



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Volume 43, No.1
Summer 2022

Red Devil Memories

By Hope Parrish

As far back as I can remember, July 4 in Culver City was like a Norman Rockwell painting. The streets were lined with patriotic colors, American flags hung proudly from every home, and mouthwatering BBQ smells filled the air.

Every year my sisters and I could not wait for Dad to drive us to the Studio Village fireworks stand to buy our "Safe and Sane" Red Devil "Family Assortment" box filled with pyrotechnic joy. At dusk we would start with sparklers, snakes, and Smoky Joe's Cabin. When it got dark, our driveway became a fireworks extravaganza.

In the early 1960's, the Culver City Exchange Club and Culver City Veteran's Organization (American Legion) collaborated, operating Culver City's nine "Safe and Sane" fireworks stands around the city. Stand sales funded our "Independence Day Fireworks Show" at Helms Field, now Jerry Chabola Field.

Braddock and neighboring streets were filled with excited families, walking to Culver City High School, waving flags and riding decorated bikes. Young kids were pulled in wagons to enjoy a picnic, snack bar treats, music, and the best overhead fireworks in the city.

LA City and parts of LA County had now banned fireworks sales, putting pressure on their neighbor, Culver City. In 1986, our City Council voted 3-2 to ban the sale of fireworks for good. Without the sales from the stands, how

would the Independence Day Fireworks Show continue? Collaboration with the City of Culver City, local sponsors, and a nominal suggested admission fee kept the show going for almost 15 more years.

This small event with complimentary admission began with about 500 spectators and grew to a tradition with over 10,000 attendees by the last show on July 4, 2012.

One of the main reasons for the show's cancellation was the installation of artificial turf on Helms Field for student-athletes, and the subsequent concerns with fire. When that door closed, a window opened in the form of West Los Angeles College President James Limbaugh, Ph.D., also a member of the Exchange Club, who brokered a partnership with the club. The show resumes this year on July 3rd, literally lighting up the night's sky after two dark pandemic years.

CULVER CITY • 9 DISCOUNT FIREWORKS STANDS • CULVER CITY
For a real 4th of July celebration... get

Spectacular RED DEVIL FIREWORKS

Safe and Sane
State Approved

RED DEVIL FAMILY ASSORTMENT
OTHER RED DEVIL ASSORTMENTS \$2.99 to \$9.95 including

\$10.95
RETAIL VALUE \$16.00

GIANT RED DEVIL ASSORTMENT
RETAIL VALUE \$80.00

SPARKLER BARGAIN 4 PACKAGES
RETAIL VALUE \$24.35

WILDCAT OR PIRATE ASSORTMENT
RETAIL VALUE \$8.75

1976 CENTENNIAL ASSORTMENT
RETAIL VALUE \$21.89

LAWN DISPLAY
RETAIL VALUE \$40.35

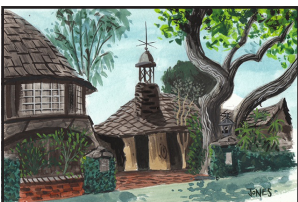
BLOCK PARTY
RETAIL VALUE \$40.35

48" ASSORTMENT
RETAIL VALUE \$38.89

OPEN 8 A.M. to MIDNITE
Stand #1 11000 W. Washington Blvd. Stand #6 5207 Sepulveda Blvd.
Corner Washington and Sepulveda Mayfair Parking Lot

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, July 23, 2022 General Program The Hobbit Houses Discussion and Open House, 5-7PM



Top: Photo taken by resident.
Bottom: Illustration by Jones

Have you ever wondered about the storybook buildings tucked away behind the condo complex on Dunn Drive? Now is your chance! The Lawrence and Martha Joseph residence and apartments, sometimes affectionately nicknamed "the Hobbit Houses," were built single-handedly over several decades by Lawrence Joseph, a former Disney artist and aircraft engineer who worked on Lockheed's Skunk Works. His wife Martha was the personal secretary to Lew Wasserman, president of MCA.

Current residents, including Bob and "Critter," will share stories and all residents have generously agreed to open up their homes for tours. Bob, whose parents were personal friends of the Josephs, has lived at the residence off and on since 1964. Critter was a protégé of Lawrence Joseph in learning carpentry and design skills. Past residents include Zasu Pitts, Paula Prentiss, Richard Benjamin, and Gwen Verdon.

Following the talk and tour, guests can linger to hear music performed by two residents who are Grammy-winning artists. **Please note: this program is on Saturday, July 23, 5PM. Pre-registration is required via Eventbrite.** Please visit the Culver City Historical Society website for the link. Address and parking details will be shared upon registration.

YOUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Hope M. Parrish



Hello Members, Friends, and Neighbors,

As we enter summer, lots has been going on! In May, the Historical Society accepted a proclamation from the City of Culver City, recognizing Historic Preservation Month and the work we continue to do in our community. We co-hosted our second event with Jim Shanman and the Culver City Walk 'n Rollers, this time on bicycles, learning our local historic sites with fantastic docents at each stop. Thanks to Denice Renteria for liaising

the collaboration! We also continue our work inside the museum – entering data, changing up exhibits, and collecting donations from our community and friends for items to preserve in the collection.

Did you know that your Culver City Historical Society is now 42 years old? Early on, we moved our young collection around to several temporary spots around our city, looking for a place to grow. Fast forward to the September 25, 2006, City Council Meeting and Item A-2, wherein the Culver City Historical Society entered into a long-term agreement with the City for our current space in the Veteran's Memorial Complex. So, happy Sweet Sixteen!

As we all know, technology has sped up and changed over 40 years (hello, dial-up?). We express our deep gratitude to the City of Culver City and Veteran's Memorial Complex staff for helping us solve our internet issues. This has been a challenge for many years and we appreciate the high speed wi-fi!

I am excited that VP of Programs Clare Denk is taking our July General Program "on the road," and hope many of you will join us for the Saturday evening, July 23 magical tour of the Hobbit Houses.

We have so many opportunities for involvement! If you find time on your hands, reach out and join us on this road of preserving our city's history – 40+ years and counting!

Best wishes and thanks to you all.

– Hope



Historian Marc Wanamaker and President Hope Parrish co-presented the Society's April General Program on Southern California's local airports.

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.

Newsletter Editors

Michelle Bernardin, Ryan Vincent

Newsletter Design

Sue Slutzky

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Hope M. Parrish, President

Michelle Bernardin, Immediate Past President

Denice Renteria, VP, Development

Tami Eskridge, VP, Museum and Archives

Clare Denk, VP, Programs

Carolyn Wispe Burns, Treasurer

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Michael Laase, Parliamentarian

Kevin Lachoff, Photographer

Mark Morris, Media Archives

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STAY CONNECTED

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org

facebook.com/CulverCityHistoricalSociety

twitter.com/histofculvrcity

instagram.com/culvercityhistoricalsociety

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

Louis Block

Welcome Our New Members

Michael Chiabauda

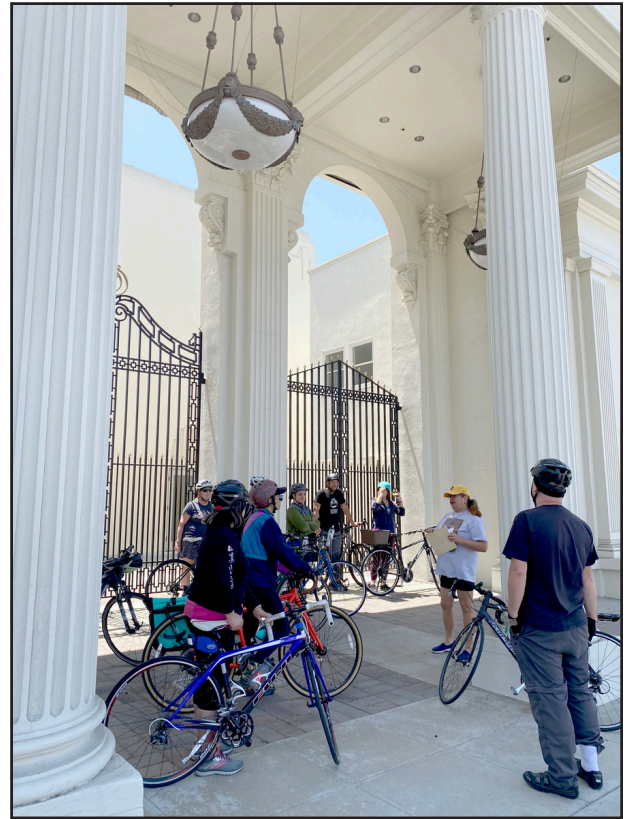
Ruth Martin Del Campo

RECENT EVENTS

May 22 Historic Bike Tour With Walk n' Rollers



Society President Hope Parrish at Hal Roach plaque.



Society Secretary Mara Bommarito at the MGM Colonnade



Society member Maureen Fleming at the Culver Studios



Society members accepted a proclamation in honor of Historic Preservation Month from Mayor Daniel Lee and Members of the City Council on May 9th.



Former Society VP of General Programs Ryan Vincent at Media Park

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

We make it convenient for you to renew your membership, which was due in January 2022. You can do this on our website at CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org/membership. There, you will be able to pay instantly with your credit card and save a stamp! You don't need to renew if you are a Lifetime member, but please consider making a donation. We count on the support of our members to be able to maintain the Archives, and to continue the promotion and preservation of Culver City history. Rates for individual and family levels increased beginning January 2022.

Your continued support is always greatly appreciated.



P.O. Box 1356
Culver City, CA 90232

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org
(310) 253-6941

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 23 (note new date) – Special General Program

The Hobbit Houses, 5-7PM

August 26-28 – Fiesta La Ballona in Vets Park

September 18 – Our annual Founders' Day in Vets Park! More info to follow.

September 20 – Happy 105th, Culver City!

October 19 – General Meeting and Program

Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES – 1st and 3rd Sundays, 1-3PM

July 3 (CLOSED for Independence Day weekend), July 17, Aug. 7, Aug. 21,

Sept. 4, Sept. 18, Oct. 2



Support (at no extra cost to you!)



We depend on your membership and donations to keep the archives running. You can also build on your support in two small ways that don't cost extra. If you are a Ralphs shopper and have an online account you can designate the Culver City Historical Society as your "Community Contribution." If you are an Amazon shopper, go to smile.amazon.com and login to your account. Under "Your Account," go to "AmazonSmile." From there, you can designate Culver City Historical Society as your charity. Every dollar counts! Both programs are a great way to help your Society without any extra cost to you.

Business Member Roster

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.

Benefactor

The Culver Studios Ryan Smith (310) 473-8900

Supporting Corporate and Non Profit Sponsors

Culver City Exchange Club Dr. Bob Montgomery (310) 499-4840

History For Hire Pam and Jim Elyea (818) 765-7767

Sony Pictures Entertainment Kristin Cavanaugh (310) 244-5368

Supporting Business Members

11 of Twelve James Finn (917) 951-6699

Appletree Music LLC Amy Loftus Panchansky (615) 268-8050

Cantalini's Salerno Beach Restaurant Lisa Schwab (310) 821-0018

Cavanaugh Realtors Dannie Cavanaugh (310) 837-7161

Culver City Flower Shop Mike Eskridge (310) 839-2344

Culver City Neighbors Chiqueeta Jameson (310) 801-3445

Freeman Properties Stuart Freeman (310) 839-7593

George Petrelli Famous Steaks Marie Petrelli (310) 902-5899

Göran Eriksson / Techtrans Göran Eriksson (310) 841-2901

Ken Harada, D.D.S. Ken Harada (310) 837-5121

Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary..... Lori Larcara (818) 424-1619

JLF Appraisals & Estates..... Joel and Linda Forman (310) 837-7455

John Riordan Plumbing John Riordan (310) 838-4656

Keller Williams Silicon Beach Noel Boix (310) 463-4242

RE/MAX Estate Properties Michele Walman (310) 704-0811

Santa Maria BBQ Jim Rodrigues (310) 559-5709

SendOutCards Richard A. Marcus (310) 397-4696

Sorrento Italian Market Albert Vera (310) 391-7654

Tower Insurance Associates Janice Beighey (310) 837-6101

Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Jeff Cooper (310) 606-9479

The Wende Museum Justin Jampol (310) 216-1600

Please Renew or Become a Member of the Culver City Historical Society Today!

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)
- ☐ Family Lifetime Member (\$500)
- ☐ Individual Lifetime Member (\$300)
- ☐ Patron Member (\$100)
- ☐ Business Member (\$50)
- ☐ Family Member (\$35)
- ☐ Individual Member (\$25)
- ☐ Non Profit Organization (\$15)
- ☐ New Member ☐ Renewal

Name/Company _____

Contact Person _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Voluntary Contribution to Museum Fund \$ _____

Please check type of membership and enclose your check payable to:
The Culver City Historical Society, P.O. Box 1356, Culver City, CA 90232

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