Marking #14  
By Julie Lugo Cerra, Historic Sites Chair

As a founding member of our Culver City Historical Society, it is hard to express the depth of my great pride as we plan the marking of Historic Site #14, the Rollerdrome.

The Rollerdrome opened in 1928 on land annexed to Culver City in 1924, first inhabited by Tongva Native Americans. It could accommodate more than 200 people and became an important fixture in our social scene. The site of the Rollerdrome became Tellefson Park, built and named during the U.S. Bicentennial celebration in 1976. Michael Tellefson served Culver City as city attorney, mayor, and chief administrative officer. If you lived on Irving Place, you might have known the Tellefsons.

As a researcher, I can honestly say that residents and visitors who spent time at the Rollerdrome always have wonderful stories to tell—from the dress code (no jeans), to their birthday parties and skating competitions! We have gathered detailed information and memories from notable residents like Virgie Eskridge, Ethel Ashby, Jean Barker, and many others—like the Rollerdrome’s organ, which became a reality in 1929, a few years after it opened. Most even remember the name of Mr. Osterloh, the organist who played music for “Couples Skate,” “Singles Skate,” and “All Skate.”

A kind donor parted with his sister’s skates, an amazing gift to our society, still housed in the original case! The skates bring back memories to the delight of many visitors! We will make sure it is on display again as we mark the site.

We have been working with our wonderful city staff, headed by City Manager John Nachbar, and our Parks and Recreation staff, headed by Corey Lakin and Patrick Reynolds. We look forward to unveiling the marker before the year’s end (before some planned upgrades to the playground) and hope you join us for the celebration. Check our website and on social media for the big announcement!

The MGM Cartoon Department brought the world Tom & Jerry, Droopy, Barney Bear and many more characters loved the world over.

Legends of hand-drawn animation including Hanna and Barbera, Tex Avery, and Chuck Jones were responsible for hours of animated shorts, some of which were filmed in 3-strip Technicolor, some produced in CinemaScope, and some won the Academy Award for Best Animated Shorts.

Join us as animation historian Jerry Beck gives a talk and video presentation on the animation history of MGM, including a tribute to beloved painter, inker, and Society member Martha Sigall.

Jerry Beck is a writer, animation producer, college professor, and author of more than 15 books on animation history. He is a former studio executive with Nickelodeon Movies and Disney, and has written for The Hollywood Reporter and Variety. He has curated cartoon home video compilations and has lent his expertise to dozens of special feature documentaries and audio commentaries. Beck is currently on the faculty of Cal Arts, teaching animation history.

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

Rollerdrome, exterior and interior (Culver City Historical Society)
Dear Members and Friends:

My very best wishes to all of you as we approach fall and 2020! We have had a great year!

As the Society continues to grow, we are involved with local and citywide events, requiring volunteers. Life is busy, and I know this firsthand. But for the Society to continue to be viable, we need you! I know many of you would consider this opportunity but think, “I don’t know our city’s history. How can I be of any help?” Well, it’s simple – you start by showing up, and we promise to share our knowledge about our city so you can pass it on to others. If you love Culver City as much as we do, I encourage you to join us.

This is also election time for our 2020-2022 Board. We have a few openings that are vital to our Society:

**VP, Development:** Manages merchandise sold online and in our Archives store, and develops ideas for events and fundraising, including the Founder’s Day Picnic. This is a voting position.

**VP, Museum and Archives:** Works with the collection and displays in the museum and manages the open hours each month. This is a voting position.

**VP, Programs:** Selects program topics that are presented at the quarterly General Meetings. This is a voting position.

**Communications Chair:** Keeps the Historical Society’s good name out in the press through releases and our quarterly print newsletter. (Social media and InDesign knowledge are NOT a requirement.) This is a non-voting position.

**Volunteering:** Choose your own adventure! We participate in about six events each year that require a friendly face handing out swag.

These positions are exciting and can be shaped by you. I have personally found my time volunteering to be rewarding, as have our current and previous board members. As the Society’s president, I am asking you to consider these positions. If the Historical Society is to continue to grow and operate in the years to come, we need you!

Please feel free to call me if you would like to know more.

Thank you!
Hope   cell: (310) 880-6335
The Evolution of Girls Basketball in Culver City Through a Player’s Eyes

By Maureen (Miller) Fleming, Culver City High School ’78

When I was growing up, the mandatory school dress code for girls was dresses. It was hard to play sports in a dress and patent leather shoes on the playground blacktop. But where there was a will, there was a way.

My friends, Marisa and Tami, and I would spend our recess watching the boys play basketball from the sidelines, itching for the chance to catch a stray ball and pass it back. Sure, foursquare and tetherball were fun, but basketball looked amazing!

Our classmate, Tito, offered to teach us some pointers on shooting and defense at recess. As we showed ability, the boys started letting us play with them.

Since girls were sporting jammed fingers and skinned knees, one of the teachers ruled that “Girls could not play basketball at recess anymore.” Back to the sidelines. My mother, a feminist for the time, called the school, put her foot down, and we were back on the court!

The next year, there was a meeting after school for girls interested in playing basketball for Culver City Parks and Recreation—the first year it would be offered to girls! A courageous gal named Marilyn, with no experience whatsoever, volunteered to coach us.

In 1972, maybe in response to Title IX, they added flag football. Marisa, Tami, and I played for La Ballona. We lost our first game to Vets, so Marilyn enlisted the help of Marisa’s older brother. He taught us three plays. He would secretly call plays out from the sidelines in Japanese. “Ichii” “Ni!” “San!” And we would execute them perfectly. We won every game after that with those three organized plays and a lot of determination. Apparently, girls playing football was big news because our picture was in the Los Angeles Times!

Basketball was offered in Phys Ed at Culver Junior High; however, some teachers made the girls play using the “3 Bounce Rule.” You could dribble the ball three times and then you had to shoot or pass, even if you had a clear path to the basket. This was frustrating! While we never expected to play on a boys team, we felt that we could play with the same rules (and if Ms. Huerta was your PE teacher, you did). I have always maintained that the “3 Bounce Rule” partially contributed to modern-day feminism!

When we entered high school, CCHS was forming their first Girls Basketball team! Excerpts from a 1976 Centaurian newspaper article stated that girls basketball has proven to be a ground breaker in women’s athletics. We made it to CIF but not into the Olympian. We would have to wait for our senior year in 1978 to get a picture in the yearbook.

Since then, girls basketball at Culver City High School and all over the world has soared in popularity, coaching, and ability. As an adult, I coached girls’ athletics through Parks and Rec. We’ve come a long way! Thank goodness for all the Titos and boys on the schoolyard, big brothers, dads, all pioneer coaches, and our moms for sticking up for us all those years ago.

Los Angeles Times article on Culver City’s “powder puff” girls football, November 1972. (Maureen Fleming)

Girls basketball photo from CC High School yearbook. (Maureen Fleming)

Ideas for the newsletter? Interested in writing an article? Email Newsletter @CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org
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The Culver City Historical Society, P.O. Box 3428, Culver City, CA 90231-3428
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 12 – 14th Annual L.A. as Subject Archives Bazaar
Doheny Memorial Library, USC, 9AM - 5PM

October 16 – General Meeting and Program
Multipurpose Room, VMB, 7PM

December 1 and 15 – Do your holiday shopping with us!
Wrapping and shipping available!
Archives and Resource Center, 1PM - 3PM

January 15 – General Meeting and Installation of Officers
TBA, 7PM

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

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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!