

# Culver Historical Highlights

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## Historical Society Designates Historic Site #10 *La Ballona School First in Area*

### LA BALLONA SCHOOL SELECTED AS HISTORIC SITE #10

by Sandy Burton  
Historic Sites Chairperson

On August 21, 2001, the Board of the Culver City Historical Society voted to designate La Ballona School as its Historic Site #10.

At the September 4, 2001 Culver City Board of Education meeting, Society President Don Rogers presented the proclamation for approval for La Ballona School, the first school established in the Culver City area in 1865. The wording on the plaque will read:

*Originally a wood-frame structure, classes began for the 1865-66 school year as a part of the Ballona School District. In its first year, there were 17 boys and 11 girls registered in 14 classes. The teacher, Miss Craft from Boston, received \$50 per month, including board. The school year was seven months long, so children could work on the ranchos. Established on a portion of Rancho La Ballona, this is the oldest school in what became Culver City. It eventually became a part of the Culver City Unified School District.*

Today's students feel strongly about their school. From "Read California" (11/29/00), here is what Nahla, a fifth-grader at La Ballona School had to say: "La Ballona is a great school, with great people. The community I live in is special because it is busy and the people are nice and get along easily with each other. My school is also very special because it is filled with intelligent students who are well educated. We all speak different languages. Spanish, Arabic, Asian and French are just a few. We have many different cultures. Having friends from all over the world is a good experience."

Special thanks go to the Historic Sites committee: Ross Hawkins, Susan Berg, Julie Lugo Cerra and Sam Cerra.



*An early class at La Ballona School, first in area.*

The school is located at 10915 Washington Blvd. The date of the official dedication ceremonies will be announced shortly.

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**NOTICE:**  
**The Society has a new**  
**telephone number:**  
**(310) 287-4558**

### OCTOBER 16TH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: ELECTIONS!

• CC Police Chief Ted Cooke Guest Speaker •

The Culver City Historical Society's Fall General Membership Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 16th at 7:00 pm in the Lethridge Garden Room at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue.

This is "Election Night" to choose the Society's next slate of officers and we ask the entire membership to come out to support and vote for the future Board who will take the reins for the next two years.

The evening will also feature special guest speaker Culver City Police Chief Ted Cooke who will discuss the history of the Culver City Police Department – its development and the changes and challenges it has faced through the years.

Please join us for this important and informative meeting. The public is invited to enjoy the free program (note: only members will be able to vote) and students are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served following the program.

For more information, please call Cathy Zermeno at (310) 839-7688.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Don Rogers



The next General Meeting of the Historical Society will be held on Tuesday, October 16th. This is a very important meeting because the Nominating Committee will be presenting a slate of officers to be elected for the next two years. Your vote is very important and I urge you to be in attendance.

Our bylaws require that the President appoint three members to the Nominating Committee: one officer other than the President, one Committee Chair and one member from the General Membership. The Nominating Committee shall report to the Society in October and additional nominations may be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee.

Election shall be by ballot held immediately following nominations. If there is only one nominee for an office, the election for that office may be held by voice vote.

I have appointed Virgie Eskridge as the Officer, Sandy Burton as the Committee Chair, and Sam Cerra as the Member-at-Large. I am sure that they would welcome any suggestions you might have for people to serve in the various offices for the Historical Society. You may contact them at the new CCHS telephone number: (310) 287-4558.

**Other News:** The City Council recently created a Cultural Affairs Commission. Included in the scope of this Commission's responsibilities are public art, performing art and historic preservation, among others. This is good news because the Human Services Department, which staffs the Commission, will also remain involved with the Historical Society and its interests.

We are off to a wonderful start in the cataloging of the wealth of material now housed at the new Society office. I would like to thank Susan Berg for serving as the Museum Cataloging Chair and the many other volunteers for their efforts.

See you on October 16th!

*Don Rogers*

## Culver Historical Highlights

PO BOX 3428 • CULVER CITY, CA • 90231-3428  
(310) 287-4558

The Culver City Historical Society, founded in 1980, is a non-profit membership organization created for the purpose of collecting, preserving and exhibiting the history of Culver City and its cultural and civic accomplishments.

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Publisher.....Lee Bixler  
Editor .....Judy Stangler  
Associate Editor.....Ross Hawkins  
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Lupe Smith

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### Officers and Committee Chairs

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## Notes from Your City Historian

by Julie Lugo Cerra



its intent is to provide a readily identifiable symbol that residents and visitors alike can immediately associate with Culver City." Redevelopment Agency chair Steven Rose offered "The logo's goal is to portray the essence of the community, not to tell the whole story."

### CULVER CITY ADOPTS NEW LOGO

The Culver City Council-Redevelopment Agency adopted a new Culver City logo at their meeting on September 10, 2001.

Designed by Sussman/Prejza & Company, the word "Culver" (red) is said to be a script typeface based on the marquee of the Culver Theatre which draws from Culver City's history. The word "City" (black) is in a more modern typeface designed to reflect Culver City's present and future.

According to the CCRA press release, "The logo is a bright/vibrant representation of Culver City - a "safe, clean and green" community, proud of our 'small town.' This logo represents the past history that highlights Culver City's long-standing prominence in the movie industry and looks forward and excited about the on-going evolution of the City."

The release quotes Mayor Ed Wolkowitz: "The new logo will be a very visible component of the City's promotional and marketing activities. The logo will never replace the City Seal. Rather,



### THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Thirty years ago, in April 1971, the Culver City Council established a Culver City Redevelopment Agency. The first major project of the Agency was the Fox Hills Mall, built on the Fox Hills property that was annexed to Culver City in 1964.

Over the years, the Agency has taken on many redevelopment projects, including the Filmland Building (now Sony Pictures Plaza) sponsored the Charettes; to get direction on the redevelopment of Downtown Culver City and the eastern portion of Washington Boulevard; and most recently, a West Washington Visioning project. The restoration of the historic Sony Pictures movie lot was under the purview of the Redevelopment Agency as is the Hayden Tract and the Costco site.

### EDITOR'S COLUMN

Mark your calendars for the October 16th General Meeting and the elections for the new Board of your Historical Society. Come also to learn more about our outstanding Police Force from our special guest speaker, CC Chief of Police, Ted Cooke.

A chance encounter on an eBay auction site brought out the wonderful generosity of one of our members, Fran Brevig. When the auction was completed, Fran felt it was more important to donate the Culver City Rose Parade pins to the Society's archives and we thank her for thoughtfulness.

As the country moves forward, the Historical Society joins with the rest of the world in remembering those lost in the World Trade Center tragedy. We look to the future and to the unity, strength and forbearance of our fellow Americans to see clearly, act wisely and embrace the ideals set forth by our forefathers. We salute America!

The CCRA has offered opportunities to involve the community in the strategic planning for Culver City and programs like Façade Improvement to achieve the goals of redevelopment. Coincidentally, the Culver Theatre, whose marquee inspired the logo, is scheduled for redevelopment in a joint venture of the CCRA and the Center Theatre Group.

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# REEL LIFE IN CULVER CITY

by Ross Hawkins



## RAND BROOKS & THE ROSE PARADE: 70 YEARS LATER

In 1932, Rand Brooks rode horseback in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. He was thirteen years old and the only thing he remembers about the event was that he rode a big bay horse that wore a wreath of roses.

Seventy years later, Brooks – who was featured in David Selznick's *Gone With The Wind* and played William Boyd's sidekick "Lucky" in the Hopalong Cassidy series – has been asked to ride again in the 2002 Rose Parade.

Brooks retired from films in 1954 and currently raises horses in the beautiful Santa Ynez Valley. He plans to ride his national champion in the Western Pleasure and Saddle Seat Division, an Andalusia Bay named "Kurdo," in the



L-R : Laurel & Hardy with Rand Brooks

New Year's Day event.

Brooks was placed under contract to MGM in 1938 and appeared in one of the early Andy Hardy films. He was featured in Luise Rainer's last film at MGM, *Dramatic School*, an uninspired rehash of *Stage Door* which also starred Lana Turner and Paulette Goddard. He recalled that Rainer, who had won two academy awards for the films *The Good Earth* and *The Great Ziegfeld*, was feuding with studio boss L.B. Mayer at the time and was somewhat difficult to work with.

Concerning the classic *Gone With The Wind*, Brooks confided that he hated his role as Vivian Leigh's simpering first husband whom she marries at the onset of the Civil War. "I had a good scene with Clark Gable where I challenged him to a duel, but nobody remembers that." Rand wanted to play the character

a little bit stronger in his scenes with Vivian Leigh, but director Victor Fleming insisted that he play it as a "lovesick puppy." "I did it Fleming's way," he recalled, "and I was typecast from then on." He was happier as Hopalong Cassidy's sidekick "Lucky" in 1946.

After a tour of duty during World War II, Rand returned to Culver City where he lived on Fairbanks Way with his wife Lois, comedian Stan Laurel's daughter. He was also friend and neighbor to Martha and Woody Tolkien and stuntman/actor Carl Pitti.

We look forward to seeing Rand riding again on New Year's Day 2002.

For more information on the multi-faceted career of Rand Brooks, please go to his website: [www.aberdeenfarms.com](http://www.aberdeenfarms.com).

## VOLUNTEERS ATTEND 1ST WORKSHOP AT WLAC

The first volunteer workshop to begin to sort and catalogue the Society's many collections of artifacts, memorabilia and photos was held on Saturday, September 8 at the new CCHS office on the West Los Angeles College campus.

Museum Cataloging Chair Susan Berg introduced the first volunteers to the trials and joys of archiving this wonderful collection. Deepest thanks go to Steve Newton, Martha Gunther, Fred Machado, Marc Wanamaker, Julie Lugo Cerra, Museum Chair Ross Hawkins and Scott Malsin for sharing their time and energies.

Scott Malsin has a computer to donate to the Society if a compatible monitor can be found. If you can help, please call Scott at (310) 398-3183 for the details.

We encourage members and friends to attend the volunteer workshops which will be held the second Saturday of each month, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Society's new office on the West LA College campus.

For more information, please call the new CCHS telephone line: (310) 287-4558.

## Calendar

Oct. 13:	Volunteers Workshop at WLAC
Oct. 16:	<b>General Membership Meeting</b>
Nov. 10:	Volunteers Workshop at WLAC
Dec. 8:	Volunteers Workshop at WLAC

## ANNUAL PICNIC BRINGS FRIENDS TOGETHER

by Cathy Zermeno  
Program Chairperson

The Society's Annual "Picnic in the Park" was held on July 17th at Carlson Park. It was a great turnout, and from the smiles of the many members and friends who attended, it was a huge success.

The food was delicious as always and the desserts were especially yummy! I want to personally thank everyone for contributing to the potluck picnic, with a special thanks to our dear friend John Riordan for his famous cake.

It was a wonderful opportunity to renew longtime friendships as well as making new ones. See you all again next year!

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY SENDS BEST WISHES TO DEAR FRIENDS

by Eloise Mc Nerney  
Sunshine Chairperson

Some of our closest friends and supporters have not been up to par of late and we'd like to send them our warmest best wishes: "May each new day find you feeling better - there are so many people thinking nice thoughts about you and wishing you a quick, easy recovery" (*Susan Polis Schutz*):

Founding Society member and past President Lupe Smith has recently suffered a stroke and is now recuperating at home.

We understand our favorite "baker," John Riordan, is feeling better.

Glad to hear that founding Society member Kay Lyou seems to be on the upswing after her recent treatments.

Ralph Larkin, who has been feeling poorly but wonderfully looked after by his dear wife and past CCHS Parliamentarian, Edna Larkin, will celebrate his 90th birthday with family and friends on Oct. 16.

And we send our condolences to the family and friends of Vera Cavanaugh who passed away this past July.

We appreciate hearing from the community to let us know if any of our friends need a lifting of the spirits. Please call Eloise McNerney at (310) 398-7086.





## Become a member of the Culver City Historical Society Today!

Join others in preserving the history of the "Heart of Screenland" and the efforts to create the Culver City Heritage Museum. We can't do it without you!

### TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

☐ Benefactor (\$1000)  
☐ Family Lifetime Member (\$500)  
☐ Patron Member (\$100)  
☐ Family Member (\$25)  
☐ Individual Member (\$15)

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Please make checks payable to **The Culver City Historical Society** and mail to  
P.O. Box 3428, Culver City, CA 90231-3428. For further information, call (310) 287-4558.

Contributions of both historic and social significance as well as monetary donations are encouraged, and the CCHS  
IRS tax exempt status may make such contributions tax deductible.

### 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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## Culver City Historical Society

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