



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Volume 39, No. 3
Summer 2018

An Unexpected Culver History Lesson, Part 1

By Hope Parrish

While I was teaching in Nebraska in early May, it was my goal to take some time to search out more information about our beloved Harry H. Culver. I was in the neighborhood! A day trip to Milford, where Harry was born, included visits to historic buildings and markers. But the information kept directing me to Jacob H. Culver, Harry's father. I was surprised to discover how much the two men had in common!

The first commonality lies in their shared middle name, Hazel. Hazel was the maiden name of Jacob's mother Mary Hazel. Jacob was born in Mercer, Ohio. At the age of two years old, he and his parents moved to Wisconsin.

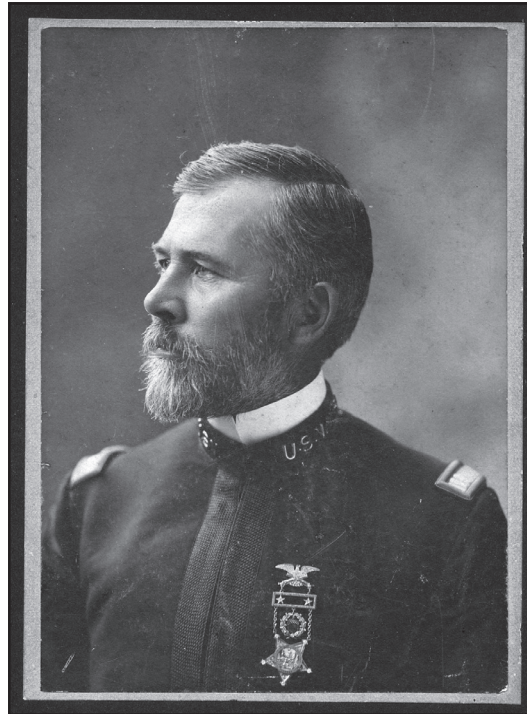
At the tender age of 16, Jacob enlisted as a drummer boy in Company K of the 1st Regiment, Wisconsin Infantry. He served in the Civil War until the end, seeing battles including Mission Ridge, Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, and the Atlanta Campaign. Upon his return, he enrolled at the

University of Wisconsin in 1866. Harry, at age 17 in 1898, enlisted in the Spanish-American War Troop K, U.S. Volunteer

Calvary under Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders, where he advanced rapidly from trumpeter (music obviously ran in the family!) to corporal and then to sergeant. Like his father, Harry went to college, enrolling at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in 1899, after the war, where he spent the next three years.

Utilizing the benefits of the Homestead Acts, Jacob moved to Milford, Nebraska in 1870 where he partnered with H.G. Parsons to start the *Blue Valley Record*, Milford's first newspaper. Harry would later follow his father to work in the newspaper business. In 1903, Harry worked in the Philippines for the *Manila Times*, and later for a publishing business in Detroit in 1906.

There is so much more that I learned between this father and son and this trip to Milford! Stay tuned for part two in our fall newsletter.



Jacob Culver (Culver Family Collection)

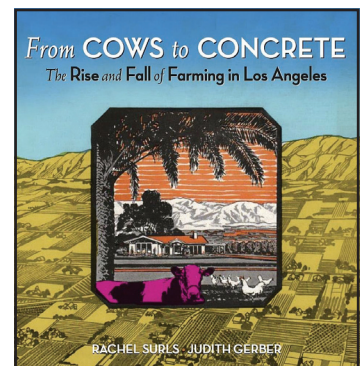
UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18, 2018 - General Meeting and Program **The History of Los Angeles Agriculture, Past and Present** Multipurpose Room, Veterans Memorial Building, 7PM

In today's concrete and asphalt-lined megalopolis, it's sometimes hard to remember that Los Angeles was once the agricultural center of North America up until the 1950s, with Culver City having played a large part.

Join us as Rachel Surls, co-author of *From Cows to Concrete: The Rise and Fall of Farming in Los Angeles*, will give an illustrated look back at our farming heritage and explore such history as the Tongva people who lived along Ballona Creek, the missionaries that brought European agricultural knowledge to the area, the rancho owners that cultivated West Los Angeles and raised cattle, and the beginnings of California's citrus and winemaking empire.

We'll also look at "fantastic farm" tourist attractions like Culver City's own Monkey Farm, the malathion spraying of the 1980s that began in Culver City, and efforts to bring back urban farming amidst the current locavore and "eat local" movement.



The public is invited to this free program. The entrance to the ARC is from the back parking lot.

YOUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Hope Parrish



Happy Summer Everyone!

I would like to begin this letter by applauding our Programs VP, Ryan Vincent, for inviting LA84's Wayne Wilson to present a wonderful program about our city's involvement with the 1932 and 1984 Olympic Games. If you missed it, you will be able to view it on our website soon, under "View Our Videos on YouTube."

Since the Installation of Officers, we have received some very generous items into the Society's collection. Many of you remember the large city photos on the walls in Roll n' Rye. We now have three of them. If you were a student at Culver High from 1962-1982, you may remember the drama teacher, Sandford Bodger. His collection of photos, programs, and posters from the Fall productions and Spring musicals are now part of our collection. How many of you remember hearing about the Egyptian House? To date, there has only been one photo that I have ever seen. That all changed when longtime resident Steve Peden left instructions to his family to donate his entire Egyptian House collection to the Society. We now have many photos, newspaper articles and, most significantly, two beautiful wood columns that once adorned the walls inside the house (see photo below). May was National Historic Preservation month. With all our newly acquired gifts, we are doing our part in preserving our history.

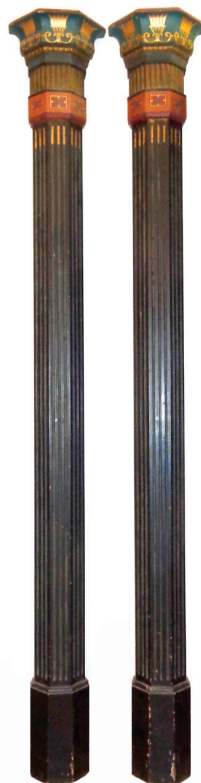
Our Museum and Costumes committees have been doing lots of Spring cleaning! Art and Ellen Litman's Museum committee is doing such a great job getting our collection files organized! Denice Renteria and I are looking forward to the new shelving that will support our costume collection.

None of this would be possible without all of you. I look forward to seeing you soon at our July 18 General Meeting and Program!

Until then, remember: history is fun!
Hope



Society VP of Programs Ryan Vincent and President Hope Parrish with Wayne Wilson from LA84 Foundation after his presentation on our city's history with the Olympic Games at the April 18, 2018 General Meeting and Program. (Kevin Lachoff)



OUR MISSION

The Culver City Historical Society was created for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and exhibiting the history, cultural, and civic accomplishments of Culver City and its environs.

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MEMBERSHIP

The Culver City Historical Society exists because of the involvement and generosity of people like you. Please help strengthen our voice for preserving Culver City's architectural and cultural heritage by becoming a member.
CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org/membership

In Memoriam

Mary Ellen Fernandez
Fred Machado Sr.
Mim Shapiro

Welcome Our New Members

Charlyn and Jack Barton
Nicole DiFalco
Nicolas Garcia
Rhonda and Leonard Koss
Heather Moses
Julio Vera



Marking the Rollerdrome Site

Located on a portion of Rancho La Ballona, at the present location of Tellefson Park, the Rollerdrome was the earliest significant structure on that site. That area had been a part of Culver City's Annexation #4, known as the 1924 "Bohemia Annexation." The Rollerdrome, a very popular roller-skating rink, was dedicated in the late 1920s by Mayor Reve Houck.

It was a wooden skating rink, equipped with an organ. The space was also used for competitive skating events.

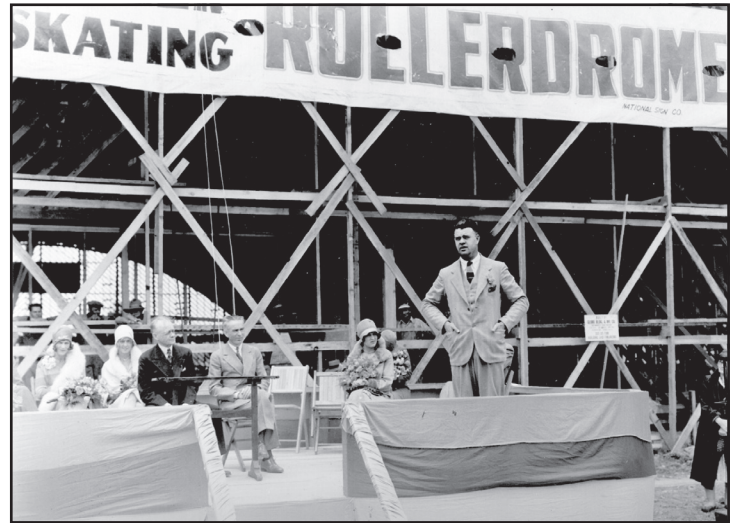


Newly built Culver City Rollerdrome

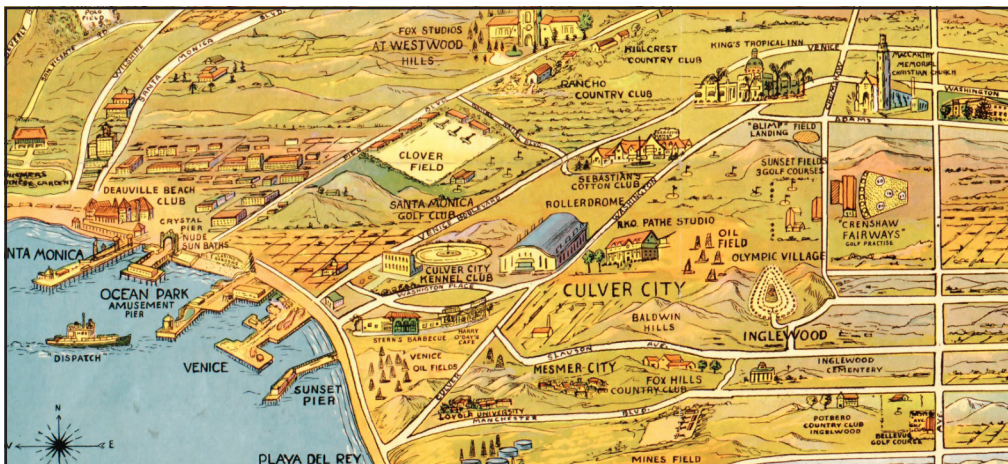
The Rollerdrome became a well-known recreational facility that appealed to skaters of all ages. Many people, like our own Virgie Eskridge, have shared their memories of time spent at this popular roller skating rink. Virgie remembers Mr. Osterloh, who served as the early organist. Another Society Founder, Ethel Ashby, often spoke of this historic site and its social significance to our community. She liked to point out the "strict dress code" precluded anyone from wearing "blue jeans!" It was a favored place to meet family and friends, celebrate birthdays, or enjoy a date. Skating options like "Regular Skate," "All Women," "Couples," "Solitary" (interpreted as "solo time to show off"), were announced, along with the "All Men" call which Ethel pointed out "made all men race like a bunch of whippets."

When the Rollerdrome was no longer viable as a skating rink, it was razed to make way for another recreational venue, a city park. It was named for Michael Tellefson, who served as a city employee, (Chief Administrative Officer and City Attorney), and as an elected Councilmember and Mayor (1930-34). Many remember Tellefson Park became an official 1976 U.S. Bicentennial dedication. Mike Tellefson advocated for other city-owned facilities, like the Veterans Memorial Building (1950), and he negotiated important contracts, like our sewer contract with Hyperion in 1951. His portrait hangs in the Mike Balkman Council Chambers at City Hall, and a Culver City street is named Tellefson. Mr. Tellefson and his wife lived on Irving Place.

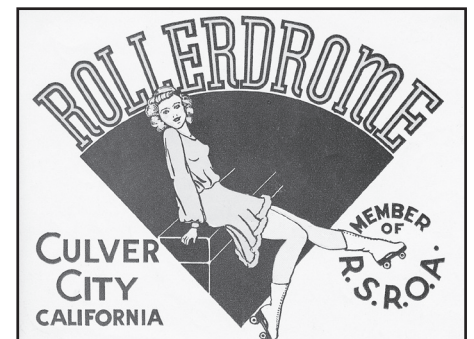
We look forward to marking the Rollerdrome site as the Society's Historic Site #14. Watch for an announcement of the marking date soon!



Culver City Mayor Reve Houck, is pictured seated in the light suit during the ceremony to celebrate construction of our historic Rollerdrome in the late 1920s. Houck was also an advocate for Victory Park, Culver City's first park, and the financing of the first city bus, which led the way to establish Culver City's bus system, the second oldest in the state.



Early map of the area with several important recognizable local sites: Rollerdrome (centered), Kennel Club, Stern's Barbecue, Fox Hills Country Club, Loyola University, Sebastian's Cotton Club, etc.



Culver City Rollerdrome patch used on skate case. (CCHS Collection)



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 18 – General Meeting and Program

Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

August 24-26

Fiesta La Ballona in Vets Park

The ARC will be open on Sat. and Sun.
(Check our website for times.)

September 16

Our annual Founders' Day Picnic is back!

Vets Park (More info to follow.)

September 20 – Happy 101st, Culver City!

October 17 – General Meeting and Program

Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES

1st and 3rd Sundays, 1-3PM

July 1, July 15, Aug. 5, Aug. 19, Sept. 2,
Sept. 16, Oct. 7, Oct. 21

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These fine Culver City area businesses support our work to preserve Culver City history for future generations.
Please show your support by your patronage of their services and products.

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Join others in preserving the history of the "Heart of Screenland" and support the Culver City Historical Society Archives and Resource Center (ARC). We can't preserve local history without you!

- ☐ Benefactor (\$1,000)
- ☐ Corporate Sponsor (\$500)
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- ☐ Patron Member (\$100)
- ☐ Business Member (\$50)
- ☐ Family Member (\$30)
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