

All About Oakridge



A Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument
Former Residence of Barbara Stanwyck and Jack Oakie

Work to Begin on Oakridge Residence

It's time to take down the tarps! Through the collaborative efforts of outgoing LA City Council District 12 Councilmember Mitchell Englander and current Councilmember Greig Smith, Quimby fees have been secured from the City of Los Angeles for the long-awaited and urgently needed roof repair at Oakridge. If you



have toured the historic residence, you already know that Quimby fees are funds collected from local development projects which are set aside to preserve and improve parks and open space in the community. The Oakridge Estate was originally purchased with these funds and Friends is grateful that they are once again coming to the rescue in the ongoing effort to rehabilitate the property. **More Good News:** We are delighted to report that Council District AB1290 Funds, which provide funding for redevelopment and community services, have also been obtained for reconstruction of the driveway entrance and creation of a 30-35 stall gravel overflow parking area at the property. These improvements will allow expanded and improved visitor access to the residence and grounds. We anticipate these projects will occur concurrently and are awaiting notification of a start date from the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Please check our website www.theoakridgeestate.org for future updates!

Beautification Efforts Continue

Plans for landscaping and irrigation at the rear of the residence have recently been finalized with the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Through the generous gift of an anonymous donor, the Oakridge Estate will receive 7 new oaks in addition to other trees, shrubbery, ground cover and decomposed granite paths. These enhancements will provide a welcoming site for larger community events and fundraising programs to support the

Jack Oakie's Niece Visits Oakridge



From left to right
Patti Miller, Jinny Miller, and son Dean Miller

Friends of Oakridge had many reasons to be grateful over a recent Thanksgiving weekend when the Miller family stopped by Oakridge for a visit. Jinny Miller, 94 years young, is Jack Oakie's niece and the daughter of Jack's only sibling, sister Alice. Those of us who had the pleasure of meeting Jinny were captivated by her spry spirit, sharp mind and keen wit. Jinny recounted memories of her childhood visits with her Uncle Jack as we toured the residence and grounds. She shared photographs of her visits to Oakridge and recalled swimming and playing tennis as a young adult. Jinny then generously gifted Friends with a treasure trove of Oakie memorabilia she had saved over the years that included books, articles, programs and invitations to events.

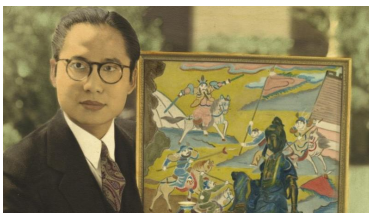
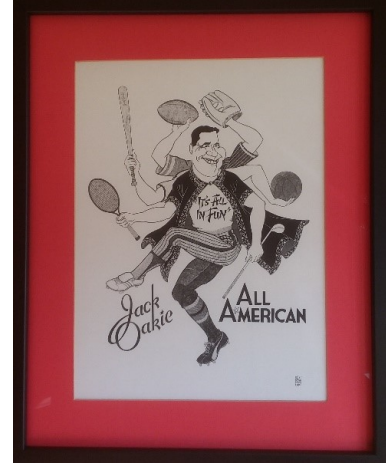
Of special note was a pen and ink caricature of her uncle titled "Jack Oakie All American" drawn by artist Keye Luke (photo and story below). Friends has framed the artwork and plans to display it along with other items from the Miller's collection as soon as conditions at Oakridge allow. We extend our sincere appreciation to Jinny and her entire family for their support and for entrusting Friends with preserving the legacy of her Uncle Jack!

"It's All in Fun"

When Jinny Miller visited Oakridge, she gifted Friends with a humorous caricature of Jack Oakie by Keye Luke. Through our research about the caricature, we discovered the interesting story of the actor and artist's life and his connection to the

Oakies.

Keye Luke was born in Canton, China in 1904. Upon arriving in Los Angeles in 1928, his first job was as an advertising illustrator for Fox West Coast Theatres. He created special advertising art for Grauman's Chinese Theatre and occasionally designed elaborate souvenir programs for selected film premieres: *King Kong*, *Little Women* and *Strange Interlude*. Keye Luke was commissioned to paint several of the Grauman's Chinese Theatre's interior murals, including the fairy tale gardens and the massive ceiling mural which can still be seen today at the legendary Hollywood theatre.



Keye Luke did not intend to become an actor, however, his screen career lasted over 50 years and he is best known for his portrayal of Number 1 Son, Lee Chan in the 20th Century Fox *Charlie Chan* series. Although Keye Luke became a famous film star, he never gave up his career as an artist. He was also known to sketch portraits or caricatures of his fellow actors.

Keye Luke and Victoria Horne appeared together in the 1945 serial *Secret Agent X-9*. The film was about American, Chinese, and Australian agents trying to stop Nazis from obtaining the formula for synthetic fuel. We can only speculate that it was during the filming of *Secret Agent X-9* that Keye Luke met **Jack Oakie** and gifted him with one of his famous caricatures.



Keye Luke grips the wrist of treacherous Victoria Horne, aka Japanese spy Nabura, in the Universal serial "Secret Agent X-9" ('45).

UPCOMING TOURS AND EVENTS

Public Tours: Friends' next tour of the Oakridge Estate is on **Saturday, April 13th at 10:00 am**. \$15.00 tour tickets can be purchased at our website beginning Monday, March 25th at 9:00 am.

Special Event: Join us on **Sunday, April 14th at 12:15 pm**, as Friends of Oakridge commemorates the 107th anniversary of the sinking of the **RMS Titanic**.

Barbara Stanwyck was known for portraying women with courage and determination, but did her character survive the sinking of the Titanic? See for yourself in this **1953 version of the film Titanic**. Special guest speaker **William Carter Harper**, who portrayed Stanwyck's son, will share his memories of making the film and working with Barbara.

Special Instructions: Admission is \$25.00 per person. Tickets go on sale Monday, March 25th at 9:00 am at our website. Seating is limited to 40 guests. Gate will open at 12:15 pm for those interested in touring the house. Guest Speaker to begin at 1:00 pm, followed by the screening of the film.



Save the Date: Friends of Oakridge will be offering a Public Tour on **Saturday, May 18th**. Please check our website for more information and to purchase tickets.



Would You Like to Volunteer at Oakridge?

The Friends of Oakridge is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization and we are always looking for enthusiastic people to join us. We offer our volunteers a unique opportunity to utilize their skills, interests, and enthusiasm. Our volunteer team is comprised of individuals from a variety of professions, all sharing a common interest in the history of the Oakridge Estate. Volunteer opportunities include tour docents, event volunteers, social media, community outreach, and research. Volunteers are provided with training and are matched with assignments based on their availability and interests. Please visit our website to complete a Volunteer Application. An organization member will contact you soon and we look forward to meeting you.



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