

# Culver Historical Highlights

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Summer 2007

## CULVER CITY CELEBRATES ITS 90<sup>TH</sup> ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2007! CCHS Presented with Proclamation for Historic Preservation Month

### SOCIETY PRESERVES PHOTO PLAQUES OF CITY OFFICIALS

On May 14, 2007, the City Council presented the Culver City Historical Society with a proclamation in celebration of Historic Preservation Month. Also at the council meeting, the vintage photo plaque collection of Culver City elected officials from the early days of city government to the present that the Society has saved and preserved was unveiled.

(See related story on pg. 5.)



To commemorate Historical Preservation Month, the CC City Council presented a proclamation to the CC Historical Society. Mayor Alan Corlin (back row at right) and Councilmembers Steve Rose, Gary Silbiger and Vice Mayor Carol Gross (from L) join in the presentation to CCHS President Cathy Zermeno (center with proclamation) and members of the Society on May 14, 2007.



### CITY'S FOUNDER ENVISIONED A "WELL-ORGANIZED MODERN CITY . . . A CREDIT TO THE COMMUNITY"

[This brief history by City Historian Julie Lugo Cerra is taken from the Culver City website at [http://www.culvercity.org/cityinfo/history/harry\\_culver.html](http://www.culvercity.org/cityinfo/history/harry_culver.html)]

#### HARRY CULVER: THE CONSUMMATE ENTREPRENEUR

Harry Hazel Culver was born in Milford, Nebraska in 1880. His father was a National Guard Brigadier General and strict disciplinarian.

Before landing in California in 1910, Culver had a myriad of experiences which helped mold the entrepreneur he became. Although underage, Culver enlisted in the Spanish-American War, working his way from trumpeter to sergeant. He spent three years at the University of Nebraska, financing his education through assorted jobs, including taking in laundry.

Culver traveled to the Philippines in 1901 where he went into the mercantile business. He also became a reporter for the Manila Times. His next job was a three and a half-year stint as a special agent in the Customs department.

#### CULVER FINDS HIS DREAM IN CALIFORNIA

In Southern California, Culver took a job with I. N. Van Nuys in real estate. As the story goes, after Van Nuys offered to make him a manager, he went out on his own.

After intense study, Culver pinpointed this area for a city – between the pueblo of Los Angeles and Abbot Kinney's resort of Venice



Harry H. Culver is on the left surveying development plans.

– and announced his plans at the California Club in Los Angeles in 1913.

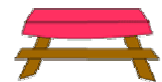
He formed the Culver Investment Company, located his office on Main Street, and when local voters rejected annexation to Los Angeles in 1914, he worked toward his goal of a balanced residential/commercial community.

After watching filmmaker Thomas Ince film a western on Ballona Creek, Culver convinced Ince to move his Inceville Studios from the beach to Washington Blvd. The landmark colonnade on Washington Blvd. was built in 1915, and Culver City, incorporated in 1917, was quickly becoming "The Heart of Screenland."



## CCHS Annual "Picnic in the Park"

• JULY 18<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING •



It's Summer Time – and the annual Culver City Historical Society's "Picnic in the Park." So come join friends and neighbors to relax and enjoy delicious food and drink and a summer's evening for a great community get-together. Updates on the exciting new developments and happenings of the CCHS ARC will be highlighted along with brief tours of the new facility.

We'll be meeting at Veterans Park (NW corner of the park off Culver Blvd. at the B-B-Q pit area) on Wednesday, July 18, 2007 from 6:00 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.

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 or email Marty Nicholson at [Martynic99@aol.com](mailto:Martynic99@aol.com).

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Cathy Zermeno



It's "Picnic Time" again! Time to get together with longtime friends as well as welcome new ones to the Society's annual picnic.

And this year we have something very special to share – the opening of the "Culver City Historical Society Archives & Resource Center" (ARC). During the picnic, we will open our doors for brief tours so that you may see what all the hard work so far has accomplished. Also, we encourage your suggestions as to what you think should be displayed and included in ARC. We still have a ways to go ..... but it's lookin' good!

Hope you have a chance to stop by the City Council Chambers to see the wonderful photo portraits of former City officials that the Society has put on display for present and future generations to enjoy and appreciate. We give very special thanks to CCHS Government Liaison Julie Lugo Cerra who worked so hard to coordinate this permanent display for the city. And our many thanks to former CAO Dale Jones and Sam Cerra and Steve Newton who helped to save and protect these treasures for the many years leading up to this exhibit.

I want to express the thanks of the whole Society to Martha Sigall who has just turned 90-years-young, and who has accepted the position of Vice President, Ways & Means. We're truly grateful to our longtime member who has agreed to fill this vacancy.

And a reminder that September 20, 2007 marks Culver City's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday! While some keynote activities have been planned (see page one), many ideas for the celebration are still being reviewed. You'll be hearing more about this very important city milestone at the picnic and we welcome your thoughts as well.

So many exciting things are happening now that it is a terrific time to be a member of the Culver City Historical Society – and we encourage our members to spread the word and bring in new folks to enjoy the special heritage of our wonderful community.

See you at the Picnic!

Best, *Cathy Zermeno*

## Notes from Your City Historian

by Julie Lugo Cerra



years. If you know any high school students who would like to be a part of this program, for which they earn community service credit, please encourage them. Teacher extraordinaire Drew Seymour at Culver High is our contact (CC High School: 310-842-4200). (see photos on pg. 6)

All of the third graders at El Marino School celebrated May as Historic Preservation month with us – starting with a visit to the council chambers for a primer on community civics, then a walk around downtown. It was especially nice to share the first installation of council members' (and early trustees) photos with all four groups!

### HISTORY CAN BE A BUSY JOB!

Of late, historic activities have been varied and great fun! In addition to my usual column in the CC News each week, I have been out on the "talk circuit" quite a bit.

It was my pleasure to speak to the Manhattan Beach Historical Society in May – Historic Preservation Month – at their charming museum in a historic house in Polliwag Park. My Powerpoint presentation covered the role of the movie industry in the development of Culver City.

Lion's Club member Charles Deen asked for some help with information on their charter members which I presented at one of their meetings recently. That was fun – as their initial members included Harry Culver, Clarence V. Loop (first president of Culver City's Board of Trustees) and other notables, like Cecil Truschel (CC Police Chief) who was related to our own Jozelle Smith. Joz is still the only second generation councilmember, and of course, her son Paul is also a "Lion" ....

### LOCAL CC STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN AND ENJOY OUR HISTORY

Living History is over for this year, and it was tough saying goodbye to the seniors who have participated for the past three



KTLA Morning News was broadcast live on May 18, 2007, from 7-10 am. in Town Plaza. (In the distance, our City Council is being seated for interviews.)

### CULVER CITY: A TV STAR!

How nice to have local TV station KTLA televise live from Culver City on their Morning Show on May 18<sup>th</sup> from 7-10 am (3 full hours!). Culver City has a lot to offer, and they did a nice job from profiling our past

## Culver Historical Highlights

PO Box 3428 • Culver City, CA • 90231-3428  
(310) 839 - 7688

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.  
Editor & Publisher.....Judy Stangler  
Contributing Writers..... Julie Lugo Cerra  
Marc Wanamaker, Sandy Burton, Steve Newton  
Printed by.....Mr. Printer

### Officers and Committee Chairs

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### Editor's Column

"90 years" – where did the time go?!!

So much history, so many stories. The CC Historical Society is trying to document it all and we definitely need your help to do it.

There are lots of things, little and big, that can help us accurately chronicle our wonderful city's history. Look through your family photo albums, you might just find pictures with old buildings, special city events, various sports activities and other unique views. Remember, the Fiesta La Ballona has been around for over 50 years – you might just find some candid shots of its early days when there were big parades and other city-wide events!

With our new resource facility, ARC, we can now accept items of historical significance, get them archived, and available for displaying and for academic research. It's a new day, based on the history of this very special city – please join us as we move forward!

**Remember, it's YOUR Historical Society—we can't succeed without YOU!**

to the history-making changes now happening downtown!

Many of our members – including the City Council, Steve Newton with his 1930 CC police car, the Culver Hotel, along with your historian – got air time. This, in addition to all the press – NY Times, LA Times, Tour and Leisure, California Tour and Travel – is great recognition for our little oasis. Harry is still right – "All Roads lead to Culver City!"

(cont'd. pg.7)

# REEL



## CULVER CITY

by Marc Wanamaker

[Ed. Note: Marc Wanamaker is on assignment. In his absence, we are reprinting the wonderful article that famed director George Sidney wrote for the 2000 Millennium Winter issue of Culver Historical Highlights.]

George Sidney, along with an extraordinary list of film credits, was a CCHS Patron member.

Among his many classic films include *The Harvey Girls*, *Show Boat*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Anchors Aweigh*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Viva Las Vegas*. He was a dear friend to the Society and here are his fond memories of his "Dream Street."

### "Dream Street"

by George Sidney

Everyone has a favorite street – Broadway, Bond Street, Canal Street, Rue de la Paix, State Street, Basin Street, Via Veneto, even the Yellow Brick Road.

I first saw mine and walked on my "dream street" in 1930: **Washington Boulevard** in Culver City, California. Contained within a mile on that fabulous thoroughfare is the aorta of this capital of entertainment. My footprints shared the path with the entertainment greats – factual, historical and fictional – who worked at the studios of the reel cinema world which were created and built along its curbs, such as Triangle, MGM, RKO, Pathé and Desilu.



MGM's Colonnade entrance on Washington Blvd. built in 1915.



Thomas Ince Studios – later RKO, Selznick Studios, Desilu among other names.

From Thomas Ince, C.B. DeMille, Louis B. Mayer, Hal Roach and David O. Selznick came forth a mecca of creativity which encouraged the talents of Thalberg, Freed, Stromberg, Welles, Ford, Stevens, Capra and Fleming, as well as Minnelli, Pasternack, Koch, Franklin, Lubitsch, Wyler, Wilder, Dassin, Zinnemann, Adler, Leonard, Frankenheimer and Spielberg, among so many others. These were the manufacturers of dreams – entertainment, comedy, drama, romance, music, dance -- all creating this miracle mile in the *real* Hollywood: Culver City, USA.

My footsteps echoed alongside those of the Munchkins, Garbo and Lassie, Trader Horne and Lena Horne, Clark Gable and *Captains Courageous*, Lawrence Tibbet and Elvis (along with Frank and Bing), Astaire and Kelly and the Nicholas Brothers.

They shared the road with Edward G. Robinson, Robinson Crusoe and *The Great Caruso*; the Three Musketeers, Three Marx Brothers, Three Ritz Brothers, Three Stooges, three Barrymores – John, Ethel and Lionel (any number can play); Sylvia Sidney and George (the first) Sidney and George (the second) Sidney, as well as Sidney Fox, Sidney Sheldon, Sidney Skolsky, Sidney Carton, Sidney Poitier, Sid Caesar, Julius Caesar, and Caesar Romero; Lana Turner and Ted Turner; Joan Crawford, Peter Lawford and Laurel & Hardy; L.B. Mayer and Roger Mayer.

And the ladies: Barbara Lamarr and Hedy; Scarlett O'Hara and the *Red-Headed Woman*; Marie Dressler, Marie Antoinette, Mrs. Miniver and Sadie Thompson – to name but a few among the multitude of beauties, saints, sinners and vixens.

I walked through The White House and Tara; visited with Santa Claus, Tarzan, Lincoln, Washington, F.D.R., the Indomitable Teddy, Napoleon and *Citizen Kane*. I journeyed along the Hudson River, the Nile, Thames,

*Showboat* on the Mississippi, Volga, and Yangtsee; traveled to the North Pole, China, Japan, Shangri-La, Hawaii, England, Europe, Africa, under all the seas and into outer space.

I watched Mickey and Judy grow up; *Our Gang* remaining kids forever; *Tom and Jerry* wreaking havoc. I experienced the burning of Atlanta and *Gone with the Wind*, the San Francisco earthquake, locusts and *The Good Earth*, and *Singin' in the Rain*. I watched chariots race in *Ben Hur*, sport cars in *Grand Prix*, and Buster Keaton on a locomotive. I knew *The Wizard of Oz*, *Gunga Din*, *The Great Ziegfeld* and *The Greatest Show on Earth*.



Hal Roach Studios, c.1920s.

I strutted along with all of these stars and celluloid giants who paved the way for those who will continue to matriculate on this street for the entertainment of 2000 and beyond. It all happens on my "dream street" in Culver City.

I look forward to the time when the most important film festival is not in New York, Europe, or the Orient, but in the birthplace of the studio system – where fans and aficionados will come annually, as well as daily to share and marvel at the work of the greats of the past and be introduced to the ingenious imaginations of the future entertainment makers – here in the Garden of Eden of entertainment – CULVER CITY.

PS: Can't forget *The Thin Man*, Nora and, of course, "Asta."



Myrna Loy, William Powell & "Asta."

## An ARC Update .....

by Robin Turner, Vice President, Museum

Even though it seemed like moving into our new Culver City Historical Society Archive and Research Center (ARC) took forever to do, we are now moving quite quickly in getting tasks ready for volunteers to help start organizing parts of our collection. With a fantastic group led by CCHS Board members, much as been accomplished in the past several weeks!

During Spring Break, Costume Committee Chair Louise Coffey-Webb and her students counted, identified, and organized the vintage MGM costumes that are in our possession.

We've also managed to put the Syd Kronenthal collection and the Olympic items together, separate out the Exchange Club materials, as well as the Sister City items, and have a few tasks ready to start the volunteer program.

We also had a crew – comprised of CC Mayor Alan Corlin, Redevelopment Chair and past CCHS President Steve Rose, and Civil Service Commissioner Dan Gallagher – to set up the new light tables and move heavy furniture. **THANK YOU, guys!**



Past CCHS President and CC Councilmember Steve Rose moved all the bookshelves donated by Andy Weissman into the ARC himself ... speaking of "muscle!"

Special thanks to Sony archivist Colin Greene who, at the beginning of June, took time from his busy schedule to teach some of us how to curate collections properly as well as giving tips on archiving techniques.

Colin and some of his crew came back the next day to help rearrange our furniture and give us pointers on how and where to set up our exhibits.



Sony Pictures archivist Colin Greene (at L) and staff brought some needed expertise and muscle to our new archives! Colin also gave an "Archives Triage Workshop" to further assist us in our organizing and preserving efforts.

By the end of the first week of June, Board members had sorted many of the basic collections (mostly in boxes) so that we will be ready for our volunteers to come in and help get the ARC in order. A daunting task – but we know our members are up to it!

Starting June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the ARC will be open for volunteers to help. Initially, our hours will be every Saturday from 9am to noon and Thursdays from 10am to noon. As we get more organized, we will expand the hours and assign specific tasks. If you are available to help in this process, please call Cathy Zermeno at (310) 839-7688 or Robin Turner at (310) 836-5508 to let us know your availability.

The first two projects we will tackle will be to get the Julian Dixon book collection in order and into the new bookshelves that Andrew Weissman so generously donated to the ARC. The second will be to identify and catalog the many photographs and paintings that we have collected throughout the years.



Past CCHS President Marti Diviak (R) and her husband Dennis stopped in to see the ARC with CCHS Pres. Cathy Zermeno (L) while on vacation in May.

~ ~ ~

Here is our Wish List for supplies and display items that we need before we can truly be "open to the public."

- Cases that "hug" the walls and are not imposing into our small area where the items can be viewed. There will be limited space to walk around to view the various exhibits and we need to plan for the future.
- Cases expressly for displaying the MGM costumes and other such items in our collection. We have determined that these cases will cost between \$1,000 - \$2,000 each, and requesting donations. For this sponsorship opportunity, we will attach a "donated by" plaque to each case in appreciation of your donation.

All of these items will be discussed and further updates will be shared at the Annual Picnic General Membership meeting on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Also, we will have brief tours of the ARC during the picnic to let you all see what's happening. With the upcoming Fiesta La Ballona right around the corner, we will also need help in getting the ARC ready for the public mini-tours during the Fiesta weekend of August 24-26.

Again, let me thank everyone that has helped in getting the ARC ready to this point. We have a fabulous Board and a membership that I've found is always ready to help.

See you at the picnic meeting!

~ Robin

~ ~ ~ CELEBRATING MORE THAN 25 YEARS !”

## CC HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE CULVER CITY’S 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MILESTONE

September 20, 2007 will mark the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Culver City’s Incorporation. To celebrate this landmark event, the Society has scheduled the following events – with more ideas to come, from CCHS members and the community, as we move forward.

### **May 14: PRESERVATION MONTH PROCLAMATION.**

In honor of the Historic Preservation Month of May, the Culver City Council presented the Culver City Historical Society with a proclamation citing its many preservation accomplishments. At the meeting, Muriel Clark, Asst. to City Manager Jerry Fulwood, unveiled the first installment of the vintage photo plaque collection of elected city officials (City Trustees which later became Councilmembers) from the 1917 era to the 1960s. Martin Cole, Asst. City Manager, facilitated the necessary approvals to install the collection, and Sony Pictures provided the custom-made drapery cover. The Society had saved and preserved these photos for the City for several years with the help of CCHS members Sam Cerra and Steve Newton. The Society is currently researching additional photos need to be acquired so that new plaques can be made in the same style, and has earmarked funds to keep the display current.



*CCHS member and former councilmember Ed Little poses next to his "vintage" council photo. Ed served on the city council in the 1960s. The first historic installation of photos was unveiled on May 14, to an appreciative crowd.*

### **June 27: CC CHAMBER EXPO.**

The Culver Hotel's new owners shared their booth with the Society at the 24<sup>th</sup> Culver City Chamber Expo on the front lawn of The Culver Studios. CCHS docents led informal tours of the Hotel, sharing many facts and features of the Hotel's fascinating history since it was first constructed by Harry Culver in 1924. According to General Manager Douglas Newton, the hotel will open up the second floor office of city founder Harry Culver, which is currently being renovated, and the third floor "John Wayne Suite," so named for the famed actor who once owned the hotel.



*The historic Culver Hotel, built in 1924.*

### **July 18: ANNUAL CCHS PICNIC: VETS PARK.**

Members will have the opportunity to view the new ARC facilities now a work-in-progress. Ideas and suggestions for appropriate activities to celebrate Culver City's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday will be discussed.

### **August (weekend of 24-26): FIESTA LA BALLONA.**

The Society will open its doors for brief tours of the new "Culver City Historical Society Archives and Resource Center" (ARC) and introduce the community to the archives and services the new research facility will offer.

### **September 20: CITY'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY AT CULVER HOTEL.**

Culminating a myriad of celebratory events, the Society will host a birthday bash at the historic Culver Hotel! Guests are encouraged to dress in the era of the hotel (1920s). *Highlights:* The Raffle of a variety of prizes donated by several of Culver City's business concerns, and topped off with the Grand Prize auction of an original animation cel of "Tom & Jerry," hand-painted and donated by our own Martha Sigall, along with a copy of her critically-acclaimed book, *Living Life Inside the Lines: Tales from the Golden Age of Animation*. More details to come.



*Martha Sigall – who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday this year! – is donating one of her "Tom & Jerry" animation cels for the September 20<sup>th</sup> celebration of Culver City's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.*

All photos on pgs. 4 & 5  
by Julie Lugo Cerra.

# "LIVING HISTORY" HAS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR!

by Julie Lugo Cerra, City Historian

Though the "Living History" program is over for this year, wonderful memories remain. The Society is immensely proud of all of the great students who participated, especially the graduating seniors who have shown what creative young people we have here in Culver City! We wish them all great success in their future endeavors and thank them for showing that "History really can be fun!"



*LEFT: Steve Rose made a presentation at the April CCHS General Meeting to four graduating seniors who have presented "Living History" programs for three years! (L-R) Alexandria Richardson, Andrea Santos, Rezwan Kabir & Ashley Guerro.*



*RIGHT: The "Machado Brothers" (Alexandria Richardson & Andrea Santos, center) are flanked by Halimah Najieb-Locke (L) and teacher Drew Seymour (R) at Farragut School presentation.*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- JULY 18: CCHS "PICNIC" & GENERAL MEETING
- AUG. 24-26: FIESTA LA BALLONA
- SEP. 20: CULVER CITY TURNS 90! CCHS PARTY AT CULVER HTL.
- SEP. 23: CC FILM FESTIVAL (*tent.*) AT VETERANS MEMORIAL COMPLEX

## "THANK YOU" TO

### OUR NEW MEMBERS

- Cindy Johnson
- Pauline Bart
- Thais Rothman

### AND NEW "LIFETIME" MEMBER:

- Carol Ball

- **THANK YOU** to GUS PRADO for our impressive new ARC Entrance Sign!!
- **THANK YOU** to LES & BARBARA SILVERSTEIN for the rare railroad spike.
- **THANK YOU** to JONATHAN & AMY WEISS for their gift in honor of George Garrigues' 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- **THANK YOU** to VIRGIE ESKRIDGE for her generous gift to the ARC in memory of her parents, the Tingers.
- **THANK YOU** to ALBERT & URSULA VERA for their support in providing nourishment to our volunteers in our move to and work at the new ARC!
- **THANK YOU** to BILL HAHN for the many historic photos, books & letters he donated to the ARC.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF HISTORY!

Consider giving a Culver City Historical Society membership as a gift ~ birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, any occasion!

Ms Julie,  
Thank you so much for the past 3 years you've made so much fun of every day I was doing it. I've learned so much from you and your volunteers. I'm going to miss you so much next year. Thank you so much!  
-Alex

Notes of gratitude from the "Living History" students to their mentor, Julie Lugo Cerra.

My Julie!

All three years of Living History has been an experience to remember. Last year, there was the infamous burger incident (or maybe it was the year before) and this year I had Ashley's specially-crafted dipsticks. So not only did I learn from the skit and your personal car tours, but lunch was also key in my education, and I thank you greatly. This year was probably my favorite, even though we didn't do the Gabrielinos, b/c of the children this year. Ashley and I will be sure to visit!

-Rez

P.S. I can't wait for your home cooking! 😊

Julie! For the past 3 years you've taken us to schools around Culver City helping us teach kids the history of Culver City as we learned even more from you on the way. Thank you for everything! You have been a great teacher and better friend!

-Ashley Guerro

Julie!

I just wanted to let you know how much we all appreciate you and everything you do. I will miss working with you, and the food you feed us! Thank you!  
-Halimah

Dear Julie,

You are and will forever be my Culver City mom. It's so amazing how much you have taken us all in and shared so much of yourself with us. Whenever someone asks me about the volunteer service I provide in, I always speak about the Living History because that's where I have gained and what I have learned so much. You truly are an inspiration to me as a woman and as a person who actually enjoys a bit of history. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!  
-Love yamun, Alex

Julie - Thanks again for all your super enthusiasm and support. I'm looking forward to next year!  
-Drew

## "Notes" (cont'd)

We continue to receive wonderful information from Robert Elliott of the First Motion Picture Unit (FMPU), who now lives in Florida. In June, I received an amazing compilation of subjects he photographed while he was serving at "Fort Roach" (as the old Hal Roach Studio was affectionately called during WWII) and staying in the "barracks" at the Pacific Military Academy. Mr. Elliott was one of the fine folks we interviewed up at WLA College, so we have him recorded on tape as well.

Isn't it great that we have a nice tie to the Culver Hotel? New Manager Douglas Newton, of the "Culver City Newtons," allowed us to share a table with the hotel at the CC Chamber Expo on June 27<sup>th</sup>, and walk folks over to the hotel for informal *history briefings* on the hotel's fascinating history since it was built in 1924 by city founder Harry H. Culver.

On the day of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual George Barris Car Show, who rolled into town but past CCHS president Marti Diviak with her husband Dennis! Cathy Zermeno graciously opened up the new ARC to show them our long-awaited digs. Marti, who worked at the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), spent a lot of time evaluating and identifying the MGM costumes, and displaying them. She is still actively enjoying historic pursuits and was putting together an exhibit of vintage aprons and cookbooks in Oregon. "Little" Susan, their daughter, is all grown up and teaches dance. She was traveling Europe while they were visiting Culver City.

~ ~ ~

And, adding to my many other *historical* pursuits, I now have been made a member of the Board of the LA City Historical Society. It will be a pleasure to work with my *little* cousin, and a fellow CCHS member, Christina Machado Essex (who got me into this!). My Lugo ancestors came to Alta California in 1774, and Francisco Salvador Lugo (a grandfather) was present at the founding of the pueblo of Los Angeles. No wonder I feel so old!

Just a reminder, historically: 2007 not only marks the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the incorporations of Culver City, but also the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ivy Substation!

*A great pictorial book on Venice:*

**"Venice, CA: Coney Island of the Pacific"**  
by Jeffrey Stanton

Relive moments at Venice Pier, Pacific Ocean Park, the roller coasters and much more! 288 pages & 367 historic photos of rich history. Hardback at \$50. For more info: <http://www.westland.net/venicehistory>.

## CULVER CITY "SNAPSHOTS"

### The Ivy Substation



The Ivy Substation was constructed in 1907 by the Los Angeles Pacific Railway, which became part of the Los Angeles Pacific Railway Electric Company. It operated as one of its largest electric substations as a branch for the electrical generation and distribution system. This substation was located along the "Balloon Route" rail line from downtown Los Angeles to the Pacific Ocean.

When real estate developer Harry Culver searched the area for land to establish his city, an important factor was transportation. The Ivy Substation played a role, and although it was not the depot as many have thought, it supplied the power. By the time Culver City began to materialize, one could catch a "Red Car" downtown to Los Angeles, or to Abbot Kinney's resort of Venice.

By 1954, the historic Mission Revival style building stood empty and weather-beaten. Noted railroad historian David Cameron, also a CCHS member, lobbied to place the Ivy Substation on the National Register of Historic Places which happened in 1981. The Ivy is also designated as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #182. (Note plaque inside.)

### ~ SUNSHINE THOUGHTS ~

**The Society sends its warmest condolences to CCHS Treasurer Lynn Barril on the passing of her Father. Our thoughts are with her and her family.**

~ ~ ~

- **A special "Get Well" message to our good friend Bob Lench.**
- **And sending best wishes for happier health to longtime CCHS members:**

~ Jackie McCain  
~ Eloise McNeer  
~ Anita Shapiro  
~ Jo Ellen Weaver  
~ Reba Yudess

## REMEMBRANCE

### CHARLES MCCAIN

(1921 – 2007)

This past February 2<sup>nd</sup>, we lost one of our dearest friends and greatest supporters, Charles McCain. He passed away at home, with his family at his side, dying peacefully after a long battle with thyroid cancer.

He is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Jacqueline (Jackie); three children, Kathleen Ann (John Engman), Chuck, Jr. (Marilyn), and Roderick John (Linda); five grandchildren (Jennifer, Nicholas, Natalie, Anne, and Charlie); three great grandchildren (Kyle, Alexa, and Chance); and three American Field Service daughters (Jenny, Fleur, and Liva).

Longtime fixtures on the Culver City scene, perhaps Charles will be best remembered for his companionship with his wife Jackie in their many local political and community development endeavors. In addition to countless campaign seasons spearheading grassroots efforts for candidates and referenda innumerable, together Charles and Jackie led the Culver City Homeowners Association for three decades.

Throughout those years, he also enjoyed giving his time to serving on the City's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year steering committee and to helping to found the CC Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) as a CCARES ham radio operator checking in each Sunday evening with Fire Station No. 1.

Retired superintendent of Bilt-Rite Cabinet Co., Charles was a third-generation carpenter and craftsman known as the go-to-man by friends, neighbors, and community groups alike.

Charles and Jackie began a life-long relationship with the St. Joseph Center in Venice, which provides services and resources to help the working poor and homeless men, women, and children of all ages. Today the St. Joseph Center serves as consultant to the Culver City Planning Commission's Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness.

Charles gave a great deal of himself to our city and to his neighbors and the Historical Society sends its warmest regards to Jackie and their family.

**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!

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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) 287-3850 or email: [cchistorical@pacbell.com](mailto:cchistorical@pacbell.com).

Contributions of both historic & 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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**Culver City Historical Society**

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