

# COSMOPOLITAN CHRONICLE

True tales from the annals of history, archaeology, construction, and restoration of the Casa de Bandini and Cosmopolitan Hotel.  
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## 1930s Balustrade Uncovered

**Nicole Turner**  
**Archaeological Project Leader**  
**San Diego Coast District**

Cave Coutts Jr., son of Ysidora Bandini (Don Juan Bandini's daughter) and Cave Johnson Coutts, 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 balustraded railing of cast stone, shown in the historic image below (ca. 1938 photograph. Library of Congress, HABS 1937).



Shortly after the death of Cave Coutts 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.

