



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Volume 40, No.1
Winter 2019

An Unexpected Culver History Lesson, Part 3

By Hope M. Parrish

I could write thousands of words of what I learned about Harry Culver and his family on my two recent trips to Nebraska over the last eight months.

It all came into focus when I learned that Harry moved to Omaha in 1908. He became the manager for real estate developer George P. Bemis. Harry purchased a home in the Bemis development at 3401 Hawthorne adjacent to the Bemis Park. I drove through that neighborhood and found his home beautifully located up on a hill just north of downtown (see photo below).



(Hope Parrish)

The following year, Harry decided he should go into business for himself and opened his own brokerage office in Omaha's National Bank Building. He sold large parcels of farm land, offering exchanges of property with merit. "We make a specialty of exchanging Property."

When Harry arrived in California, as many know, he worked with Isaac Newton Van Nuys, developing the valley. In my opinion, what he learned from Van Nuys, Bemis, his father, and others provided him the tools that he needed to take on this task of developing his own city.

Not stopping there, he became president of the National Association of Realtors, flying around the country, giving hundreds of speeches each year. When I was in Nebraska, I felt a familiar sense of home. One telling sign, it occurred to me that no matter the size of the town I visited, there was a park in each neighborhood. I have read that one of the requirements Harry Culver instilled in his developers was that they should have a park in their neighborhood plan. Coincidence? Culver City has ten parks and five elementary schools that give our children and families a place to gather, learn, and enjoy.

Is this why our town is so unique? Could it be why many say Culver City is a "model city"? Harry H. Culver gave to my family and many others a beautiful city with jobs, homes, and community. Thank you, Harry Culver, for your vision, passion, and service to the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 16, 2019 – General Meeting and Program Historical Ecology and the Ballona Watershed Multipurpose Room, Veterans Memorial Building, 7PM

When you bike or walk along Ballona Creek you see a concrete-lined flood control channel. Once you go under the Marina Freeway overpass on the bike path you see fields that are called wetlands, but they don't look very wet at all.

But Ballona Creek was once a picturesque natural waterway fed by runoff from swamps and rainwater, lined with sycamores and willow trees that ended at Ballona Lagoon, a freshwater marsh with ponds, vernal pools, and wet meadows. The Lagoon actually extended from the base of the Westchester bluffs in the south all the way to the intersection of Main Street and Abbot Kinney to the north, and as far east as Overland Avenue.

Dr. Eric Stein of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) will bring us back to the days before West Los Angeles covered up and redirected its natural waterways, showing what is sure to be a fascinating look at the flora and fauna of what was.

We'll also take a look at the City of Culver City's Ballona Creek Revitalization Project, which seeks to enhance habitats, open space, and landscaped areas. The public is invited to this free program. The entrance to the ARC is from the back parking lot.



Artist rendering of Los Angeles Basin, c.1850
(Southern California Coastal Water Research Project)

YOUR PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Hope M. Parrish



Happy New Year, Members and Friends!

As we welcome in 2019, I would like to say that it has been my pleasure to be the Society's President. My first year was busy and exciting. We discovered some wonderful items in the ARC, and some incredible items were donated to us this year. We closed the ARC in June, which allowed us time and space to change up the displays and present you with something new. In October, we brought back our Sunday Conversations with a guest

speaker, archaeologist Robyn Turner. Her conversations about local archeological digs are always interesting!

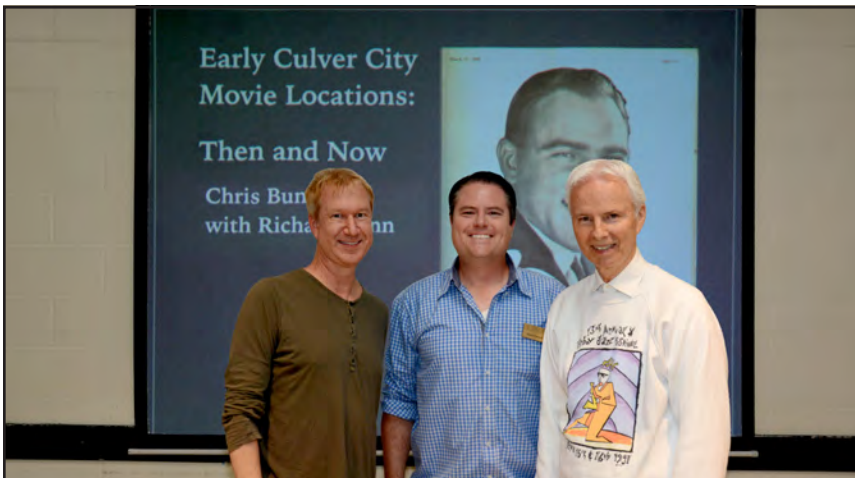
Ryan did a great job with the programs this year—they were fun, interesting, and loaded with Culver City history. I cannot wait to see what is in store for us in the coming year!

A special highlight from this fall was collaborating with the Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum and the Wende Museum to present us all as the Culver City Cultural Corridor. This was our first time opening all three spaces for a crossover event. Our hope is to hold more events on the weekends, to include more of the public.

I have said before that it takes a village, which grows each day due to the generosity of our members, our donors, and the creative ideas and dedication of our volunteers including Jeanne, Tami, Judy, Michelle, Fred, Ryan, Tito, Denice, Sharon, Denise, Art, Ellen, Julie, Dennis, Margie, Michael, Annie, Nick, Stephen, and Julio.

I look forward to seeing you at our Annual Business Meeting and General Membership Program on January 16. As a member, you will vote to ratify the operating budget for the new calendar year, along with revisions to the Society's by-laws. The By-Laws Committee has proposed the ability for the Executive Committee to call for voting via e-mail in extenuating circumstances. Please review the proposed changes at CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org/bylaws2019. It will also be posted at the meeting.

We can't do this without you!
Hope



Historical Society VP, Programs Ryan Vincent with Chris Bungo (left) and Richard Bann (right) after their presentation on early movie locations in Culver City at the October 17, 2018 General Meeting. (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

Welcome Our New Members

Christopher Bungo
Pete Chiabauda
Susan Gordon
Thomas Mitchell
Ross Urquhart



Marking and Preserving History

When our Culver City Historical Society formed, we knew we all shared an interest in local history and we learned about many options available to preserve that rich history! Charles Lugo chaired our first Historic Sites Committee, and it offered a learning experience for me to work with my dad and our Society “madrina” (godmother),

Clarita Marquez Young. Ordering bronze site markers was admittedly a real learning experience!

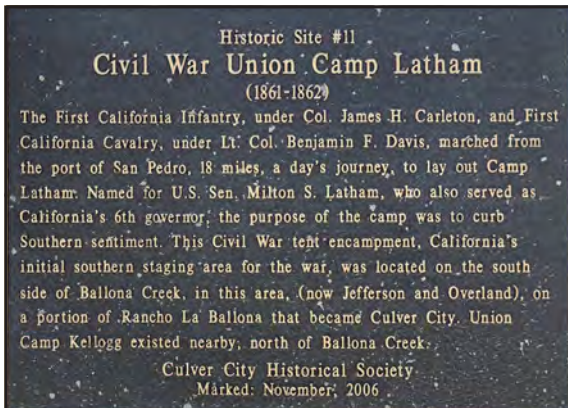
The Society voted to mark City Hall as our entry experience and as we approached the City, their only concern was set aside since we were marking “sites,” not structures. The City Hall marker remains on the corner of Culver and Duquesne. It tells the story of the site of the 1928 City Hall, which has since been replaced. In some instances, like the Hull Building, site #2, the marker is in plain view on the structure. Our choice from the beginning was to provide long-lasting bronze markers that tell the story of the site.

It was many years later before the city formed a Historic Preservation Advisory Committee, made up of a wide-range of organizations and at-large members, which included some of our Society members like Linda Brady, Carolyn Cole, Mary Ellen Fernandez, James Lamm, Judy Potik, Jim Quirarte, and Cathy Zermeno. With the help of a consultant, 30th Street Architects, a historic structures survey report was produced in August 1990.

Another historic benefit to our community was the formation of a Cultural Affairs Commission in 2001. The commission, which included members of the Historical Society, was given the opportunity to combine the programs of Historic Preservation and Art in Public Places. One of the interesting decisions we made when I served on the commission was to recommend changes to the Culver City Municipal Code, one of which allowed “Architecture” in the category of Art in Public Places. Do you know the other Society past president who served on that commission? Michelle Bernardin!

As we enter the New Year, I urge us to work together and make changes that benefit our fine city. One way might be to have your voice heard by city staff who will update our city code with respect to historic preservation. Christine Byers, has shared this upcoming opportunity:

“City staff anticipates placing an item on the City Council meeting agenda in January 2019 relating to the City’s Historic Preservation Program. This agenda item pertains only to updating relevant sections of the Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC), which is the foundation and framework of the Historic Preservation Program. Staff will be seeking direction from the City Council with the intent of making updates to the CCMC so that the program reflects best practices, current priorities of the Culver City community, is better aligned with state and federal guidelines on historical resources, and is more user friendly both for property owners and City staff.”



Camp Latham marker, soon to be reinstalled at Rotary Plaza. (Michelle Bernardin)



First Society historic site marking at City Hall in 1981. Left to right, from back: Councilmembers Richard Alexander, Paul Netzel, and Richard Brundo; Catherine Zermeno, Society president; Councilmember Paul Jacobs; and Charles Lugo, Historic Sites chair. H. Dale Jones, CAO of Culver City, is kneeling on the left. (Julie Lugo Cerra)

REMINDER: JANUARY IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL MONTH! PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!



P.O. Box 3428
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 CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org (310) 253-6941

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 16 – Annual Business Meeting and Program
 Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

April 17 – General Meeting and Program
 Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES
1st and 3rd Sundays, 1-3PM
 Jan. 6, Jan. 20, Feb. 3, Feb. 17, Mar. 3, Mar. 17, Apr. 7

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Membership renewal is due in January 2019. You can renew online! Please go to our website at CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org/membership. There, you will be able to pay instantly with your credit card! Obviously, 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.

Your continued support is always greatly appreciated. Thank 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.

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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)
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- Individual Member (\$20)
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