

## THE KIDS' READING ROOM



# 'Touring Wilshire Boulevard'

## Part 5

The story so far: Mrs. Kelly's class has visited very different buildings along Wilshire Boulevard and has learned a lot about the history of Los Angeles. The last stop is Santa Monica, a city that borders Los Angeles.

By **SHERRILL KUSHNER**  
Special to *The Times*

**T**HE bus traveled through a canyon of high-rise buildings on the way to Santa Monica.

"We are now going through Westwood," said Susan, their tour guide.

They passed Sepulveda Boulevard. "Here's the oldest building on Wilshire," she said. "It's the Wadsworth Chapel, built in 1900. It once served Protestant and Catholic war veterans."

The bus crossed Centinela Avenue and entered Santa Monica. "This city now has strict laws on how tall a building can be," explained Susan. "So you won't see as many tall buildings here."

Gray clouds hid the sun as students stepped off the bus at Christine Emerson Reed Park.

"It's colder here than in Los Angeles," said Clara, pulling on her sweater.

"Yes," said Mrs. Kelly. "Santa Monica

is often cooler because of clouds and sea breezes from the Pacific Ocean."

Billy saw people playing tennis and basketball on the park courts when they turned onto 7th Street. Kids were swaying up and down on swings and climbing a jungle gym. "Are we going to play in the park?" he asked.

"Not today," said Mrs. Kelly. "We're going into Miles Memorial Playhouse. It's around the corner on Lincoln Boulevard."

"This is a place where they put on plays," explained Susan. "A man named J. Euclid Miles gave money for this building to be used as a theater for children. It was badly damaged by the Northridge earthquake in 1994, but it's been repaired. It's now used for art, dance and theater classes as well as performances."

"It looks like an old California mission," said Emily.

"Yes, you're right," said Susan. "This style of architecture is called Spanish Colonial Revival. It has plain stucco walls, tile roofs, arches, courtyards and wrought iron decoration."

The students stepped inside. Small children were rehearsing for a dance recital. A lady played piano.

"We'll walk back to Wilshire and then go seven blocks to where it ends at Ocean Avenue," instructed Susan.

"There we'll take a quick stroll through a part of Palisades Park which was created in the 1890s. It stretches 14 blocks on top of a big bluff above the Pacific Ocean. The park has lovely gardens, picnic tables and many interesting sites."

When they got to the park, the children got a spectacular view of Santa Monica Bay.

"If you look to the left you can see where Colorado Avenue ends at the pier," said Susan.

"I've been to the pier," said Billy. "There's a Ferris wheel, roller coaster, carousel, bumper cars and lots of other fun rides. It's awesome!"

"Someday maybe you all can come

back here with your families. You can be the guides and show them some of the special places you've learned about on Wilshire Boulevard," said Mrs. Kelly.

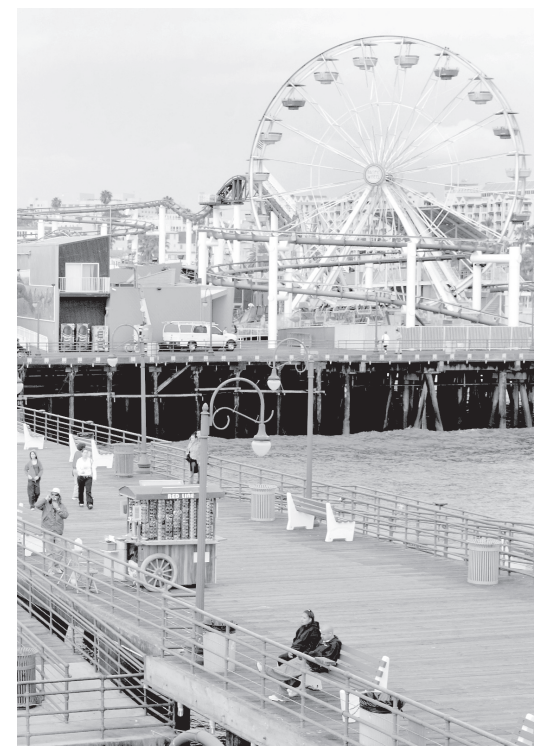
*Author's note: The Los Angeles Conservancy will host a self-guided architectural tour down Wilshire Boulevard on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All places described in this story will be open to the public during this time. For more information and to get a free guidebook for kids, call (213) 430-4219 or go to [www.curatingthecity.org](http://www.curatingthecity.org). Thanks to Catherine Gudis, director of education at the L.A. Conservancy, for fact-checking this story.*

**This story will be on The Times' website at [latimes.com/kids](http://latimes.com/kids). The regular Kids' Reading Room features will return next week.**



JACQUES GARNIER

**THEATER:** Miles Memorial Playhouse.



LAWRENCE K. HO Los Angeles Times

**AMUSEMENT:** Santa Monica Pier.