

Culver Historical Highlights

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SUMMER 2001

CC HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAS A NEW HOME !

COMMUNITY TURNS OUT FOR MAY 22 OPEN HOUSE

by Don Rogers

On Tuesday May 22 the Culver City Historical Society held its "Open House" to officially celebrate the grand opening of its new office at the West Los Angeles College.

Joining in the celebration of the "opening" of the new Society home in Bungalow B1 - Room 101 at the north side of the campus were WLAC President Frank Quiambao and members of his staff along with CC Vice Mayor Carol Gross and Councilmember Steve Rose.

Also attending were President Elaine Alexander and Regina Barton from the Venice Historical Society, and WLAC representatives Mario Purugganan, Vice President of Administrative Services, and Lee Felthoven, Facilities Manager, among others.

Guests were given an informal tour of the site which will house the Society's extensive collection of artifacts and memorabilia, while provid-



L-R Don Rogers, Carol Gross & Frank Quiambao

ing a location for archival, research and preservation efforts as well as viewing in specific display areas.

While thoroughly enjoying the delicious spread catered by Victor Jr.'s, all shared in the excitement of now having a specific location to meet and work together on the many projects and



Venice Hist. Soc. Pres.
Elaine Alexander



L-R Julie Lugo Cerra, Vic Mammana & Ross Hawkins

programs the Society oversees and presents.

The Culver City Historical Society was founded in 1980 to preserve the history of the area. Members have actively worked over the past two decades to collect and catalog memorabilia, photos and printed material. It also sponsors historic tours, lectures, documentaries, and has marked nine historic sites to date.

Now we turn to the major task of sorting and cataloguing all of the material that we have accumulated. To start, "office hours" will be from 1-4 pm on Fridays and 9 am -1 pm on Saturdays beginning September 7.

* * *

CCHS ANNUAL "PICNIC IN THE PARK"

• JULY 17th GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING •

Summer Time! Picnic Time! It's time for the annual Culver City Historical Society's "Picnic in the Park" – so come out and renew friendships, meet new people and make new friends, and enjoy delicious food and drink and a summer's evening for a great community get-together.

This year's picnic will again be held at Carlson Park (corner of Braddock & Le Bourget) on Tuesday, July 17, 2001 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm with dinner served at 6:00 pm. The picnic is potluck and members are asked to bring a main dish, salad or dessert for six people plus themselves. Plates, utensils and soft drinks will be provided by the Society.

The public is invited and members are encouraged to bring family and friends. For more information and to let us know what you'll be bringing, or if you would like to help with the picnic planning, please call Cathy Zermeno at (310) 839-7688.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Don Rogers



May 22, 2001 is a date Society members will long remember because it marked the grand opening of the new Historical Society office site at West Los Angeles College. With a location from which to work and meet, we now must begin to sort and catalogue all of the wonderful items we have accumulated over the past 20 years. If you would like to volunteer or have items that you would like to add to the Society's collection, please call Ross Hawkins, Vice President Museum at (310) 204-6920.

We had a very successful booth at the Fiesta in May, raising additional funds for the Society. Thanks to all who helped staff the booth, and to those who conducted the Historical Society bus tours on Saturday. A special thanks to Julie Lugo Cerra for her efforts in creating the narrative for the tours.

Ongoing discussions for the development of a permanent Culver City Heritage Museum site in the basement of the Culver City Julian Dixon Library continue. More information will be presented at the next General Meeting which will be held at our annual pot luck picnic at Carlson Park on July 17 (see page one).

Your Board of Directors has been working very hard on a number of projects this year, and is very excited about the progress the Society is making. We hope you are as well and we encourage you to get involved.

See you at the picnic in July!

Don Rogers

Notes from Your City Historian

by Julie Lugo Cerra

IT'S A SIGN!

On Tuesday evening, June 26th, a beacon began shining again from the historic Beacon Laundry Building. The neon lights alternately started flashing Beacon's and Helms, under a rotating beacon above. The structure's rehabilitation by Walter N. Marks Inc. is scheduled for completion in September. It will become a part of the Helms Furniture District. I would not be surprised if Wally has plans for the Helms sign renovation next!

Special thanks to Jim Quirarte, who helped rescue volumes of bound Evening Star News newspapers. They are being donated by Bob Thompson of the Hal Thompson Co. (Industrial Realtors). These will be archived in the Society's WLAC facility in the near future.

For those who have an interest in the Culver City Airport, I thought you might enjoy this unusual photo. We knew that Harry Culver flew his plane out of the Culver City Airport, but did you know the Goodyear Blimp flew in and out, too? Photo is courtesy of "cuz" Fred Machado.



Culver City teachers will have a teachers manual for community and local history in the fall. It was my pleasure to write this, the first revised manual since the '60s. It is also on CD, with a companion documentary produced by CC High School's Visual and Performing Arts Academy.

Special thanks to fellow docents, Susan Berg, Sandy Burton and Michele Cerra who joined in the fun taking "Historic Highlights Tours of Culver City" during the Fiesta La Ballona.

The community is missing a very special person, Mike Balkman. Words are totally inadequate to describe the sense of loss of a friend, a hard worker, and a former mayor and councilmember, who saw things clearly and operated from that stance. Mike was always willing to help, especially when children were involved. He is missed every day. Mike died in April. He will always be a positive part of Culver City history.

WE WELCOME THESE NEW CCHS MEMBERS:

Louella Benson-Garcia

Cantalini's Salerno Restaurant

Lisa Schwab

Charles & Susan Deen

Steve Newton

Culver Historical Highlights

PO BOX 3428 • CULVER CITY, CA • 90231-3428
(310) 838-1073

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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Goodyear blimp at CC airport

EDITOR'S COLUMN

It was a wonderful moment: the dedication of the new Culver City Historical Society office at the West Los Angeles College! On May 22 the Society's Board welcomed the community and sister historical societies to our new base of operations and it was truly a "grand opening!"

Now the real work begins - and we need your support more than ever. Mark your calendars for September 7 and plan on joining with others who will be working to sort and catalogue the many wonderful items the Society has collected over the past 20+ years in preparation for the Culver City Heritage Museum.

This is a wonderful first step toward making the dream of a museum a reality - and WE NEED YOU!

REEL LIFE IN CULVER CITY

by Ross Hawkins



FIESTA LA BALLONA 2001 A GREAT SUCCESS!

Once again the Culver City community came out to enjoy our city's heritage at the annual Fiesta La Ballona on the May 19-20 weekend at Veterans Memorial Park. The CCHS' booth was well attended, earning the Society more than \$800 during the two-day event!

Special thanks go to Sandy and Chuck Burton for helping to set up, Julie Lugo Cerra for overseeing the very popular city tours, and to Stu Freeman for obtaining such great raffle prizes.

We are truly indebted to those who provided the raffle prizes: Jackie McCandless (*strawberry cream cake & other tasty treats*), Martha and Sol Sigall (*a cartoon cell of "Bugs Bunny"*), Charlie Halstead and the Sagebrush Cantina (*a tablecloth depicting the history of Culver City*), Julie Lugo Cerra (*her recently published cookbook - "Fire Burn and Cauldron Bubble"*), and Ralph Larkin (*his video, "The Last Ride of the Pacific Electric," a short documentary on the closing of the Pacific Electric Rail Line in 1960*).



Sol & Martha Sigall & "Bugs Bunny"

As Vice President, Museum, I am especially pleased to have our new office at the WLAC - it is definitely the first major step toward preserving the archives of "The Heart of Screenland."

I'd like to add my personal thanks to those who worked hard to make our "open house" such a success: Pres.

Frank Quiambao, Mario Purugganan and Lee Felthoven of WLAC; Victor Mammana, owner of Victor Jr's, who supplied the wonderful buffet; Pres. Elaine Alexander and Regina Barton of the Venice Historical Society who were kind enough to provide the photos of the occasion shown in the newsletter; and to the more than 100 well-wishers who came out in support of the Society.

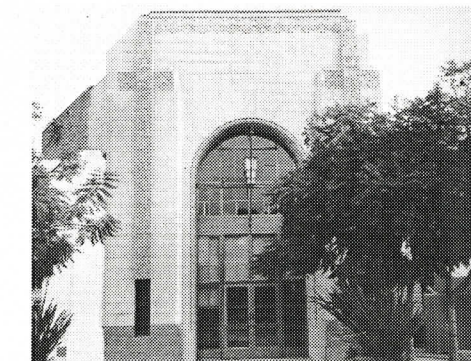
Beginning Friday, September 7, the office will be open for workshop/study sessions. The schedule: Fridays from 1-4 pm and Saturdays 9am -1pm.

Members are encouraged to sign up to help catalog memorabilia, photos and printed materials that have been donated and collected over the last twenty-one years. One of the first items to receive attention will be Harry Culver's personal scrapbook that he created after flying across the United States in 1929 (see photo).

The Society is currently seeking donations of the following items for its new office: a computer and an answering machine. Anyone who may be able to supply these items as well as those wishing to sign up for the workshop/study sessions are invited to all or fax me at (310) 204-6920.



Ross Hawkins with Harry Culver scrapbook



The Citizen Building

HISTORIC SIGHTINGS

by Sandy Burton

HISTORICAL SITE #4 THE CITIZEN BUILDING 9355 CULVER BLVD.

The Citizens Publishing and Printing Company, established in 1923 by Eugene Donovan, was the oldest independent newspaper under continued family ownership in the Crescent Bay District. The site on which the Citizen Building was erected in 1929 is a portion of the original Rancho La Ballona Spanish land-grant.

Eugene and Catherine Donovan, known to their many friends as Gene and Kitty, had a dream. They, with their son, Roy, would someday create one of the most modern up-to-date publishing and printing establishments in the Crescent Bay area which would be housed in an architecturally beautiful building of stone, steel, concrete and brick that would represent their faith in the future of their adopted home, Culver City.

Their first step in 1927 was to purchase land at 9355 Culver Blvd. and to employ Orville E. Clark to design the building. Mr. Clark prepared his plans from ideas and designs submitted by Kitty "to whom is given full credit for its successful accomplishment."

In 1928, O'Hanion & Flansburg was selected to begin the construction of the building. Gene Donovan's final instructions before work began was that wherever possible, all materials, supplies and labor would be obtained from local sources in Culver City.

When construction was finished in 1929, the News Printing Company that had been established in 1923 under the management of his son, Roy Donovan, and the Western Citizen, founded by Gene Donovan, were consolidated into the CITIZEN, Publishers-Printers.

On Friday, December 6, 1929, the first "new" CITIZEN edition was printed. On Saturday, January 1, 1930, the public was cordially invited to attend the public opening of the CITIZEN'S new home. More than 2,000 people attended the opening.

The dream was complete and Gene and Kitty numbered among their many accounts such names as Thomas Ince, Hal Roach, Selznick, DeMille, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and R.K.O. Pathe.

The Citizen Building was dedicated as the CCHS Historical Site #4 on Thursday, October 18, 1984.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (\$1000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor (\$500) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Lifetime Member (\$500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Lifetime Member (\$250) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron Member (\$100) | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Member (\$50) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member (\$25) | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization (\$15) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Member (\$15) | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Member (\$5) |

Name/Company: _____ Telephone: _____

Contact Person: _____ Fax: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Email: _____

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) 838-1073.

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.

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Please show YOUR support by your patronage of their services and products.

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Culver City Historical Society

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