



SAN CARLOS

# HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA *NEWSLETTER*

FALL 1980

200 E. AVE. 43, LOS ANGELES, CA 90031

## BICENTENNIAL: LOOKING BACKWARD, FORWARD

Los Angeles has begun its 200th year of existence in typical fashion. Amid the fanfare celebrations at El Pueblo State Historic Park, the artist exhibits at the County Museum of Art, the Municipal Art Gallery, and other locations, the literature exhibit at Pierce College, and other programs, attempts were made to raze the Brown Derby restaurant!

This should serve as an object lesson for all of us who cherish our Southern California heritage. It's a fragile legacy, subject to obliteration at the whim of a real estate developer or a high-rise speculator. Protecting that legacy should be an implicit responsibility for every member of the Historical Society of Southern California.

This will be a year that sees a wide variety of birthday observances, from the enduring to the absurd. "L.A.'s the Place" is not just a bicentennial slogan. It promises to be the stem of a sentence that can make of the bicentennial an important series of events, or the butt of Johnny Carson's monologue or Bob Hope's savings and loan commercials. Preserving a heritage is serious business. But in honoring the past, we must also plan for the future.

Such plans are currently under way at HSSC headquarters with the start of a new seasonal year that just happens to coincide with the city's birthday. Between now and next June there will be meetings, receptions, hikes, and outings to attract the interest of every HSSC member. But there's more. The Society has in progress an active program of restoration of the Lummis Home (El Alisal) gardens, involvement with local schools, and hosting of various activities at the Lummis Home. The operative word for the year is "outreach," a program of extending HSSC sponsorship and involvement beyond past limits to new horizons; to kindle a sense of active participation by our members. The year promises to be an exciting one, a time during which we may all find ourselves joining in the appreciation of the past while looking forward to the future.



Students at Alternative School 7 constructed a prize-winning exhibit for the History Day/L.A. program held last May at California State University, Northridge. The subject of the exhibit was the life of Charles F. Lummis, and the display featured a scale model of the Lummis Home which now serves as HSSC headquarters. In the photograph, Social Studies teacher Ken Easum, who directed the students in the project, and (from left) Rachel Siegel, Suzanne Jones, Michelle Anton, and Linnea Johnson admire their work, which took first place in the group exhibit competition. The exhibit has been on display in the foyer of the Lummis Home.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

As the City of Los Angeles celebrates its Bicentennial, members of the Historical Society of Southern California can take pride in the fact that for almost half of those 200 years their Society has been actively involved in education and research and in preserving the history of Southern California.

Founded in Los Angeles in 1883, the Society has published annually or quarterly since that year a journal of Southern California history. By the turn of the century the Society had collected a library of thousands of books and pamphlets and a rare collection of manuscripts, maps, and photographs. Not only was the Society publishing historical volumes, but it was engaged in translating manuscripts on file in the Spanish archives at Seville dealing with the history of California. In 1910 HSSC was one of the founders of the Los Angeles County Museum. It deposited in the Museum the majority of the Society's books, papers, and other effects, which became the nucleus of the Museum's Southern California history collection.

Our Society has had an illustrious past, and we now approach the threshold of its second century. A major step at this time has been the hiring of our new Executive Director, Jackie Wilson, in addition to our long-time Executive Secretary, Peg Cassidy. We are embarking on an expanded program of activities for the 1980s under the guidance of our Board of Directors and our new Executive Director.

Those members who have recently visited our Society's headquarters have already seen the tremendous change in the gardens of the Lummis Home. With support from the Theodore Payne Foundation, the cooperation of the City of Los Angeles, and the efforts of many of our members, the restored garden at El Alisal, with its walkways amid native California plants, is already a charming adjunct to the Lummis Home, and our work on the garden is just beginning. In the planning stage is a small museum area in the house itself for displaying to our members and the public some of the fascinating paintings, drawings, photographs, and other historical effects belonging to the Society.

The *Southern California Quarterly*, our Society's authoritative journal of historical research, is received by libraries throughout the country, and we thus perform an educational function on a broad scale. In addition, during the coming decade we plan to increase our educational function in our own area and communities within our area. We are increasing our programs for school children in cooperation with local schools, and we also plan to increase our assistance and encouragement to local historical organizations.

As we enter the decade of the 1980s, we are continuing our present activities, and we will provide programs and dinner meetings featuring subjects of historical interest, outings and treks to historic places, and receptions and special events for members and their guests. A tentative program scheduled for

this year appears elsewhere in this issue. We plan to take advantage of our present resources while expanding our outreach. It is our hope and expectation to grow in size and in involvement and become a greater factor in the cultural life of Southern California. There is much to be done, and there are many opportunities for members to serve. Any members who would like to play a more active part in our plans for the future should call Jackie Wilson at 222-0546.

Douglas F. Richardson  
President

## NEWSWORTHY NOTES . . .

**Art Committee keeps busy:** "Last of the 49ers," a portrait of Emanuel A. Speegle at age 93, has been restored by the Art Committee. The artist, Orpha Klinker, was a well known painter of portraits and landscapes in the 1920s and 1930s in Los Angeles. She received many prizes for her etchings, which include a print of El Alisal, headquarters of the Society.

**Historic artifacts,** including 13 cabinet maker's wood hand tools, were recently donated to the Society by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kuster. Sylvia D. Helfert provided a willow milk jug and tumbler, and Keith Lummis has supplied 15 Lummis photographs to be used in education projects with local schools.

**Ellen V. Peterson** has taken HSSC Life Membership so that she need no longer wonder each year if her dues are paid up! Besides her HSSC membership, she is the president of the Downey Historical Society.

**The San Fernando Valley Historical Society** held its 9th annual Rancho Days on September 13 & 14. The theme was "A Fiesta at the Rancho." Exhibits included demonstrations of branding, candle making, adobe brick making, and other early California activities.

**Time out:** Joe Deras, retired gardner who worked for the City of Los Angeles, is spending his retirement time by volunteering to work in the Lummis Home garden one day a week! Betty Southam of the Theodore Payne Foundation has volunteered to assist in developing the garden aspect of the pilot history program with Alternative School 7.

**Cleaning out the attic:** Katie Ainsworth, Joni Atkinson, Mary Escherich, Helen Lawton, Arthur and Jack Richardson, and Sally Swan have begun assessing the Society archives stored in the Lummis Home attic. Needless to say, more help is needed.

**Painting and Sculpture in Los Angeles 1900-1945** is the title of an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from September 25 to November 23, produced by Assistant Curator Nancy Moure. Those interested in early Los Angeles history should not miss this show, one of the Museum's several exhibitions celebrating Los Angeles' 200th birthday.



# OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE HSSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 1980-1981

*President* ..... Douglas F. Richardson  
*Vice President* ..... Joseph Choate, Jr.  
*Vice President* ..... William W. Escherich  
*Treasurer* ..... Philip V. Swan  
*Secretary* ..... Doris E. Harris  
*Executive Director* .... Jacquelyn F. (Jackie) Wilson  
*Executive Secretary* ..... Margaret J. (Peg) Cassidy

## *Members of the Board*

|                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mrs. Ed (Katherine L.) Ainsworth | Thomas S. McNeill                 |
| Robert G. Colvin                 | John Stuart Mill                  |
| Dr. Judson Grenier               | James V. Mink                     |
| Mrs. Raymond E. (Florence) Hay   | Dr. Robert M. Newcomb             |
| Dr. Harry Kelsey                 | Mrs. R. Kenneth (Peggy) Ross      |
| George D. LaMoree                | Hugh C. Tolford                   |
| Mrs. Fred W. (Helen) Lawton      | William J. Warren                 |
| Henry F. Lippitt, 2nd            | Mrs. Robert D. (Mary Helen) Wayne |

## HSSC SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR THE LOS ANGELES BICENTENNIAL YEAR, 1980-1981

**September 20, 1980:** Reception at Lummis Home honoring the Theodore Payne Foundation. Display of HSSC art collection.

**October 13, 1980:** Preview reception and guided tours of the new Gallery of California and the Southwest, 1540-1940, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, Exposition Park. Wine and Cheese.

**November 19, 1980:** Evening meeting at Svec Hall, California Hospital. Speaker: Dr. Leonard Pitt, Professor of History, California State University, Northridge. Subject: "The Founding of Los Angeles."

**December 6, 1980:** Christmas reception at Lummis Home honoring El Alisal volunteers. Refreshments.

**January 21, 1981:** Dinner meeting at Occidental College. Speaker: Dr. Robert Winter, Professor of History, Occidental College. Subject: "L.A. the Magnificent."

**January 30, 1981:** History Day activity with Alternative School 7.

**February 18, 1981:** Reception and guided tours of Spectrum, the Los Angeles Bicentennial photo-mural exhibit at the Merced Theater, Los Angeles. Wine and Cheese.

**March 18, 1981:** Joint dinner meeting with the Chinese Historical Society, in Chinatown. Speaker to be announced.

**April 15, 1981;** Evening meeting at Svec Hall, California Hospital. Speaker: Katherine Ainsworth. Subject: "Father Serra."

**April 1981:** Extra event: HSSC hike, location to be announced.

**May 20, 1981:** Annual meeting. Dinner and speaker; details to be announced.

**May 1981:** Extra event; HSSC hike, location to be announced.

**June 6, 1981:** HSSC Annual Trek.

## NEW MEMBERS

HSSC welcomes the following new members and encourages their participation in Society activities.

### **Life:**

Mrs. Ellen V. Peterson

### **Sustaining:**

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Godfrey

Mr. and Mrs. Stephen N. White

### **Active:**

Mrs. Sharon L. Buck

Dorothy Dawson

Francis H. Dean

Daniel James Griffin

Joyce H. Haman

Mr. and Mrs. David Johnson

Mrs. Marjorie Kassorla

Ellen and Marc Malinkoff

Phyllis Michaelis

Bette P. Michaels

Mrs. Jean Ottens

Mrs. Jane H. Palmer

Harriet Roth

James H. Seaman

William Settani

Morgan Sinclair

Dr. Charles O. Slosser

Christie Snyder

Robert W. Stuppi

Mrs. Harlan Thompson

Mrs. Lawrence Tintor

Mrs. Eda Westby

### **Student:**

Mrs. James M. Dodge

### **Corporate-Patron:**

Beneficial Standard Corporation

Send news of your own individual doings to Abraham Hoffman, Newsletter Editor, 19211-1 Haynes Street, Reseda, CA 91335. Your modest activities deserve notice in our *Newsworthy Notes!*



## GETTING INVOLVED . . .

Frequently I hear people say, "If I belong to an organization I want to know why . . . am I needed?" It is my strong conviction that the involvement of members is essential to the growth and vitality of any organization, and please know that we *do* need your participation, ideas, and expertise. Our president, the members of the Board of Directors, Peg Cassidy, and I invite you to contribute to the future of the Society as we expand its outreach. We are open to any ideas you may have, but here are some we have developed:

*Friend of the Lummis Garden:* Volunteer two hours a week; Adopt-a-Plant financial contribution; help design a brochure and T-shirt.

*Education Committee:* On Friday afternoons volunteer to assist and assess a semester-long pilot project with Alternative School 7 which will involve students in shadow puppetry, slide lectures and tours of El Pueblo Park, learning about native plants and planting in our garden, visiting the Children's Museum "Before You and Me" exhibit, and a Landmarks Club luncheon researched in the 1903 Landmarks Club cookbook and prepared and eaten in the Lummis Home. The finale to the project will be a History Day at the school presented by participating students and a visit to the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum's new exhibit, "California and the Southwest, 1540-1940."

*Historical Society exhibit in the foyer of the Lummis Home:* Help to develop the concept of the exhibit which will give the Society identity in the Lummis Home.

*Membership Committee:* Contact members by letter or phone. This may be done at Society headquarters or at home.

*Public Events and Hospitality:* Be a host or hostess for community organizations enjoying the use of our headquarters.

*Publicity and Public Relations:* Develop relationships with the media and other organizations to expand our visibility.

Please call me at 222-0546 and I will be delighted to talk with you about your interests and what you would like to do. If you know people who would enjoy membership in the Society, please let them and us know about it. The Society you belong to is yours. We have an exciting future if we creatively engage our greatest assets—our members.

Jackie Wilson

Executive Director

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
200 EAST AVENUE 43 • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90031

Gentlemen:

Please accept my application for membership as ..... member  
in the Historical Society of Southern California.

I enclose my remittance in the amount of.....for annual dues.

Name.....

Firm Affiliation (if applicable).....

Address.....

City..... State..... Zip Code.....

Date..... Telephone..... Sponsor.....

Dues include subscription to the Society's **Quarterly** and **Newsletter**. All dues, contributions and bequests are deductible under State and Federal tax provisions since the Society is a non-profit organization supported solely by membership dues and contributions.

#### MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

STUDENT MEMBER ..... \$ 10.00

ACTIVE MEMBER..... \$ 20.00

FAMILY MEMBER ..... \$ 30.00

SUSTAINING MEMBER ... \$ 50.00

CONTRIBUTING  
MEMBER..... \$ 100.00

PATRON or COR-  
PORATE PATRON ..... \$ 250.00

LIFE MEMBER ..... \$1000.00

Historical Society of Southern California  
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Los Angeles, Calif. 90031

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