



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2020

That's Entertainment

By Donald Norden

It was 1974 and I was 14 years old. I was visiting a security guard named Ken Hollywood, at MGM's East Gate. He handed me a pencil and paper, saying "Two fellas will be coming out soon that you will want to meet!" And that was it.

Growing up in Culver City, I spent almost all my time on the back lots, either being chased, or just hanging out, watching as TV shows and movies got filmed. We were sharing stories together at this gate when, lo and behold, a Rolls Royce driven by Fred Astaire slowly rolled to a stop. Ken waved to Fred as we approached him with paper in hand. He graciously signed his name, shook my hand, and drove off.

When I thought things couldn't get better, an old Chevy Impala appeared. I was not even thinking this was a star since his car was no better than my dad's, but I did a double take and couldn't believe my eyes — it was Gene Kelly! He yelled out to me, "Let me pull over so we can talk."

"What was your favorite movie of all time to be part of?" I excitedly asked. "I'm gonna surprise you," Mr. Kelly responded. "It's not a musical." After a long pause he said, *The Three Musketeers*. "That's my favorite, too!" I exclaimed. "All the athletic preparation needed to make it look real was more difficult than almost any of my dance numbers," he added. "I love that show. You look like you were born with a sword in your hand," I said. "You're very

athletic, and I can't help but admire your skill."

He then shared his love of baseball. The Pirates were his team. I told him, "When it rains we sneak into the backlot and dance on the same cobblestone street where you performed *Singing in the Rain*. Well, mostly we just splash and sing."

I was probably blushing as I giggled, and then he smiled that wonderful, iconic smile.

Donald blogs at phantomofthebacklots.com.



Lobby Card for *Singin' in the Rain* (1952)

UPCOMING EVENTS

The April 15, 2020 General Meeting and Program Has Been Cancelled



Actor Eddie Quinlan at the Culver City Airport

As we continue to monitor and adjust to the changing environment in our city and broader world, we are erring on the side of caution and minding the current city-wide recommendations for large gatherings. Unfortunately, we are cancelling our next General Meeting and Program on Wednesday, April 15.

We are working on a program of the Culver City airports and Petrelli's Airport Café, and look forward to presenting this fantastic program in July. *Stay tuned!*

Stay safe, stay healthy, and be there for each other in these confusing times. More than we value history, we value you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

YOUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Hope M. Parrish



Dear Members and Friends:

Spring is on its way! I want to introduce to you our 2020-2022 Board. If you missed the installation, the food was delicious and the evening was outstanding. I can't thank Vice Mayor Göran Eriksson enough for his wonderful words that he spoke while installing us all. Yes, I am here for another two years at which time I must pass the torch, as I will be termed out. Emelie Gerard has moved into a new position. She is now our VP of Development, which involves fundraising,

organizing the Founder's Day Picnic, and purchasing new items for our store. I am excited to see what she comes up with.

Dennis Parrish (my amazing Dad) has taken on the position of VP of Programs. Some of you may remember the great programs he presented to us in the past. I cannot wait to see his next Program! Tami Eskridge is BACK...and she will now be our new VP of the Museum and Archives. With the many great donations we have received, I am looking forward to working with her on new exhibits for your enjoyment. Also, Carolyn Wispe-Burns will continue to be our Treasurer. Michelle Bernardin, our immediate Past President, has also been editing this newsletter. Let us know if you'd like to relieve her and join our team!

I can happily report that these dedicated committee chairs will be continuing in their current positions:

Denice Renteria – Costumes Chair
Andrew Weissman – Government Liaison
Julie Lugo Cerra – Historic Sites
Jeanne Conklin – Membership Chair
Michael Laase – Parliamentarian
Kevin Lachoff – Photographer
Mark Morris – Videographer
Scott Malsin – Webmaster

I cannot thank our Wednesday volunteers enough for their hard work and dedication to get the museum digitized! We continue to make huge gains, and it is through the generous support from you, our members, and the amazing people that I have just mentioned. Thanks to you all, and I look forward to seeing you at our next General Program to see what Dad has in store for us!

Hope



Your 2020-2022 Historical Society Board at the January 15 Installation of Officers. (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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Michelle Bernardin

Newsletter Design

Sue Slutzky

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Hope M. Parrish, President
Michelle Bernardin, Immediate Past President
Emelie Gerard, VP, Development
Tami Eskridge, VP, Museum and Archives
Dennis Parrish, VP, Programs
Carolyn Wispe Burns, Treasurer
OPEN, Secretary
Denice Renteria, Costumes Chair
Julie Lugo Cerra, Historic Sites Chair
Jeanne Conklin, Membership Chair
Andrew Weissman, Government Liaison
Michael Laase, Parliamentarian
Kevin Lachoff, Photographer
Mark Morris, Video Editor
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STAY CONNECTED

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org
facebook.com/CulverCityHistoricalSociety
twitter.com/histofculvercity
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

Fred Yglesias

Welcome Our New Members

Deborah Alexander	Scott Johnson
Jack Bommarito	Frank Strasser
Mara Bommarito	Linda Vandergeest
Jennifer and James Finn	Michele Walman



Marking Our Diverse History

Charles Reyes Lugo, my father, was the youngest of eight children born to Mercurial and Rita Reyes Lugo on the local Lugo Ranch. My little brother and I could count on visits annually to the LA County Museum to visit the early Californio exhibits that included a portrait of ancestors like Don Antonio Maria Lugo, from whom there is a direct line. The Lugo

family is recognized by the Pobladores as Early Californio settlers. As descendants, we developed a sense of pride in our Spanish history, which was enhanced by Culver City's La Ballona Days that began in the 1950s. We were not limited to just one line in our ancestry, however.

Even in the early days, this land became what I call "an oasis within the urban metropolis." And how do we know this? Local directories in early years listed names that were Asian, English, German, Spanish, etc. Although we celebrate our Hispanic history, Culver City developed from a rich, broader heritage. And what kind of food do we enjoy? We all know the names of a favorite taco stand, but then there are Italian restaurants, and Japanese and Chinese along with many others. We clearly know that we don't have to limit our experiences by heritage!

Although I enjoyed visiting relatives on the Lugo Ranch as a child, it was not until my parents' later years that I learned more about my father and his experiences on the ranch where he was born. He not only worked in the fields, and at the Lugo Ranch Stand, he also went to school and delivered fresh vegetables to locals. Included in their customer base were many Asian families who invited people like my father, a young delivery boy at the time, to sit at their tables and enjoy their food, where he became a chopsticks pro!

In his later years, Daddy began to share more stories about his youth. It came in very handy, especially when he was joining us for dinner. I kept chopsticks on hand and I will never forget the great memories made by a grandpa teaching his little granddaughter how to use them, as he told stories of growing up on a portion of Rancho La Ballona, which became Culver City.



Lugo Ranch/Corn Stand: Center, Charles Reyes Lugo (father), with Vicenta Lugo (sister), and nephew, George Lugo (nephew). (Julie Lugo Cerra)



Lugo Ranch marker being cleaned by Carlos Lugo family. (Julie Lugo Cerra)

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

The envelope in this newsletter will make it convenient for you to send back your membership renewal, which was due in January 2020. You can also do this online! Please go to 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 will be increasing beginning January 2021!

Your continued support is always greatly appreciated.



P.O. Box 1356
Culver City, CA 90232

CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org (310) 253-6941

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April 15 – General Meeting and Program
Multipurpose Room, VMB - **CANCELLED**

May – Historic Preservation Month
For more info: savingplaces.org

July 15 – General Meeting and Program
Rotunda Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES

**Closed to the public until further notice,
or by appointment only.**

**For questions or inquiry, please email
info@culvercityhistoricalsociety.org.**

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.

Supporting Corporate and Non Profit Sponsors

Culver City Exchange Club Dr. Bob Montgomery (310) 499-4840
Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary.....Paul Goldstein (310) 641-0707
Sony Pictures Entertainment Kristin Cavanaugh (310) 244-5368

Supporting Business Members

Marianne Afifi, Library Consultant Marianne Afifi (310) 838-4079
Catalini's Salerno Beach Restaurant Lisa Schwab (310) 821-0018
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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 (\$30)
- ☐ Individual Member (\$20)
- ☐ 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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