

ONCE UPON A TIME IN NORTH PARK

THE SILVERGATE MASONIC LODGE BY ED OROZCO

The Silvergate Masonic Lodge, which also houses a Temple, is located at 3795 Utah Street. For decades, the lodge's exterior was painted white or beige, under-emphasizing the building's Art Deco details. Early in 2008, the building received its long awaited make-over. The Board of Directors favored a four-color palette similar to the Art Deco district in Miami Florida that would showcase the building's clean, flowing lines accentuated with zigzags, chevrons, fluted pilaster, corbels and other geometric forms. Sumptuous yet streamlined, the new pale white main color serves as subtle backdrop to vibrant and theatrical accents of colors such as soft blue, red, brown and hints of gold in some of the façade's intricate detail.

In 1992, Alex D. Bevil wrote a "Once Upon a Time in North Park" article about the Silvergate Masonic Lodge. The article is a chronological outline about the lodge's history and interesting beginnings. An excerpt follows.

Success in the lodge's efforts to obtain \$75,000 for the building's construction was attributed to its campaign chairman, Colonel Ed Fletcher. The architectural firm of Edward and Charles Quayle was retained. The Quayle Brothers had designed many noted homes, commercial buildings, factories and theatres in San Diego. They had recently completed the ornate Spanish Renaissance Revival style North Park Theatre (29th Street and University Avenue) in 1928.

Asked to design the new Silvergate Masonic Temple to resemble King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, (of which the lodge members trace the beginning of their lodge) the Quayles gave full reign to their architectural imagination. Since King Solomon's Temple would have been designed using imported building styles and methods, the Quayles hypothesized that the modern temple should be resemble a blending of Mesopotamian Ziggurat and Egyptian Temple features already found in the highly fashionable Art Deco style of the late 1920's -1940's.

For a copy of the entire article, visit the North Park Historical Society's archive of past articles on their website at www.northparkhistory.org. The Masonic Lodge is also covered extensively in the North Park Historical Society's award-winning book, *North Park: A San Diego Urban Village, 1896-1946* by Donald Covington.

The Silvergate Masonic Lodge Building was recognized in 1989 by the Art Deco Society of California as one of the most outstanding examples of Art Deco Architecture in the entire state. The building continues to be an important North

Park landmark and center of activity. In recent years the Silvergate Masonic Lodge has opened its doors to several non-profit organizations such as the San Diego School District and the North Park Historical Society. The lodge is also utilized for other civic and private events.

For more information about the social events at the Silvergate Masonic Lodge, visit their websites at www.calodges.org/no296/ and www.silverstarhall.com or contact Gonzalo Lestat Ruiz at 619-425-7135.



The Masonic Lodge Prior to Its Recent Exterior Enhancement



The Masonic Lodge with Its New Color and Accents