered at the hotel to attend the funeral of Couts, who had passed away at the Horton House on June 10th.

Miguel de Pedrorena, Jr., another Old Town resident, frequently stayed at the hotel to visit his sister Isabel, who still resided in the family's adobe a block away on San Diego Avenue.

Colonel William J. Gatewood, former publisher and owner of the *San Diego Union*, and Edward "Ned" Bushyhead, his part-Cherokee partner, checked into the Cosmopolitan on at least three occasions in 1870 and 71, most likely because the weekly newspaper had relocated downtown to Horton's Addition.

Tomasa Pico, the elderly widow of Francisco María Alvarado and sister of Governor Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor, stopped at the hotel on March 25, 1872, probably on her way home to Rancho Peñasquitos.

Two individuals, who stopped frequently at the hotel, sometimes for days at a time, were Andrew Cassidy, a Soledad Valley rancher and county supervisor, and Moses Mannasse, a storekeeper and farmer from San Pasqual. Cassidy visited Old Town regularly in 1870-1871, most likely, to review records in the county courthouse at the Whaley House. Mannasse, in turn, probably came to Old Town to see his cousin Joseph.

Military officials in transit to their frontier posts often stopped at the hotel; among them, A. P. Greene, the agent at San Pasqual Indian Reservation, and General George Brown Dandy, the commander of the U.S. Army depot at Yuma in the Arizona Territory. Dr. John S. Griffin of Los Angeles, a well-known veteran of the battle at San Pasqual in 1846, registered at the hotel on March 25, 1872, probably to tend to his brother-in-law Benjamin Hayes' invalid wife Adelaida, the daughter of José Antonio Serrano.

Charles Nordhoff, a well-known New York journalist, and his wife spent an evening at the hotel while touring San Diego in April 1872, to put the finishing touches on his soon-to-be-published, best-selling guidebook, *California for Health, Pleasure, and Residence*.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 3 San Diego, Alta California, September 26, 2008 Price: Free

THE COSMO BAR.

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

Without photographs or written accounts, what the interior of the Cosmopolitan Hotel looked like in the early 1870s remains largely a mystery. The bar is undoubtedly the single most important first floor historic space to restore. It sets the tone—it is the showpiece—of the interior restoration.

The bar opened in 1870 after construction of the hotel had been completed. It was located off the main entrance hall in the room facing Calhoun Street. On-site inspections of existing historic fabric reveal that the floor was tongue and groove Douglas fir. Much of the original woodwork, including the wainscoting, window wells, and window frames, remains intact. According to Susan Buck's paint analysis, the woodwork was grain painted to look like oak. The adobe walls above the wainscoting were plastered and covered with lime whitewash. They may have been wallpapered, although probably not initially. There was most likely a ceiling medallion similar in design to the one recently found by archaeologists in the sitting room on the opposite side of the entry hall.

According to historical consultant Bruce Coons, the room would have had a front-back bar, made of either mahogany or black walnut with recessed panels. It would have had a brass foot rail and above it three wood-bordered mirror insets.

The most likely location for the bar counter would have been along the rear wall to the right of the doorway opening out to the rear veranda. The length of this wall is 20' 4"; thus, the bar with an opening at each end could be no longer than 14' or 15'.

No written record to my knowledge exists of the barroom's furnishings or equipment. There is, however, an 1870 room-by-room inventory of the furnishings of the three-story Franklin House, which operated on the south side of the plaza from 1858 to 1872, when it was destroyed by the fire.

According to this source, the Franklin House bar had a counter, an iron safe, a writing desk, an overhead clock, a key rack, 2 round tables, 2 maps, 6 hanging lamps, 8 pictures, 8 demijohns, 11 arm chairs (no bar stools), fiddles and cases, cribbage board, fish bowl, spittoons, 10- and 20-gallon kegs, champagne and wine glasses, sugar bowls, assorted liquors, absinthe, Stoughton and Lacon's bitters, bar tumblers, sherry, port, and Chateau Leroux, Claret and Cocumungo wine.

In addition, the Cosmopolitan Hotel's bar sold imported Havana cigars for 20 and 25 cents each, fresh lager beer by the glass, bottle, or gallon, choice brands of liquor, and the "Uncle Toby" five for 25 cents. Ice was always on hand.

The bar was the premier gathering place for male guests and visitors. Here, they could shake off the dust from the stage trip, relax and socialize, smoke a cigar, down a shot of whiskey or a bottle of beer, play a hand of Monte, poker, or cribbage. It was their home away from home.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 4 San Diego, Alta California, October 3, 2008 Price: Free

FOOD & OTHER GOODS.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

The correspondence between Bandini and his son-in-law Abel Stearns let us know what foods were consumed and what kind of goods were used around 1840-60 in San Diego.

Bandini was constantly asking Stearns to send him various food items, sometimes he just ran out of them or they were difficult for him to get in San Diego or from his other ranches. In one of the letters written in 1858 in Tijuana, Bandini says that the ranches are not producing anything, that's why he sometimes has to get groceries in San Francisco, but they are too expensive there. He asks Stearns if he can get cheaper food in Los Angeles.

Sugar was very scarce, and one letter tells us that Bandini wasn't able to get any sugar in San Diego, and he was very angry because he knew some people in San Diego could get it but not him. Other goods he asks for are coffee, *panocha* (hard brown sugar; an item his family really liked), rice, wheat, salt, flour, tea, beans, corn, oranges, wine, *aguardiente* (liquor), *pinole* (roasted corn flour), and chocolate.

In one of the letters where Bandini talks about his dying father, he asks Stearns to please do whatever he can to send him coffee because that is the only thing his father wants to have, and also some bread.

Bandini had cattle, so he had easy access to meat, which they salted. He sent his daughters 64 watermelons once, and also cabbages and pumpkins. He mentioned eating lots of grapes, and in the next letter he said he was sick of them.

OTHER GOODS

Things that they used in their everyday life are accounted for in several letters, things that Bandini asked Stearns to get for himself, his family and for his workers as well.

Items such as white and blue cotton cloth, silk and striped cloth were requested to make blouses, shirts and skirts and flowered linen and cotton to make bedspreads, also green ribbon for his daughters. He would also mention *sarapes*, handkerchiefs, *rebozos,* satin to make shoes, a good cordovan (soft leather originally made from goatskin) for himself, gold and silver thread, paper, ink bottles, drinking glasses, serving platters (that apparently were easy to break), window glass, white blankets, knives, rope, axes and soap, amongst others. In a letter written on December 24th 1839 Bandini asked Stearns to send him Mexican fireworks.

Bandini loved to entertain and have parties and guests, maybe this was the reason why in one letter he asked Stearns to send him two dozen saucers and cups. In this particular letter we can see that he didn't have the appropriate tableware to entertain his guests: "It is not good that the *fiscal de la suprema corte* (district attorney) receive such stingy treatment."

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 5 San Diego, Alta California, October 10, 2008 Price: Free

LOSING YOUR MARBLES.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

Archaeologists have recovered many kinds of artifacts from the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel. Antique toys, in particular, speak volumes about the children who once owned them. Toy marbles, enjoyed by the children of Old Town for decades, have been found from different areas of the house.

Marble games, with various sets of rules, have been played by children around the world for more than two thousand years. Marbles in the 1800s could be made locally, or purchased of decorated porcelain, clay, or glass. Ceramic marbles were made by hand with two piece molds, and with the invention in Germany of the marble scissors in 1846, glass marbles were mass-produced and became accessible to everyone. By 1890 the first machines for making glass marbles were introduced.

Marbles have been found in almost every house in Old Town, which tells us that they were a very popular and accessible toy. One could play marbles alone, or in a group, and different games could be played such as enclosure games or hole games. One could have several target marbles, and a favorite marble to shoot with, called the "shooter." It was a special marble because of its color, design or size, and a child would avoid losing it at any cost. Marbles could be also shot from a sling shot. The child could also trade marbles, and they were often prized, cached possessions.

Iris Engstrand and Thomas Scharf in their article "Rancho Guajome, A California Legacy Preserved" (*The Journal of San Diego History*, 1974, Vol.20, No.1) note that Ysidora Bandini and Cave Couts of Rancho Guajome had eight children. Once when Benjamin Hayes and his son Chauncey were visiting them at Guajome, Chauncey gave the Couts kids "marbles of a dozen colors brought from Los Angeles" which they played with under the porch.

Archaeologists at the Cosmopolitan Hotel project have found 9 marbles: 8 made of painted ceramic with green and red lines, and one made out of red glass. One can only imagine the way these marbles got to the Cosmopolitan Hotel. Perhaps Bandini's grandsons played with them and lost them in the garden; perhaps a family with children stayed at the Cosmo Hotel and brought them to amuse themselves.

The expression "You lost your marbles" didn't originally mean going crazy, it meant to become really, really angry. When you play certain marble games, if you are not a dexterous enough, your opponent can win all of your marbles. Your reaction will be to get angry because you lost.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 6 San Diego, Alta California, October 17, 2008 Price: Free

MYSTERY OF THE ACORN PENDANT.

NICOLE TURNER.

San Diego Coast District. Archaeological Project Leader.

During recent excavations at the Casa de Bandini/ Cosmopolitan Hotel, a single acorn pendant was unearthed. Probably worn on a necklace, or attached to an earring, this small pendant is only a few centimeters long with an ivory body and metal eyelet for hanging. Why an acorn? Who wore it? Where did it come from? In the preliminary analysis phase, these are just a few questions asked, all of which could possibly remain a mystery.

There are a variety of reasons jewelry was modeled after the fruit of the oak tree. In some cultures, acorns once constituted a dietary staple, rich in protein, carbohydrates, and fats. Local California Indians worked day and night from September through November in higher altitudes to gather and preserve acorns. The meat from cracked and hulled acorns was stored in granaries, and some of the meat was immediately leached and ground into flour with a stone mortar and pestle. Acorns were also a popular theme during the Victorian Era because they were associated with immortality. "In Britain, one old tradition has it that if a woman carries an acorn on her person, it will delay the aging process and keep her forever young."(http://www.answers.com/topic/acorn). The acorn also symbolizes potential and strength, and has been associated with fertility and youth.

Who wore the pendant, and where it came from are the real mysteries. The Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel has been frequented by a number of visitors throughout the years. To give an idea of the cultural diversity present, the local community itself was established by Spaniards, Mexicans, *Mestizos*, Indians and *Californios*. Completed in 1829 by Don Juan Bandini, it became a social hub. Guests included political figures, presidio officers, friends, and family. In 1869, Albert Seeley purchased the building and converted it into the Cosmopolitan Hotel, which was visited by hundreds of guests over the years. The building later served as a boarding house, an olive packing plant, and a residence.

Thousands of visitors have passed through this building, danced on its earthen and wooden floors, meandered through its courtyard, and provided the necessary labor to keep this building alive. Any one of these visitors could have brought with them the mysterious acorn pendant. The Governor's wife could have lost the pendant while dancing at one of Don Juan Bandini's famous *fandangos*. Perhaps it was one of a pair of earrings that Albert Seeley gave to his wife on their anniversary. Another mystery…

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 7 San Diego, Alta California, October 24, 2008 Price: Free

THE CONTRACTORS.

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

In 1869, Albert Seeley hired Parsons Brothers to renovate Juan Bandini's single-story adobe and convert it into the two-story Cosmopolitan Hotel.

Henry F. and Samuel H. Parsons operated a construction business on Fifth Street downtown near Alonzo E. Horton's wharf. Advertisements in the San Diego Union identified them as architects, builders, and carpenters.

Parsons Brothers specialized in producing moldings, trims, doors, sashes, blinds, and other ornamental finished woodwork. They catered to an exclusive clientele, building commercial establishments and homes for New San Diego's upper crust, including remodeling Horton's elegant home.

They had certain advantages that other San Diego contractors did not. Their complex of shops was located next to a large lumber yard run by McDonald, Gale & Co., and their workforce used steam-driven lathes and other machines to mill, turn, and finish lumber. The yard also had two brick kilns.

The June 30, 1869 issue of the San Diego Union described Parsons Brothers' operation as "…something new and useful…." They not only built and assembled houses, including prefabs, but also sold finished goods to other contractors. Mass-production and speed, as the reporter notes below, was their trademark:

"We noticed sash-doors and blinds in all stages, from the lumber sawed into shape to be painted and finished articles ready to place in the buildings. They have several pieces of moulding of rare finish made in their shops. All milling and boring done by machinery. The whole establishment is driven by steam.

Just as steam power has advantages over blood and muscle, so have these gentlemen advantages over builders who are getting along without the aid of it. Notwithstanding their facilities of steam and machinery, these gentlemen employ not less than fifteen men weekly to push on their heavy operations.

Jobs are taken and the houses are constructed in the lumber yard or at the shops, already to put together when they are taken to the ground, and put together on short notice."

The Cosmo's character-defining wooden exterior features—its clapboard, turned columns, baluster railings, window trim and sashes, pilasters and bracketed cornices—were not made in San Francisco or Monterey as initially suspected, but right here in San Diego by Parsons Brothers.

The other interesting aspect is that the partnership dissolved in November 1869 shortly after completion of the Cosmopolitan. Why Samuel sold out his interest to his brother remains a mystery, but his timing was fortuitous because shortly after the country would be mired in a major depression. By the early 1870s, San Diego's real estate boom had collapsed, wreaking havoc for the construction trade and many other local businesses.

I would like to thank historian Ellen Sweet for researching this and other Cosmopolitan articles.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 8 San Diego, Alta California, October 31, 2008 Price: Free

1930S BALUSTRADE UNCOVERED.

NICOLE TURNER.

San Diego Coast District. Archaeological Project Leader.

Cave Couts Jr., son of Ysidora Bandini (Don Juan Bandini's daughter) and Cave Johnson Couts, purchased the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel in July, 1928. Significant changes to the structure were made under the new ownership. This included revamping the upstairs rooms and installing a kitchen and dining room down below. Even more significant were the modern conveniences that were installed for the first time, such as, electricity and indoor plumbing, conveniences that are taken for granted today.

As a result of the renovation, the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel took on a look similar to the Steamboat Revival style architecture popular in Louisiana. The entire building was covered with peach color coat of Portland cement stucco over chicken wire and lime plaster. According to the 2004 Historic Structure Report for the Casa de Bandini, the exterior plaster was painted yellow, the window frames were painted white and green and brown trim was used on the porch. A distinguishing characteristic of this phase was the vertical lath screens that were installed above the porch and balcony. The downstairs porch along the west and south sides were trimmed with a balustered railing of cast stone, shown in the historic image below (ca. 1938 photograph. Library of Congress, HABS 1937).

Shortly after the death of Cave Couts Jr. in July of 1943, his estate sold to J. H. and Nora Cardwell. The building was again remodeled. Under Cardwell ownership a Spanish Colonial Revival style was incorporated. This remodel included the enclosure of approximately half of the pre-existing chamfered posts in stuccoed columns. Rustic wooden posts and railings were used on the balcony and enhanced with ornate wrought iron hardware. On the west and south sides of the building, facing Mason Street and Calhoun Street respectively, the balustrade was enclosed with a solid perimeter wall. Unfortunately these remodels have overshadowed the integrity of the building's historic past. In the last few years, a collaborative effort is taking place to restore the building back to its 1870s appearance as the Cosmopolitan Hotel. Amidst the ongoing restoration of the building the aforementioned 1930s balustrade was uncovered, still hidden within the perimeter wall. The image below is of the recently uncovered balustrade.

Evidence of previous construction phases still survive at the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel. Even though the archaeologists and architect on-site had already suspected the balustrade to be preserved within the stuccoed porch wall, it was still very exciting to watch its unveiling, and it is just as exciting to share this discovery with the public.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 9 San Diego, Alta California, November 7, 2008 Price: Free

A CAMEO APPERANCE.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

Archaeologists from ASM Affiliates just found a cameo at the Cosmopolitan Hotel. Do you, or anybody in your family, have a cameo? Is it a family heirloom? Do you have an old photo of your mother, or grandmother, wearing it?

A cameo is a portrait or scene carved in relief with a contrasting colored background (the opposite is called *intaglio,* a piece carved below the surface). Cameos were carved in shell, agate, onyx, and lava. Most often, they depicted women's heads. Cameo design in the 18th and 19th centuries turned to a renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman styles, so cameos often show mythological scenes also. Cameos were popular pieces of jewelry from the Victorian Era (1837-1901) through the early 1950s. Cameos made out of shell were less "formal" and appropriate to be worn during the day.

Physical traits can help to date a cameo. The long Roman nose may denote an early piece (before 1850), while a nose slightly upturned can be dated as a 19th century piece. The more simple "classical" woman's head and the ones with men's heads are generally early. After being carved, more recent cameos were usually placed in a setting made of gold; older cameos were usually set in brass or silver. They could be made into brooches, earrings, rings or pendants.

The cameo found at the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan Hotel site is made out of shell, oval in shape and depicts the profile of a bearded man with short, curly hair and a straight nose. He is wearing something like a robe, or a very loose garment, which is only visible around his neck. The man's face looks classical Greek or Roman. It's very hard to know if it was a jewelry piece because the setting is missing. But the most amazing element of this cameo is its size, this wonderful piece is 0.4" long and 0.2" wide! The size of a pine nut! The carving detail is so exquisite that one can only be amazed by the dexterity of the artist who made it. This piece could have been a tiepin due to its small size, but the analysis is just beginning on this item.

The expression "a cameo appearance" refers to a small role performed by a well-known actor, making reference to the small faces that cameos have. We don't know if this cameo belonged to the Bandinis, or how it was lost and buried in the ground. But what we can imagine is that this beautiful piece was once a prized object and made the wearer very happy and proud. Once displayed, it will continue its mission of delighting people, but now as an invaluable piece of history.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 10 San Diego, Alta California, November 14, 2008 Price: Free

WHEN THE CIRCUS CAME TO OLD TOWN.

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

On the morning of November 17, 1871, New York City's Mammoth Circus paraded through Old Town's crowded streets; its caravan of lumbering wagons festooned with colorful banners and animal cages and surrounded by costumed performers and prancing horses. Circus posters and newspaper ads in both Spanish and English promoted the company as "The Great Show of 1871!" Some of the performers, including the owners William Thompson, an animal trainer, and Omar Samuel Kingsley, a Creole bareback rider, and the company's agents, Rowe and Wenban, stayed at the Cosmopolitan.

That evening Old Towners packed the Big Tent to watch some 50 performers dazzle them with a menagerie of horseback riding stunts and animal acts. Admission cost a dollar for adults and 50 cents for children.

Kingsley, the company's star, was already a legend. He had performed in the capitals of Europe and in Japan, China, and India. His signature act was bareback riding dressed as a woman with the stage name, Ella Zoyara. Audiences thought he was a woman, a daring heroine who rode like a man. His slender physique and long curly black hair concealed his true gender—something that he managed to keep secret until 1867 when he ended up in a Manilla jail after brawling with some Spanish officers at one of his performances.

Three other performances were staged on Saturday afternoon and evening, November 18th and Monday evening, November 20th in New Town in front of the Horton House. The company then traveled onto Mexico on the brig *L.P. Forster*.

On the return leg in March 1872, it once again performed in New Town and Old Town featuring new performers and new acts, including the "Stud of Horses," before enthusiastic crowds. Kingsley, Thompson, and their agents stayed again at the Cosmopolitan before the company traveled on to Los Angeles and San Francisco, and then headed East by rail.

Omar Samuel Kingsley, 1863.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 11 San Diego, Alta California, November 21, 2008 Price: Free

LOST ART OF WRITING.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

It is hard to imagine life without email and cell phones. These methods of communication have become indispensable parts of our busy lives. But in the 1800s, long distance communication was done by writing letters, an art that is sadly almost extinct.

Juan Bandini's correspondence to Abel Stearns (found at the Bancroft Library) unveils details about political matters, business issues, health, weather, and all kinds of everyday events that happened in San Diego, in Tijuana, or on their ranches. Thanks to these invaluable written documents we are able to better understand the past.

By reading these letters one can see that writing was a very important part of Bandini's life. He must have spent a lot of his time writing letters and business documents, which he would send via messenger, or even by ship. Some of these letters were written at night, and one can imagine how hard it must have been to write a letter under the light of a candle or an oil lamp.

He once asked Stearns to send him ink when his ink bottle broke on a trip to the Guadalupe Valley in Baja California. In an 1840 letter from San Juan del Rio, he says that he is writing on his last piece of paper, and asks if Stearns could send him one *resma* (ream) of paper.

Bandini had beautiful handwriting, especially considering how he had to dip his pen in ink every few words, and his handwriting changes from time to time. One letter dated in 1847 was particularly hard to read. The words were crooked and very shaky, with big ink stains, and mistakes; not characteristic of Bandini's letters. It is only at the end of the letter that he mentions having an accident and cutting his finger.

In a letter written in 1842 Bandini says that Juanito, his son, asked to stay with his brother José María at Stearn's house specifically so Juanito could keep learning and practicing his writing skills.

Back in the 1800s people used pens and pencils, but the pens had metal pen nibs mounted in wooden pen holders, and the pencils were graphite sticks, which were sharpened with a knife. England was the most important graphite manufacturer. American graphite pencils were made by mixing glue, wax, and other materials (American Heritage.com, Fall 2004, 20:2).

The ASM archaeology crew discovered a rusted metal pen nib and several pencil lead fragments while excavating the Cosmopolitan Hotel, the former Bandini House. These writing utensils could have been used by somebody working at the hotel front desk, or maybe by Don Juan Bandini himself, and are witnesses to his long working days and nights writing the letters that speak for him now.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 12 San Diego, Alta California, November 28, 2008 Price: Free

OLIVES.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel has had many alterations throughout the years. At one point it was used as an olive pickling factory. Nancy Carol Carter in her article "San Diego Olives: Origins of a California Industry" (*The Journal of San Diego History*, 2008, 54:3, 137-161) notes that in 1900 Edward William Akerman and Robert Luther Tuffley moved their Old Mission Olive brand processing business to Old Town San Diego. They remodeled and occupied the Casa de Bandini from 1900 to 1919. They used the downstairs for offices, and for processing and pickling activities. Their friends and employees lived in the rooms on the second floor. The next-door Seeley Stables barn was used for processing olives as well.

As part of the Cosmopolitan Hotel project, ASM archaeologists were assigned to dig test trenches looking for a windmill at the Seeley Stables courtyard, and discovered 25 complete glass jars, and broken pieces, pieces of cut cork, and olive pits. The jars recovered are made of thick clear glass, have a wide mouth, a cylindrical long body with a ring or shoulder close to the neck, and come in three different sizes. The wide mouth allows for easy access to the product. The shoulder is typical of the pickling jars of the early 1900's. They appear to be machine-made. It's hard to tell for sure if these bottles were used for olives because they have no tag or embossing that says what the content was.

The corks are a very interesting find. The olive oil that was processed in the plant would be bottled inside long neck glass bottles. Corks would be used to close the bottles, cut flush to the bottle lip and sealed with wax. The corks found by the archaeologists are probably what was left after sealing the bottles: small thin discs, chunks, and cylindrical pieces.

My grandfather-in-law, Alfred Whittle, used to pickle his own olives. He used a "lye-curing process" where olives were kept in a solution of lye, water, and ice cubes (to shorten the cooling time of the lye), changing the mix 3 times every 6 hours. To check if the olives were cured he would keep some olives in plain water and compare the color to the ones inside the lye solution; the cured olives would have a dark yellowish color. Rinsing them afterwards with fresh water, he would keep them submerged for seven days until the water had a light pink color. The final step was to jar the olives in the brine mix, which he made from water, salt, oregano, black pepper, and garlic cloves. The olives should be kept submerged completely in the brine.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 12 San Diego, Alta California, November 28, 2008 Price: Free

ABSOLUTELY PURE.

Ellen Sweet.

Historian.

That was the motto for Akerman & Tuffley's Old Mission brand of olive oil. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, as home to Edward William (Will) Akerman and Robert Luther Tuffley's olive pickling plant, the old Cosmopolitan Hotel building's operations garnered honors for North San Diego (or Old Town as it was locally called). Ackerman & Tuffley's claim to a superior product, according to their promotional material, was based on purity, quality, and general excellence. They carefully blended oils from a variety of olives. They sterilized their tools and equipment. And their special advantage was storing the oil in adobe buildings which assured the correct temperature and ventilation for their product. This plus the advantage of the San Diego soil and climate were their reasons for their award winning products. Perhaps it didn't hurt that Will Akerman was married to Ysabel Ana Altamirano, who's California and Baja California heritage no doubt included knowledge of olive preparation.

According to an article in the *San Diego Union* (April 22, 1902) explaining their successful operation, their brand of "Old Mission" was derived from use of the olive orchards from the first mission in California. Akerman & Tuffley acquired the property from the Rt. Rev. Francisco Mora, then Bishop of the diocese. They began making oil and pickling olives, but they found that their equipment was inadequate for their expanding business. Because of their need for a better facility, they moved their operation to the old Cosmopolitan Hotel in 1896.

They must have hit on the right combination because these two English entrepreneurs in Old Town won many national and international awards for their olive products. Akerman & Tuffley's exhibit of olive oil at the 1900 Paris Exposition was honored with a gold medal, one of twenty-seven gold medals awarded to California products. The award was made by passing

over olive oil exhibits from Spain, Italy, and France. In 1902 they won a silver medal at the Pan-American Exposition and a gold medal at the World's Paris Exposition.

In 1910 olive crops in San Diego were only moderate and Akerman admitted that their firm had been shipping in olives from northern California for years because they could not keep up with the demand with only San Diego County crops. By 1911 Akerman & Tuffley announced plans to build a new olive processing plant a few blocks away from their leased Cosmopolitan Hotel operation. Perhaps they no longer considered the use of an old adobe building a key to their success.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 14 San Diego, Alta California, December 12, 2008 Price: Free

WHO WAS ALBERT LEWIS SEELEY?

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

Like many San Diegans, Albert Seeley came from somewhere else. Born in the rural farm belt of Illinois in 1822, he had been a stage driver since the age of 17, working in Texas and then Los Angeles.

Seeley arrived in Old Town with his English-born wife Emily and their children in 1867. At 5' 10½", he was considered a large, fine-looking man. He also was a superb horseman and stage driver, and was shortly awarded a government contract to carry mail and passengers between Los Angeles and San Diego.

The United States Mail Stage Line initially operated out of the Franklin House located on the south side of the plaza. The new operation under Seeley and his partner Charles Wright faced multiple difficulties. The mail never arrived on time (three times weekly) because of poor road conditions, especially during winter when rainstorms washed out entire sections of the coastal route to San Juan Capistrano. River crossings were particularly dangerous, and holdups, although infrequent, did occur.

In early 1869, Seeley was appointed road master. He spent months improving the coastal route, further delaying mail deliveries and triggering negative press coverage from the San Diego Union. It was a difficult time for the man from Illinois.

In May, he purchased Bandini's family home and adjoining lots for $2,000; most likely with Emily's recent inheritance of $8,000. It was a wise investment because the property provided Seeley with an opportunity to build the necessary facilities for his stage operation and to house his passengers. Within a month, he had hired Henry F. and Samuel H. Parsons to renovate the deteriorating adobe and to add a wood-framed second story and balconies.

By 1871, Seeley had built a large barn for his coaches and mud wagons, bought the Blackhawk Livery Stable, and put up corral fencing and a windmill for pumping water from a well. Over the next year, he erected another windmill, rebuilt or replaced several sheds, and planted eucalyptus trees along Juan Street as a windbreaker. As of 1873-1874, the one-time Texas stagehand owned five wagons and other vehicles valued at $1,000; 16 horses and halfbreeds at $800, and harnesses, ropes, and bridles at $200. The hotel lot was valued at $2,000 in terms of improvements.

The stage master loved fanfare and exaggeration. In 1874, he purchased the largest and most splendid stagecoach in the entire county, and before putting it into service, gave everyone in Old Town a free ride. His advertisements boasted that his Los Angeles-San Diego stages passed through "the best part of Southern California."

On August 7, 1898, the "courteous commander," as the historian Hubert Howe Bancroft once called him, passed away in Santa Rosa, CA. He and Emily are interned at Olivet Cemetery in Colma near San Francisco.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

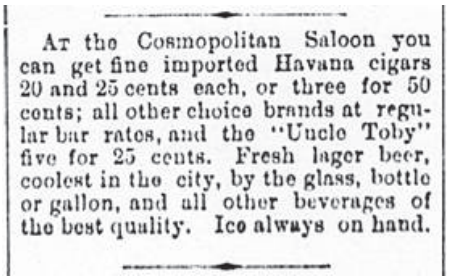
True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 15 San Diego, Alta California, December 19, 2008 Price: Free

"ICE ALWAYS ON HAND."

William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

Albert Seeley, in his advertisements for the Cosmopolitan states, "Ice always on hand." Today, this statement would seem obvious. But in the 1870s, decades before *General Electric* produced the first home refrigerator with a freezer compartment in 1939, ice in balmy San Diego was no easy feat. So the question is, where did he get it?


At the Cosmopolitan Saloon you can get fine imported Havana cigars 20 and 25 cents each, or three for 50 cents; all other choice brands at regular bar rates, and the "Uncle Toby" five for 25 cents. Fresh lager beer, coolest in the city, by the glass, bottle or gallon, and all other beverages of the best quality. Ice always on hand.

From about 1,000 BC–when it was recorded the Chinese cut and stored ice–to the mid 1800s, all ice was harvested. In the early 1800s there was a brisk ice trade, primarily from Boston's "Ice King" Fredrick Tudor. The *Tudor Ice Company* operated from 1805 to 1863 and owned icehouses in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Galle, Singapore, Jamaica, Havana, New Orleans, and Charleston. The ice was shipped in sawdust, so it could survive the long sea journeys.

California also got ice from the East coast, a slow and expensive process, until the *Union Ice Company* contracted with Russian Alaska in 1851. Rival companies soon followed. The *California Ice Company* bought 250 tons of ice from the Russians in 1852, using straw for insulation. The next year, a third ice company, the *American Russian Commercial Company* was founded in San Francisco. The price, $75 a ton, made the Eastern companies non-competitive.

On the horizon however, was a deal breaker, machines that made ice. Dr. Gorrie of Florida–whose main concern was not cold drinks but to treat yellow fever patients–built his first cooling machine in 1834, and was granted the first U.S patent for mechanical refrigeration in 1851. The Northern press, especially in Boston, scoffed at the idea of machine-made ice, and his invention was never successful commercially.

The first real break-through for modern refrigeration was an 1860 U.S. patent granted to Ferdinand P.E. Carre of France. His system used ammonia, which is still the most common method of commercial cooling today.

Much more successful at marketing, Carre's machines were quickly bought by breweries all over the country. Cold storage buildings for meat packers used refrigeration units, and railroad cars and ships began to provide refrigerated transport.

In Seeley's time, there were 3 breweries in San Diego; the *City Brewery*, the *San Francisco Brewery*, and the *Philadelphia Brewery*, and it is possible he bought ice from one of them. Lager beer–also advertised–requires cold storage, so a brewery that made lager may have also have had an ice machine.

But another option is also possible. When Jose Aguilar was the Mayor of Los Angles, (1866-68) an ice factory was built there, which sold ice for 4 cents a pound. In a letter written by D.M. Berry, about San Diego, in early 1873, he states: "even the ice they use is made in a factory in Los Angles…"

So, the next time you need to come up with a toast, remember Dr. Gorrie, and Mr. Carre, the inventors that helped cool your beer or sparkling wine, or put the ice in your glass.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 16 San Diego, Alta California, December 26, 2008 Price: Free

BATHROOMS: PART 1.

William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

Today, when we think of a bathroom, it has a toilet, a bathtub, and a sink. But 100 years ago, this was not always the case, in fact it was rare, only 14% of homes in 1908 had a bathtub. Although these seemingly simple components have been in one place or another for thousands of years, this combination which almost all of us consider ordinary is a comparatively modern configuration.

When the Casa de Bandini was first completed in 1829, it did not have bathrooms, nor did the Cosmopolitan Hotel in 1870. Bathrooms were not installed in the hotel until 1930, by Juan Bandini's Grandson, Cave J. Couts, Jr. This is about the same time indoor plumbing started becoming more common in rural homes in the U.S., and only six years after pipe and fitting sizes, finally became standardized in the U.S.

The reasons for the seeming delay of indoor plumbing are many, starting but far from ending with the fixtures.

Bathtubs. The word itself appears to come from Mark Twain, who coined the word bath-tub in an 1869 story *Innocents Abroad*. Before that they were often called bathing tubs, and of course had been around for centuries. In the time of Juan Bandini they were often made of wood–similar to a large bucket–or copper, and could have been round or oblong. In 1847, Juan had a bath house built in an effort to have his daughters visit him more often. It was built next to, or over the well, and would have contained only a tub, no sink and certainly not a toilet.

The bathing tub would be filled with a bucket from the well, and hot water added by heating it over a wood fire. The tubs usually had no drain, so had to be emptied by bucket.

By the time of the Cosmopolitan, not much had changed in terms of tub design or how it was filled and used, except in high-priced city homes, where new home designs included what we now

think of as a bathroom, although the room was often much smaller than today. Tubs made of tin were common in addition to wood and copper; cast iron tubs were not manufactured in the U.S. until 1883, by the Standard Sanitary Manufacturing Company, and the Kohler Company. There must have been a bath house close to the hotel, as getting to San Diego via stage coach no matter what route, had to have been a very dusty affair.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 17 San Diego, Alta California, January 2, 2009 Price: Free

BATHROOMS: PART 2.

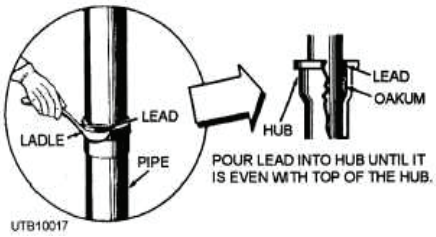
William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

When Cave Couts Jr. had the first plumbing installed in the Cosmopolitan in 1930, indoor plumbing was coming into its own in rural America. That year almost half of the U.S. population was rural, and the population of the City of San Diego was only 147,995. Even today, the State of Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development offers "zero percent interest, forgivable loans in eligible localities for the installation of indoor plumbing."

Plumbing pipes have been accredited to the Romans, who made them from lead. The word plumbing is derived from the Latin word *plumbum*, which translates as lead. Lead was still used for pipes into the 1800s although in the U.S. until the early part of the 19th century the most common pipe material was wood. Wooden pipes were still in use much later–in Detroit Michigan, over 100 miles of wooden pipes were still in use in the year 1886–and they were still being installed at least as late as 1908. Wooden pipes were either made by hollowing out or boring logs, or wooden staves were banded together much like a long barrel. The first plumbing in the White House had bored out wooden pipes.

Cast iron pipes were imported from England until the early 1800s when the first cast-iron pipe manufactured in the United States was produced in a foundry in Weymouth, New Jersey. Plumbers in the 1800s could also use plain or tin lined lead piping for cold-water service, or galvanized, enameled or rubber-coated wrought iron piping. Copper was available as a pipe material as well, but did not become popular until after WWI.

In 1930, the plumbing installed in the Casa de Bandini/Cosmopolitan–renamed The Miramar by Couts Jr.–were unlined cast iron pipes for waste lines, and brass pipes for water lines. The cost of brass pipes was higher, but brass required less maintenance, and lasted longer. Brass pipes are either soldered or threaded–in the case of the Cosmopolitan they are threaded–and iron pipes were connected by packing oakum and then poring lead into the hub of one of the pipes. Oakum is made from tarred hemp. The lead was melted in a small caldron, and then poured with a ladle.



Sinks. In both Bandini's and Seeley's time, the sink as we know it was a simple bowl, with no drain or faucets. The Cosmopolitan would probably have had one in every room, and a corresponding pitcher to fill it. It would be emptied by either a maid, or the water simply thrown into the street or courtyard off the veranda. With the advent of indoor plumbing, it was relatively easy to design a drain hole in the bowl, and it becomes a sink.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 18 San Diego, Alta California, January 9, 2009 Price: Free

BATHROOMS: PART 3.

William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

When the Casa de Bandini was completed in 1829, the toilet as we know it today was still decades away from being invented. His family had two options; chamber pot, and outhouse. In 1869, when the Cosmopolitan opened the guests still had the same two options.

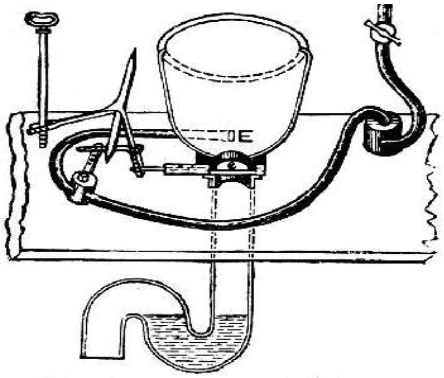
The most complex fixture in modern bathrooms is the toilet. The history of how they came into being is long.

Chamberpot & outhouse.

King Minos (circa 1500 B.C.) ruler of Crete, had a toilet, that flushed with water. So did the ancient Greeks and Egyptians, followed by the Romans. These were pretty basic, a seat located over a channel of water that flowed or was piped to the nearest river. In China, a flushing toilet has been discovered from the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC to 24 AD). Although they worked, these systems all had drawbacks, for example, they were all at ground level.

Leornardo DaVinci had plans for flushing water closets for the castle of Francis I at Ambrose. The plans included flushing channels inside the walls, and a ventilating system which reached through the roof. They were never built, as the project was considered nonsense.

Sir John Harrington, godson to Queen Elizabeth I, is often credited with inventing the first flushing water closet in 1596. However, only 2 were ever made. An American design was patented in 1857, but proved to be unsanitary. The first English patent for the flushing water close–made mostly of copper–was issued to watchmaker Alexander Cummings, in 1775 incorporating an S-curve in the drain, called a P-trap, to keep sewer gases from coming out. It also had its problems, primarily it still let sewer gas leak into the home between the bowl and the floor, and it had no venting.



Cummings design.

Many attempts were made to correct this, and the problem was solved by a plumber named Thomas Crapper, who invented an airtight seal–a wax ring–between the bowl and the floor. He also invented the chain pull mechanism, and venting system that went through the roof, similar to DaVinci's scrapped design. Crapper teamed up with Thomas Twyford, a pottery maker, whose design allowed some water to remain in the bowl, and the ceramic bowl became standard. Twyford also made toilets into art pieces, by molding them into many shapes including dolphins.

Although by 1873, 43 British firms, including Twyford, were exporting high-quality closets to the U.S., these toilets did not gain popularity until the return of soldiers from England after WWI. American designs were still behind, but finally caught up about 1900, when most new home designs included indoor plumbing.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 19 San Diego, Alta California, January 16, 2009 Price: Free

BATHROOMS: PART 4.

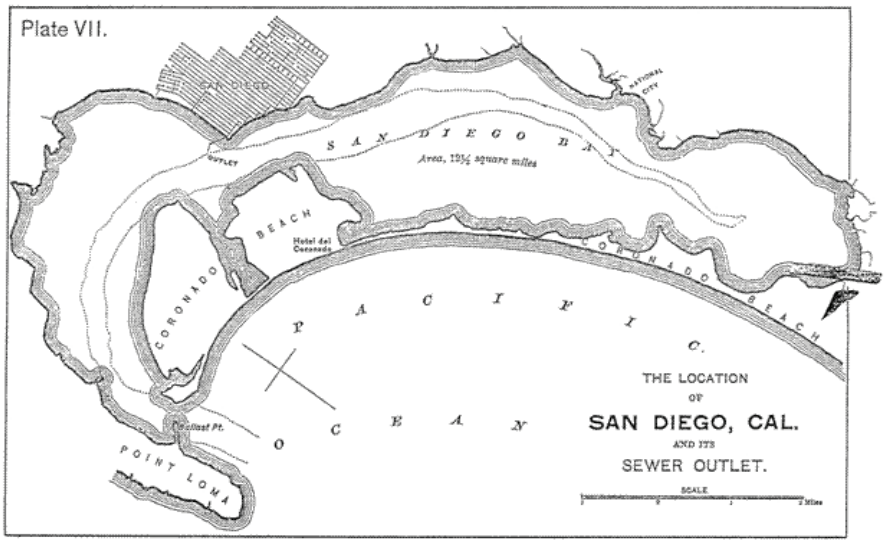
William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

Once all the components of the modern bathroom were developed, there were still two problems: where to put them, and skilled plumbers to install them.

Most homes and hotels not having the fairly new fixtures available when they were built, had no plumbing, or a room specified as a bathroom. This was the issue that Cave Couts Jr. faced in 1930, when renovating the Casa de Bandini/ Cosmopolitan Hotel. In order to accommodate the bathrooms, the existing guest rooms had to be significantly altered. Cout's workers reconfigured the rooms facing the courtyard, by reusing the Seeley studs, and then re-lathing and plastering the entire interior. Most of the incoming brass water lines were hidden in the newly renovated walls, but in most cases the cast iron drain lines were routed directly outside on the courtyard side, and down to connect with the clay sewer pipes. In the Mason Street wing, the drain pipes were connected by removing a two foot section down the middle of the Seeley floor in the sala, and routing the clay sewer pipe to Calhoun Street.

Traditionally plumbers covered roofs with sheet lead as flashing, fixed and installed water tanks, built cisterns and reservoirs, installed pipes in buildings–at the time in the U.S. being either wood or possibly lead–repaired and installed pumps, and repaired the various water closets of the time. But by the 1930s, modern plumbing had arrived. In 1924, the "Recommended Minimum Requirements for Plumbing", also known as the "Hoover Code"–named for then Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover–standardized plumbing, and over 12,000 items had been removed from manufactures catalogs. Although common on bathtubs since the 1890s, combination faucets that merge hot water and cold water valves into a single outlet were beginning to be used on residential sinks in the 1920s. The Stilton wrench, or pipe wrench was 60 years old, and plumbers were beginning to move away from lead pipes. *The Ridge Tool Company,* makers of RIDGID tools was founded in 1922, and was quickly becoming the most popular tool maker of plumbing tools.

In San Diego the Municipal Water District was 2 years old. A sewer system administered by Special Districts was in place throughout most of the city, but no treatment plant, the sewage was piped directly into the bay. The first treatment plant wouldn't be built until 1943.



Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 20 San Diego, Alta California, January 23, 2009 Price: Free

WHO WAS JUAN BANDINI?

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

In the annals of Old Town's history and its folk traditions, Juan Bandini has assumed an almost legendary presence.

With his grand home, ranchos, and extravagant ways, Bandini embodied the manners and bearing of a transplanted Spanish aristocrat to many early Americans. In later years and after his death he was often referred to as a Don, the signature title of Old World origins and rank. The American author Richard Henry Dana, who met Bandini in 1836, described him as:

> "…accomplished and proud, and without any office or occupation, to lead the life of most young men of the better families—dissolute and extravagant when the means were at hand…. He had a slight and elegant figure, moved gracefully, and waltzed beautifully, spoke the best of Castilian, with a pleasant and refined voice and accent, and had throughout the bearing of a man of high birth and figure."

But this Peruvian-born rancher and civic leader was more than just an elegantly dressed dandy who loved to dance and entertain. Having served as a delegate to the Mexican Congress, a member of Alta California's assembly (*diputación*) and town council (*ayuntamiento*), he was an important political figure. He hatched numerous plots against Mexican rule in his San Diego casa, including revolts against Governor Manuel Victoria in 1831 and Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado in 1836-1837. Although he initially welcomed U.S. military occupation and California statehood, he became increasingly critical of American rule, especially of the Land Act of 1851 that allowed claimants to challenge the validity of Mexican land grants in American courts.

Bandini's life, especially his later years, was anything but that of a "princely Don." American claimants challenged the validity of many of his Mexican grants in Southern California. Changes in Mexican law stripped him of title to his ranchos in Baja California. Chronic illness, mounting debts, Indian unrest, and the anarchy unloosed by the Gold Rush overwhelmed him. His many letters to his American-born son-in-law, Abel Stearns, at this time often reflect a dire concern about his place and that of his family in a frontier society that had changed for the worse "Liberty," he wrote Stearns on June 7, 1847, "has become licentiousness. One sees in the towns nothing but drunkenness, gaming, sloth, and public manhandling of the opposite sex."

This dimension of his life has been forgotten by posterity. He is remembered, as one writer recently put it, as a "legendary renaissance *Californio*." His home in Old Town likewise became fused with the memory of him as a Don whose life embodied the traditions of Old Spain. Remodeled in 1930, 1947-1950, and 1978-1980, the Casa de Bandini was transformed into a luxurious Spanish colonial hacienda that in no way resembled either Bandini's original single-story adobe or the later two-story Cosmopolitan Hotel.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 21 San Diego, Alta California, January 30, 2009 Price: Free

HEALTH AND MEDICINES.

Cynthia Hernandez.

Archaeological Project Leader/Interpreter.

Another fascinating aspect of life in San Diego around the 1840s that we can see in the letters Bandini wrote to his son-in law Abel Stearns is how people dealt with health issues. At 47 years old, Bandini was both a very hard worker and a very sick man. He often complained about not being able to go visit his daughters because of health problems. He would mention coughing, having very strong headaches, feeling weak, having lung problems, suffering from back pain and sometimes not being able to get out of bed for several days. He would ask Stearns to send him various medicines to heal his family and his workers such as quinine (used to treat malaria until the 1940s) castor oil (used as a laxative or for muscular pains) and *cabalongas (Thevetia peruviana)* that are beans used as purgative, but they can be very poisonous if not used with care. In one particular letter Bandini asked for some *Balsamo de Copaiba,* also known as *Aceite de Palo* which is oil that was used to treat venereal diseases and also as a diuretic.

Bandini's son, Jose Maria, was at some point sick with smallpox in San Diego and in one letter Bandini says that Stearn's godson was sick, his eyes were very swollen and one of them had become cloudy, and Bandini was very worried about it, but the inflammation subsided and he was getting better, with no danger of losing his sight.

We can follow the health of Refugio (Bandini's wife) along several letters. Refugio has been sick, Bandini doesn't know what it is but her skin and eyes are yellowish, she is very thin, she has no pain, no cough, she is very weak, not hungry, with lots of thick saliva, but no phlegm. He tries to appear calm in front of her but he is very worried for her. In a subsequent letter Bandini sends Refugio to his ranch in Tijuana to see if she gets better, but says that if she is not better in 12 days, he is going to send her to L.A. to see a doctor. Bandini says "she has lost one quarter of her circumference."

He would advise Stearns to take care of Arcadia's and Ysidora's health, to make them do some exercise and to take care of their diets. One letter tells us that Bandini asked Stearns to give Arcadia permission to visit him, she did so, and a couple of letters later Bandini tells Stearns that in the eight days that Arcadia spent with him she gained "about two inches in circumference" and at that rate Stearns would have to spend more on material for her clothing. As we can see some things never change.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 22 San Diego, Alta California, February 6, 2009 Price: Free

LIGHTING.

GREGG GIACOPUZZI.
Interpreter.

HISTORY OF 19TH CENTURY LIGHTING.

Lighting technology changed in many ways during the 19th century. Homes and businesses were much darker and ambient light was utilized to its fullest extent. Doors and windows were left open and people worked by natural light from sun up to sun set. Interior adobe walls were white washed to help create more reflection as candles illuminated interior spaces. Candles, made of cattle fat or tallow, were being produced in great quantity due to the large cattle herds on the great Southern Californio ranchos.

Candle lamps and lanterns were made of tin, pewter; sheet iron, wrought iron, and/or glass, which were hung on a nail or hook. Many of the lanterns were decorated with elaborate piercing designs.

It wasn't until the mid 1840s and early 1850s change came about in the form of "burning fuels" like whale oil or camphene (distilled turpentine). Whale oil was readily available in San Diego as whalers would cruise along the California coastline killing large pods of whales for their prized fat, bone, and baleen. Camphene, in turn, produced from what appeared to be inexhaustible supplies of corn and pine trees in Northern California.

Burning fuels which produce a low viscosity, flow ready up a wick thus creating a clean white flame. The fixtures themselves were the first truly adjustable lighting device and produced a brilliance from six to eight candles. These new types of fuels worked for a short time but the rise in cost of whale oil and the fact that camphene exploded when fixtures were dropped led to new innovations.

Kerosene, also called coal oil, is an oil distillate consisting of a mixture of hydrocarbons, primarily derived from coal, oil shale, or refined petroleum. Kerosene, first developed in the late 1850s became the cheap fuel source by the following decade because of an increase in oil production.

As a result kerosene lighting fixtures soon became standard until communities changed over to gas.

THE COSMOPOLITAN.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel was constructed in 1869 by Albert Seeley. In doing so Seeley converted the one-story adobe, the Bandini family home, into a two-story hotel and stage stop. We, currently have neither visual documentation nor written accounts of the type of lighting Seeley installed. We know based on general knowledge of the time period that kerosene lighting was the most common lighting technology used at this time.

CHALLENGE.

California State Parks and Delaware North have the unique challenge to rehabilitate and restore this original 19th century building into a fully functional 21st century hotel and eating establishment. As partners in this endeavor, we hope to create a building that will personify the "look, feel, and ambiance" of a period appropriate setting. A key element to this setting is lighting.

We look to install period lighting in the majority of the areas where the fixtures themselves are in a public view-shed. Most of these selected period reproduction fixtures are constructed of materials used in the 19th century and are nearly identical in appearance.

We have made a conscious decision, based on overall safety, that fixtures will not use kerosene as a fuel source. The lighting fixtures will be electric, up to modern codes, and in most cases the electrical elements will be hidden, utilizing frosted chimneys and light bulbs that produce a warm glow or illumination. We hope lighting will be both functional and one of many visuals elements that will enhance the visitor experience.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 23 San Diego, Alta California, February 13, 2009 Price: Free

SEISMIC RETROFIT.

William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

In 1869, when Parsons Brothers were building the Cosmopolitan hotel, they were not too concerned about earthquakes. "The Great 1906 San Francisco Earthquake" was still decades in the future. The wood framed second floor of the Cosmopolitan was built without any connections to the first floor adobe walls. Today, with 4" or 6" thick walls, that seems almost preposterous, but the Casa de Bandini has walls that measure 24" thick in 2 rooms, and nearly 38" thick elsewhere. Simply setting the wood floor framing on top of the adobe walls was no great feat, and surely seemed extremely stable.

Today however, seismic retrofit, i.e., accommodation for earth movement, in California is a major concern. Several major earthquakes have shown the vulnerability of non-reinforced cement block, brick, and of course, adobe buildings. When an earthquake affects a building it does not all move at the same time (natural frequency) or the same amount (displacement). In a 2 story building such as the Cosmopolitan, the adobe walls (first floor), the wood framed walls (second floor), and the roof level move differently. As the adobe walls move back, the roof and second floors will still move in the original direction if not connected to the adobe walls below. This means that the building would actually be moving in two directions at the same time. An unacceptable degree of damage to both the adobe walls and wood framing could result unless adequate attachments between the two floors are made.

To connect the second story of

the Cosmopolitan to the first, we are inserting 5/8" threaded stainless steel rods that are 60" long down the middle of the adobe walls. This is done by first coring holes in the upstairs wood floor to access the top of the adobe walls below. The wood plugs are numbered so they can be replaced in the original position when the job is complete. Two inch holes are then bored into the adobe,

the rods are inserted and the holes are filled with a special adobe epoxy. The epoxy is slow cure to minimize heat generation. It contains sand and has a degree of flexibility to improve its compatibility with the adobe. The top of the rods are then attached with brackets and wood blocking to the 2nd floor joists and top plates effectively connecting the first and second floors together.

The roof connections also have to be improved. Traditionally in wood frame construction, the rafters are toe-nailed, i.e., fastened with angled nails, to the top of the wall. To strengthen the interface of walls and roof, brackets called "A35s", are installed at each rafter to wall.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 24 San Diego, Alta California, February 20, 2009 Price: Free

OF BRICKS AND MORTAR, PART 1.

Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

The morning light flits across the tongue-and-groove floor of the old room like a thief. Once the premiere guestroom on the second story of the Cosmopolitan Hotel, it is now empty, silent–beckoning with forgotten memories.

Loaded down with tools, including two chisels and a heavy brass hammer, I study the far wall, where one of the hotel's three fireplaces, built in 1869, once existed. My task is to locate the fireplace.

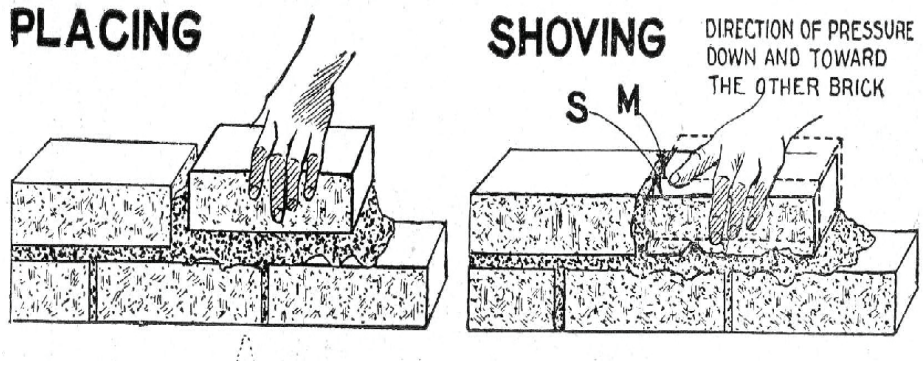
I tap the wall near a built-in closet. It's hollow. I continue tapping, moving away from the closet until I hear a heavy thump on the wall. With my big chisel and hammer, I begin cutting an incision across part of the wall and then two parallel cuts down it. I repeat the process several times, and then wedge a wide-edge spackle knife into the upper cut. Tapping gently, I begin to strip away chunks of plaster, cement, and lime.

Over the next two hours my work gradually exposes the historic brick fireplace. The hearth is bricked up–part of the 1930 remodel. The bricks on the wall face are sand-red in color, splattered with cement chips, and very soft to the touch. They are about 9 x 4½" in size, and set in alternating courses or layers of 1 stretcher (long side of the brick facing) and 2 headers (short side facing), which provided the brickwork with a natural bond or structural unity.

The art of bricklaying has not changed since 1869. Workmen then,

like today, held the trowel palm-side up piled with mortar, and moved it along the center of the brick while turning the trowel to empty the mortar. They would throw or empty mortar in a column on one or more bricks at a time. With the trowel now held upside down, they then spread the mortar outward with the point of the trowel. Excess mortar was trimmed from the sides.

Each brick was placed on a level bed of mortar, and then gently pressed into the mortar with a downward slanting motion to push the mortar up into the vertical joint between the two bricks. Maintaining a uniform thickness of mortar in the joints is difficult but essential. The horizontal and vertical joints of the fireplace are consistently ½" thick or about 1/8 the thickness of the bricks.



Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 25 San Diego, Alta California, February 27, 2009 Price: Free

OF BRICKS AND MORTAR, PART 2.

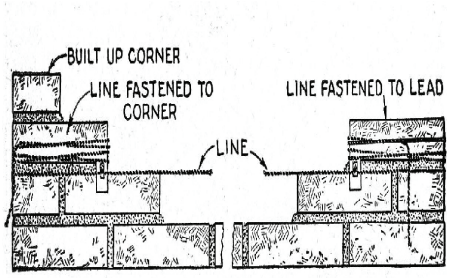
Victor A. Walsh.
San Diego Coast District Historian.

End corners of the wall were usually built up several courses to align the placement of additional bricks. A strand of cord was fastened around the corner bricks. Made from horsehair, reeds, or ship rigging, it provided a straight line across the section to be bricked. The line was always set a slight distance from the brickwork so that it would not be knocked out of place.

The fireplace has a curved arch trim. It once had a decorative wooden mantelpiece pegged into the brick face, similar to the one recently removed from the fireplace downstairs. Interestingly, the two fireplaces are slightly off center from one another so that separate flue lines could run inside the chimney. The downstairs flue spans the width of the fireplace and then tapers off running up the left side of the chimney, while the upstairs flue runs up the right side. There probably is a brick partition in the center separating the two lines.

The District plans to make the three fireplaces functional with gas insert, or possibly an electric insert. Most of the historic brick on the faces of the two upstairs fireplaces appears to be salvageable. They will have to be tested for strength, cleaned, and the joints re-pointed with lime mortar. Non-hydraulic lime mortar should be used because it hardens slowly. It should be mixed at a ratio of about 1 part lime to 3 parts sand.

Masonry is an age-old craft that has changed relatively little over time. Masons still use traditional tools, like the trowel, jointer, hawk, plumb bob and line,



—Safe method of fastening line around corner and lead. To fasten the line around the corner and lead, take several clove hitches around each.

chisel and hammer. And they still work with traditional materials such as adobe block, fired brick, stone, and cement.

It is a trade that honors tradition but is now changing to adapt to newer materials, technologies, and requirements. In many buildings, prefabricated materials that look like brick but come in sheets are replacing brickwork. As a consequence, the brick-laying aspect of masonry, as represented at the Cosmopolitan, is fast becoming a dying art.

To better maintain and accurately repair historic buildings like the Cosmopolitan, California State Parks needs, perhaps more than anything else, to build an apprenticeship program in which the old ways, the knowledge and dignity of skilled trades, are preserved and passed on to a new generation.

Cosmopolitan Chronicle.

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini & Cosmopolitan Hotel.

VOL. II, No. 26 San Diego, Alta California, March 6, 2009 Price: Free

SIGNATURES.

William F. Mennell.
San Diego Coast District Services Manager.

With the exceptions of the roof, porch retaining walls, and first floor stucco, the removal of non-historic fabric portion of the project at the Cosmopolitan project is nearing a close. The underground archaeology is also close to completion in the larger sense.

What has happened thus far: a very skilled team of dedicated archaeologists from ASM and State Parks, supported by an architect from IS Architecture, has been very carefully excavating and completely documenting everything. The construction crew from Soltek Pacific, used to doing demolition, has transformed into a team of removal, not destruction, with craftsman-like precision.

The overcoats of labors of the 1930s, 1950s and 1970s are not being ignored. The 1930s threaded brass and steel pipes, the 1950s doors and ironwork, the festive paint of the 1970s all tell part of the story of the survival of this magnificent building. Examples of each have been archived, and recorded.

What has been exposed underneath is a priceless collection of "signatures".

The names and life stories of an overwhelming majority of the generations of craftsmen, labors, women, and children involved with the construction of the Casa de Bandini, and later the Cosmopolitan Hotel are lost to history. But their work, their signatures remain.

Here is a cobblestone foundation, here lime plaster–the lime made in a kiln, not purchased in a bag. Above a door opening a lintel cut with a pit saw, here adobe blocks hand-turned and dried in the sun.

Here are "square" nails driven with a hammer that may have been passed down for 2 generations or more. There are floor joists cut in a steam powered mill. Paint here from 1869.

Exposed for only this short time, like internal organs during an operation, these deceptively simple components are perhaps our only insight to the labor and lives of the people that made them. This patient, lovingly called The Cosmo, has been undergoing an operation that has taken hundreds of hours; and the lab work, analysis curation, and recordation will require hundreds more.

The skills the teams are using today have been developed in large part to understand those that were once used traditionally, but now are so transformed they have become unfamiliar.

Every part of this building was made by someone or a team of people, and took hundreds if not thousands of hours of their lives. In their time, and "all people live in modern times", these were the products of their life that day. Written in sweat, pride, fire, and thought, the components of the Cosmo are all witness to those lost names, and their stories.

And perhaps challenges. Hand plane a piece of trim. Write a materials order with a quill and ink. Get steam to power a saw. Navigate a sailing ship. Pump a forge bellows. Feed over 100 workman everyday from an *horno*. Turn 50,000 adobe bricks. Find, cut and deliver logs to San Diego. Do it all without electricity, or internal combustion engines. These challenges and more they met, like it was just another day.