

SAN CARLOS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA *NEWSLETTER*

SPRING/SUMMER 1980

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

MT. LOWE MAKES HIGH SPIRITS

From three-year-old David Choate to 89-year-old Ivy Dawson Rogers there is quite a span of years—but they recently shared a common experience. They were among the approximately eighty HSSC members who gathered at Lake Avenue and Loma Alta Drive in Altadena on April 26. HSSC's first hike up the mountain paths leading to the ruins of Echo Mountain House and the Alpine Tavern exceeded all expectations.

Sunshine deserted us, but the gray cloud cover failed to dim the spirits of the hikers. In fact, the clouds kept the temperature down to about a cool sixty degrees and helped make the 2½ mile hike a pleasurable one. Few canteens needed to be emptied, and nobody seemed to huff or puff very much.

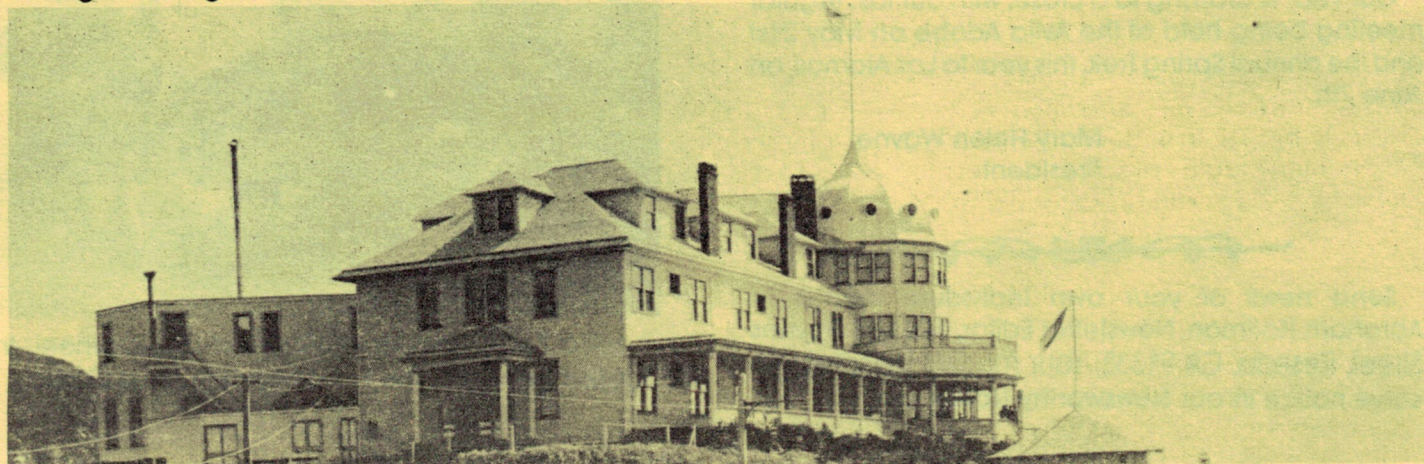
Here and there reminders of Thaddeus S.C. Lowe's vision could be spotted—railroad ties (the metal tracks were torn up during World War II as a donation to the war effort), bridge foundations, wire rods sticking out of the ground. Then, the huge flywheel, relic of the power station, signaled our arrival to the area once known as the "White City." With cloud and fog obscuring the landscape below us, the hikers found it easy to tune in on the wave length of the past—nostalgia among older members, a sense of wonder

from younger hikers as to where the attractions of a simpler age had gone.

John W. Robinson, author of books and articles on the San Gabriel Mountains, oriented the hikers on the locations of the various buildings that had comprised the White City. Robert Colvin also added commentary on the past. Hikers clustered around the photo album of Mt. Lowe pictures to compare "then" and "now." The area revealed two reservoirs, the concrete steps leading to the long-gone incline railway, and the dynamited ruins of the powerhouse.

The hikers then broke into two groups, about half proceeding on up to the Alpine Tavern site, a further three miles up the mountain. The second group eventually returned to the starting point of the hike by hiking down the old electric streetcar right of way.

Sentiment seemed unanimous that the Mt. Lowe Railway hike broke the stereotype of a historical society meeting consisting of senior citizens sipping tea and limiting themselves to armchair reminiscences. Everyone agreed that this was an activity that deserved to be repeated, a HSSC program which demonstrated that HSSC members come in all ages and sizes.



No, we didn't see the Echo Mountain House as we hiked along the trail. We only heard the echo. But the ghosts of the past were very much with us.

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

A very important decision by the Historical Society Board was made at its regular meeting in March when the employment of an Executive Director was authorized. In November 1978 the Long-Range Planning Committee recommended that this position be established, and the Board is delighted that Mrs. Jacquelyn Wilson will begin her work with the Society on April 15th. Mrs. Wilson has recently served as Public Relations Coordinator for El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park. In addition, she has been active in local historical programs, serving as a member of the Cultural Heritage Foundation board as well as developing the docent training program for Las Angelitas del Pueblo.

Jackie will be planning and carrying out some of the programs which the Society has long been wanting to undertake, including those in connection with the city's upcoming Bicentennial. She will also be pursuing increasing funding for the various programs and publications of the Society. You are invited to stop by the Lummis Home and get acquainted with Jackie if you don't already know her. She has a very important role to fill in the future of the Society.

Peg Cassidy will still be carrying out her important responsibilities—handling of the membership rolls, getting out the dues reminders, keeping the financial records of the Society, and doing all those many jobs which she does so well. We are grateful that she will be with us to handle these important duties.

Word has just been received of the bequest by a Mrs. Zoe A. Griggs of San Dimas who passed away March 21, 1980, of "my household furniture and furnishings, all paintings, pictures, works of art, silverware, and chinaware...to the Historical Society of Southern California in memory of Veral Schoenborn and Zoe A. Griggs." The Board is delighted to learn of this bequest, which came as complete surprise to the Society. We could do with more surprises of this sort! The Board is working on the best way of handling this gift, and will appreciate any further information anyone may have of either Mrs. Griggs or her sister, Mrs. Schoenborn.

Our year is drawing to a close, with our last regular meeting being held at the Avila Adobe on May 21st and the annual Spring Trek, this year to Los Alamos, on June 7th.

Mary Helen Wayne
President



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!**

NEWSWORTHY NOTES...

Carol Green Wilson, a life member of HSSC since the mid-1940s, has written **Many Years—One Message**, a history of the 125-year-old Calvary Presbyterian Church of San Francisco, for the dedication of the church's new Christian Education Building next January...

Roberta Johnson, artist and art restorer, is a new member of the Art Committee and will be responsible for the care and conservation of the oil paintings of the Society.

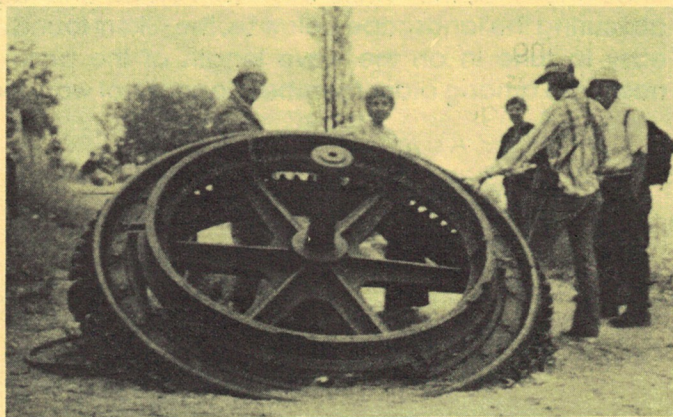
Robert G. Cowan, librarian and long-time member of the Society, needs volunteers to care for the collection of historical photographs. Sorting, classifying, labeling, and storing is advisable so that a display of these "remnants of the past" may add interest to our meetings.

Joseph O'Malley has finished restoration of the charming watercolor by Chris A. Jorgensen (1859-1935), who was well known for his paintings of Yosemite National Park. Born in Norway, Jorgensen spent his later years in Piedmont, California. His paintings are considered rare and the Society is fortunate to own one.

What did the picture say to the wall? "First I was framed, then they hanged me." But **Dorothy Gleason** reports that the Society has a number of unframed paintings, 9 x 12 and 10 x 12 in size. Larger frames with glass are also needed for drawings and watercolors. Please check around for that unused frame which the Society could put to use.

Cheryl Partridge, HSSC member who has taught at Chilao Mountain School above La Canada Flintridge for ten years, has won the Valley Forge Teachers Medal. The award is presented by the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

Katherine L. Ainsworth has donated to the Society, in honor of outgoing President **Mary Helen Wayne**, a framed bit of the blond hair of Charles Fletcher Lummis, age 3 years, 3 days—clipped in 1862.



HSSC hikers gather around the cable wheel, the largest artifact in the Echo Mountain House area.

OUR PEG

Margaret Jean Cassidy, HSSC's executive secretary for more than two decades, began her life like most Californians have done. She was born in Manhattan, New York, on May 6, in some year between 1900 and 1980. Early in her life her family moved first to Brooklyn, then to Floral Park on Long Island. Peg was the oldest of one sister and four brothers.

As the eldest child many responsibilities rested on Peg's shoulders. Her sister helped their mother with the upstairs housework while Peg did the downstairs work which included cooking, a task at which she became very proficient and in which she still excels. In addition to the family of eight, there was a cousin and an old priest living with them. At the dinner table it was seldom that there were not two or three guests or drop-ins added.

On entering the business world, Peg worked for a couple of large corporations in tall buildings that swayed when the wind blew hard—as detected by water in the washbowl. She worked for a triumvirate of psychologists, who, according to experts, should have been on the receiving end of their services. After her parents passed away, and after the Second World War, Peg came to Los Angeles with her sister and two brothers. The sister and one brother married, leaving her with her elder brother until they agreed to separate.

At this time Peg worked for the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, until 1959, when she became the executive secretary of our society. With time, effort, and friendliness, Peg has changed the atmosphere of the society into a friendly, comfortable place to gather.

—Robert G. Cowan

SPRING TREKKERS SEE SANTA BARBARA SITES

On Saturday, June 7, HSSC members had the opportunity to travel in spirit and body to the glories and romance of the 1880s. The occasion was the HSSC Annual Spring Trek; the destination, the small village of Los Alamos in Santa Barbara County. Instead of traveling by stagecoach, HSSC members took an air-conditioned bus. A brief stop was made at the Olivas Adobe near Ventura, where refreshments were served, and where HSSC members visited Rancho San Miguel, originally a Chumash Indian site.

At Los Alamos the Society had lunch and toured the restored 1880 Union Hotel, now a working museum. The hotel was a well known stop on the Wells Fargo stagecoach route and has been authentically restored and refurbished as a working hotel for travelers and guests. After the tour Society members explored the antique arts and crafts shops of the small village. Finally it was time to board the bus and return to the cares and concerns of the present. A hearty "thank you" to Helen and Fred Lawton, the 1980 Trek Chairpeople who were in charge of the event.

NEW MEMBERS

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

Life:

Jacquelyn F. Wilson

Sustaining:

Curtis A. Cole

Active:

Etha Abbott

W.P. Blair

California Historical Society (Wilshire Office)

Jose Castaneda

Mary E. Chase

Mrs. Douglas Copley

Edmund A. Da Silveria, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. DeZell

Kathi Freeman

Phil Townsend Hanna

Lois Heischberg

Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Hoffman

Dr. and Mrs. Glen L. Hollinger

Henry F. Hoyle

Robert O. Ingman

Mrs. Eve Mae Kerns

Oliver T. Kuzma, M.D.

Mrs. Robert B. Lamb

Marlene L. Laskey

Clare McFarland

Elizabeth MacKilligan

Mr. and Mrs. Denver Markwith

Mr. and Mrs. George T. Miron

Marcia R. Moore

Mrs. Harriet Negaard

Dr. Robert M. Newcomb

Don Oliver

Mrs. Christie Miles Phillips

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal Robinson

Mr. and Mrs. William G. Vowels

Martin Eli Weil

Student:

Janice M. Dodge



John W. Robinson, Mt. Lowe photo album in hand, orients hikers to what used to be as compared with what remains of the resort complex.

A LETTER OF INTEREST

Mrs. Don Schafer, Sr., of Crestline, has kindly offered to share with us a letter written by her grandmother's sister to her father in New York. The letter illustrates that high interest rates are nothing new for Californians.

Pasadena, California, December 18, 1888

Dear Father:

I have just received Carrie's letter telling me how you are situated. I try to imagine, where in the dining room your bed stands, and your cupboard; whether you look older than when I left. I can't make it seem possible that the fields around Melvin's house look desolate and perhaps covered with snow, and the roads are rough and hubby when we are flooded with sunshine, and the streets here are as smooth and dry as the house floor.

The wind has blown a little this morning, for the first time in many weeks. We have no cold or disagreeable winds. Ask Mrs. Harbee how she would like to her lawn bordered on each side with Calla Lilies and

have rose trees, not bushes, to pick bouquets from? Charlie and I drove out to Minnie's grave at Mountain View Cemetery and carried flowers.

Beatty (Mrs. Schafer's grandmother) was out riding yesterday through the country. She said the farmers were out in the field sowing their wheat and plowing fields for barley. 30 or 40 acres will produce as much as 200 in the east. I am told that as much as 7 crops a year of alfalfa grass is raised.

Charley came here last evening and brought strawberries that he picked from the vines. We have green peas and fresh vegetables the year round. Money is loaned for 18% interest. It seems so strange to me that under all these favorable circumstances you do not see that it would be to your interest to sell your farm and loan your money here and get away from the frozen east. It is because you want to be buried in Griffin Mills? I want to be buried beside Millie in this land of sunshine and flowers.

Yours affectionately,
Eveline

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

STUDENT MEMBER	\$ 10.00
ACTIVE MEMBER	\$ 20.00
FAMILY MEMBER	\$ 30.00
SUSTAINING MEMBER ...	\$ 50.00
CONTRIBUTING MEMBER	\$ 100.00
PATRON or CORPORATE PATRON	\$ 250.00
LIFE MEMBER	\$1000.00

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.

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