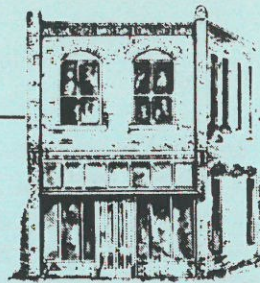


# The WHITTIER GAZETTE



WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 7

April 1981

Number 1

## Once Upon a Time

.... there really was an Avocado Show in Whittier. The booklet Whittier Invites You published in 1937 to commemorate our city's 50th anniversary announces the 12th Annual, which means that these displays began in 1927. Mildred Johns found that reference for us.

Connie Bailey was the first one in with information. Her father, Lester Cole, from 1913 to 1938 was the head of the Walnut Growers Association. When the Progress Club (a Whittier booster service organization) began making plans for the show they invited Mr. Cole to set up a walnut display. The first year he sent just a few items, but the following year the walnut growers put in a stamping machine and had pamphlets printed along with recipes (including her mom's divinity).

One of the reasons she was so impressed with this activity, even tho she was a very little girl, was that she got to go out at night with her parents to see what was happening. Quite a treat!

Some confusion began as members responded, because they would place the show in different parts of town. But that got straightened out. It was held on more than one spot.

Bill Wood lived down around Painter and La Cuarta and remembered, as a little kid, walking up the street in the early 30s to Sunset where the show was being held. The ground of the vacant land was covered with sawdust and/or walnut husks. The lure for a little boy was the carnival that was set up along Sunset, too. It had one of the most rickety ferris wheels he has ever seen.

Both Earl Myer and Connie Bailey referred to the show as being out along Whittier Blvd. west of the State School, but were too tiny to be more exact. Then, this letter came from Mrs. Ernest Jordan:

"... the Progress Club sponsored the Avocado Show. They put up a big tent on west Hadley, somewhere around the Hi School--little west of there, I think. Every merchant in town had booths displaying their wares. It was better than the L.A. Fair because everyone in town went. So, in ad-

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Once - cont.

dition to the exhibits, sideshows, food, etc., you met all your friends. It was a yearly event.

One year I remember that there was friendly rivalry between Lamar Stanley, who was showing a refrigerator that made ice cubes and L.C. Montgomery and his new ice box that had some sort of a gadget that you set on the ice and it made ice cubes in the block of ice. Lamar Stanley owned the Farmer's Hardware and L.C. Montgomery owned the Crystal Ice Company."

So, you see, Minnie, there really was an Annual Avocado Show. Those were real people we heard from who actually saw it. But do continue to collect information about it for a file folder marked "Avocado Show" for the information files of OUR NEW MUSEUM.



### *Letter from the Editor*

With this edition we begin our seventh year of the Gazette and a new format. Since the Sept. 1975 issue, we have been delivering a very classy newspaper. For the first couple of years the entire edition was a gift from Pearl Spear at PMS Litho (and now Calvin's Art Store, too), then we began paying for the printing, but at a ridiculously low price compared to other print shops.

With the many kinds of expenses we can look forward to in properly caring for all the artifacts that will be coming in for the Museum, every bit we can save will be better used in preservation. This new format can help our budget. And I will make it a point to see that we do not lose in content what we are losing in elegance.

While I have your eye, may I also thank you for kind words and information. I have basked in your praise: it is one thing to enjoy doing a job, but much sweeter to know it is appreciated. And without your articles and tidbits on the phone, this would long since have become a dull journal.

Most of all, Bless you, Pearl, for keeping the communication flowing that helped hold our group together through the formative stages and doing it so beautifully. Your baby has grown up and is trying its wings.

Mary Ann

# Annual Message

By the time this report is read, escrow will have closed on the museum building at the corner of Philadelphia and Newlin. Thus, we begin our second decade with a truly remarkable record of accomplishment behind us. As a result of the efforts of the Society, the community of Whittier is in the unique position of beneficiary of the work of a small group of public spirited citizens: the Friends of the Bailey House interpret and help preserve the heritage of the city's founders; the Pio Pico Docents interpret and preserve memorabilia relating to the life and times of the last governor of Mexican California; and the Museum Foundation Board has raised nearly \$400,000 to buy, equip and maintain a museum.

Once again, the Society has had a busy and productive year. In June, Virginia Boles and Bobbie Myer headed the committee responsible for the "Historical Underpinnings" brunch held at the East Whittier Woman's Club. Delores Heller from Bakersfield brought along a trunk load of undergarments and humorous commentary on the items to the delight of a capacity crowd. The delicious food was prepared and served by Virginia Boles, Bobbie Myer, Jean Arbuckle, Francine Rippey, Virginia Schallenberger, and Marygene Wright. A city crew shut off the water supply in the midst of preparing the brunch but charm, persuasion and threats soon restored the water and everything was ready on schedule.

A fashion show featuring clothing and accessories of by-gone days from Claire Radford's personal collection and a catered luncheon took place in September. The event was co-sponsored by the Friends of the Bailey House. Claire was also producer and narrator, with Linda Chesnut, Ways and Means Chairman, responsible for all other arrangements. This production, too, played to a sell-out crowd.

Nadine Wood and Virginia Mathony accepted responsibility for the second annual Heritage Ball at the Whittwood Mall in November. The Lusk Co. again made a generous contribution which included Les Brown and His Band of Renown. Doris Pawlak and Bonnie Myers from the Mall worked with Society members to insure another successful evening. All proceeds from this and the other two events went to the museum fund.

Our interesting and well attended general meetings were planned by vice-president and program chairman, Sylvia Foltz. The May meeting featured Art Historian Kathleen Symon whose topic was Southern California Architecture in the 20s and 30s. Four of Whittier's historic homes were opened to members for tours during the October meeting. Capacity crowds toured the Fletcher House (owners Mr. and Mrs. Richard Allington), the Strong House (owners Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Collins), the Harrison-Johnson House (owners Mr. and Mrs. Barry Kerns), the Baldwin House (owner Tom Bryant), and then adjourned to the Bailey House for another tour and an ice cream social in the tree-shaded back yard. Friends of the Bailey House assisted with tours of the house and the social. January's meeting included ele-

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mainder of Walter's term of office.

It has been a privilege for me to serve as your president for the past two years. Your support has meant much to me and to the other members of the Board. I know that you will continue to support the Society and the new officers in the same way, and wish them, as I do, much success in the coming year.

Phyllis Pearce



## Picture perfect

The last issue of the Gazette ran a picture of what appeared to be a Greek Revival style "biggie". Thanks to Dee Essley, Ethel King and Helen Broadwell we have some different pieces to what is usually a varied story that one house can tell.

The house was on the southeast corner of Greenleaf and Broadway and was built in the early 1900s by C.W. Harvey. It was bought by Hellman, the president of the Standard Oil Company of Southern California with headquarters in the building at the corner of Penn and Bright.

Dee recalled that it was almost scandalous for this town to have Mr. Hellman driven to work in his limousine by a chauffeur. Another memory that impressed him was that the house would be re-decorated each time the daughter would return from a European trip.

Ethel remembered the park-like area to the south of the house. She also recalled that about 1916 an invalid son died and there was a funeral service held at the house.

Helen recalled the house at a much later time - in the mid-thirties - after she had moved here from the Covina area. At that time a Mr. and Mrs. Carl Long lived there. They were also involved with oil and later moved to San Marino. The house was sold to the Alexanders (Mrs. Alexander was a Mason from Santa Fe Springs) who eventually took the house down and built the complex of apartments now on the property.

We all thank the three of you for taking time to share what you know with the rest of us. It is hoped that some day information like this will accompany each photograph in our collection.

# What's Happening?

## *General Meeting*

Our Spring General Meeting will be on Thursday, May 20 - 7 for visiting, 7:30 for meeting - at Etinger Center of Whittier College. Etinger is the building just east of the Student Center at the corner of Earlham and Painter, so use the parking lot on the corner. The speaker will be Jane Mueller, project librarian of the Southern California Consortium Heritage Project. She will tell us how material for seven counties is gathered and computerized for reference and, also, present us with a copy of the survey. Help with refreshments is always welcome. Call Francine Rippey - 333-3614.

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## *Associated*

Many members have asked about accessibility to the restoration project across the hill in Industry-Puente. On Saturday, May 16, the Associated Historical Societies of L.A. County will hold its Spring mini-conference there. The day starts at 9 and continues until about 4. This includes a business meeting, lecture on preservation of textiles, tour of the facility, lunch at a Basque restaurant and tour of a Rowland adobe in Walnut. Please call 696-7850 and get a copy of the program with reservation information. Deadline May 9 - cost \$7.50.

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## *Pio Pico*

Don't forget the International Fiesta on Sunday, May 3, at the Pico Mansion. Craft, art and animal displays; dancers performing Basque, American and Mexican folk dances; food and games should offer you an interesting afternoon from 12 to 4.

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## *Magic Show*

And remember the Magic Show, "Magic Town A' Poppin". Saturday, June 13 from 7:30 to 9:30 is the date at the Community Center. The Magic Castle magicians Trent and Mari Bessent and Don Stewart will be there to confound us all.

Proceeds are going to the Museum Fund. If you did not get your ticket for \$3 at the Annual Meeting, send a self addressed envelope to:

Linda Chesnut  
13620 E. Camilla St.  
Whittier, Ca. 90601

Our Society is sprouting a new branch - a Genealogy Committee. Under the chairmanship of Gladys Muller, a group of family history buffs has organized for the purposes of encouraging and stimulating interest in genealogy in the Whittier area, providing monthly meetings with speakers, holding beginner and regional (worldwide) workshops, accumulating a genealogy library, developing and executing genealogy projects (like indexing Arnold's History of Whittier), providing a center for exchange of surnames and other material, and being available to respond to questions from the outside. What a wonderful asset to our Society and Museum!

This Whittier Area Genealogy Committee announces a meeting at Etinger from 1 to 3 on May 16. The speaker will be Mary Schartz discussing "The Availability of Genealogical Sources in the L.A. Area". Everyone is most WELCOME.



### Membership

You have remembered to renew your membership haven't you? If not the information is on the back page. As a special bonus for waiting so long, all those who renew in the month of May can receive 3 oz. of free whipped cream. Just send your name, address, phone and dues check and complete the following in 300 words or more: "I prefer lavender colored whipped cream because....." Then watch the mailbox for a very messy envelope with your membership card. (The Society does not guarantee that your post person will ever deliver to you again or that the cream will be usable).

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Membership year is April 1 to  
March 31 and open to all persons  
interested in the history and  
future of the Whittier area.  
Dues -\$5 individual, \$7.50 family,  
\$25 institutional, \$50 sustaining,  
\$100 individual life, \$175 life  
for husband and wife

Society President  
Mrs. Kenneth Foltz  
14624 Millou Lane  
Whittier, Ca. 90602  
(213) 693-5751

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