

# Culver Historical Highlights

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## ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES CLINIC OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC

SOCIETY TO STAGE PREMIERE EVENT ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2002

### AN INFORMAL APPRAISAL CLINIC

by Julie Lugo Cerra

On Saturday, September 21st, on the day Culver City begins its 86th year as an incorporated city, the Culver City Historical Society will celebrate with a wonderful free event!

From 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, in association with West Los Angeles College, there will be a free "Antiques and Collectibles Clinic" in the college's Fine Arts Building. This is your opportunity to bring up to five of your favorite bits of Culver City or movie memorabilia, collectibles or antiques (*no furniture or vehicles*), to be appraised by our team of specialists, Marc Wanamaker and Micheal Goodrow.

The free Clinic will be an informal appraisal – for informational uses only – and cannot be relied upon for insurance or actual resale purposes, but will be an excellent occasion to learn more about your favorite collectible items.



What might be the value of this photo?



Learn more about your favorite collectibles  
(Who is the famous star on the far left?)

### MARC WANAMAKER

We are pleased that longtime supporter and current Museum Chair, Marc Wanamaker will be one of our specialists. Marc is a native of Los Angeles and has studied art, music, theatre and history at schools in West Hollywood, Hollywood, West Los Angeles, Northridge and Los Angeles proper. In 1971, he embarked on the researching and writing of an encyclopedia on the history of motion picture studios in the United States.

In 1977, Marc was influenced by a cousin who was a world-class art expert, and began a journey researching art, fine art and antiques. After many years as a fine art scout, he has discovered and researched several important and historical pieces with international repercus-



CCHS Museum Chair  
Marc Wanamaker.

sions. He is currently a movie memorabilia consultant to all the leading auction houses in the world as well as sitting on the boards of many historical societies in the area. He is officially an historical consultant with the Los Angeles County Museum, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, California Historical Society and the California State Library at Sacramento among others.

### MICHEAL GOODROW

We are also privileged to have Micheal Goodrow, who grew up in Culver City and helped operate a family-owned nursery school on Venice Blvd., working with Marc. Micheal studied music, art and theatre arts in the area and is an alumnus of the Los Angeles City College theatre arts department. He became a regular on the '70s television series *Eight Is Enough* and you will recognize him from other appearances in films and television. He began his interest in "collectibles" at a young age and became an experienced flea market and antique show regular learning the ropes of collecting many types of items, from Hawaiian shirts to Art Deco collectibles. An accomplished musician, Micheal has won an Emmy Award for his work writing the music for children's programming.

**NOTE:** Both the extremely popular CCHS historic "throws" and the CCHS license plates will be available for sale at the Clinic.

Parking is in Lot #8, directly across from the Fine Arts Building. From Overland Avenue, take Freshman Drive and make a right turn onto Albert Vera Street to Lot #8. For more information: (310) 287-4558.

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## OCTOBER 15TH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Special Guest Maxine Mytar to Discuss Early Film History

The next General Membership Meeting of the Culver City Historical Society will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2002 at 7:00 pm in the Lethbridge Garden Room at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City.

Our planned guest speaker for the Fall General Meeting will be Maxine Mytar, a resident of Culver City for nearly half a century who has worked at several film studios including MGM and Hal Roach. Active in local civic affairs for many years, Ms. Mytar has recently published a book of her memoirs entitled *The River and Beyond* which she will discuss. [see "Reel Culver City" column for more information, pg. 3.]

The public is invited to enjoy the free program. Students are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served following the program. For more information, please call Ross Hawkins at (310) 287-4558.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Steven Rose

## Culver Historical Highlights

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As the first anniversary of September 11, 2001 is commemorated in thousands of ways across America and the world, we all will look back at the changes it brought to the ways we live our lives. I can not forget how this event so close to all of us will become an historical part of our society and in future years how it will be written about by historians and taught to our children, grandchildren and their grandchildren. The way we carrying on our lives today will reflect in tomorrow's history.

I believe that as members of the Culver City Historical Society our mission is to preserve history. As citizens of Culver City and America our goal is to make sure that the history we make today will be something that we can all be proud of as it is written down in future history books and preserved in the archives of government and in the City's organizations that we all belong to. Let each of us as members of the Culver City Historical Society work to make our history that which we can be proud of today and tomorrow.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our first "Antiques and Collectibles Clinic" at West Los Angeles College on September 21, 2002. Bring up to five items and learn more about the value of your antiques and collectibles. Come out and join the fun!



## Notes from Your City Historian

by Julie Lugo Cerra



First City Hall on Main Street

## CULVER CITY'S 85TH ANNIVERSARY

On September 20, 1917 the City of Culver City was incorporated, so this month marks its 85th anniversary! In 1917, the city's elected council was called a Board of Trustees and the following elected officials took office: R.P. Davidson, Dan F. Coombs, Walter Edwards, V.R. Day, and B.J. Higuera, with Chas. F. Shillito as City Treasurer and C.N. Rosenthal as the City Clerk.



Culver City "Board of Trustees" (1917)

## WHAT DID THE CITY LOOK LIKE IN 1917?

There was one major studio, at 10202 W. Washington Boulevard, (now Sony Pictures), the beginning of Thomas Ince's first studio in town with glassed-in silent film stages behind the colonnade. Ballona Creek was a tree and watercress-lined waterway, still meandering through the valley. Main Street had been filed with the County Recorder and building had begun.

## HARRY CULVER LOCATES ON MAIN ST.

City founder Harry Culver's real estate offices were located on Main St., where he would eventually have a sales force of hundreds. He had become the proud father of daughter Patricia the month before the city was incorporated and people were just discovering what a creative entrepreneur Culver was. He used a variety of publicity promotions such as kleig lights, marathons, bus rides for a "free lunch," and rewarding the parents of the "Prettiest Baby Contest" with a lot in town.

That initial year, the first resolution was adopted. It provided for the appointment of a City Attorney at \$50 a month. Resolution #4 authorized the lease of the upper floor of the theatre at \$15 per month. That site is now the Culver Hotel. It was a mere year before the city officials felt they should, "in accordance with government conservation, discontinue the illuminated sign over City Hall" until the general condition of the county improved.

As 1918 continued, the trustees adopted Resolution #16, which established the entire city as one voting precinct. The polls were located at City Hall. By 1920, all of 37 votes were cast!

And so the city conducted its business and grew dramatically from the 1.2 square miles centered about Main Street. By 1971 it decided to redevelop itself, and we continue living its history – play a part!

**Calendar reminder:** This year's Machado Reunion will be held at the Centinela Adobe on September 25th.

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.

The CCHS Newsletter is published quarterly.

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN

We are very gratified to have received many compliments from our sister historical societies on the look and content of *Culver Historical Highlights*. We believe this to be a reflection of the support and participation of our wonderful membership and mirrors the special pride and abiding interest our community has shown the Society and the City's fascinating history through the years.

As we continue to grow, we hope to expand the newsletter to eight pages and feature more in-depth research articles and historical pieces along with some of the marvelous photos that are in our archives. Museum Chair Marc Wanamaker and Museum Cataloging Chair Susan Berg are hard at work creating a public-friendly environment where not only our members but serious researchers can view and explore the treasure trove of historic items and memorabilia that the Society has amassed over the past twenty years – and we always welcome additions!

Remember, we can't do it without you – it's **YOUR** Culver City Historical Society!



# REEL LIFE IN CULVER CITY

by Ross Hawkins



## MAXINE MYTAR TO SPEAK AT OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

We are very fortunate to have Maxine Mytar as our special guest speaker for our upcoming General Meeting on Tuesday, October 15th.

Maxine has lived in Culver City for nearly half a century. She began working as a secretary in the script department at MGM in 1943. During the 1950s, she worked at the Hal Roach Studios, when such early television classics as "My Little Margie" and "Amos and Andy" were being produced. She was still working there when the studio closed and has vivid memories of the sad ending of arguably the movies' greatest laugh factory. Later, she moved to Twentieth Century Fox where she was Associate Director of



Maxine Mytar

Business Affairs/Feature Films and was an eye witness to the behind-the-scenes "war" that was fought over the making of *Cleopatra*, along with the demise of Fox's magnificent back lot to create Century City.

Active in Culver City civic affairs for many years, Maxine has recently written and published a book titled *The River and Beyond*. In her forward, Maxine writes, "An old African proverb says that every time a person dies, a library burns down. So before my library burns, I have set down this collection of stories in order to leave any inquiring descendants a glimpse into my life..." Maxine will be delighted to sign copies of her book which be available for purchase.

Maxine's son Randall Mytar will also join in the discussion with a slide presentation of never-before-seen photos of the old MGM



Maxine at Hal Roach Studios (1952)

Lots 2 and 3. Randall, who has been an architectural illustrator for the last thirty-three years after graduating from the Art Center College of Design, is also a jazz musician. His group, the J.L. Randall Trio, recently recorded an album while performing locally at the Jazz Bakery.

You won't want to miss it!

## POPULARITY OF CCHS "THROW" EXTENDS PRODUCTION

The response to the Society's custom "throw" blanket has been overwhelming, with many repeat customers! As a result, several additional throws have been produced and will be available at the "Appraisal Clinic" on September 21 as well as by calling the Society directly.

These treasured and collectible keepsakes have been designed to capture the spirit of Culver City, the "Heart of Screenland," with the depiction of various historical landmarks and elements unique to this area. It is created from a selection of historical photos chosen to highlight the City's heritage. Among the historic sites included are the City Hall, the Citizen Building, the Hull Building, the Culver Hotel, and Helms Bakery. Five historic film studios are represented including the famous MGM colonnade on Washington Blvd.

Created by Hudson & Co., these throws are made of 100% cotton, Jacquard woven in the U.S.A., preshrunk, color-fast and machine washable. Measuring approximately 48 x 67 inches and fringed on all four sides, these throws are beautiful, practical and affordable at \$40.00 each. Please call Reba Yudess at (310) 287-4558 for additional information.

The Society is proud to offer these throws to commemorate our City's heritage and all surplus proceeds will go to the Culver City Heritage Museum Capital Campaign.

## A FOND GOODBYE TO BEVERLY VIOLIN

by Ross Hawkins

On May 5, 2002, Culver City lost a good friend when longtime resident and community activist Beverly Violin passed away.

A member of several organizations, including the Culver City Historical Society, the Board of the Culver City Senior Center, the Culver City Democratic Club, the Culver City Homeowners' Association and an alternate on the Culver City Landlord/Tenant Mediation Board, Beverly was awarded a commendation by the Culver City Council for her service to the community. Accepting the award at the August 26th Council meeting was her husband Efrem, just two weeks before what would have been their 50th wedding anniversary.

I personally got to know Efrem and Beverly when they graciously helped promote the publicity for two fundraisers for the Historical Society last year. I later learned how closely Efrem was connected to the film industry: his father, Misha Violin, was acclaimed as a world famous conductor and

## SOCIETY TO PRODUCE COLLECTIBLE HISTORIC NOTECARD SETS

Historical Society Ways & Means Chair Martha Gunther announced that the Society would soon have its first collectible Historic Notecard Set available for sale.

The premiere limited edition set will consist of eight cards featuring four different historic photos: St. Augustine's Church, the first La Ballona Elementary School, the original Culver City Hall and the Willet Studio.

While it is hoped that this first set in a series of annual limited editions to be produced by the Society will be available at the September 21st Antiques & Collectibles Clinic at West Los Angeles College, it will definitely be offered at the General Meeting on October 14th. Priced at \$10 per set, these Historic Notecards will make wonderful gifts for the holidays and other special occasions.

## CALENDAR

- Sep. 13: Culver City's 85th Anniversary
- Sep. 21: Antiques & Collectibles Clinic: 10am-4pm
- OCT. 15: GEN. MEMBERSHIP MEETING: 7pm

violinist, and wrote the musical scores for the silent movies *Phantom of The Opera*, *The Sea Hawk* and *Ben Hur*.

The wonderfully energetic and dynamic team of "Ef and Bev" contributed to the Culver City community for more than 35 years and we wish Efrem and the Violin family our sincerest best wishes.



Efrem & Beverly on their Wedding Day, 1952

## RENEW YOUR CCHS MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Please support your Historical Society and renew your membership  
- We can't do it without you!

## 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)

\_\_\_\_ Corporate Sponsor (\$500)  
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\_\_\_\_ Organization (\$15)  
\_\_\_\_ Student Member (\$5)

Name/Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

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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 Center Flowers.....	(310) 839-2344	Spartan Supply Co. ....	Rick Betts (310) 837-5351
Culver City Employees Federal Credit Union.....	City Hall	The Antique Guild .....	(310) 838-3131
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## Culver City Historical Society

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