Memories of A Lifelong Culver City Bookworm
By Mara Bommarito

Growing up in Culver City during the 1960s and early 70s, gives me a warm and fuzzy feeling—especially reminiscing about those glorious days of summer!

My daily schedule began at the Plunge, with afternoons spent at the Culver City Library (the current Teen Center.) That little brick building played an seminal role in my young life. It became my second home, a great source for learning and pleasure reading. Being a daily patron and a voracious reader, every librarian knew me. I researched subjects I found interesting, taking copious notes on Ancient Egypt and exotic animals. By 1969, I knew I was destined to be an archaeologist or a zoologist!

Every summer, the library was filled with activities. The participants received a large folder to list the titles of books read. I treasure my folder, from the reading contest in the summer of 1968. Another activity I enjoyed was poetry writing. The librarians typed up our poetic contributions, decorating each page and placing them in prominent locations for all to read. I remember feeling so proud to see my own words in print.

After spending a happy summer afternoon in the library, I loved nothing more than taking home a big stack of books and reading them to my heart’s content.

I vividly remember the day I heard the library was moving to a much larger new building. This was very concerning! How was my library experience going to be affected? In 1970, the new library opened in its current location. How spacious and foreign it seemed! Seeing my old friends on the shelves and new books waiting to be discovered was reassuring.

Did I become an archaeologist or zoologist based on my youthful interests? No, but I did choose a career that continued sharing my love of reading with thousands of children. For 40 years as a teacher and then school principal, I filled my classrooms and my school with books! Kudos to the Culver City library for having a significant role in molding me into the person I am today!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 – General Membership Meeting and Program
CULVER CITY BARS, DIVES, AND BISTROS
Multipurpose Room, Veterans Memorial Building, 7PM

Did you know that silent film star, Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle opened a Night Club across the street from La Ballona Elementary School? Dennis Parrish, long-time resident of Culver City, will walk you down Washington Blvd of yester year. Learn about the many famous bars, bistros and cafes operating there during the Prohibition era—Kings Tropical Inn, Sebastian’s Cotton Club, Fatty Arbuckle’s Plantation Café and Big Ed’s. Join us for this fun and historical trip through Culver City’s rather bawdy past. The program will include a photographic essay of Culver City from the 20’s through the 50’s. What a jumping place it was during this era!

Please note: this program is on Tuesday, April 18, 7PM.

This free program is open to the public. Masks are not required.
Happy Spring 2023 to our members and friends...

We’ve been busy! In January our new officers were installed by Mike “Mr. Culver City” Cohen, followed by a wonderful program presented by Nick Sparks, Co-Founder of Periscope Films. Nick shared the work in film preservation undertaken by Periscope. That evening’s video is on our YouTube channel for viewing. Thank you, Nick and Mike!

We have some new faces. First, Maureen Fleming, who has begun implementing new displays with enthusiasm as our new VP of Museum and Archives.

Also stepping up to the plate, is a lover of history, storytelling, and is Mara’s hubby-- Jack Bommarito! Jack joins Denice Renteria as Co-VP of Development. They have been hard at work arranging for volunteers to provide walking tours in celebration of the 11 th anniversary of Jim Shanman’s Walk & Rollers.

We say goodbye to longtime photographer and friend, Kevin Lachoff, and welcome Ron Peterson, as our new In House Photographer. Beverly Peterson has also joined the Board as Co-Treasurer with Carolyn Burns. Valerie Meyer officially chairs our Costume Collection with Madisen Matsuura, past intern, assisting her.

Dennis Parrish is back and will present a series of programs about Culver City’s early clubs and night life! And finally, Anissa Di Vincente is our new Webmaster!!

Fridays at the ARC are swarming with busy bees! You can see Elizabeth Voncannon going through boxes of history donated over the years.

Thanks to our continued collaboration with Adrienne Madrid, Career Counselor at CCHS, we have 3 new students-interns; Eve Mott, Maren Brown, and Taj Neufeld. Each of them bringing great energy to the museum!! Special thanks to all our volunteers; it takes a Village!

All of this is only possible because of the support and generous donations from our members and sponsors. Thank you!

See you at the Program!

– Hope
RECENT EVENTS AND VISITORS
Photos courtesy of Hope Parrish

Rainy field trip with the interns to find Dick Van Dyke Boulevard.

Tami Eskridge and Jeanne Conklin archiving CC History.

Maren Brown carefully organizing and archiving.

CCHS Alumni spanning from 1963-2022 enjoying a Sunday afternoon in the Museum.

Hope Parrish, current President, with Cathy Zeremo our very first President.

Taj Newfeld and Eve Mott researching a project.
**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

July 18 – General Meeting and Program
Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

ARC OPEN DATES – 1st and 3rd Sundays, 1–3PM
April 2 and 16, May 7 and 21, June 4 and 18, July 2 and 16

We depend on your membership and donations to keep the archives running. If you are a Ralphs shopper and have an online account you can designate the Culver City Historical Society as your “Community Contribution.” Every dollar counts! This is a great way to help your Society without any extra cost to you.

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