Ellen Browning Scripps was a successful newspaper woman who became extremely wealthy in the business. Then she retired in San Diego where she began a career as a philanthropist. While here, she made immeasurable contributions to the educational, cultural and recreational life of the city. Ellen Browning Scripps is the subject of this 9th program in the series "Twelve Who Shaped San Diego".

Ellen Revelle (ER): "She was very uninterested in anything for herself, her wants were very simple; she dressed very simply and one can't imagine her going out on a shopping spree getting a new hat or anything. I mean she may be getting some new shoes if she needed then, but she was very independent. For years and years, she continued to prepare for guests herself. She had very little household help and she had, of course, lots and lots of newspapers coming into the house and that shouldn't be wasted, so I can remember seeing her rolling these up into little tight bundles and using them for kindling. A very, very frugal individual. She was very quiet about her giving and she did not like to be known as a philanthropist. She wrote her brother George: "I'd little rather people take what I give to them without expressing or feeling any gratitude because it is annoying to feel that anyone is under obligation to me but I do like to see and know any benefits that accrue from my giving." She tended to give not only large gifts, like colleges and things like that, but also she would be aware of somebody with small needs. Maybe $100 would make a tremendous difference and she would give a small amount, and it was rather typical, I think, that in her will, the large endowments and things could wait, you know, go through the long process, but then interests started immediately on the small requests, because those were needed more.

(PT): Ellen Revelle, grand niece of E.B. Diego (?) historian and chief historical consultant for these programs. The first thing I'd like to ask you about this point of the program is could you tell us a little bit more about EBS' early life? I'm thinking in particular about the life she led before actually coming to San Diego.

(ER): Well, she really had had a whole career before she ever came here. She was about 60 years old when she retired in La Jolla. She was born in London and lived there for a few years. Then her father migrated to the United States as so many other people in those areas have settled in Illinois which was essentially the West, the frontier at that time. Her father had had three different wives. Child bearing and all of the work that women did in those years was very hard on them and so there are several different families, all part of the Scripps family whom he was the father and Ellen was one of the older children. She was
older than 3. W. Scripps, for example, her most well known brother. She was 18 years older than he and so a large part of her early life was spent in cooking and cleaning around the house and in taking care of the younger children. E.W. mentions in his autobiographical remarks the tremendous influence that she had on him; that she was the one who read to him, she was the one who took care of him. When he was 6, she was the one who remembered to give him a cookie and so on. She went to Knox College, essentially in the money that she herself had earned in variety of ways and she spent a couple of years there. Then she went to Detroit and later on to other cities to help out in the newspaper business because several of her brothers, James, the oldest brother, was the first one to go into the newspaper business and ultimately E.W. did also. But she went to join them there and helped out and was a working newswoman for more than 20 years and again, this in the beginning was a very, very tough existence. She has described in one of her letters that the only way to keep warm in the winter was to sit over some of the newspaper presses. There was a light, ? a loft up above the presses, and she would be sitting up there doing proofreading, copywriting, editorial assistance and so on. And that was the only way to keep warm.

(PH): To continue the story of Ellen Browning Scripps newspaper career we return to Ellen.

(ER): She started in the newspaper business by joining my grandfather James Edmund Scripps. I think George may be gone there by that time too and E.W. had gone to Detroit and they started the Detroit Evening News which was a new idea 2 cent paper that a working man could afford on his dollar-a-day wages and she was invaluable working there. She would work and correct copy and all sorts of things and then very soon started a column. She may have been one of the first columnists. The column was officially known as Matters and Things, but the people on the paper called it Ms. Ellen's miscellany and because she just gathered up little items, humorous little items here and there, sort of like the New Yorker type of things that she made the little comments about them. Here are some delicious ones that she had. Here's one: "On New Year's Day, 24,497 people in the city swore off on something. At this writing, all the three have commenced again, and they are dead. The lips and tongue of a lady in Indianapolis swell when she talks rapidly to such an extent that it's stopped articulation and all the husbands in that city are urging their wives to call on the lady, secretly hoping that the disease is contagious."

(PH): I'd like to read a few more of these matters and things which are really rather amusing. "Port Smith, New Hampshire produces annually an addition to numerous temperance orators 120,000 barrels of ale and 90,000 gallons of rum."

(CC): One of the ones I've enjoyed too. It says "Peanuts police gazettes and dime novels are to be excluded from the Boston and main railroads in the future. The attempt to induce the railroad
authority to exclude from the trains all who do not produce from
the resident clergyman a certificate of regular attendance at
Church—good moral character and total abstinence from intoxicating
liquor has failed. The peanut regulation is a compromise."

(ER): And then she took leave from her column and went to Europe
and South Africa and Southern Europe in 1881—1883, I believe it
was, and went with E.W. Scripps who was consultative and was bold
to travel in a warm climate so she left the job with the one
brother to go and travel with the younger brother. He was 18
years younger than she, and so while she was taking this trip for
two years, it was natural for her to be writing a column that she
wrote back to the paper and so her letters from abroad continued
to be used as a column in the paper. Some of these have been
published. We know of about 99 letters and just a cross section
of them mainly ones dealing with women have been privately
published thanks to one of the Scripps alumni about two years ago
as a sampling called a sampling of travel letters. Well I thought
that she was the first foreign correspondent but it turns out
Margaret Fuller was ahead of her for about 38 years. But she was
so aware of women, and saw interesting things about them. She
wrote about the Moorish women and how they were completely
dominated and had to be under the surveillance of first, their
fathers, and then their husbands and had no freedom at all. And
when she got to Spain, she found that the Spanish women didn’t
have to wear veils, that they were hardly any better off than the
Moorish women that they could neither read nor write. I’ve often
wondered how she got in to some of the places she got in. She got
into harems apparently, and sat on cushions on the floor with
other Moorish ladies and somehow managed to communicate. And she
wrote one of the last things that I thought was rather interesting
telling about European women. She said “I know it’s the fashion
with the American traveler to deprecate the barbarist and slavish
condition of the European working women and draw in vidious
comparisons between her unhappy lot and that of her American
sister. She felt that this was a product of a false and
irrational sentimentality uncalled for and only wasted. Why
shouldn’t woman work in the field if they must work at all? I
don’t believe the German women’s outdoor life is less conducive to
health and happiness than the American women’s indoor life are
more subversive of womanly delicacy moral rectitude or
intellectual development. But she was able to remember all of
this, how she felt and wrote it down. She wrote a vivid
description of bullfights. She went to a bullfight where she
almost got sick but her reportorial sense was so keen that she
observed and remembered and then wrote about that so vividly that
when it was read at a women’s club meeting one time, I heard two
little ladies behind me saying “I think we’d better leave. We may
be ill!”. Her description was so, so vivid.

(PH): This has been an all too brief glimpse at the writing
career of Ellen Browning Scripps. While she was contributing
these articles to the paper, she was also beginning to make her
own fortune and all the while she was continuing to be an
important part of the family business as well. In fact, her brother alludes to this in his writings about her.

(ER): E. W. Scripps remarked that Ellen Browning Scripps has always been a working woman. From her girlhood, she maintained herself without being any expense to her father or to any member of the family. During her whole life, even from the days when she was teaching school, she contributed to the support of other members of her family. And then he goes on to say that when she was working on the newspapers she not only kept her accounts but was naturally so saving that she always had money and was always a creditor of the newspaper company and some of her brothers. On several occasions, E. W. Scripps borrowed money from Ellen and he goes on say "she took an active part in all her family business affairs. Never in her life was she in debt. Never was there a year in her whole life when she did not make some contribution either as a gift or a loan to members of the family or to less fortunate employees and business associates". But the way in which she made her money evidently was through the kind of frugality that Mrs. Revelle mentioned earlier, and she was very shrewd in her investments. Most of the investments, of course, were in the stock of the newspapers and these increased tremendously in value. But she made other investments also and when she came to the San Diego area, she invested in real estate and so it was through these kinds of investments that her money came”.

(PH): It’s interesting that so many of the Scripps siblings got together in the newspaper enterprises. I’d be interested to hear a little bit more about the family. Why was it that they all became so interested in newspapers?

(ER): That’s hard to say but one clue, perhaps, to this, is that the father James Scripps had been a bookbinder in London. Evidently, it was traditional for bookbinders always to keep a copy of everything that they bound and so, although the family was very, very poor when they were growing up in Illinois in this frontier - you know, the log-cabin kind of life, they had these, not only beautifully bound, but fine literature and so, I think that had a great deal to do with the interest that they all ad in literature and their ability to write and their love of reading. Ellen Scripps, after she had done the cooking and washing and helping around the house all day long, she would read to the youngsters at night and she read these beautiful books that they had Shakespeare, Tennyson, Browning, Sir Walter Scott,... many of the classics. Another thing that is mentioned on more than one occasion in both books about Ellen Browning Scripps and E. W. Scripps is the influence of a little book called Peer Parley’s Tales. Evidently this was a sort of condensation of historical or literary works for children and from Peter Parley’s Tales, Ellen and E. W. and James Scripps evidently all picked up the concepts of simplicity and condensation which are so important in journalism. As we remarked earlier she was so much older - 18 years older than E. W. Scripps that she in many ways was almost
like a mother to him. He said later on that his ideals were really attributable to her influence and he listed these as public service, justice, equality, free speech and democracy. In the late 19th century, of course it was popular to attack the robber-barons as they were called, those who had accumulated tremendous wealth at public expense and E.W. always took on the robber barons and he took the side of labor and his motto was “God damn the rich, God help the poor”.

(PH): Mrs. Revelle also had some recollections of E. W. Scripps who was her great uncle.

(ER): Well, of course he’s famous for having consumed an incredible amount of whiskey per day and smoking these tremendous cigars. He was the only one that we ever saw smoking at Ellen’s house and you could tell that he’d been there because she’d be at the door fanning trying to get the smoke out. He was rather irascible.

(PH): But nevertheless, E. W. Scripps had a natural talent for selling newspapers and for expanding the business.

(ER): He would pick out someone in one of the papers as someone who showed ability. He’d give him a certain amount of money and said “go to such and such a city and start a paper, and that would be entirely up to the individual then to carry on and if it succeeded - fine - if it didn’t well, it’d been an attempt. He had apparently very shrewd judgment about individuals and could sense the ones who would be able to do this and just send them out to start a paper.

(PH): There are many institutions that bear the Scripps name. One of them is a world famous center for scientific research - the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla which celebrates this year its 75th anniversary. Both Ellen and E. W. Scripps played important roles in its development. Dr. Roger Revelle, Ellen Revelle’s husband had seen a great deal of that development. He’s long been associated with the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and was its director from 1950 to 1964.

Roger Revelle (RR): The Scripps Institution wasn’t always called the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. It was first called the Marine Biological Association of San Diego. And there was this society formed here under the leadership of Dr. Fred Baker to encourage a professor of zoology from Berkeley named William B. Whitter to bring his embryonic marine biological station to San Diego. This was in the very early 1900’s. Whitter had been having a summer program in marine biology which started some time in the middle of the 1890’s and gradually moved down the coast, got down here to San Diego and finally found Dr. Fred very enthusiastic about him. They were first at Coronado and then they decided to move to La Jolla. At that time, Whitter who was a very philosophical type guy made the acquaintance of E. W. Scripps, who was also a very philosophical type guy and Scripps was a
monologist. He talked all the time. One of the interesting
things about Whitter was that Whitter talked back. Whitter was
able to break in and actually carried on a conversation. This
fascinated E. W. that somebody would actually propose ideas to him
and propose new points of view. And E. W.'s sister, Ellen
Browning Scripps, also became acquainted to him. They proposed to
build a biological station at what's now Scripps Park just above
the cove and E. W. took a very dim view of this. He said the land
wouldn't be adequate. The deed of gift would be very restrictive
and he proposed that instead they buy or obtain the present sight
of the Scripps Institution - a 160 acre at Pueblo Lot of the City
of San Diego. Even in those days, this lot was supposed to be
worth about - these 160 acres were worth - about $70,000 but he
managed to get the city to essentially donate the land at a price
of $1,000 to establish the Institution for Biological Research.
He was not at all in favor of having it called the Scripps
Institution because he was afraid that would discourage other
donors if it was called by any particular name. But Whitter
thought it would be a good idea to call it that Scripps was
interested primarily in people. He didn't want Whitter to spend
any money for buildings or for equipment or for a library, he just
wanted to pay people's salaries. And he thought that the
scientists were far more important than the library or the
equipment and he and Whitter, Scripps and Whitter quarreled on
this issue, how they should spend the money. The amount of money
involved was very small 5 or 10 thousand dollars at a time,
although that went further in those days then it does now. Ms.
Ellen Scripps continued a steady support of Whitter and his
institutions, whether E. W. was mad at him or not. Eventually
E.W. came around and again they were reconciled and they kept on
with their conversations.

(PH): Those were the beginnings of Scripps Institution of
Oceanography. In the time since, it has seen many important
oceanographic discoveries, had been the center of research by some
of the most prominent names in oceanography and had itself
undergone significant changes.

(RR): The institution grew enormously from a staff of 35 and a
budget of $110,000 which we had in 1931 to a budget of about 12
billion and a staff of about 1,200 in 1964 when I left here. Now
it had gone up about $40,000,000 on the Bill Nuemberg whys and
energetic direction but the staff is of course bigger but several
more professors lost more graduate students. It's really quite a
place. I think it's not unreasonable to say it's a leading
institution of its kind in the world. The main thing we did
however was to send expeditions to sea and we started really
going. By 1964, the Scripps Institution ships were all over the
world. They traveled all over the world and traveled well over a
million miles over the ocean. We had a fleet of a dozen ships. I
used to say that our fleet was considerably larger than that of
most small countries ranked with Costa Rica's. These
oceanographic expeditions were really exploring expeditions, so
little was known about the ocean. So much could be found out that
every time you went to sea, you may have a dozen real discoveries: it was just incredible, just a fantastic period. I'd like to say that it was one of the world's great years of exploration of that 20 years from 1950 to 1970.

(PH): Dr. Roger Revelle, former director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Dr. Revelle was also an important figure in the development of the University of California campus in La Jolla. He was its first chancellor and the Revelle College is named after him. Scripps Institution of Oceanography was in the thick of the development of the science of oceanography and therefore history, in particular the history of this new science is found in the halls and laboratories of its old buildings. A group of San Diegans led by Dr. Fred Spiece are attempting to preserve the Institution's first building. It's called the Scripps Lab Building. Dr. Spiece is the Director of the Marine Physical Laboratory at Scripps and is the Institution's Associate Director. At the old lab building, he spoke of this historic structure which is now hidden amongst a great number of new buildings.

(FS): It was not as hidden when I first came here. I've been here for about 26 years now and when I came, the Institution was in a period of really dramatic growth. After World War II, oceanography was growing everywhere and Scripps says, the sort of the oldest oceanographic institution in the country was growing quite rapidly. This building had one classroom and it was in this room, right adjacent to where we were standing, that every Wednesday we had a scientific staff meeting and someone would talk about his bright new idea or whatever it was that was going and it was very exciting kind of time. So this building, to those of us who had been around for a while is really where Scripps is. It was not a hidden place at all. Although today it is surrounded by a lot of other much more recent buildings. And we do plan to keep this as a really working type building. We are not going to make a museum out of it or something like that although as a historic place we would have some obligations to let people wander through and see what was going on, what it was like and so it really is kind of an anchor back in historical past for us and the fact that we can put that anchor together with productive programs for the future really makes it a worthwhile thing to do.

(PH): Dr. Fred Spiece, chairman of a committee formed to raise private funds for the restoration of the Scripps lab building. At this time, the 350 to 400 thousand dollars required for that restoration has not all been acquired. But private fund raising efforts had been successful in raising a good part of the money and state money is being sought. Those working for restoration believed sufficient money will be acquired to restore what they considered to be an important part of San Diego's historical past. Clare, another feature about this building that makes it especially interesting is that it was designed by the famous architect Irving Guild and I wondered didn't Ellen Browning Scripps had a lot to do with promoting Irving Guild's architecture
(CC): Yes, Ellen Scripps really helped Irving Guild by giving him several very important commissions at an early period in his career and for example, this building, which is named the George Scripps building - George Scripps another of the Scripps brothers didn’t have any children when he died. He left his money to Ellen Scripps and she chose to use it for the building there at Scripps Institution of Oceanography but she wanted it known as the George Scripps building. And she asked Irving Guild to do this building and of course he also designed later her own home and the La Jolla Women’s Club and the La Jolla Community Center. All of these buildings were commissions that Ellen Scripps gave to Irving Guild and they a reflect all of them, the important qualities of his developing style of architecture, which has been referred to as one of the few early original styles of architecture in the United States. Prior to the 19th century, most architecture in the United States was very derivative. It was copied from that of England, or France, or Spain. Or somewhere else. But right around the turn of the century, people like Frank Lloyd Wright, and Irving Guild began developing styles that were original and related to materials and concepts that were more associated with the United States itself. New materials like precast concrete for instance and then the simplification of building design which was certainly evident in the buildings that Irving Guild did.

(PH): Ellen Browning Scripps early support of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography is only one example of her intense interest in education. It’s for that reason that we’ve chosen this program for a detailed look at one particular aspect of education that’s especially relevant to a series on San Diego’s history. And that is history education. Throughout the city, there are many fine resources for the further study of local history and there is something for everyone: from the casual researcher who has a question about local history for which he seeks an answer to the scholar working on extended research on a historical topic. As this series of programs is broadcast, we expect and hope that many listeners will wish to study further some of the many areas that have been covered and so we take you now on a audio tour of the key resources for local history research here in San Diego. We start at UCSD. The central library there houses a special collection of some 1500 rare books acquired over many years by Kenneth Hill. The collection covers accounts of early explorations in the Pacific area. Many of the titles are extremely beautiful in their original bindings and they are rare and expensive. Of course they are also vital sources of information for researchers. The Hill Collection of Pacific voyagers is one of the largest collections of its kind in the world. Kenneth Hill, a native Californian who has throughout his life been interested in the sea began the collection when he saw a copy of Captain Blyth, a Count of Mutiny on the Bounty. The Hill Collection of Pacific voyagers has some volumes worth thousands of dollars and so security is tight. First, a locked door then a metal cage also locked, and finally a combination lock vault.
This vault is for both security and climate control. To protect the old volumes, a plastic cover further protects the books. Inside the vault, Kenneth Hill and bibliographer Ronald Silvera showed me just a few of these interesting old volumes.

Kenneth Hill (KH): Some of these superb early Spanish books are so beautifully printed that you can hardly, just feel the fine binding and the wood block printing, and the red and the black contrast. This is published in Seragosis, Spain in 1555, and just almost like new, browning but no fixing. And this is an old one dealing with the Portuguese discoveries of, not discovery but real exploration of the Straits of Magellan principally, but it’s just a gorgeous book and nicely done and superb map of all this area showing in detail as you come down around from Argentina and Chile being over here. How you got through here the Straits of Magellan. And it was a very important chart to have because it was by far the best of fifty to hundred years and people tried to navigate through it. If they didn’t have a good chart, they just came to a disaster. Well, here would be another one in original column and obviously parted at one time of a monastery and has to do with Cortez’s early letters all printed in Latin to the Emperor detailing his experiences in conquering Mexico. And there are other things in it but that’s the principle reason for buying this book. And this is a 1550 beautiful and unusual book to have.

(PH): There are many accounts in the Hill collection that related to the period of Spanish exploration and to Father Serra in early mission settlements. In addition to the Hill collection at the central library at UCSD, there are the private papers of John D. Spreckles. There is also an extensive collection of materials on Ed Fletcher. There are his scrap books and nearly one hundred boxes of personal papers. Anyone desiring access to the materials at the Central Library at UCSD should contact the Department of Special Collections. That’s at the Central Library of the University of California San Diego. Another source of materials for the history researcher is found at the main library of San Diego State University. The San Diego History Research Center was established within the last few years. Dr. Steve Colston is the archivist.

Steve Colston: We are concerned with acquiring materials that are document the development of the San Diego region, primarily in the 20th century. So we go after business records, labor records, the records of cultural organizations, of churches, of private papers for example also, certain kinds of public records are also sought actively by us. We have the records, for example, of business records. We have the records of the American Tuna Boat Association. We have the records of the Hotel del Coronado. We also have the records of non-profit organizations that are active in the San Diego region such as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, of Citizens United for Racial Equality, as an example also of this type. Of public records, we have the appellate court briefs relating to San Diego County which we, excisioned from the County Law Library, and this a rather
extensive collection, about 50 feet in length, with a chronological scope of about 1892 to about 1930. We also have the San Diego City Lot Books that are from 1890 to about 1929, 1920, also. These are books that were recorded by the county clerk. It deals with land rally in San Diego appraised values of land, transfer of land, who were the owners of the land and so, it's a tremendous resource in local history that has to my knowledge virtually untapped.

(RK): We have a great deal of different types of materials. We have books of course but we have materials such as pamphlets. We have newspaper clippings. We index local materials in the San Diego Union and that's very heavily used. We have pictures...

(PH): Dr. Steve Colston, archivist at the San Diego History Research Center. The center is located at the Library on the campus of San Diego State University. Next, we visit downtown San Diego, at the main branch of the San Diego Public Library. Here, the California Room is the main source of information on local history. Rhoda Kruse has been senior librarian for several years.

Rhoda Kruse (RK): We have a great deal of different types of materials. We have books of course but we have materials such as pamphlets. We have newspaper clippings. We index local materials in the San Diego Union and that's very heavily used. We have pictures...

(PH): The newspaper file is indeed quite an amazing thing. People don't know about that. They really should because anything, from finding the name of someone you read about 4 years ago in the Union and can't put your finger on to just general research. You can also find what's very helpful a summary of the article right in the files so you don't necessarily have to go to the newspaper to use it.

(RK): This is true. The fact that we do have an abstract of the articles on the index cards saves a great deal of time for researchers. You can eliminate the use of the microfilm to just the one you know well be pertinent to the subject you're researching on and since there's often a long jam of people waiting to use the microfilm reader. This is very important.

(PH): What would you say are some of the things that people might not even guess were here that would be useful to them. What are some resources that somebody wouldn't even dream of finding in the public library that may indeed be a great help to research paper or just an individual project.

(RK): One of the things we have that is extremely valuable is our file of city directories. And these are used by people trying to trace the history of houses, skiptracers, and seekers after lost heirs, all kinds of people. We have a collection of old telephone books too but it is not as complete as the City directory collection unfortunately. We do also have the great register of voters, dating back to 1866 and this is surprisingly informative. Some of those great registers had descriptions so that the voter could be identified with. There's a scar on the left hand or missing thumb or something like that. We also have some Sanborn fire maps and this is also valuable for those who are researching
historical houses and we have one dating back to 1887.

(PH): Rhoda Kruse who was at the time of this interview senior librarian at the California Room. Due to the recent budget cuts at the Library, she's been transferred to the Art and Music Section. The California Room is in the main public library building downtown at 8th & E street. The San Diego Historical Society located in the Serra Museum near Old Town has long been the center for historical work in San Diego. One program of particular interest deals with oral history. People who remember various facets of San Diego history are interviewed by members of the Society. And they're transcribed recollections are preserved and indexed for future use by researchers. It's a part of the library service which is headed by Sylvia Arden.

Sylvia Arden (SA): Well, the San Diego Historical Society, I believe, pioneered an oral history program in the city in about 1957. They did get some funds from the county and it was done with equipment a little old fashioned in our standards, but they used equipment and went out in the county to interview the pioneers. We have a marvelous collection. We have continued since then but that is a great nucleus and they type them, and we still type all of them, and they're used constantly. Of course, will all interviews you can't just use an interview, you have to back it up with research because you're dealing with people's memories and their egos, but they are very, very valuable.

(PH): The oral history materials are only a part of the complete collection at the Historical Society Library. Surrounding the library is a growing historical society, a museum and a large number of activities for community participation. James Moss is the executive director of the San Diego Historical Society.

James Moss (JM): The society concentrated initially on the collection of documents in building the land, library and manuscript collections, and operating the Serra Museum and homing in on that very early Spanish Colonial period. Now the Society's artifact collection and it's traditional museum interpretive program has expanded with the acquisition of a structure being the Villa Montezuma, which is operated as a historic house museum and cultural center and the Golden Hill part of town overlooking downtown San Diego at 20th and K Street. In that building the Society attempts to capture a little bit of the essence of the Victorian period through the furnishings in the house and the style of the house itself that is the architectural style of the house. The society also over the years has developed a very fine publication program. Beginning in 1955, the Society started publishing a quarterly magazine. Society has also engaged in the publication of monographs, books on specific subjects.

(PH): James Moss, Executive Director of the San Diego Historical Society. He mentioned two locations which the Historical Society operates the Serra Museum and the Villa Montezuma and I understand there is a third site that will eventually be part of the
Historical Society.

(ER): Yes, Miss Mary Marston very generously gave the Marston home and about 4 1/4 acres of land surrounding it gave it to the city and it’s now in a sort of life trust that is to say she has the option of occupying it as long as she wishes to during her lifetime and eventually it will become owned by the City of San Diego. It’s immediately adjacent to the north end of Balboa Park and the proposal by the Historical Society is that at some future time the home will be developed into probably some exhibits that would be appropriate to illustrate the life of George Marston and Irving Gill who was the architect of the house.

(PH): As we continue this audio tour of some key research tools that are available to San Diegans who are interested in local history. We have one now that is not especially amenable to radio broadcasting but it’s one with which you’re certainly familiar. If you’ve ever gone through a book on San Diego history that contains old photographs you undoubtedly recall the name Title Insurance and Trust Company. This company’s photograph collection includes at latest count more than 140,000 negatives in addition to prints, maps and other artifacts. Larry and Jane Booth have long been associated with the collection. Jane Booth is its curator presently. Larry Booth is curator of the San Diego Historical Society but he’s been associated with the Title Insurance and Trust Company Photo Collection since he came to the company as a commercial photographer in 1951. The history of the development of this collection is in itself an interesting story.

(LB): Frank Ford who was president of Union Title Insurance and Trust Company in 1947 bought a collection of photographs by Herbert Fitch. Herbert Fitch was a commercial photographer in San Diego for 50 years and he was liking for a place to have his life’s work perpetuated so in his entire collection which was only about 8 or 9 thousand photographs at that time to Union Title Insurance Company. It was a marvelous collection because it represented a chain of photographers not only Herbert Fitch’s work but that of his predecessors that he bought. He bought the work of J. A. Shariff who in turn bought the work of C. P. Fasten then who in turn bought the work of other photographers from a very early time period so that the chain of photographs ran from about 1870 up to 1946.

(JB): Larry has written a book on collection use and care of photographs. It was published last year. It embodies what he has learned over the years about how to collect them and how to take care of them. His philosophy of duplicating photographs is very important because one thing one might you have a deteriorating photograph you simply do some art work on it and make it look nice a cosmetic remedial thing and this is a no-no because what we must do is preserve the historical authenticity of the photograph so if you want to do some remedial work you would do would be only minimal because you do not want to turn things over so that Point Loma points the wrong direction or we don’t want to change the
city we simply want to keep the record of it.

(PH): The final local history resource we'll be discussing is a seven volume series of books written by Richard Perad editor emeritus of the San Diego Union. These books cover the history of San Diego from the days of the earliest Indian inhabitants to recent times. The project began in 1959 when James Copley publisher of the San Diego Union at that time suggested that Perad be the one to write what was planned to be a one volume update of San Diego History.

(RP): It took a year, I'd say, to write a volume of San Diego History. It was kind of sabbatical. And then after I got into it, I got very interested in the history series, and finally I convinced them I couldn't do it in one, it had to be two, though afterwards it grew from two to three to four and kept growing that way and I never got back really to the newspaper business except as a consulting boy. The only big chance we made from oldhistory is that I divided the period a little differently but most books on history of early California or old California and the new California were divided into epics of who occupied the time. At first, it was the Spanish influence, then the Mexican-American period. Well, I found that wasn't satisfactory that you left things hanging in the air. I believe a book should have a beginning, and a climax and an end. So we had to bring the periods to an end. Period of expiration and the mission period which went over into the Mexican period so we kept with the mission period then we keep for the rancho period which is spanned for both generations, both people, both the Mexican and the American period. So we found we've made a better book that way, that has a beginning and an end to it. So we're trying to cover up that formula ever since.

(PH): Even to the extent that they are continuing to come out, I understand that recent, that volume had just come out on modern times.

(RP): Yes, its the last one which I didn't know whether I do when I retired so ostensibly retired and then they wanted to continue the books and they got me back doing some other controlling work but I didn't think you should try to write your own period. It's sometimes very hard where I was involved in so many of these things and people are alive today and should you pass judgment on them but I have to think it over a couple of years. I decided there was no reason you shouldn't because of the fortunate way in which we'd handle it. We made it narrative history, we didn't pass judgment to say we think this is bad and that's good, why didn't they do this or that. We put down what happened and let the real judges. It's a newspaper style of course. We don't judge whether it was right or wrong, or what consequences were of their actions. So I figured we could do it all right and so I spend a couple of years on it, though I had a lot of materials accumulates files, I've got files on the floor down there, accumulated most of it so we finally put it together and decided
to do it. And I keep thinking maybe I ought to do another one to keep the last ten years.

(PH): Richard Perad, editor emeritus of the San Diego Union and author of the seven volume series of books on the History of San Diego. By the way, another valuable part of the series is the bibliography at the end of each volume with thorough listing of sources for more information on the topics covered by the books.

We’ve had an extensive audio tour of several sources of history education in San Diego and it’s now that we return to the main subject of our program Ellen Browning Scripps, for it was the field of education that she saw as an important area for her philanthropic work. The last major endowment that she gave was for the beginning of Scripps College for Women in Clairemont. Her grand niece, Mrs. Ellen Revelle tells the story.

(ER): Well, it was President Blazedale of Pomona who suggested to her the idea of having the group of colleges in Clairemont and persuaded her, talked to her about it and she was interested in the idea of the group colleges and made Scripps College possible. And she wrote him in May 1920 “I’m convinced that there’s nothing so fundamental and hence so vital to the service of people at true education. What of course is largely a personal and not a mechanical matter and it’s a personal element in the college: it’s instructors and its curriculum that makes it appeal to me”.

(PH): Ellen Browning Scripps thought about developing this new college reveal a refreshing concept of education which were by today’s standards, many years later, sounds very modern.

(ER): “I’m thinking of a college campus whose simplicity and beauty will unobtrusively seep into the student’s consciousness and quietly develop a standard of taste and judgment”. This was a quote over in 1926 when there really was a, she gave an interview about her hopes for the new college. She said “I not in sympathy with the so-called education which is imparted from an austere professor behind a desk to the docile student seated in front of him, with a text book as their only common meeting ground. Rather, I’d like to imagine a circle of teacher and students seated about a table or a hearth fire stimulating one another’s powers of thought and creating a mental capital which no text book can supply. I’d like to picture a college whose model is not preparation for life but life itself”.

(PH): Mrs. Ellen Revelle and so Ellen Browning Scripps, a woman who was educated before women were expected to go to college, who has succeeded in business and made her way in a career in which women were not generally included. Near the end of her life endowed a women’s college. And clear, as we conclude the program on Ellen Browning Scripps, I’d like to talk a little bit in summary form about the many things that she contributed to while she was here in San Diego.
Well, before I get into that, I think that certainly, although we think of her in San Diego as having made so many contributions here, that in terms of money, certainly her major endowment was the Scripps College, the amount of money that she gave to that ran into several million dollars. And her philanthropies in total in San Diego are also numbered in the millions of dollars. It had been impossible to calculate the value in money of those gifts because many of them were made anonymously and many of them were in the form of stock in the newspaper business, or in real state, in the value of those of course increased greatly over the years, so that the total amount of one of her biographers attempted to make an estimate of the total amount of money that she had contributed, and he finally gave up. He said it's just several million dollars. Well, it seems to me that Ellen Browning Scripps really had two important careers. First, she was a working newspaper women, a columnist, and editorial consultant in the Middle West for more than 20 years. In an area where few women entered professional other than teaching and nursing, this was an achievement in itself. But her accomplishment was even more noteworthy, I think because of her success in this field, not only professionally but also financially. Her shrewd investments in the newspaper stock and in real estate enabled her to retire at 60 and then began what is essentially a second career; that of creative philanthropist. For the next 30 years really, she lived here in La Jolla and made many important contributions to the cultural and educational and recreational life of the city - San Diego in general and the suburb of La Jolla, in particular benefitted greatly from her many thoughtful gifts. Ms. Scripps played a tremendously significant role in developing the beauty of both land and buildings in La Jolla. Including for example the nucleus of Torrey Pines Park, the Children’s Cove, in front of the Casa Manana, the Women’s Club, the Community Recreation Center, several buildings of the Bishop School, the Scripps Metabolic Clinic and then her own home which of course has been extensively remodeled and turned into the La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art. Her contributions to various institutions in San Diego are so numerous that if I simply read off the list of them, it might even take the whole program. But to give you some idea of the breed and variety of her interest, I'd just like to name a few. She contributed to the restoration of buildings in Balboa Park. She contributed to the YMCA. She contributed to the YMCA, the Museum of Natural History, the Zoo and Scripps Cottage at San Diego State University. Her major philanthropies of course are the college that's named for her in Pomona and the initial buildings of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, which led to the establishment ultimately here of the University of California at San Diego. One of her favorite poems which is quoted in the biography of her by Edward Clarkson is called the Diver. It’s by Lilly Long, and it goes like this:

"I have plunged into life, oh god,
As a diver into the sea.
Knowing and fearing now saved they
known command to me
To grapple and search for the truth
Hidden whatever it be.
So I search for the truth in thy work
Thou lord of the truth and of me.”

And I think her passion really was for truth. Her attorney, Jacy Harper, a man who helped her with all of the legal ramifications of making contributions that she did, so he was intimately familiar with the kinds of things she was interested in. And he said of her: “there seemed to be no limit to the range of her unquestionable thirst for knowledge. Her life was devoted to the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, a search endlessly gratifying and endlessly exciting. Her gifts to various educational cultural groups, of course especially to the College and to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography are a continuing contribution to that search for truth. And as she said in her dedication of Scripps College “the paramount obligation of a college is to develop in its students the ability to think clearly and independently and the ability to live confidently, courageously, and hopefully. And I hope that can be an inspiration to all of us.”

(PH): Dr. Clare Crane, San Diego Historian and Chief Historian Consultant for this series of programs on San Diego History. Ellen Browning Scripps contributed immeasurably to the cultural and educational development of the City of San Diego. The economic development of the City will be the topic of next week’s program. San Diego’s economy is to a great extent related to our harbor because of the tourist industry and our beautiful location on the Pacific. Because of the industries that depend upon shipping into sea, and because of the United States Navy and its tremendous financial impact on the city, Congressman William Kettner was instrumental in bringing the Navy to this location. And the life of William Kettner will be the subject of the next program in this series.

“Twelve Who Shaped San Diego” is a series of programs on local history, biographies of twelve great men and women who have left their work on today’s San Diego. The programs are heard each week at 12:30 Tuesday afternoon, with a repeat broadcast Wednesday night at 8:00 o’clock. A resource packet is available with the programs. Send $2.00 to KPBS-FM, SD 92182, and ask for the San Diego History Resource packet. We also welcome your comments on the series. The address again is KPBS-FM San Diego, CA 92182. I’m Peter Hamlin, series producer. Thank you again for joining us. “Twelve Who Shaped San Diego” is a production of Public Radio Station KPBS-FM, and is made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.