



SAN CARLOS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NEWSLETTER

WINTER/SPRING 1981-82

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

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY

Members of the Society turned out in gratifying numbers on Tuesday, November twenty-fourth, to help the Los Angeles Times celebrate its one-hundredth birthday. The tone of the evening was set with a reception in the Times opulent lobby, over cocktails generously poured by our hosts. Members were joined in informal conversation by Times Editor-in-Chief Otis Chandler, Publisher Tom Johnson, and members of the Society's and the Times' staffs. We were impressed by the lobby exhibit of photographs and artifacts from the Times archives and a good, short film. Most of us then took advantage of the opportunity to tour the plant at work. A fine dinner in the paper's spacious dining room followed. The souvenir menu lists, among other attractions, Miniature Western Salad, Veal Cutlet "Acapulco," and California wines.

After dinner we were welcomed by Master of Ceremonies Judson Grenier and President Douglas Richardson. Otis Chandler spoke of the history of the Times under General Otis and the Chandlers, Harry and Norman, and touched lightly on the accomplishments of his own era. He then introduced the paper's present publisher, young dynamic Tom Johnson (who

had been commenting with grace and humor a few minutes before, to some of us at the cocktail reception, on a recent mordant Los Angeles Magazine treatment of the Times and its current leadership.) Mr. Johnson remarked on the dramatic growth of the Times in editorial and journalistic stature in the last fifteen years. Older members of the Historical Society heartily seconded his argument. Mr. Johnson then took on a role familiar to many Society members as he narrated a superbly put together slide lecture on the history of the Times. The evening was thoughtfully planned and beautifully executed. A good time, it is safe to say, was had by all. *oto*

It isn't often that we can spend Christmas in a Greek revival home, but, in December, Society members did just that. The Phineas Banning home in Wilmington was decorated for the holiday season, and green and red trimmings were hung in every room. Docents explained the history of the home; described the furnishings, some of which were Banning family heirlooms; and allowed us to wander through the house.

We admired the beautifully set dining table, the elegantly furnished parlor, and were able to visualize a busy family going about its daily tasks in the comfortable house.

A slide show and photographic display gave information about the history of the Banning family and the city of Wilmington which Phineas founded.

Robert Banning, President of the California Historical Society and a direct descendant of Phineas, greeted us on the outdoor patio. Hot cider tasted especially good in the cool night air, and the variety of finger foods was a delicious treat. The evening was a pleasant beginning to the holiday season. *toothy mendi*

In January members of the Society trekked up the hill to the Southwest Museum and spent an evening with our neighbors. We listened as the new director, Patrick Houlihan, told us his plans and ideas for the museum. Among these are cooperative efforts with the Society, increased community involvement, appointment of a Curator of Art and renewed efforts to make the collections of the Museum more available to scholars and researchers.

(continued on page 3)



Dick Cunningham, President of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society, discusses SFVHS plans and accomplishments.

FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

As HSSC's year 1981-82 closes this June 30, and my term of office as President also draws to a close, I would like to thank all of the directors, officers and staff members who have devoted their time to our Society and contributed so much these past two years. I wish to pay particular tribute to Bill Escherich, a long-time member of the Society, former President, and currently chairman of our Centennial Committee, which is busily making plans for next year—the Centennial Year of HSSC. Year after year Bill has contributed his wisdom and hard work to our Society, in addition to his many other civic efforts and offices. No person in recent years has been more dedicated to this Society than Bill.

To Jackie Wilson, our hard-working and ever-cheerful Executive Director, we all owe a special debt of gratitude. Her boundless enthusiasm and flow of new ideas are the chief reason for my confidence that our Centennial Year will not only be a celebration of the past but also a springboard to the future, during which our Society will become a greater factor in the cultural awareness of Southern California.

To all the board members, to Jud Grenier, who as program chairman provided us with one of the finest series of programs we have ever had in a single year, to Peg Cassidy, Executive Secretary since before most of us can remember, and to the many other members and friends of our Society who volunteered their time and talents, I give my thanks for making the past year a success and my term of office a pleasure. I salute you all.

I appreciate having had the opportunity to serve as president of this Society and to enjoy the friendships with my colleagues in its service. As my term ends I cannot help but feel that this Society has done far more for me than I have done for it.

Douglas F. Richardson
President

TWO ANNIVERSARIES

The NEWSLETTER of the Historical Society of Southern California, Volume I, Numbers 1-2, is dated Spring-Summer, 1962, just twenty years ago. On pages three and four appeared this announcement: "By action of the Society's Board of Directors, based on the recommendation of the Board of Editors, henceforth, the Society's activities will no longer be reported in the Society's *Quarterly*. Instead, Society events, news, and member information will be sent to the Society's membership in the newly created form of a *Newsletter*, of which this is the first issue."

The announcement continued: "The Board of Directors have also endorsed several major changes for the Society's *Quarterly*. First among these was to elect a new editor to succeed former Society President, Gustave O. Arlt. The new editor, Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., is introduced to the membership in a biographical sketch in the *Quarterly*." The *Quarterly*'s new editor was also editor of the *Newsletter*.

Members were urged "to read the new editor's essay, "A New Dress and Under a New Plan," in the March issue" of the *Quarterly*. It makes good reading today. We congratulate Doyce and the *Newsletter* on twenty years of uninterrupted, innovative, scholarly service (on the part of the former) and persistence in the face of adversity (on the part of both).

SPECIAL GIVERS

On November 25, President Doug Richardson sent a letter to the HSSC membership calling for support of the Society beyond regular membership dues. Member response was quite enthusiastic and most appreciated. Below is a list of Special Givers in the order of receipt of their generosity.

Etha M. Abbot
Henry F. Lippitt, 2nd
Elinor R. Ives, MD
Mrs. Stephanie Opid Holton
Jacob Zeitlin
Hope Tryce
Francis Ballard
Doris E. Harris
Hugh C. Tolford
Mary Helen Wayne
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Dolley
Robert L. Starkey
Henry H. Clifford
James H. Kindel, Jr.
O. E. Laird
Lucile Phillips Morrison
Martin Smilo
Burnett C. Turner
Chevron, USA
Harold W. Grieve
R. Stanton Avery
Walter Wheeler
Edith W. Haught
Joseph M. O'Malley

Barbara E. Paul
Edna Criag
Dudley Gordon
Frank Q. Newton, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. George D. Jagels
Richard H. Deatinge
Watson Land Company
Elizabeth H. Luckenbill
George D. LaMoree
Louise & Joe O'Falherty
Dr. Robert E. Stewart, Jr.
Florence M. Hay
Mr. & Mrs. Frank W. Klatt
Dr. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Morgan Sinclair
Richard H. Brill
William W. Escherich
Marcia Erickson
Peggy Ross
Robert G. Colvin
Dr. Judson A. Grenier
Mrs. H. James Farr
Marian Parks



DUDLEY GORDON

We are saddened to report the passing of Dudley Gordon, long-time HSSC member and active supporter of the Society. He died on April 14, age 84. Our next Newsletter will feature a profile of his career. Dudley will be missed by all of us.

THE GARDEN GROWETH

Betty Southan reports:

The Garden at El Alisal has been trimmed, cleaned, and generally put into shape for spring and summer. Two hundred plants have been set since fall, all natives. One goal for the garden is, in Betty's words, "A grand showing of colorful herbaceous perennials." Our two Fremontodendrons (Flannel bush) were in bloom in March, as were the blue Ceanothus (Wild Lilac). In May the poppies will be out, as well as the Blue-eyed grass and the sages. The Redbud will have passed its blossoming season. But the redbud is a shrub for all seasons; its foliage will be rich through the summer, it will set handsome russet seeds in the fall, its branch pattern will brighten the winter, and it will be back in full, gorgeous bloom in the spring.

The Society is indebted to the crews from the City Department of Parks and Recreation for massive cleanup and general help, and to Jim Seaman for his almost daily toil in the garden. As always, volunteer gardeners are needed and welcomed with open arms. If you feel the need to get your hands into some fine California dirt, call the Society Office (222-0546). You will be warmly received.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIETY (continued)

We were able to tour the Museum at our leisure, were impressed with the new library building, browsed in the book shop, and consumed delicious refreshments.

The Southwest Museum shares a common heritage with the Society, and we were pleased to spend an evening with our fellow history buffs.

On a perfect California day, February twentieth, the impeccably restored San Fernando Mission in its rich, manicured gardens offered an ideal setting for the Society's monthly meeting.

Monsignor Francis J. Weber received us in the Mission patio with characteristic cordial dignity, and the large group in attendance split up for a pleasant tour of the Mission buildings and grounds. A highlight of the afternoon was the opportunity to visit the newly housed Archdiocesan Archival Center, guided by the Secretary of the Old Mission, our own Robert Johnson. For most of us this was a first view of the Library, and for all of us a welcome chance to visit its Archivist Monsignor Weber. At three o'clock we gathered in the Chapel to enjoy a slide presentation of "The Founding Father of the West," introduced by Father Weber and narrated on film by Bing Crosby. A leisurely walk—for some of us—took us to the Andres Pico Adobe, where what used to be called a collation was laid on for us by the San Fernando Valley Historical Society and served by Elva Meline, Curator, and ladies of the Society. (Katie Ainsworth later gave a spirited account of the making of pan dulce, guacamole, Mexican chocolate, and other goodies for the spread). Dick Cunningham, president of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society, called

the Societies together in no uncertain terms in the Adobe patio. He gave a spirited account of S.F.V.H.S. plans and accomplishments, especially the Society's projected John Peabody Harrington Memorial Village of the Indians of Southern California at Pasegna (or Pasekna). If the spelling or anything else about the project or the Society's other activities intrigues you, Mr. Cunningham, on the evidence of his most enjoyable talk, will be glad to explain things to you in more detail. A call to 365-7810 will put you in touch with him.

A rainy and cold evening failed to deter a hardy group of history buffs who braved the elements on the evening of March 16 and trekked to the Dominguez Adobe. We were treated to an informative and enthusiastic commentary on the first United States Air Meet held on the Rancho grounds in 1910. Much memorabilia is displayed in the museum at the Adobe, and Father Patrick McPolin was a genial host.

Fortified with generous servings of Irish Coffee, we viewed a slide presentation of the Air Meet itself. Legendary aviators Glenn Curtis, Charlie Willard, and Louis Paulhan flashed across the screen in their flimsy planes, and we marveled at the extraordinary progress made during the ensuing seventy years.

In 1984 another sort of competition will be taking place on the grounds of the first California land grant when Cal State University Dominguez Hills will host the International Olympics Cycling competition in its new velodrome. This and other information about the international competition was imparted by Dr. Robert Jones of the University. The stadium has been financed by Seven-Eleven Stores and will become a community attraction under the management of the College after the Olympics. Cycling never has been as popular in the United States as it is abroad, and the college is hoping for an increase with the presence of the Velodrome. After all, Los Angeles' first freeway plan was a proposed bicycle track between Pasadena and the Plaza area.

Big Santa Anita once was one of the loveliest and busiest of canyons in the nearby San Gabriel Mountains. Time and a series of check dams have made changes, but the charm of the canyon still attracts many hikers today. It certainly charmed our group of twenty-nine as we set out from Chantry Flat on March thirteenth, a cold, overcast Saturday morning.

Led by Bob Colvin we wended our way down to the canyon bottom, becoming warmer as we descended, surveyed the site of Roberts' Camp, once a busy trail resort, and continued our way up canyon. The trail was well marked, the stream rushed and jumped on its way downstream, and the rustic cabins scattered along the trail added to the general ambience. At the site of Fern Lodge, another once-thriving resort, situated on an oak covered flat, we left the canyon and began a climb up and around the ridge.

After another hour we reached our destination, Sturtevant Camp, established in 1893 as a resort, now operated as a Methodist Church Camp. The tall spruces, shady oaks, and sylvan setting were as

welcome now as they must have been to the hikers of ninety years ago. Upon arrival, some of us just sat on a rock; others enjoyed the fire built in the fireplace of the second oldest ranger cabin in the United States; and other set out to explore as much of the camp as possible. A satisfying lunch, more resting, and at two o'clock we reluctantly headed back to civilization.

The trail on the return trip was high above the stream, and we had glimpses of small cascades and rocky gorges. Stands of pine, spruce, and oak made the trip restful and short. On the way we stopped to visit one of the canyon residents who showed us around his home. About eighty cabins are located in the canyon now, down from a high of 300 during the canyon heyday. Two cabins are occupied full-time, and the remainder are used as weekend and vacation retreats. All supplies and equipment must be carried in by pack train or people power. In fact, Chantry Flat operates the only burro pack train in the local mountains.

We reached our cars at Chantry Flat, refreshed in spirit and happy that there is still a Big Santa Anita.

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NEW MEMBERS

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

LIFE

Mrs. Ulric Bannister Bray
George A. Dunning
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph W. Wolfskill

BUSINESS PATRONS

Capitol Milling Company
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Antonio Rios Bustamante
Margaret L. Caton
Santiago Mendez, Jr.

GETTING IT TOGETHER

Since the first of the year, a group of volunteers has been busy sorting through some of the Society's archival material. The guest houses at the Lummis home have been turned into workrooms, and desks, shelves, file cabinets have been installed. Marion Parks, who drives up from Corona del Mar, has been going through the files of the Society, putting the right document in the right place in the right year. She has uncovered some interesting correspondence, and eventually we should have a comprehensive record, correctly organized, of our nearly one hundred years.

Eleanor Ives has organized the postcard collection, arranging all those 3½ by 5½ cards into categories. The Society has an extensive collection of the cards which, in some cases, give us a glimpse of history not

found elsewhere. Now she is surveying the contents of five large boxes of photographs donated by the Herald Examiner. She hopes to separate the really historical photos from those of the more public relations type.

In another section of the guesthouses, Don Balch and Betty Marsh have been looking at the large collection of historical photographs which the Society has gathered over the years. Many of these pictures are of the early years of Los Angeles and Southern California, and others show the city in later, more modern times. People and scenes document the history of the city. Most of the pictures have been placed into categories and been filed in acid free storage boxes. In addition to the photos, there are many negatives, including some glass plates. Some of the latter seem to be unique views of Los Angeles and

its citizens. We also have discovered a collection of lantern slides, but have not reviewed it thoroughly.

Organizing an archival collection is a long range project, but the volunteers have made extraordinary progress in a few months. We hope to have a well organized, well documented collection, eventually, which will be of use to Society members and the general public. Meantime, we wanted you to know

that things are happening at the Lummis House, both inside and out.

Many of the photos were given to the Society by CHARLES PUCK, a long-time member who died in 1966. We would appreciate any information about Mr. Puck who seemed to have given much time and thought to the Society. Call Jackie Wilson if you can help fill in the gaps.

*Joan 7
Betty*

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS	
STUDENT MEMBER	\$ 10.00
ACTIVE MEMBER	\$ 25.00
FAMILY MEMBER	\$ 35.00
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.