



WHITTIER GAZETTE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY, WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA

Vol. 2

December 1976

No. IV

ONCE UPON A TIME

... at the turn of the century, Everett Frazier would climb to the belfry of the white frame Friends Church and salute Christmas sunrise. To the East the voice of his trumpet would call out "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come." And turning to the West it would announce "Joy to the Earth! The Savior Reigns." "No more let sins and sorrows grow" would resound off the hills to the North and then across the valley to the South he would play "He rules the World with Truth and Grace."

Dr. Binford's Jewelry Store window would now be cleared of the Christmas strips and poinsettias and, perhaps, pyracantha berries and his stock would be low on pocket watches and chains and signet rings. His engraving tools would be at rest, because almost everything he had sold had been engraved.

The two ladies and one man who were clerks at Myers Brothers Store would not have to work after closing tonight as they had for the last few weeks. Since they went all over the store with one customer, there were bolts of yardage and socks and gloves to be returned to the proper place on counters and showcases when the customers had left.

Mamie Newby would be up and busy at her house on Comstock. The whole family would be coming for her elegant Christmas dinner of turkey and cranberries and pumpkin and mincemeat pies (made with real meat). The tree would be ready and so large it nearly filled the room and there was hardly space left for the family.

Not all the trees in town were so grand. Many were branches of ordinary cedar or evergreen tied together to form a tree. Presents were tied on and

cont'd on page 7

Neighborly Visit

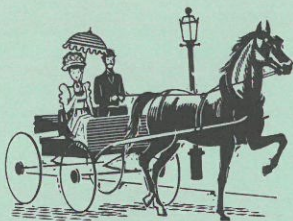
OVER THE RIVER

... but not through the woods, to Montebello we go. High on the bluff above the Rio Hondo, sits the Juan Matias Sanchez Adobe. You can see it easily from Lincoln Avenue as you skirt along the bluff between Beverly Boulevard and San Gabriel Boulevard. To get to 946 Adobe Street, you take Poplar Street north from Beverly and right on Lincoln, around the curve and then left on La Merced Boulevard for just a block to Adobe Street and right up the hill.

This adobe was restored and presented to the City of Montebello in 1971 by its last owner, Mrs. Josephine Scott Crocker. The oldest part of the house dates, probably, back to 1845 and its major portion added in 1854.

Juan Sanchez had been a friend and partner of William Workman, who gave the La Merced Rancho to Sanchez and F.P.F. Temple, Workman's son-in-law. All but 200 acres and the house were lost in the failure of the Workman-Temple Bank in 1876. Even this was lost in a lawsuit to Lucky Baldwin, who later sold it to W. B. Scott, father of the donor.

Why not ford the rivers some Wednesday, Saturday or Sunday from 1-4 and pay a friendly call? And while you are over there, drive on up to Lincoln and San Gabriel Boulevard, if you haven't seen the marker for the site of the original San Gabriel Mission - Mission Vieja.



HISTORY IS TODAY

ASSOCIATED HISTORICAL SOCIETIES OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

"Restoration of our Heritage" was the theme of the Fall Conference on October 23rd sponsored by AHSLAC. Participants met at the Andres Pico Adobe in Mission Hills for coffee and donuts and a tour of the adobe. Tally Ramsing, Virginia Mathony, Martha Russell and Claire Radford attended. After the get-acquainted time, the group visited the Mission San Fernando de Espana, and then met for a panel discussion on restoration. We were saddened to hear that the Mission was torn down after the earthquake and rebuilt; that the building today is not as strong as it was when it was bulldozed, destroying many frescos.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Speer told us an interesting story on a happier note. They discovered a Victorian house that was about to be bulldozed. They quickly decided to purchase it and took it down and numbered each board. They purchased a lot and rebuilt the home. To date, they have about \$50,000 in the house and lot and it isn't quite complete although they have moved in and are delighted with it. It is a 2½ story house which stands proudly with head held high above the one-story houses in the neighborhood.

Following the panel, lunch was served and a short business meeting was conducted by President Claire Radford. The afternoon included a tour of Los Encinos State Historical Monument, a delightful adobe maintained by a group of Docents from Los Encinos Historical Society, who led tours and hosted a wine tasting party.

Virginia Mathony

Did You Know?

There is a wide diversity of historical societies in the United States. One very interesting one is the Buffalo Soldiers Historical Society. Their purpose is to establish a museum in Flagstaff, Arizona to preserve memorabilia and information about the Black military contributions in America since 1539.

NEW HISTORICAL GROUP

The Swedish-American Historical Association of California is a new and functioning organization. The organizational meeting was held in Claremont on Sunday, November 14th. Besides the business meeting including presentation of the by-laws and election of officers, three speakers were heard. One gentleman was a Swede and the other two were Americans who have spent much time in Sweden. Their subject was the impact of the recent election in Sweden on the government and the people.

The main purposes of the organization are to develop the repository for the history of the Swedish people in America to be housed at California Lutheran College in Thousand Oaks and to continue the collection of oral histories of these people.

Sue Johanson is the president - or Proder - of this new group. At present the membership is mostly from Southern California, but they are certain to become state-wide. Perhaps you would like to talk to Sue about membership at 693-2512.

† † † †

REMEMBER WHEN

..... the growth of trees and vines was so thick along the San Gabriel River that they did Tarzan movies at Sanford Bridge? (Telegraph Road)

Walter Wood

..... you said to yourself you were going to get an item to Mary Ann at 696-7892 for the Gazette and then let it slip your mind?

..... there was Thomas's Tent City on the west side of the river along where Richardson's Lumber is now and vacationers stayed in the wooden half buildings covered with canvas?

Neva Turner

..... this editor didn't catch the "S" on the name of Leona Meyer in the last issue and wanted to make this appology?

BOOK NOOK

SPANISH-MEXICAN FAMILIES OF EARLY CALIFORNIA: 1769-1850 — 350 pages, illustrated. Paperback, \$25. Published by Polyanthos, Inc. Drawer 51359 New Orleans, La., 70151. November 1976.

Inspired by copious notes made by the late Thomas Workman Temple II, this compilation is the first volume in the series which will identify the earliest known Latin families of the West Coast. With detailed information on pre-California ancestry, spouses and children, the index covers over 4,000 names of early Californians and is essential for a proper study of Latin American history and geneology. The editor is a professional geneologist and has published articles in the National Geneological Society's **Quarterly**. Order from publisher.

WE THREE CAME WEST by Helen Raitt and Mary Collier Wayne; Tofus Press 1974. Very entertaining reading. A magnificent job of editing family letters of life in the 1870's and 1880's in Southern California, when Pasadena was the Indiana Colony, Santa Monica had no sidewalks and the land in the little German colony of Anaheim sold for \$25 to \$50 an acre.

HOW TO SELECT AND RENOVATE AN OLD-ER HOUSE in paperback for \$2.50 plus 40¢ shipping, is by Gerald Sherwood and published by Dover Publications Inc., 180 Varick St., N.Y., 10014; code 23374-X. This book goes from the choosing of a house to planning what to do, then tells you how to do it and with what and even where to get materials. It contains over 100 line drawings, diagrams and photographs. This is a republication of a handbook from the Department of Agriculture Forestry Service. Send title, author, code and money to the publisher.

MEMORY LANE

My parental grandmother came across the plains in 1851 as a little girl of four. The family came first to El Monte, where there was a stage coach house, which was standing as late as 1924. From there the family went to Downey.

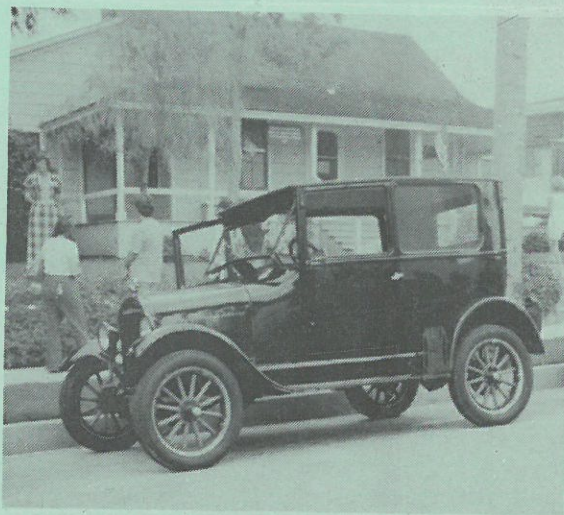
Frances King

My remembrances include the wonderful honor of being the Charter President of the Whittier Historical Society. Above all, I'll never forget the encouragement of all the charter members of the Society, who met at the first annual banquet held at the Hacienda Heights Country Club.

C. Richard Arena

For years there was a Boy Scout cabin on the north side of the Bailey Street Extension - the 13000 block above Hill Ave., where the kids spent days living "out in the country".

Roberta Forsberg



OTHER STUFF

No. This isn't an old photo we found in the files. One fine Sunday morning in September the Docents at the Bailey house greeted an Antique Model T club that had motored over Fullerton Road from Puente, had brunch at the Wm. Penn, visited the Ranch House and headed home via Turnbull Canyon.



*Somehow not only for Christmas,
but all the long year through,
the joy that you give to others,
is the joy that comes back to you!*

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS
BE MERRY AND BRIGHT





	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Dec. 1976	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

WHAT'S HAPPENING

PIO PICO MANSION

You have all received your flyer about Las Posadas. Come prepared to eat (the food is delicious and Mexican) and enjoy yourself. Do check in at the guest book as a Society member. An invitational birthday party is planned for Celestino Pico at 12 noon.

The Mansion will be closed from December 22nd to 28th and open again on December 29th and 30th. It will be closed on December 31st and January 1st.

There will be no docent meeting on December 4th because of the Posadas the next day. The January meeting will be on the 8th instead of the 1st. Three guesses why.

JONATHAN BAILEY HOUSE

Friends of the Jonathan Bailey House will hold an Open House on Sunday, December 12th from 1-4. The house will be decorated in the theme of "An Old Fashioned Christmas". The public is invited to tour the house. There will be no admission fee.

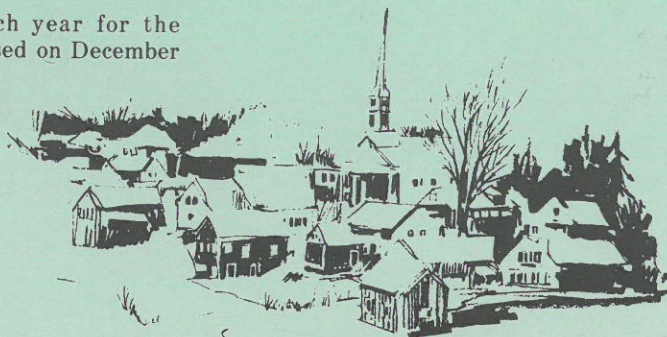
The Bailey House closes each year for the holidays. This year it will be closed on December 17th and re-open on January 5th.

MINI-CONFERENCE to be HELD in WHITTIER

The Associated Societies of Los Angeles County, of which the Whittier Society is a member, will hold a mini-conference on January 22nd at Rio Hondo College. Following the meeting, a tour will be planned for the Whittier area. The Whittier Historical Society has agreed to help sponsor this conference and tour. Save the date as it will be an enjoyable day . . . an opportunity to meet others who are interested in history. We hope many of the WHS members will be on hand to welcome the visitors.

Virginia Mathony
Secretary of Associated

(Editor's note: This is great chance to 'show off' both Bailey and Pico to very interested people and there may be some other historic place that would like to open its doors. Let Virginia know.)



INFORMATION PLEASE

Once Upon A Time cont'd.

I'd like some information about the Greene and Greene house that used to be a Santa Gertrudes and Whittier Blvd. If you recall it, please call Sam Guyan - 697-7071.

At a State Society meeting a Mr. Gene E. Venum of 13140 Pfeifle Ave., San Jose, 95111, requested contact with relatives in Whittier named Reese or Rees (I didn't know enough then to ask the spelling). Could you pass this along to any "old family" members by that name? His part of the family left this area many years ago and perhaps you can create a reunion. Mary Ann Rummel - 696-7892

Does anyone know how long Myron (Mike) Fales lived at 6237 Greenleaf and when that building was turned into apartments? Nadine Wood -- 696-0743.

The Pico Mansion needs an antique dining table - 1880 or before, if possible - and a stone Mexican metate. If you can offer any suggestions please call Claire Redford - 691-0468.

there was a special time when the tree was 'unveiled' and the gifts were shared.

When the children woke up, they went to their stockings that were hung - wherever it was convenient. The bed post was a good spot. You could get to them quickly that way. The luckiest children found a bicycle or a red wagon or a doll with a china head and hair and eyes that opened and closed. But, times were hard, so most found practical gifts, like clothes that mother made, in their packages.

There would be no city crews out the next day to take down street decorations. There had been none. The shopkeepers would not spend tomorrow taking down tinsel and displays. So very little had been put out.

Christmas then was for families and churches. Santa Claus had visited the Quaker Church on White Sunday. The parents had brought the gifts for their children and they were hung on the tree and Santa had called out the names. The Masonic Lodge 323 of Whittier had seen to it that needy families had baskets to help make their Christmas a joyous one. There wasn't much of the commercializing in Christmas that there is now.

Exerpts from Oral Histories of
Dr. and Mrs. Binford, Mrs. Armitage,
Mrs. Bailey and Mildred Johns

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS

The 1976 Neiman-Marcus Christmas catalog (the Cadillac of catalogs!) has many unusual gift ideas, such as two buffalo calves (6 months old) for \$11,750, a roll of 40 buffalo nickles for \$450 or a toy buffalo for \$700. If these ideas seem too expensive or exotic for you, shop closer to home for gifts of lasting value. Give someone a membership in the Whittier Historical Society, especially someone in a rest home who would appreciate receiving the Gazette each month and reading about Whittier.



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The WHITTIER GAZETTE is the official publication of the Whittier Historical Society. The name "Gazette" was chosen since this is one of the oldest names for official journals.

EDITOR: Mary Ann Rummel

Membership in the Whittier Historical Society is open to persons interested in the history and future of the Whittier area. Membership year is from March 1 - February 28. Dues are \$3.00 for individual membership - \$5.00 for family membership - \$25.00 for institutional membership - \$100.00 for life membership

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Published by the Whittier Historical Society

Printing - Courtesy of PMS Litho/Graphics
11936 East Washington Blvd., Whittier

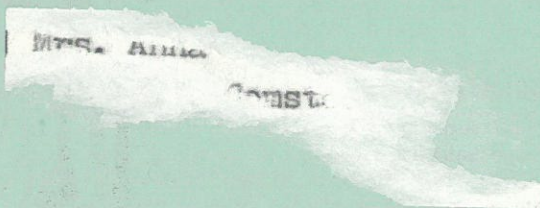
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31
26
5