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HAPPY NEW YEAR ~ 2006!

FOUNDING CCHS President Cathy Zermeno Again Takes the Lead

IN MEMORIUM

LU HERRERA PASSES FORMER CCHS PRESIDENT

by Julie Lugo Cerra

Services for Lu Herrera, a founding member and the Society's eighth president, and long-time community figure, were held on November 19, 2005 at Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City.

Came to Culver City in 1948

Born "Lula," in Alabama in 1920, she was indeed a Southern lady. She met her husband, Sammy, during World War II



L-R FRONT ROW: LU HERRERA (ALWAYS WORKING!) WITH FRIEND SILVA & HUSBAND SAMMY AT A CCHS MEETING.

at a USO dance - and that dance lasted more than 60 years! married and moved to California in 1945, where they first lived with Sammy's mom. They landed in Culver City in 1948, buying their first home on Culver Crest in 1954.

While working in a bank, Lu was approached by the City Clerk and offered a job at City Hall. Within a few (cont'd on page 6)

CC HISTORICAL SOCIETY INSTALLATION: 2006

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF!

On Wednesday, January 18, 2006, founding president Catherine Zermeno will take a second term as president of the Culver City Historical Society.



CATHY ZERMENO

L-R: MARTI DIVIAK, RUSTY KOSTICK, CATHY ZERMENO AND CHARLIE LUGO AT FIRST **CCHS INSTALLATION.**



Cathy, an active force in the formation of the Society, was elected in 1979 and installed as our first president in 1980 by Charles Reyes Lugo. "Charlie" Lugo was a fifth-generation Californian, born on a ranch in 1908 to Zanjero (water overseer) Mercurial and Rita Reyes Lugo, on land that became Culver City. Also a founder, Lugo served President Zermeno as her Historic Sites Chair.

Cathy has chosen to let the next generation install her, so her ceremony will be officiated by a sibling team of sixth-generation Californians, City Historian Julie Lugo Cerra and Culver City's Sr. Building Inspector, Carlos Lugo.

PRESIDENT & BOARD TO BE INSTALLED AT DINNER-MEETING

President-elect Zermeno will be installed with her new Board at the dinner meeting. The election in October yielded a fine team consisting of 1st VP, Programs Marty Nicolson, 2nd VP Museum Robin Turner, 3rd VP Ways and Means Susan Deen, and Treasurer Lynn Baril. Mary Gibson has since agreed (cont'd on page 6)

JANUARY 18, 2006: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP DINNER-MEETING ~ INSTALLATION of OFFICERS ~

The Culver City Historical Society's Winter General Membership Dinner-Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18th at 6:30 pm in the Lethridge Garden Room at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue.

This will be the Installation of President-Elect Cathy Zermeno and her Board as well as a thank you to outgoing President Steven Rose. The Installing Officers will be Founding Members Julie Lugo Cerra and Carlos

Reservations are a must for the healthy dinner catered by El Pollo Loco. Cost is \$15 per person. Please join us by calling Julie Lugo Cerra at (310) 558-3818 and leave your name and contact and the number of quests attending.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Steven J. Rose



The new year of 2006 starts off well with a new Society president, Cathy Zermeno. Having been the charter president of the Society in 1980, Cathy returns to lead the Society to new heights during the next two years. Her continued dedication and support throughout our 25-year history brings renewed vitality to the position.

During the last four years the Society has gone through many changes that has positioned it for growth in the coming years. Among these:

- The Society's museum archives were moved back to the City of Culver City after several years under the watchful eye of Ross Hawkins at West Los Angeles College.
- Julie Lugo Cerra and Joan Jakubowski started the "Living History" program in which Culver High seniors depict moments and personalities of Culver City/LaBallona Valley history for elementary school students throughout the community.
- A project has been initiated in conjunction with the City of Culver City to install
 photographs of all the elected City officials which will be an ongoing project for
 the Society.

The last four years has brought about change and challenge for all of us in the Society. I want to thank you for the opportunity of serving the Society as President and ask you all to join me in supporting Cathy Zermeno in the coming years.

Best regards,,

Notes from Your City Historian

by Julie Lugo Cerra



 Regular displays of city history at City Hall highlighting the Society's archives.

"CULVER WEST ALEXANDER PARK" HONORS FORMER MAYOR

After a delay of 14 months – from the time the City Council first asked its staff to bring in a commission recommendation with public input on the renaming of Culver West Park in honor of former mayor and commissioner Richard Alexander – a decision has been made. Following an official ceremony early in 2006, the park will be known as "Culver West Alexander Park."

Culver West was formerly "West End Park," and the locals, partly because of the shape of the city and partly because they have LA 90066 mailing, have long felt like a "step child." The park was renamed Culver West to identify that area as a part of Culver City. This new title will simply incorporate the Alexander name.

CITY'S "NAMING" POLICY TO BE REVIEWED

The attempt to honor Richard Alexander was unfortunately a painful experience for Alex's family and friends, and pointed to the lack of process the City has in such matters. The City Council will soon review its policy in naming or renaming public places. Our Society should be involved to help shape a new policy. Your visionary input will be invaluable as a resource.

CCHS - CULVER CITY PARTNERSHIP

Although we should be pleased with our accomplishments over our "first" 25 years, it is not time to relax on the historic front.

In that spirit, I am delighted to report that the Culver City Historical Society has begun discussions with the City of Culver City to enter into a partnership. At our October meeting, action was taken to write a letter to the City's Chief Administrative Officer, Jerry Fulwood, to meet and discuss the possibilities.

Outgoing president Steven Rose, President-elect Cathy Zermeno and I, as your Government Liaison and City Historian, followed with a fruitful initial meeting with the CAO. As a result, we are working on two items the Society will supervise:

• A display at City Hall of all the elected officials, from the City's incorporation to the present, utilizing archived photos rescued by Dale Jones and Sam Cerra as the base of the exhibit. We will also explore several possibilities, including research and securing photos of councilmembers for the last 40 years.

Culber Historical Highlights

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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.

Publisher	Deborah Kearney
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•	Sandy Burton
	Marc Wanamaker
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Cathy Zermeno	Membership
Jozelle Smith	Public Relations
Judy Stangler	Newsletter
Sandy Burton	Historic Sites
Julie Lugo Cerra	Governmental Relations
	Sunshine

Editor's Column

Recording, preserving & discovering the history of Culver City is a primary goal of the Society and Culver Historical Highlights. To that end, we hope that each issue contains something new and/or illuminating for our readers. We also hope that each issue can be picked up in 10, 20 or more years and someone reading it who knows nothing of our special town will find stories of interest.

While our contributing writers work to tell something more about our City's past than was previously known, we welcome and encourage everyone who has other memories, memorabilia, and records of all kinds and sources to share with us to expand – and sometimes, correct – the historic information now known.

The Society takes its work very seriously. As Thomas Carlyle noted, "[History] may be called . . . the Message, verbal or written, which all Mankind delivers to everyman." Clearly our past affects our future and the City of Culver City has a wonderful and varied past as our writers continue to discover!

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



L-R:
Jim Robertson and
Fred Machado in
front of the photo
gallery of the City's
elected officials.

REEL



CULVER CITY

by Marc Wanamaker

CULVER STUDIOS POISED FOR GROWTH

The famed Culver Studios at Ince and Washington Boulevards is again slated for expansion, upgrading and renovation

The new owners, an investment firm, have been slowly repairing and maintaining the studio lot, but now there are plans for a larger program for expansion. The studio will continue to be available to lease for years to come as the eighty-seven-year-old historic studio still continues to be a viable studio facility for today's filmmakers.

Located at 9336 W. Washington Boulevard, it was originally built as the "Thomas H. Ince Studios" in 1919. Over the years, the beautiful Southern Colonial design of the administration building which fronts onto Washington Boulevard has become an historic landmark, and is universally recognizable.

By 1925, after the death of Thomas

Ince, the studio was taken over by Çecil B. DeMille and Pathé Studios. In 1930 Pathé merged with the RKO companies, and the studio became known as the RKO/Pathé Culver Studios well into the 1930s.

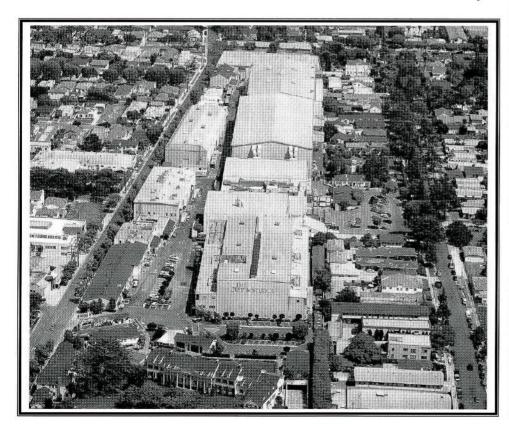
In 1935, David O. Selznick signed a long-term lease on the studio and by 1936, it was renamed, "Selznick International Studios," making such classic films as *Gone With The Wind, Rebecca* and *A Star Is Born*.

When Desi Arnaz and Lucille Ball purchased the assets of RKO Studios in 1957 (which included the Culver City studio lot), they named their company "Desilu" and christened the Culver studio as "Desilu Culver Studios." In 1967, a major portion of the Desilu assets were sold to Paramount Studios. Desilu Culver was later sold to an operating company and re-named "The Culver City Studios."

In 1986, the Gannett Company purchased the studio and sold it to Sony as a television annex in 1991.

Through the 1990s, the studio was used by Sony Television production, as well as independent films and television shows such as *The Nanny* (TV: 1993-99), *Starship Troopers* (1997), *Air Force One* (1997), *Stuart Little I* and *II* (1999-2002), *What Women Want* (2000), *The Lot* (TV) and *Kill Bill* (2003).

Aerial view of the Culver Studios today.



AN APPRECIATION

THANK YOU, ROSS HAWKINS...

For more than a decade, CCHS member Ross Hawkins has penned his column, "Reel Life in Culver City," bringing our readers multitudes of information, anecdotes, personal accounts, etc., etc., etc. While writing his column, he also produced and directed Culver City: The Reel Hollywood. The Last Ride of the Pacific Electric Railroad, and Culver City Cowboys, which chronicles the Pitti Family of Culver City and their work as stunt performers in westerns throughout the years.

Due to the continuing growth of The Scene Dock, the production company he 1987 founded in to produce documentaries. commercials educational films. Ross finds that he can no longer devote the time needed to continue his column. With many other projects on his plate, Ross has decided to turn over the coverage of Culver City's film history to CCHS member and former Museum Chair, Marc Wanamaker.

Marc has an extensive background in the movie industry as an historical consultant, lecturer and teacher. 1971, he formed Bison Archives which has been instrumental in preserving and saving rare and important collections of the motion picture industry for numerous institutions around the world. He is associated with numerous organizations including The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, the Los Angeles County Museum and the California State Library the California State Library among others. welcome the perspectives Marc will bring to his new column.

And again, thank you, Ross – we wish you much success in all your future endeavors and for all the history you've covered for *Culver Historical Highlights*.







GIVE THE GIFT OF HISTORY!

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

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND

A THANKS TO OUR MEMBERSHIP

It is the membership that has kept the Culver City Historical Society in business for 25 years and we'd like to thank all of you who support and have supported the Society throughout our growth and development.

We would especially like to acknowledge the Life Members who lasting dedication is an integral part of the Society's success:

> **Brian Bumpas** Sam & Julie Cerra Charles & Susan Deen Earl Eskridge John Felix Carol Gross Joan Jakubowski Robert Lench Daniel T. Munoz

John Riordan K.R. Weber

Sandy Burton Flora Collins Shiloh Eldridge Virgie Eskridge Esmerelda Fucci

David & Diana Hauptman

Syd Kronenthal Alicia Millikan Morgan Dene Oliver

Robin Turner

Ed & Marla Wolkowitz

This year, there were special contributions that we also wish to recognize:

- Thank you to Sue McCabe, Dannie Cavanaugh and Ramon's Jewelers for their generous contribution to the Historical Society in honor of our 25th Anniversary this past September.
- In addition, thank you to the following generous donors in memory of our dear founding member Esther Tarn:

Dannie Cavanaugh Ruth Jensen Mary Couey **David Henderson**

Cavanaugh Realtors **Dorothy Steiner** Patricia Pohlenz **Doral McKee**

Cathy & George Zermeno

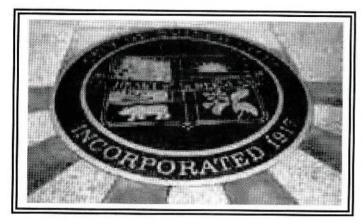
Dues statements were mailed earlier this month. Remember, dues are payable January 1st for the calendar year. Please help us stay active, focused on our programs and working toward our goal of a museum in Culver City. We depend on your dues to support our activities.

If you have not received your statement, please complete the membership application found on the back of the newsletter and send it along with your check.

The Culver City Historical Society is a non-profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)3. As such, your dues may be tax deductible. Please check with your tax advisor.

CULVER CITY ~~~ 25 YEARS GREAT YEARS!"

About the City . . .



CITY FACTS

Culver City's Founder: HARRY H. CULVER

(announced his plans in LA in 1913)

Year of Incorporation: 1917

Charter city: 1947

City's area at incorporation: 1.2 square miles

City's area in 2001: 4.987 square miles, approx.

~ due to 42 annexations! (See map at right)

Culver City Flower: Lantana

Current Population: 38,000 (2000 census)

Wording on City Seal: "City of Culver City -

The Heart of Screenland

- Incorporated 1917"

For more City information, see: http://www.culvercity.org/city_info.html

2006 CALENDAR DATES

January 18: General Membership

Meeting & Installation Dinner

April 19: General Membership

Meeting

May: Historic Preservation Month

July 19: Annual Picnic

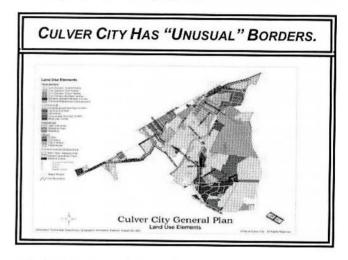
August: Fiesta La Ballona

October 18: General Membership

Meeting

The current seal of the City of Culver City was adopted in August of 1936. Prior to that, two "Notary" type seals were used, according to the City Clerk's records.

For additional information, see: http://www.culvercity.org/cityinfo/history/cityseal_hist.html





Museum Notes

by Robin Turner, Museum Chair

MOVING FORWARD.....

First, let me thank you for reelecting me as Museum Chair. I take this position seriously, and appreciate the help and support as well as the historic knowledge all of you can give me to do my job well.

We are still going through the process of getting our new museum digs prepared for "habitation!" Our outgoing president, Steven Rose, is working on the construction issues and making some excellent headway – so we need to be patient for just a little bit longer.

Our Pacific Theatre display case continues with the Gragg sculptures exhibit. This public venue provides a wonderful opportunity to let our community and visitors learn more about the Society and the spectrum of memorabilia we have collected. I encourage you to share your suggestions and ideas for items, themes, etc. of what you'd like the Society to put in this display case.

Again, thank you.

~ Robin

CULVER CITY "SNAPSHOTS"



REMEMBER THE "PUP CAFÉ" WHICH RESEMBLED THE "BULLDOG CAFÉ (ABOVE)? (IT WAS LOCATED AT 12732 WASHINGTON BLVD.)

"Installation" (cont'd.)

to be Secretary. The committee appointments will be made as a part of the installation process.

Cathy's first installation came just as the Veterans Memorial Building was completing its renovation in 1980. Her first fundraising committee, which included Marti Diviak, Mildred Kearney, Judy Potik, Mary Ellen Fernandez and Diane Netzel, created a late evening supper and fashion show event, showcasing the costumes rescued by Syd Kronenthal from the MGM Property Sale in the early 1970s. The proper care of the city-owned costumes and displays of Culver City History will be priorities of the new president.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AT ITS BEST

Cathy Zermeno was born in Santa Monica, but moved to Culver City 51 years ago with her husband George. They raised their two children, Chris and Melissa in Culver City, where Cathy was active in all levels of PTA.

Cathy's involvement in the community has included service as president of the Guidance Clinic Guild, Foster Children's Association, CC Homeowners, Culver Crest Homeowners, CC Woman's Club, Westside Opportunity Workshop, and the CC Chamber of Commerce. She served numerous also on committees and advisory boards, the Brotman Chemical including Dependency Advisory Board, CC Bicentennial Committee, and YMCA fundraising committees.

She has served the City often on several of the Fiesta La Ballona Committees, (also as Chair), as well as the Downtown Charette, the Redevelopment Agency Committee, (RP3C, PAC), and continues as an active member of the Sister City Committee. She was also appointed to the Civil Service Commission, where she served as Chair and Vice-Chair.

Cathy Zermeno has been honored with numerous commendations from the City of Culver City, Honorary Service Awards from the PTA, Citizen Recognition from the CC Chamber of Commerce to name just a few of her many accolades.

Please join us on January 18, 2006, to begin a new year, with Cathy Zermeno at the reins, once again, and to thank Steven Rose for his four years as president.

"Lu Herrera" (cont'd.)

years, she was promoted to the position of Deputy City Treasurer under Bruce Latta. Her popularity grew and in 1963, Lu was elected as City Treasurer, serving for 24 years, until her retirement in 1988.

She was the guardian of the public funds, and the first innovative treasurer who saw the opportunity to invest public funds. In those days, there was no electronic banking – you were lucky if you had a Selectric typewriter – so Lu made the bank deposit with a police escort! She often said her favorite color was green, the color of money....

ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY

Lu's community activities extended far beyond her professional accomplishments. She was a member of many organizations and held the presidency of the Soroptimist Club, the Sister City Committee and several business and professional womens' clubs. She was a founding member of the CC Guidance Clinic Guild and acted as Regional Chairman of the Christmas Seal campaign for three years.

Lu was a member of the Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Chapter D.A.V. #123, BPW, and Las Amigas. She was also honored as "Woman of the Year."

A presence at the old Friday Morning breakfast meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, Lu was recognized for her financial wisdom throughout the country.

A TRUE PARTNERSHIP

Lu always looked perfect, from head to toe – and Sammy could take some credit for that. Their partnership was very clear as he named his hair salon "Samilu."

Always a lady, the epitome of a good public servant, and a wonderful mentor for those of us who had the privilege of working for her, Lu Herrera will be deeply missed. Once in a while, she would receive a piece of mail addressed to her as the City Treasurer but they left off the "r," making her giggle.

But maybe it wasn't an error. Lu Herrera was the City "Treasure."

As we went to press, we learned of the passing of former CCHS Treasurer, **David Henderson**. Our warmest wishes go to his wife, Lorraine, and his family. More about David in our next issue.

WHAT THEY WERE THINKING . . .

by Sandy Burton

CCHS HISTORIC SITE #3: ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH

[Note: St. Augustine's Church became CCHS Historic Site #3 on December 4, 1983.]

CULVER CITY-SANTA MONICA CONNECTION

From an historical perspective, it seems St. Augustine's mother was St. Monica. With St. Monica's Church located in Santa Monica, it seemed a logical choice to build the new St. Augustine's Church in Culver City, to be named after her son.

Augustine was born 17 years after the Roman Emperor Constantine died and is remembered as a writer. He didn't believe that saintly virtue was a prerequisite for membership in "The Church" and is considered the father of the Western Church.

ESTABLISHED IN 1919

With land donated in 1883 by J. Francisco Figueroa, a prominent land owner in the valley, St. Augustine's Parish was established in Culver City in 1919, becoming an official parish of the Monterey Los Angeles Diocese.

As the population increased, priests from St. James in Redondo Beach, St. Agnes in Los Angeles and St. Clement in Ocean Park, as well as St. Monica's, served the needs of the St. Augustine's Parish.

CHANGES THROUGH THE YEARS

Each pastor improved the parish in a different manner.

Father Thomas O'Toole was the first resident pastor and served until October 30th, 1921. During his tenure, Father O'Toole was responsible for the first frame bungalow built on what is now 3850 Jasmine Ave. This building was moved to Jean Place in 1926 and used as a convent.

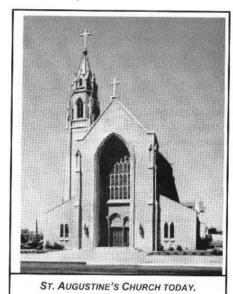
In 1922, Msgr. O'Halloran enlarged the little wooden church to a capacity of 500. Later a stucco rectory was built and the parish hall was converted into a four-classroom school.

The first sisters arrived at the parish in 1926, on the feast of St. Augustine, in order to teach at the new school which opened on September 7, 1926 with an initial enrollment of 123 and staffed by six sisters.

EARLY MEMORIES

The early parishioners had such childhood memories as riding to mass in a horse-drawn buggy. A Mrs. Fostler

recalls, "I remember walking up a steep hill to spare the horses ... and the hot coffee mother would take in mason jars to fortify the communicant's for the trip home again." Mrs. Fostler's mother, Mrs. Ward, would visit neighboring ranches by horse and buggy to collect \$.25 per ranch to help maintain the parish.



Many parishioners donated time and talent, as well as money, to assist the Church. Mrs. Ralph Clement remembers that every item was donated and nothing was bought because there was no money!

was bought because there was no money! She often sang at mass while Charlie Martin pumped the organ. (Charlie frequently threatened to quit pumping in the middle of a song, but never did!)



First Communion Class at the first St. Augustine's Church.

A NEW CHURCH IN 1936

A new church was constructed in 1936 by replacing the old wooden structure which was moved back to make more room. It had a seating capacity of 700, and was erected on Washington Blvd. The beautiful building caused nationwide interest because of the construction of small steel rods welded to a single unit.

The new St. Augustine's Church was dedicated on April 25, 1937 by The Most Reverend John J. Cantwell, Archbishop of Los Angeles.

REMEMBERING... "SEPULVEDA/JEFFERSON" PART 4

by Steve Rose

THE HOWARD HUGHES LEGACY

Howard Hughes was arguably one of the great geniuses of the 20th Century!

Among the inventions and ideas that he brought us were:

- The recessed rivet.
- The fastest fighter plane of World War II.
- A new design for the "bra" that was worn by Jane Russell in the notorious film The Outlaw.
- For a time after World War I, he owned the largest air force in the world.
- And he built the largest plane ever: the "Spruce Goose" (and not made from spruce!

Hughes owned Trans World Airlines (TWA), a great number of casinos in Las Vegas, and several airlines that he combined into Hughes Air West.

Part of his legacy includes the Howard Hughes Medical Foundation in what is now part of Playa Vista. He also owned the property that included the Hughes Center which reached all the way to the Pacific Ocean.



"I am by nature a perfectionist, and I seem to have trouble allowing anything to go through in a half-perfect condition. So if I made any mistake it was in working too hard and in doing too much of it with my own hands."

What truly makes Howard Hughes so unique is that with all his genius and wealth, he would eat at the local eateries of the day including Bert's Bar-B-Que when it was on the corner of Sepulveda and Playa, as well as Leo's Coffee Shop on Sepulveda Blvd.

Howard Hughes spent a good deal of his time in Culver City – while working his magic at Hughes Aircraft on Teale Ave.

[Ed. Note: "Remembering" is an occasional series of personal recollections by Culver City locals. We welcome yours!]

Become a Member of the Culver Join others in preserving the history of the "Heart of Screenland" and the efforts Types of Me	s to create the Culver City Heritage Museum. We can't do it without you!
Benefactor (\$1000) Corporate Sponsor (\$500) Patron Member (\$100) Family Lifetime Member (\$500) Family Member (\$25)	Business Member (\$50) Corganization (\$15) Individual Lifetime Member (\$250) Individual Member (\$15) Youth Member (\$5)
Name/Company:	Telephone:
Contact Person:	Fax:
Mailing Address:	Email:
Please make checks payable to The Culv P.O. Box 3428, Culver City, CA 90231-3428. For further informa Contributions of both historic and social significance as V CCHS IRS tax exempt status may make	ation, call (310) 287-3850 or email: cchistorical@pacbell.com. well as monetary donations are encouraged, and the

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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