

2010 GOVERNOR'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

Chicken Boy on North Figueroa Street



Chicken Boy restored and reinstalled atop a roof on North Figueroa Street

This nomination tells the story of Chicken Boy, which started life as a 22-foot tall Paul Bunyan statue manufactured by the International Fiberglass company in Venice, CA. The Chicken Boy Fried Chicken restaurant bought it in the late 1960s, hired an artist to customize it, and installed it atop the restaurant on Broadway in downtown Los Angeles. At the time, Los Angeles was a haven of roadside landmarks, most of which have by now disappeared.

When the restaurant closed in 1984, Amy Inouye campaigned to save the statue. Chicken Boy was offered to her provided she moved him from the property. Ms. Inouye put Chicken Boy in storage while she contacted museums hoping to donate him to a sculpture garden, but there were offers and the statue remained in storage until 2007.

In 2003, Ms. Inouye relocated her design office to Highland Park to a building on North Figueroa street, an alignment of Route 66. Importantly, the building had a flat roof, and Ms. Inouye began the process of installing Chicken Boy on her office roof.

Structural engineer, Melvyn Green agreed to take on the project. Amy Inouye assembled a team to help carry out the project. They gathered the requisite installation permits, learned to do fiberglass work to make minor repairs, repainted Chicken Boy, and found a company to install him. Funding was made possible through the sale of souvenir merchandise, a Community Beautification grant, and Amy Inouye's personal funding of the project.

Chicken Boy's October 2007 installation was a community success and celebration. The unique, 22-foot tall statue has become a recognizable and popular landmark of modern-day Los Angeles.

Learn more about Chicken Boy:

http://www.laobserved.com/archive/2016/08/how_chicken_boy_got_to_hi.php