



SAN CARLOS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NEWSLETTER

WINTER 1979-80

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

HISTORY IN ART

Through the efforts of Thomas McNeill, our alert Chairman of the Art Committee, HSSC has acquired as a gift a valuable Alexander F. Harmer oil painting of an early scene in Old Los Angeles. It brings a vivid illustration to us of the historical days we study and discuss.

Harmer was born in New Jersey in 1856 and died in Santa Barbara in 1952. He worked actively in Los Angeles from 1885 to 1892. Besides enjoying a reputation as a fine painter in the realistic style of those days, Harmer is also mentioned in numerous art notices as an illustrator of magazines and books.

We also owe a vote of thanks to Harold Grieve for securing a fine restorer who brought the painting back to its original charm.

--Dorothy Gleason

HSSC PUBLICATIONS

Newer members may not be aware of the many fine publications available from HSSC. They include back issues of **Southern California Quarterly**, the Society's historical journal; a topical index and a bibliography of annuals and quarterlies published from 1884-1957; photographic studies of Los Angeles history; monographs on such topics as California ranches and the Fort Mojave Indians; and **A Guide to Historic Places in Los Angeles County**, as well as the new index described in the President's Message in this issue.

Full details on authors, publication dates, and price appear in every issue of **Southern California Quarterly**. They can be obtained by calling or writing the HSSC office; but they are also on display at the Lummis Home. Drop in, browse a bit, and add some important items to your California collection.

AN ACTIVE YEAR FOR HSSC

The HSSC has sent out the old year and ushered in 1980 with a series of exciting activities. The traditional Christmas Reception at El Alisal, the Lummis Home headquarters for HSSC, was held on December 8 and provided an interesting afternoon for the many in attendance.

The January meeting featured two important award-winning films. The meeting was held at the California State University, Northridge Faculty Club and dinner was served to members attending. Margaret Bach and James Stevens of the Los Angeles Conservancy then presented "Landscape with Angels" and "L.A. Architecture, the Best Kept Secret in the West." These films emphasized restoration and preservation of the city's architectural and cultural heritage. One of the high points of the "Landscape with Angels" film was the very early film footage of Los Angeles street scenes, illustrating the degree of research that went into the film. Ms. Bach discussed the idea of the "built environment" of Southern California and the importance of preserving important buildings.

February offers a tour of San Sylmar, a private museum devoted to the display of mechanical musical instruments, fully restored classic and antique automobiles, and other fascinating items, on February 20. The March meeting will feature a tour of the Gamble House.

Program Chairman Marcia Erickson and HSSC President Mary Helen Wayne have outlined some very interesting meetings that merit your support. If only to emphasize how far the Society can depart from the traditional "meeting in an auditorium," the April 1980 meeting will be a hike up Echo Mountain and Mt. Lowe!



Parking problems in Compton in March 1933 were not much helped by the Long Beach earthquake, just 47 years ago.

FROM THE PRSIDENT...

Our **Newsletter** is off to a fine start with an unusual format and a delightful style. Congratulations to editor Abe Hoffman. We appreciate his expertise and look forward to upcoming issues.

The Historical Society of Southern California takes great pride in its publications, and just off the press to join the list of past contributions to the literature of the area is the **Southern California Quarterly Cumulative Index, 1958-1976**. Scholars, researchers, and casual readers of the **Quarterly** will appreciate the necessity of this **Index**, which opens the doors of the most recent years' publications. Our thanks to Anna Marie and Everett Hager for their masterly work in editing this new volume. And continuous praise to Dr. Doyce Nunis and his assistants who edit the **Quarterly** and make this outstanding contribution to the literature of Southern California history. Send your check to Peg Cassidy--only \$18.50--and you will receive your copy.

The Lummis Home has a new look due to the efforts of the City of Los Angeles. The refinished woodwork and newly painted walls add to the charm of the landmark, and the thanks of the Society go to the City of Los Angeles for doing an excellent job in helping to preserve this fine historic site. If you missed the Christmas Reception, stop by for a look soon.

The Board of Directors, which meets every other month on the second Tuesday morning, is planning various projects centered around the upcoming Bicentennial. Announcements will be made as these projects near completion. Your suggestions for programs are always welcome.

Mary Helen Wayne
President



Lichtenberger's Carriage Manufactory was an important stop for the Telegraph Stage Line to San Francisco in the 1880's. Lichtenberger's and the Historical Society of Southern California were contemporaries. Although the Manufactory is long gone, HSSC continues to support Southern California's rich heritage through its publications and activities. Show this **Newsletter** to a friend--especially page 4 with the application form--and help the Society's membership list grow.

NEWSWORTH NOTES

The **Chatsworth Historical Society** has been in the news quite a bit lately. Its museum at the Minnie Hall Palmer Homestead Acre was recently completed, and besides the Palmer House's being listed with the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board as a historic cultural monument (it's number 133), the house and surrounding gardens have been named to the National Register of Historic Places. The Society has also received a \$2,000 grant for a series of lectures and seminars on San Fernando Valley history.

Congratulations are also due to **California State University, Northridge**, for receipt of a \$100,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for creation of an archive for the collection of records of voluntary associations of Los Angeles County. Under the guidance of Dr. Leonard Pitt, the archive has solicited records from the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the Industrial Association of the San Fernando Valley, the Jewish Federation Council of Los Angeles, and materials from the Chicano Press Association.

DON'T BE MODEST

HSSC members are a very curious group. Individually, we'd like to know what other members are doing; collectively, however, everybody must think what he or she is doing doesn't deserve mentioning in **Newsworthy Notes**. Nonsense! Have you reviewed a book somewhere? Have you written a book? A magazine article? Served on some committee, gone to a convention, had your picture taken for a newspaper, located some interesting old letters? It need not be something done for HSSC. We're also interested generally in historical activities throughout Southern California and within each of the region's many communities.

Let's put it this way. If the Editor of this Newsletter has to resort to nepotism to fill space, he will! Like this: On January 17 KNXT-TV Channel 2 News dedicated a model TV Newsroom at the Children's Museum. The exhibit features working equipment that children can handle, touch, and work with. As it happens, the Valley Alternative School kindergarten class chose this day to take a field trip to the Museum. **Joshua Hoffman**, age five, gave a make-believe weather report before the assembled Channel 2 reporters (including Ralph Story who met Joshua's father at the Autumn Gala), city officials, and Museum staff. That evening Channel 2 News prominently featured Joshua in its account of the exhibit, as did the Los Angeles **Times** the next day and the **Valley News** on Saturday.

Now, this nepotistic news may have some validity, since after all, the Children's Museum is an important new attraction in Southern California. However, please--don't send in the latest adventures of your children or grandchildren! Your own highlights will do fine. Don't be modest!

SOCIETY ENJOYS LANDMARK PROGRAM

A large crowd turned out for the November meeting at the Municipal Gallery in Barnsdale Park for Bill Escherich's slide presentation of early Los Angeles and its suburbs from 1850-1900. Old-timers in the audience recognized many of the landmarks, most of which are now gone. While Kodachrome had not been invented in those early days, these slides were in full color, having been hand-tinted by Bill's parents and a previous owner of this unique collection.



AUTUMN GALA A GALA AFFAIR

Rainy weather retreated as HSSC members and their guests gathered for the first meeting of the fall season. Over 350 people were present at the Bradbury Building on October 20 to admire the famous interior court, the ironwork and wood panelling, and the general atmosphere of a journey back to an earlier and elegant era. Those in attendance also enjoyed sampling cheeses from different countries, several varieties of wine, vegetables and dip, and other good things to eat. There was also convivial conversation as old friends spotted each other and new friendships were formed. On the fifth floor a display of Nancy Grenier's water colors attracted attention.

Apart from the attraction of the location and the wine and cheese, the Gala also sparked interest in HSSC activities. Membership Committee Chairman Donald Hata was kept busy answering questions about the Society, copies of **A Guide to Historic Places in Los Angeles County** found eager buyers, and the **Newsletter** and other brochures also attracted interest. The success of the Gala suggests a high degree of interest among HSSC members which will hopefully be met if not exceeded by the future programs which are planned for upcoming meetings.

NEW MEMBERS

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

Sustaining:

Earl T. Casler, Jr.
Mrs. Earl T. Casler, Jr.
Joan Miller

Active

Edward F. Alejandro
Mrs. Millicent Augustine (from Student to Active)
M. Catherine Beamer
E. Kenneth Bennett
Charles A. Bigbee
Tom Bilicke
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Bradley
Cultural Heritage Foundation
Golenda Woods Davis
John C. Denning
Joanna Dunklee
Mrs. John E. Farnan
Marlene J. Gordon
Mrs. Frances G. Guinn
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hedley
Holly Hendrix
Mrs. Frank T. Howard
David and Karin S. James
Donald King
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph E. Lescoulie
Florence Patricia Line
Barbara Mayfield
Dove Menkes
Romilda Moree
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mulqueen
Royce Neuschatz
Mrs. Cheryl B. Partridge
John G. Ripley
Budd F. Rude
Colin Sandell
David Schleidt
Sister Catherine Louise, C.S.J.
Erwin Speakman
George B. Stoneman, M.D.
Carolyn Strickler
Mel and Jill Swift
Mr. and Mrs. Clinton M. Tompkins
Tish Tompkins

Student

Allen Purcell
Sally A. White

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

Among Los Angeles' more dubious achievements in the 1970's was leadership in, among other activities, the spread of controversial massage parlors which sprang up like mushrooms to arouse the ire of nearby residents, the prurience of potential patrons and the attention of the police.

But, wouldn't you know it? There's nothing new about any of this. Here is a verbatim account of Los Angeles massage parlors in, believe it or not, the year **1912!** It comes from the Los Angeles **Municipal News**:

MAY REVOKE PERMITS OF MASSAGE PARLORS

"Through information furnished by Mrs. Beatrice Davis to the police commission, a round-up of massage and bath parlors is expected and persons holding permits will probably have to appear and show cause why their permits should not be revoked. Mrs. Davis, who holds a permit to practice massage,

was accused by the police officers of immoral conduct.

"When she appeared before the police commission in answer to the charge she admitted she had treated both sexes, a violation of a police commission rule, but declared that nearly all other persons holding similar permits were doing the same thing and some of them were using their massage permits as a cloak for immoral practices. She gave the names and address of several who she declared she had personal knowledge were doing so, and offered to give the chief of police more information. Her information so shocked the commission that no action was taken on her case and none will be taken until the other cases she reported have been investigated."

--**Municipal News**, October 23, 1912,
p.7

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 COR- PORATE 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.

Historical Society of Southern California
200 East Avenue 43
Los Angeles, Calif. 90031

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