

AUG 25 1970



## CHARLES F. LUMMIS MEMORIAL HOME

State Historical Monument No. 531

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
HEADQUARTERS

CHARLES F. LUMMIS

(1859-1928)

*Author, Editor, Historian, Poet, Librarian*

Erected this building largely with his own hands

Wrote ten books on our *Southwest & California*

Founded the Southwest Museum

Created the slogan "*See America First*"

City Editor, *Los Angeles Times* (1885-87)

Directed Los Angeles Public Library (1905-10)

Awakened Anglo-Americans to the value of Spanish-American culture

Awarded knighthood by King of Spain for writing on Spain in America

Editor, *Land of Sunshine* and *Out West Magazine* (1894-1910)

Initiated preservation of California Missions

Founded Sequoyah League "*To make Better Indians by Treating them Better*"

"Lummis' home, El Alisal, came the nearest to being  
a salon of anything ever started in Los Angeles."

Harry Carr in *Los Angeles: City of Dreams*

This building was constructed, largely with his own hands, by Charles F. Lummis (1859-1928).

He selected this site in 1895 chiefly because it was adorned by a mammoth, ancient sycamore (Sp. *Aliso*) whose four giant trunks pointed to the points of the compass. It has since died and has been replaced by four saplings. (See patio)

The rocks used in the construction were found on the premises and along the banks of the Arroyo Seco.

The building measures ninety feet East to West. It has fifteen rooms and took as many years to build. Lummis regarded it as his gymnasium. He used it as home, office, and museum. It has now become his memorial.

The entrance hall is known as the *zaguán*.

On the right is the *muséo* or museum. It has been the scene of many a concert, talk, or entertainment. Here Mme. Schumann-Heink sang, Will Rogers twirled his rope, and Carry Jacobs-Bond played "The End Of A Perfect Day." Here Lummis displayed his archaeological and ethnological collections from Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, and our own Southwest.

On the walls are groups of photographs of his intimates among writers, painters, singers, musicians, soldiers, movie stars, scientists, Spanish friends, Indian chiefs, and other celebrities. Photographs of the family hang in the bay window. The frames were made by Lummis. The plaque on the south wall commemorates some of Lummis' main achievements.

The oil painting of "Don Carlos" wearing his famous suit of corduroys was done by Gerald Cassidy of Santa Fe. The Blickenderfer typewriter was used by Lummis when writing *The Spanish Pioneers; Mesa, Canyon and Pueblo; A Bronco Pegasus; Flowers Of Our Lost Romance;* and other books. Glass used in the window near the entrance are old photograph plates from Lummis' files. The leggings hanging on the wall were used by him when he

walked from Cincinnati to Los Angeles in 1884. The arrowhead collection he made over many years.

The *comedor* or dining room has been the scene of many a gala occasion attended by America's top intellectuals. Here Lummis' Spanish troubador sang songs of the old country. Occasionally Lummis would take the guitar and sing some Indian or old California songs that he had collected for posterity. At times Lummis would require his guests to "sing for supper" by telling a story, relating an anecdote or adventure, singing a song, or dancing a jig.

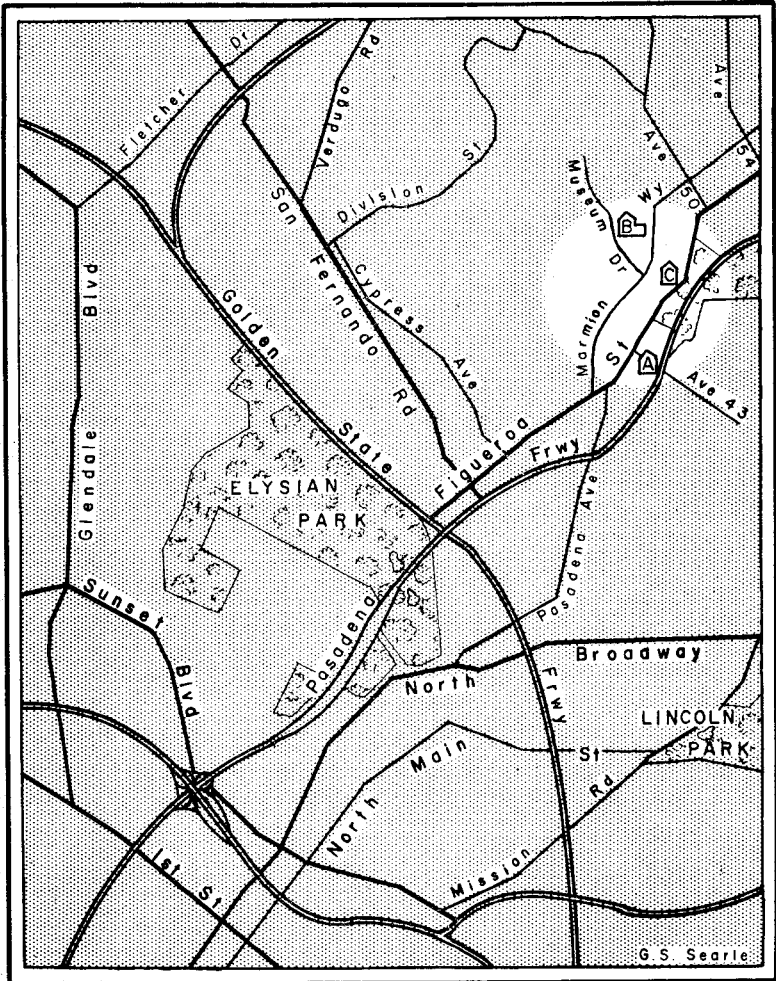
The carved doors on the sideboard were made in Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico, in 1776. The niches in the walls are like those found in Pueblo Indian homes. The door between the *comedor* and the *museo* were copied by Lummis from a Velásquez painting.

The *cocina* or kitchen was patterned after one in a California mission. Here Theodore Roosevelt dried dishes which Lummis washed.

Among the guests who have been entertained at El Alisal were writers: Mary Austin, Eugene Manlove Rhodes, William Allen White, Stewart Edward White, Blasco Ibáñez, and Ernest Thompson Seton; painters: Maynard Dixon, Charlie Russell, Ed Borein, and William Keith; singer Mary Garden; and actress Mme. Modjeska; movie stars: Theodore Roberts, Harry Carey, and Hobart Bosworth. Other notables entertained here were David Starr Jordan, Nicholas Murray Butler, Frederick W. Hodge, and the Duke of Alba.

At the time of his death Lummis' wish was that he be remembered as one "Who did his share." His ashes are sealed within the wall of the patio portal.

As a state monument El Alisal has been preserved for posterity by the state of California. The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks maintains it. The Southwest Museum and the Charles F. Lummis Memorial Association help it function. The Historical Society of Southern California has its headquarters here and with the Lummis Association make it available to the public daily except Saturday, 1-4 p.m.



- (A) **LUMMIS HOME — EL ALISAL**  
 Historical Society of Southern California, Headquarters  
 200 East Avenue 43, Los Angeles 90031  
 Open daily except Saturday 1-4 P.M.
- (B) **SOUTHWEST MUSEUM**  
 234 Museum Drive  
 Open daily except Monday 1-4:45 P.M.
- (C) **CASA DE ADOBE**  
 4605 North Figueroa Street  
 Open Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday 2-5 P.M.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**  
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