

New Series No. 3 - Spring 1967

Lummis House, Los Angeles

COMMENTS FROM
THE PRESIDENT

The Society has had a good year. Those who attended the meetings and the functions have been enriched; the Quarterly has published new material to add to the storehouse of historical information; we have made new friends, and, sadly, we have lost some old ones. The officers and directors of the Society, assisted by Margaret Cassidy, executive secretary, have handled our business and financial needs. And Ruth Powell has been writing the NEWSLETTER for us.

Now, as the season closes, I'd like to express a few thoughts.

Wallace Stegner, the new editor-in-chief of The American West--the magazine of the Western History Association--made some provocative comments in "An Introduction," written for the February 1967 issue. Because they express so well the place of history in our own area, where the Society is confronted with a changing world, I'm taking the liberty of quoting from his remarks:

A heavy proportion of westerners do not live where they were born; like other immigrants, they have broken the link with their past, they own a historical sense appropriate to another place. And those westerners who do live where they were born,... may be almost as cut off, for their past has not yet been adequately created for them, their identity has not formed within a known historical context.

A living magazine...can help clarify the cultural continuity and create a historical tradition within which the westerner can locate himself. It also can and must address itself to the pressures and problems of the modern West...because what we are is a consequence of what we have been, and what we become will depend on how lucidly and largely we understand present and past as continuum. Quite frankly, we hope to put both past and present at the service of the future.

So it is with our Historical Society, which encompasses so large an area that, if we are to survive, we must be many things to many people. The Society can help the citizenry to understand the past in order to better understand the future, and to prevent repeating past errors.

The scholars and the students can be supplied with valuable research materials, and in turn can provide touchstones for future searchers after history. The buffs and aficionados of history can exchange ideas and enjoy fellowship through meetings, social affairs, and trips. There can be something for everyone, because everyone needs identity with their surroundings and meaning to their past in order to enjoy a richer, more meaningful tomorrow.

Our program this year, planned under the direction of Pat Manahan, covered approximately a hundred years, and provided a cross section of the many possibilities for exploring and making meaningful the history that is part of our environment.

REVIEW OF
PROGRAM

Our annual fiesta at the Casa de Adobe transported us to the days before 1850 when the haciendas of the Spanish and Mexican era were a way of life in California.

The beginning American period took on meaning when Burnett Turner gave an illustrated talk on "Preserving Our Old Pueblo at the Plaza," for our April meeting at the Natural History Museum. We saw how the Plaza served the people during the latter part of the 19th century, and glimpsed how future generations will experience history by participating in the re-created scene.

When we entered the Lummis Home, through the massive front door, to enjoy an Open House at our headquarters, we were quickly aware that history was all around us. This unique structure, built by Charles F. Lummis in the 1890's, is filled with treasures and mementos to remind us of the places and people of another era.

The tourist boom in southern California was represented in our historical explorations by the splendid Huntington Hotel in Pasadena. Built in the early 1900's, much of its history came to life when Stephen W. Royce--who became manager in 1924--spoke at our spring dinner in the Viennese Room.

Our visit to the Gamble House in Pasadena brought us in touch with another point in history. A true California Bungalow, this handsome place was designed throughout--house, furniture, fixtures, and furnishings--by Greene and Greene, Architects. Built in 1908, it has been recognized as a rich historical treasure, and is today being preserved almost as it was originally.

To experience the decade of the 30's, we met at the Sunkist building in downtown Los Angeles. Completed in 1936, this was an early example of the simplicity and utility of modern architecture. Our speaker, Don Mc Millen, presented highlights from the history of merchandising a product that was responsible for many a glowing report about "sun-kissed" California.

It was fitting that as an Historical Society we took note of the regal Saint Sophia's Cathedral in Los Angeles, where we held our Christmas meeting. Although built in the 1950's, this Greek Orthodox Church represents a tradition and culture in our midst which is several thousand years old.

Two other meetings, held in the County Museum of Natural History, added to our year's study of history. Jerry Mac Mullen gave an illustrated talk about the lumber schooner days along the Mendocino Coast; and Robert Weinstein shared with us, through words and pictures, the joys of collecting.

We hope that you have enjoyed participating in the history that is all around us, and will join us for the Annual Trek on June 3, when we will complete our collection of historical memories of the year with a visit to east Los Angeles County. Wade Kittell, chairman, has planned an eventful day; and the Robert Craigs have produced a memorable keepsake for the trip.

Chuck Powell, president

NEWS OF MEMBERS Many members have been promoting history through speeches, writings, and trips. Here are a few of their recent doings:

Dr. John Kemble lectured during the spring semester at the University of Texas in Austin. Dr. John Urabec served on the panel of judges for the Robert B. Campbell Student Book Collection Competition at UCLA. Dr. Edwin Carpenter spoke on "Some Pioneers of the Valley," at El Monte Historical Society. Anna Marie Hager addresses the California History Class of Harbor College, Wilmington in June, on the subject "Sources for Research on Southern California." Jean and Dudley Gordon traveled to Prescott, Arizona where he spoke to the Historical Society there, and to the Prescott Corral of The Westerners; and Dudley is currently traveling in Britian, and will appear before the London Corral of The Westerners.

Dr. Manuel Servin has been appointed education assistant to Governor Reagan. Bart Lytton has revealed plans to develop the Dodge House property to assure the preservation of this architectural treasure. Doyce Nunis, Jr. reports that the QUARTERLY was the subject of a column in the Boletín Bibliografico, a magazine published in Mexico City, which also carried an article about him. Doyce gave the National Library Week Lecture "Books and Reading on the Far Frontier," at UC-Santa Barbara. Attending the recent Baja California Symposium at Tijuana were: Mr. and Mrs. Ed Ainsworth, Arthur H. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Dawson, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Hager, Mr. and Mrs. Don Meadows, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Northrop, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Welcome, and Walt Wheelock.

The Society regrets the loss of several members who have passed away recently: Robert J. Woods, member of the Board of Directors; Colin M. Gair, former Board member; George Gund of Cleveland; Frederick W. Nelson, Pasadena; and David S. Shattuck, Hermosa Beach.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING: April 3, 1967 -- Water flows into the San Luis Canal, first completed section of the California Aqueduct that will bring water from the Feather River to Southern California. November 5, 1913 -- Water from the Owens River released into the Los Angeles Aqueduct for Southern California.