

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN

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Amy Essington
Email: executivedirector@thehssc.org


HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA

MESSAGE FROM THE HSSC PRESIDENT



The HSSC is planning something new for 2017: to have our annual conference in January rather than April or May, when there seem to be many more events that compete with people's time. The conference will be on "World War II and the Home Front in Southern California," and will take place on Saturday, January 21, 2017, at the University of La Verne. Pre-registration information will be available in November. We hope to see you there!

It is with sadness but much appreciation that we say "farewell" to two board members, Paul Spitzzeri and Ann Walnum. Paul has been loyally serving the Society as a board member since 2008 and joined the Executive Board for two years as 2nd Vice President. Paul was a key player in our transition from El Alisal, agreeing to place in temporary storage our archival collection at the Homestead Museum, where he works, which has been a great service to the Society. He helped reformulate our mission statement, chaired the long-range planning committee, and offered his keen insight about how nonprofits operate in the historical field. As of July 1 he has risen from Assistant Director to Director of Historical Resources, which runs the Homestead Museum in the City of In-

dustry. We wish him much success in his new (and busy) role. He remains on the Donald Pflueger Local History Award committee, so he'll continue to take part in that capacity.

Ann Walnum is a true community organizer and activist and brought her multifold talents and skills to the Society. Ann served on several committees: membership (which she chaired), by-laws, awards, and records policy. As a result, she made her mark in several important areas of the Society's structure and activities, and we deeply appreciate all of the work and effort she put into her work. Some of you may have received a phone call from Ann, since she also took part in member outreach. Ann is focusing increasingly on community projects in northeast Los Angeles, and we wish her well in that endeavor.

One of the key tasks the Society has before it is to collaborate with other historical societies in the region. Among these are the Orange County Historical Society, Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society, Riverside Historical Society, San Fernando Valley Historical Society, Los Angeles Historical Society, Chinese Historical Society of

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GETTING FIRED UP BY MORE HSSC TREASURES!

Another notable discovery made after the HSSC left the Lummis Home, its headquarters of a half-century, in early 2015 had to do with a pair of old cannons that, for years, lay on the floor of the *sala* (living room) of the home.

Information about the cannons were found in a box of unrelated material when sorting through the society's records and artifacts at a Pasadena public storage facility last fall. A little additional research yielded an interesting story that has a "coming full circle" element.

The first item found in storage is a 1939 note to the Society's secretary, Ana Begue de Packman from a Pasadena nurseryman with an appropriate surname for old cannon as well as for the nursery business, Edward Rust. The note simply stated that Rust enclosed a "bill of sale for the two cannons" and that he would

later send "the original bill of sale." There was no mention of whether the cannons were sold or donated to the Society, though it is assumed the latter.

The other document located was the enclosed bill, dated almost exactly nine years before, on 29 October 1930, when Rust purchased the cannon from the Temple Estate Company. This was a business incorporated in 1923 to buy, sell and de-

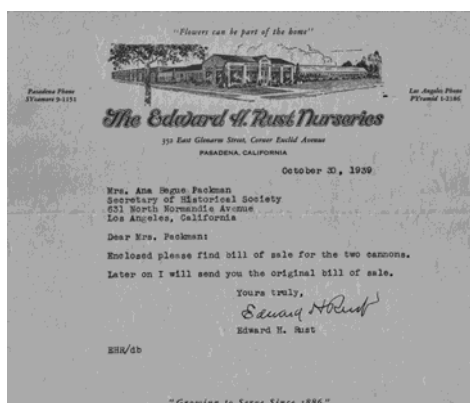
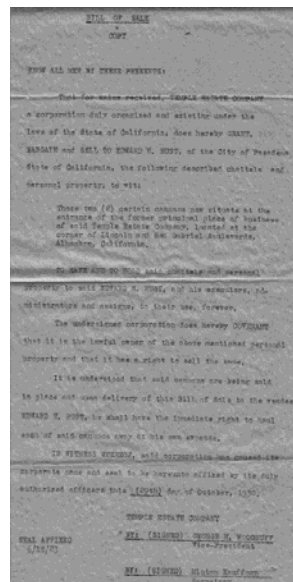


velop real estate owned by Walter P. Temple with his business manager, Milton Kauffman, and attorney, George H. Woodruff, as partners. The Temple Estate Company, using proceeds from oil wells drilled on Temple's leased property in the Montebello Hills, worked from 1923 to 1930 on oil projects throughout greater Los Angeles and out of state and also built commercial structures in downtown Los Angeles, San Gabriel, El Monte, and Alhambra.

Financial problems, however, beset the company early on as it invested heavily in its work precisely as the revenue from the Montebello fields declined and the firm never found other sources of income to cover the difference. After issuing bonds to raise money to continue its work, the Temple Estate Company was never able to bring in enough to pay its debts. So, in late 1930, as the Great De-

pression worsened, one of the many of Temple's assets to be liquidated were the cannons. One of the details noted in the 1930 deed was a statement that the cannons were "now situate at the entrance to the principal place of business of said Temple Estate Company, located at the corner of Lincoln and San Gabriel boulevards, Alhambra, California." The firm, which started in San Gabriel in the Temple Block across from the historic mission and then moved to the Edison Building, a commercial structure the company built in downtown Alhambra, moved to the Temple oil lease property, which was actually in the furthest northeastern corner of Montebello, when times were tough. The document also indicated that Rust "shall have the immediate right to haul each of said cannons away at his own expense." Presumably, this meant to his well-

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MORE HSSC TREASURES CONTINUED

(Continued from page 2)

known nursery at Glenarm Street and Euclid Avenue, which is still a nursery today, with Armstrong Garden Centers occupying the property at the southwestern corner of the intersection.

Where the cannons were housed for the quarter century that followed is not known, though it was perhaps at the Southwest Museum or its Casa de Adobe site, and it is assumed that they were transferred to the Lummis Home when the Society moved into the building in 1965. When the Society left Lummis, the two cannons were transferred, on a temporary basis, to the Homestead Museum and stored in the second floor storage area of the 1920s home, La Casa Nueva, that was built by . . . you guessed it, Walter P. Temple.

As for where Temple got hold of the cannons, that was solved by the finding of a *Los Angeles Times* article, dated 4 December 1939, and headlined “Puzzle of Ancient Cannons Cleared Up for Historians.” A photograph showed HSSC secretary Begue de Packman posing with the two cannons, while another depicted a man with the great name of Numa Alonzo Strain. What was the story?

Well, it turned out that Strain was a county road supervisor for the San Gabriel district and, in 1912, was overseeing the building of a bridge on Broadway over Eaton Wash, just west of where Rosemead Boulevard is today. Strain told the *Times* that there were three cannon lying side-by-side in the wash, which is now a cemented flood control channel, and facing towards Los Angeles. It was speculated in the article that the small-bore cannons were from the Mexican-American War era and buried by *Californios* after American military forces conquered Los Angeles in early 1847. Strain went on to note that, while the county’s Board of Supervisors tried to claim ownership, he was able to get them awarded to the road crew workers who found the cannons.

Walter Temple, who had a lifelong habit of collecting historical material, then paid \$75 for the trio. One of the cannons was donated to the Mission San Gabriel and it is still in the courtyard adjacent to the old church. The other two he kept with him at a property he had purchased the same year from the estate of Elias J. “Lucky” Baldwin on and at the base of the corner of the Montebello Hills. Baldwin had obtained the land by foreclosure on Temple’s father, F.P.F., when the elder Temple’s Los Angeles bank failed in 1876.

In April 1914, Walter Temple’s son, Thomas, who was nine years old, was playing on the hillside of this ranch just after a rainstorm when he discovered a pool of water bearing indications of oil. A lease executed with Standard Oil Company of California (now Chevron) led, along with the Baldwin portion of the hills, to the opening of the famous Montebello oil field. The income Temple received from the lease, as mentioned above, led to the creation of the Temple Estate Company. Later, Thomas Temple became an active member of the HSSC and wrote articles for the *Southern California Quarterly*. He was also the historian for the City of San Gabriel and the mission and a professional genealogist who was the first to transcribe the original sacramental records from the missions and Los Angeles Plaza Church.

The *Times* article concluded by stating that the HSSC was “hot on the trail, sniffing vigorously for gunpowder” in the search for who buried the cannons, but that, almost certainly, was never discovered. What the piece did state was that, “will be housed in a permanent place as soon as the Historical Society acquires a home of its own.” That, of course, would not be until the mid-sixties when the Lummis Home was leased.

The Society does not have currently have a permanent home after vacating the Lummis, but it seems more than appropriate that the two historic cannons are temporarily housed at Walter Temple’s home where they can be seen and appreciated by visitors on special exhibits with the permission of the HSSC.

-By Paul Spitzer, Director, Homestead Museum



HSSC EVENTS: THE JENKINS BROTHERS: AN EYE TO THE SUBSTANTIAL

The HSSC is offering a program on the Jenkins Brothers of Southern California in three locations across Southern California over three months with three co-sponsors.

Program Description: For 80 years, from the 1850s to the 1930s, Charles and William Jenkins were notable figures in greater Los Angeles. A panel of speakers spoke about these remarkable and controversial brothers in the Greater Los Angeles area.

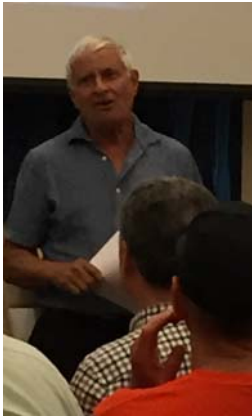
Speakers for the programs include:

- Paul R. Spitzzeri, Homestead Museum Director, transcriber of Charles's Civil War Diary and researcher on early Los Angeles criminal justice, including a well-known incident involving William Jenkins;
- Louis DiDonato, retired educator and author of a Charles Jenkins biography;
- Wayne Sherman, Drum Barracks Board of Directors vice-president and collector and researcher on Charles Jenkins;
- Alan Pollack, Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society president and author of an article on William Jenkins and the Castaic Range War.

Special thank you to Paul Spitzzeri for organizing these events.



Paul Spitzzeri



Louis DiDonato



Wayne Sherman



Alan Pollack

OLD TOWN NEWHALL LIBRARY AUGUST 27, 2016

The HSSC co-sponsored a lecture with the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society on Saturday, August 27, at the Old Town Newhall Library.

This program included material about the Jenkins brothers in Santa Clarita Valley.

DRUM BARRACKS CIVIL WAR MUSEUM SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

Co-sponsored by the Drum Barracks Civil War Museum, this event included self-guided and guided tours were available immediately following the program.

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 9, 2016

Co-sponsored by Chapman University, Leatherby Libraries.

The panel will be from 5:00 pm– 7:00 pm at the Center for American War Letter Reading Room, Lower Level, Leatherby Libraries, Chapman University. The panel will include Paul Spitzzeri, Louis DiDonato, and Wayne Sherman.

Program information will be posted on the library website:
<http://www1.chapman.edu/library/aboutus/events.html>

CHARLES JENKINS IN THE *SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY*

Louis DiDonato's article "Charles Myers Jenkins: A Sketch of the Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man," appeared in vol. 88, no. 2.

Paul Spitzzeri has authored three articles about the newly discovered diary. The first article, in vol. 98, no. 2 discusses the discovery of the document. The second article, in vol. 98, no. 3, and third article, in the forthcoming vol. 98, no. 4, include a transcription of the diary.

HSSC TOUR: TOUR OF DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES NOIR SITES OCTOBER 8, 2016

You are invited to a tour of noir sites in Downtown Los Angeles.

Schedule:

10:00-12:30 pm tour led by Greg Fischer
 12:30-1:30 pm No-host lunch at Phillippe's (optional)

El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles del Río de Porciúncula is the second oldest city in California. Come learn about Los Angeles and its story, with a focus on noir sites.

Tour cost: \$20 members, \$30 non-members. Email hssc@thehssc.org for discount code. (Current membership will be verified). Each member may use the code for him or herself and one guest.

Full tour information available at thehssc.org.



Photos of Charles Jenkins made available by Wayne E. Sherman



Image of page of the Charles M. Jenkins Diary from the HSSC Collection



HSSC MEMBERS ENJOY SPECIAL TOUR OF ST. FRANCIS DAM AND HART MUSEUM



Mark Vincent leads groups into St. Francis Dam Disaster area.

On June 4, 2016, some twenty-five attendees met at historic Power House No. 2 in San Francisquito Canyon for a special tour of the St. Francis dam disaster area led by geologist Mark Vincent. The dam's failure and collapse near midnight on March 28, 1928, sent a 12 billion gallon wall of water through the narrow canyon, killing approximately 450 people. It remains the greatest man-made disaster in California's history.

Mark prepared a marvelous presentation with maps and blow-ups of historic photographs which brought the tragic story to life. Mark's immense knowledge of the history of the area and of the civil engineering and scientific practices of the day, together with his broad knowledge of geology and natural history made for an engaging and spontaneous event, with members enjoying Mark's and each other's conversation. That conversation continued after the presentation, when tour participants met for a lively communal luncheon at the Newhall Refinery restaurant in Newhall.

After lunch, members regrouped at the William S. Hart Ranch and Museum in Newhall. Once the home of Shakespearean actor turned silent film star and early "film cowboy" William S. Hart (1864-1946), the Hart Ranch is one of Southern California's hidden historical treasures. The Hart's superb docents led members on a journey into Hart's fascinating life, which encompassed a youth spent in "the West" mingling with cowboys, ranchers, prospectors and Native Americans, as well as the dawn of Southern California's film industry. Members

also explored Hart's spacious Spanish Colonial Revival hilltop mansion, which boasts a panoramic view of the Santa Clarita Valley. Among the Hart architectural and other features are an imposing spiral "floating" staircase, a projection room for the private screening of Hart's films, a grand living room and a special bedroom for Hart's beloved dogs. The Hart's knowledgeable and engaging docents pointed out fine examples of Western-themed art from Hart's substantial collection, including works by Remington, Charles Russell and Joe de Yong.

HSSC's Board and Staff wish to thank Mark Vincent, the staff of the William S. Hart Ranch and Museum, and all of the attendees who participated in the event. We invite our members to keep an eye out for future events and reserve early as this tour sold out quickly.

-Andrew Krastins, HSSC Board Member



View from rooftop of William S. Hart Ranch House

GEORGE A.V. DUNNING LECTURE

The 18th Annual George A. V. Dunning Lecture will feature Professor Vicki Ruiz speaking on “Why Latino Studies Matters” on Saturday, November 5, 2016, from 2:00 pm-4:00 pm at 1030 Humanities Gateway Center, University of California, Irvine.

The event is free, but seating is limited. Reservations can be made here: <http://hsscdunning.eventbrite.com>

The full list of previous Dunning lecturers is available at: <http://thehssc.org/events/george-a-v-dunning-lecture/>



HSSC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DATE CHANGE

The process of membership renewal for the HSSC will be undergoing a change in November. All members will switch from a twelve-month membership to a yearly membership from November to November. With all members renewing at the same time, it will be easier to remember the membership renewal date. Hopefully, it will require less mailing of membership renewal reminders and eliminate any missed SCQ issues for those whose renewal falls during the SCQ mailing period. Current members have received a membership renewal letter with a pro-rated renewal rate for 2016. Everyone will be asked to renew at the full price in October for the November 2016 to November 2017 membership year.

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

Southern California, Pasadena Museum of History, the Old Mill in San Marino, Long Beach Historical Society, Los Angeles Westerners, Huntington Westerners, Las Angelitas del Pueblo, and the Conference of California Historical Societies. If you belong to another historical society that you would like to see collaborate with HSSC, please let us know. We’re hoping on having participation by local historical societies in our upcoming conference in 2017, for example, and we have held several events recently that joined with the efforts of various historical societies. The more we are linked together, the stronger we will all be and the more we can reach out to the public with an interest in history.

We’re delighted to say that the tour of the St. Francis Dam on June 4th was a huge success, selling out quickly and offering attendees a fascinating insight into the dam and its failure. A tour of the William S. Hart Museum followed, after lunch. Fellowship, conversation, and enthusiasm abounded. Board member Andrew Krastins was an immense help throughout the tour, and thanks go to all others who took part. A complete description by Mr. Krastins of the event is on page 6 of this newsletter.

One of the main tasks we hope to accomplish in the year ahead is to finally create an inventory of the Society’s impressive collection of manuscripts, artifacts, paintings, photographs, and many other items and to assess them. This is a long-term project that should ultimately inform us about who we are as a Society. We will keep you updated as the inventory progresses.

Historical Society of
Southern California
PO Box 93487
Pasadena, CA 91109

Telephone
323-222-0546

Website:
thehssc.org

Email:
hssc@thehssc.org


**HISTORICAL
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Upcoming HSSC Events

Tour of Downtown Los Angeles Noir Sites
Saturday, October 8, 2016

Archives Bazaar

Saturday, October 15, 2016
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Doheny Memorial Library
USC University Park Campus

18th Annual George A.V. Dunning Lecture

Saturday, November 5, 2016
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Professor Vicki Ruiz
“Why Latino Studies Matters”
University of California, Irvine

Annual HSSC Conference

“World War II and the Homefront in Southern California”
January 21, 2017
University of La Verne
The 2016 HSSC Awards will be presented at the conference.
Pre-registration information will be available November 2016.

Check thehssc.org for event details.



Professor Vicki Ruiz

HSSC Awards

The HSSC gives eight awards in three categories. The HSSC Board-approved guidelines for each of the awards are posted on our website. The 2016 awards had an application/nomination process, depending on the award. The deadline for the 2016 awards was in August. The deadline for the O’Flaherty Teaching is in October. The awards will be presented at the HSSC conference in January 2017. Check thehssc.org for more information.

Books

- The Norman Neuerburg Award honors the best book on California history before 1848.
- The Martin Ridge Award honors the best book on California history since 1848.
- The Donald H. Pflueger Local History Award honors an outstanding scholarly book or project (print or electronic) on Southern California local history.

Articles

- The Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. Award honors the best demonstration of significant scholarship in the *Southern California Quarterly* by a rising historian.
- The Carl I. Wheat and Frank Wheat Award honors the best demonstration of significant scholarship in the *Southern California Quarterly* by an established historian.

Service

- The Denise and Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award honors an individual who has enriched the community of Los Angeles by their dedicated service and accomplishments.
- The Joseph O’Flaherty Teaching Award honors creative excellence in the teaching of history in grades K-12 in the schools of Southern California.
- The Fellows Award honors exceptional lifetime achievements that have brought distinction to history.