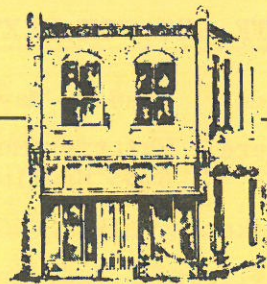


# The WHITTIER GAZETTE



WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. VIII

APRIL 1982

No. 1

## 12th Annual Meeting

Mary Ann Rummel was the recipient of the first annual Historical Award given by the Whittier Historical Society for service to the community. It was presented at the 12th annual meeting of the society, March 25, at California Country Club. Virginia Boles made the presentation and listed Mary Ann's accomplishments as follows: editor of the Gazette for 7 years, organizing and showing her slide show, "A Lot in Whittier," cataloging local photographs, serving as a docent and tour director at the Pio Pico mansion, teaching local history at the adult blind center, surveying early Whittier homes in the re-development program, and the list went on and on.

Marygene Wright, vice president, presided at the meeting and presented certificates to Varlie Gordon for the Pico docents; to Jean Arbuckle for the Friends of the Bailey House; to Nadine Wood for her leadership; and to Lee E. Owens for co-chairing the museum fund-raising drive and chairing the Museum Buffs 1981-82.

Ruth McFarland brought the members up

to date on the museum progress. She likened building a museum to building a house: a dream, a plan, finances, land, etc. The finishing, she stated, takes a long time. Plans are for the upstairs gallery to be opened this summer for traveling exhibits, and the lower floor for local historical exhibits by fall. Ruth suggested interested persons telephone the museum and ask how they can get involved.

Martin Cole presented two books on local history which he authored to the museum. Phyllis Pearce, past president, installed the newly elected officers for 1982-83. They were Sylvia Foltz, president (in absentia); Edward Irving, vice president; Ray O'Connor, recording secretary; and Berry Kerns, corresponding secretary.

Nancy Sanquist, UCLA extension, narrated a slide show on restoration of historical buildings and houses. With her pictures, she took the audience to various parts of the country and showed many restoration project.

Wise  
B 2211

## DATE SET FOR NEXT MEETING

When: Sunday, May 2, 3 p.m.

Where: Whittier Museum Gallery  
6755 Newlin Ave., Whittier

Speaker: OLIVER VICKERY

A delightful experience is in store for those who come to hear Oliver Vickery on May 2. He will entertain us with history of the Los Angeles Harbor and Catalina areas.

Vickery is the harbor area's official historian. He writes a bi-weekly column in the News-Pilot and is the author of Harbor Heritage.

As acting commandant of the Civil War Drum Barracks, and curator emeritus of the Banning Residence in Wilmington, he was recently consulted about the demolition of the building in which was found remains of the arsenal where Civil War weapons had been stored.

Last year the L. A. Harbor Commission designated the winding drive to Cabrillo "Oliver Vickery Circle Way."

Vickery comes well-recommended. You won't want to miss hearing him. Come and bring your friends.

+ + + + +

## NEW SOCIETY YEAR

This is going to be an exciting year! The museum seeds we have planted during the past years are now sprouting and growing.

We are not just onlookers in our many projects. We have shared a great deal of time and work and are, therefore, able to identify with our

progress. There is a satisfaction in seeing the society grow and in watching the museum take form.

Members are important to us. They have brought us this far and, as new opportunities present themselves, we will broaden our horizons and meet them with enthusiasm.

The society is beginning another new year and there is still much to do. We can't plant one day and harvest the next, so everyone is needed in this new year to help us launch the museum and your support is needed so we can aim high toward progressive accomplishment.

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## NEW ORGANIZATION WITHIN THE SOCIETY

We commend the members of the Museum Foundation Board for the hours of thought, study, and work they have contributed to the Whittier Historical Society in finding a museum site; for conducting a very successful fund-raising campaign; for purchasing our excellent building; for organizing and planning the exhibit areas; for purchasing necessary furniture and equipment; for tearing down houses and numbering the boards so they can be rebuilt in our museum; for remodeling and painting the museum and for many other things that had to be done.

The work of this group is too extensive to list in detail and it is impossible to adequately thank each member for his/her efforts.

As of last month, the Whittier Museum Foundation Board and the Whittier Historical Society Board

have become one group known as the Whittier Historical Society Board. This Board will conduct the business of the society and it's museum through its many committees. Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m.

The Board will welcome comments and suggestions from the members at any time.

## M E M B E R S H I P

### IT IS TIME TO RENEW!

Membership envelopes were included with the last Gazette. If you haven't used yours to mail your dues, we hope you will do so soon.

NEW memberships are always welcome, so tell your friends about us and invite them to join. The new categories of membership and the prices are listed on the last page of the Gazette.

FRIENDS OF THE BAILEY HOUSE would like to promote more interest in our "Mini" museum, because this old ranch house is where the City of Whittier began in 1887, when Jonathan and Rebecca Bailey became the first settlers. Tours are conducted by the docents each Wednesday and Sunday from 1-3 (except rainy days). Special tours are available for school classes, scouts, and other groups who wish to visit the house. Special displays are arranged periodically, such as old quilts, Bibles, china, valentines, and toys. We invite you and your friends to visit us. Frances Pedretti, Chairman.

## NEW EDITOR FOR GAZETTE



We are grateful to Mary Ann Rummel for the excellent publications she has given us. Now, she wants a rest from this assignment and we hope she won't stray too far away.

Mary Ann has taken off her editor's hat and tossed it aside. I have picked it up, brushed it off, and am trying to make it fit. Right now it is sliding about and it is difficult to keep in place. But please don't give up on me. I need your help.

I am pleased that Marilyn Jensen will join me as assistant editor. She

will continue the column "Once Upon A Time." I also welcome Claire Radford as a staff member and she will write a column "A Bit of History." We would like others to come forth and join us.

Feel free to offer suggestions, and/or contribute ideas, stories, or items. The society and the museum are growing, so the Gazette must grow along with them.

Although there will be some changes in the format, the newsletter will continue to reach you every other month.

Virginia Mathony, Editor

# Once Upon a Time

Does anyone out there remember the year 1901?

It was the year fledgling city officials strove to meet the demands of a burgeoning population; and as the year commenced, everyone was acutely aware that one of its serious deficiencies was lack of fire protection for its citizens.

Setting up a fire department was impossible until the city acquired an adequate water supply; and while \$40,000 had been appropriated for such a system in the November, 1898 water bond election, it was not until the spring of 1901 that city officials were in a position to act.

In the words of J.S. Butman from Arnold's History of Whittier comes the following account of what happened after that.

"In the summer of 1901 the city trustees called for bids for laying mains in the business district to conform to the requirements of the insurance companies and fire hydrants throughout the city limits; also one hook and ladder truck, one large, and one small hose cart, all drawn by hand, 1,000 feet of fire hose, and one bell.

"I secured the contract for the Whittier Hardware Company. In due time I appeared before the trustees and informed them that the mains and hydrants were all installed ready for use, and that the hose had been shipped, and that it was necessary for them to appoint a fire chief and have a volunteer fire department organized to be ready to receive the equipment when it arrived. One trustee remarked, Why not you?, which received the approval of the others."

Eighteen men answered the call for volunteers, meeting in a tent on North Greenleaf.

The first firehouse was a galvanized tin shed in the first block on S. Comstock. Ready for business, the W.V.F.D. faced its first problem. Of the equipment ordered, only the fire hose had been delivered. Undaunted, they borrowed an old delivery wagon from A. Jacobs and coiled the hose on to it.

Their first fire was at Tom Garrison's house at the corner of Bright and College. Reported Butnam, "The boys rattled the old wagon over there and had the water turned on in 2 1/2 minutes from the first tap of the bell."

Since Garrison was a volunteer, the others kidded him about whether he'd started the fire to see how fast they'd respond.

Much of the credit for quick

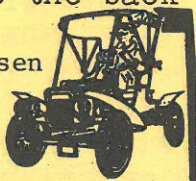
response was that the first team and wagon to arrive at the firehouse and hook onto the hook and ladder received \$2.50, the second \$1.50, and since each volunteer received only \$2 a month in pay - and then only if he was there to answer roll call at the meeting - it really paid to get a move on.

In later years the incentive pay was raised to \$3 and Dee Essley remembers, "No matter what direction the fire was in, the wagon would start north on Comstock, turn east on Philadelphia, then circle the monument at Philadelphia and Greenleaf in order to pick up volunteers.

Essley also remembers the day they rushed to the fire in a low bed mule truck, and as they rounded the monument, dashed down Philadelphia, and turned onto Pickering, the spindle overturned, throwing spokes in every direction and spreading hose clear to the scene of the fire.

The antiquated equipment was soon replaced with Whittier's first fire truck - an old Rambler auto minus the back seat.

By Marilyn Jensen



H E R E      A N D      N O W

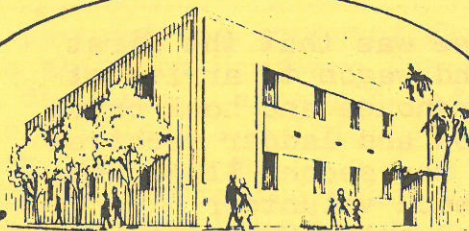


Astronauts Jack Lousma and Gordon Fullerton touched down on a long runway marked out on packed gypsum at White Sands, NM, on March 20, 1982. The Columbia spacecraft had circled the earth 129 times since blast-off from Cape Canaveral, Fla., and covered 3.9 million miles at a speed much greater than Bob Downey anticipated traveling. The entire trip was spectacular according to Lousma. "Even the toboggan ride down from upstairs," he said.

Many of us remember Lindberg's flight alone across the Atlantic; we remember "Wrong Way" Corrigan and others who were pioneers in flying. We waited at home for our daily newspaper to bring us the complete story; we looked forward to seeing the take-off and landing in the news reel at our favorite theater a week later. As time and technology advanced, we listened to such events on the radio and imagined we were there.

But today, we ARE there! If not in person with those who saw the blastoff or welcomed the astronauts home in New Mexico, at least on television where we saw it happen NOW. And the next day it was history.

# Whittier Museum



Greetings!

I hope Mary Ann Rummel is not getting too comfortable in that rocking chair. We are missing her expertise at the museum. She deserves an R & R after the work she has done to earn the "Outstanding Historian of the Year" award but we still need her here and hope she will be back to help us establish the museum's archives. Mentioning work, there has been much progress within the museum. We are now beginning the master plan with our architect and the building committee. Some of the lights in the main exhibit hall are being re-positioned. This is taking more time than planned because it is so difficult to drill through this extra hard cement.

The museum buffs have been working in the salvage area again. The Burke home in Pico Rivera was torn down in March and the society board bought one of the barns to use for siding on the barn we are building in the museum.

The museum buffs have another project that will start soon: dismantling shelving in the Whittier Motor Parts building.

The building--in the redevelopment area--was purchased by the City. We requested the shelving and other materials left in the building. After a public hearing in February, it was given to us by the City. We now own 286 feet of wood shelves, 91 feet of metal shelves, 2 display counters and a chain hoist. It is all ours to dismantle! If you would like to volunteer to help with this project, or any other buff work, please contact the museum.

As mentioned elsewhere in this Gazette, a Docent Committee is forming. We need between 40 and 80 docents. Please come forward early to volunteer your services, so we can start our training session.

If anyone knows of a youth group that needs to complete hours on a project, please let them know that the museum is in need of their services. I will arrange a time for them to work.

Now that the Historical Society has donated 100 folding chairs and the

Whittier Women's Club has given 45 chairs, we are in good shape to seat our members and their friends at our next meeting on May 2. I expect to see enough people here to fill these chairs. I have heard that Oliver Vickery, our speaker, is a unique person.

I wish to thank the donors of artifacts. They have been generous, but we still need more things. Please refer to the February issue of the Gazette for a list of needs. Keep it in mind during spring cleaning. When you run across anything you think might interest us, please give the museum a call.

The week of April 18-25 is NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK. I wish to salute all the members who have been volunteering at the museum. You have been doing an excellent job and are appreciated! Until the next Gazette, thank you all for past help and suggestions.

Owen Lampman  
Director



## Help wanted

**CLERICAL/TELEPHONE.** The museum office is now open from 10 - 5 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Nancy Claxton, 693-5061, is the one to call if you have some time to spare... a few hours a day, a week, or a month. Or call the museum at 945-3871.

**DOCENTS.** The docent program for the museum is now being formed and training sessions will begin soon. We must have trained docents ready when the museum opens. We invite you to join this group.

Museum docents will be used in various capacities such as tour guides, catalogers of artifacts, and also in the gift shop.

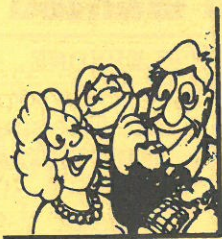
Anyone interested in serving as a docent, please call

Diane Sattler, 947-3458  
or the Museum, 945-3871

### MUSEUM CHAIRMAN ELECTED

Don Moore was elected Chairman of the Museum Committee.

All museum business will be directed to Don and his committee. Owen Lampman, director of the museum, and the museum committee chairmen will be responsible to Don. All department managers and sub-committee chairmen will be responsible to Owen Lampman.



## NEIGHBORLY VISIT

If you haven't seen the quilt that the ladies of La Puente Historical Society made, you will want to dash right over to the Bank of America building in City of Industry to see it. (On Stafford Dr., off Hacienda.)

Made for the bicentennial, it was designed by an adult education teacher and sewn by the ladies of the society. The center square is a map of the original land grant and each square of the quilt represents an historical building or event. It is beautifully done and hung in a glass case in the lobby of the building.

Extending to the right and left of the quilt are oil paintings of early buildings and scenes of the area painted by Wally Temple whose family were early settlers. Wally's father built the Temple home on Don Julian Drive which many of us visited on one of the Whittier Historical Society tours.

## ASSOCIATED MINI CONFERENCE IN WHITTIER MAY 15, 1982

The Associated Historical Societies of L. A. County will hold a conference hosted by Los Pobladores 200 on the grounds of the Fred C. Nelles School on May 15.

The program includes a continental breakfast, tour of Nelles Museum, a talk on the history of Nelles School, a talk on Pio Pico, and in the afternoon there will be tours arranged by the Whittier Historical Society. Included are: Pio Pico Mansion, Bailey House, Strong Ranch House, and Johnson-Harrison house. A charge of \$8 includes all of the above. Call Claire Radford at 691-0468 for more information. Pre-registration is desired. We hope you will join us at this historic event.

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## ANNUAL FESTIVAL AT PICO MANSION

There will be activity at the Pico Mansion from 12 noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 25. Dancers from St. Hilary Folklorico de Victoria Maria and from Annette's School of dance will perform. Craftsmen and artists will both demonstrate and display for sale a wide variety of handwork including oil paintings. The docents will bake bread in the horno and churn butter. Everyone is invited for a fun afternoon.

## A Bit of History .....

### THE "MONTE"

The "Old Spanish Trail" into California was followed by William Wolfskill in 1830-31, but it was neither old nor strictly Spanish. The trail was first traversed by a New Mexican trader, Antonio Armijo in 1829-30. Later it became known also as the Santa Fe Trail and was used by many early American pioneers. For many of these covered wagon emigrants, El Monte became the end of the trail.

Here on the banks of the San Gabriel River natural springs made agriculture easy. Also this land was not claimed in any Spanish or Mexican land grants. As early as 1849 Ira Thompson established a stage station at a place called "Willow Grove." Soon other emigrants arrived and permanent homes were built in the green oasis. In 1852 the first schoolhouse was erected here. The next year John Prior, a Baptist minister, organized the first Protestant evangelical church in Southern California in this schoolhouse.

By 1860 the main towns in Los Angeles County were the dusty pueblo of Los Angeles and the American village of El Monte. El Monte is depicted as a raw frontier town populated by a band of Texans known as the "Monte" boys, who recklessly defended "justice" and "Southern Democracy." There are tantalizingly brief glimpses in the writings of the day of their exploits. This neglected lively, early history of El Monte is a part of the story of Southern California.

On August 8, 1853, the Los Angeles



County Board of Supervisors created the Monte township. This included the San Francisquito, La Puente and Los Coyotes Ranchos plus the Nietos Tract and much of the land formerly belonging to the Mission San Gabriel. Two villages were established: Lexington and Willow Grove. The name El Monte was not official until 1868 when the legislature settled the matter. It was an important farm center and changed little until World War II.

by Claire Radford

**LINEN COLLARS  
and CUFFS**  
ARB STAMPED  
**"Warranted Linen"**  
ARE YOURS?

## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 1981 - 1982

1981 was one of the most eventful years in the history of the Historical Society when measured by growth and achievement. For many years, the long term objective of the Society has been to establish and develop a museum for the Greater Whittier area. The establishment of a museum has taken place, thanks to an active fund-raising committee and the financial help of many generous citizens and organizations. The development is now proceeding under the direction of the Museum Foundation chaired by Nadine Wood.

Bob Bates, Interim Designer, has presented plans for the first of the Museum's displays and exhibits. Owen Lampman, Interim Director, is developing Museum policies and meeting with the many committees involved in running a museum. Owen has solicited contribution of materials for the Museum's building program from several community sources. Construction of displays and necessary modifications to the building can be attributed to a very active committee for museum "buffs" headed by Lee Owens. This group has contributed their expertise and countless hours of volunteer labor.

Activities of the Society have included three general meetings planned by Vice President Marygene Wright. Informative speakers at these meetings have included Jane Mueller, Project Librarian of the Southern California Consortium Heritage Project, Dr. Harry Nerhood, speaking on "What's Cooking?", and Trent Steele, who shared slides of the nostalgic trip to Mount Lowe. The Society's year closed in March with the annual dinner meeting held at the California Country Club. Nancy Sanquist spoke to the membership about "Buildings Reborn in Los Angeles".

Three ways and means projects for the Society were planned and promoted by Chairmen Linda Chesnut and Virginia Boles. The month of June featured a family evening of entertainment when Linda Chesnut arranged for magicians from the Magic Castle to puzzle and involve an audience of children and adults at the Whittier Community Center. A fall home tour was attended by a capacity crowd of 250 Society members and friends. Planned by Virginia Boles, this tour featured four historic Whittier homes. Everyone appreciated the generosity of home owners Maxine Batson, and the families of Dennis Ward, Al Haendiges and William Kimble. Early February brought Valentines and the Sweetheart Luncheon, again executed by Virginia Boles. Over one hundred guests were impressed with a well planned luncheon served by Bobbie Myer and committee. Lucille McClure displayed her Shirley Temple doll collection and shared interesting aspects of the personal history of Shirley Temple Black.

The business of the Society has been efficiently conducted by the Board of Directors. Board members not previously mentioned include:

Earl Myer, retiring after two years as Treasurer, has spent countless hours keeping accurate records and preparing very professional reports . . .

Claire Radford, retiring as an elected board member, has worked diligently to record the acquisitions of artifacts and donations . . .

Arnold Collins has served as Inventory Chairman, Parliamentarian and Chairman of the Historical Site Committee . . .

Linda Chesnut has capably handled publicity and public relations . . .

Francine Rippy, serving as Hospitality for two years, now qualifies as a semi-professional home economist . . .

Phyllis Pearce continues to be a very supportive board member and past president and has handled the job of Membership Chairman . . .

and Bob Bates has kept us up to date with his museum progress reports.

Credit must be given to the two hard-working docent groups of the Pio Pico Mansion, headed by Varlie Gordon, and the Bailey House, headed by Francis Pedretti. Both groups have contributed a great deal to the preservation of history in the Whittier area. Highlights of their activities have included a May Fiesta at the Pio Pico Mansion and a lovely Christmas Open House at the Bailey House. Both groups also decorated store front windows with historic memorabilia to coincide with the Uptown Village Anniversary Celebration.

There are many other unsung heroes and heroines. *The Gazette* is losing its efficient editor, Mary Ann Rummel. Many hours of joy have come from reading her material. Ruth Shannon should be given credit for being chairman of the very successful Sneak Preview Party held in March, 1981, at the Museum. The work of the Society's telephone committee headed by Betty Licht should be acknowledged. Jean Arbuckle has been a faithful liaison to the Society from the Bailey House docents.

The Society has been called upon to attend Whittier City Planning Commission meetings relating to the redevelopment of Central Park and has also worked to protect the interests of Whittier in the future plans for the Pio Pico Mansion. We shall continue to be a resource center for historical information for individuals and organizations and, in general, to be an asset to the Community of Whittier.

Sylvia Foltz  
President, 1981-82

NEXT  
GENERAL  
MEETING  
IS ON  
MAY 2;  
DETAILS  
ON PAGE 2

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF THE WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM, PLEASE CONSIDER THIS COPY OF THE GAZETTE AN INVITATION TO JOIN.

## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(See over for dues)

Membership year begins with receipt of dues and is for one year.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Spouse's first name)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip)

Enclosed is check payable to **Whittier Historical Society** in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

for \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type of membership)

Mail to: WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 561  
Whittier, CA 90608

WHITTIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OFFICERS

President

Sylvia Foltz (82-85)

Vice President

Ed Irving (82-85)

Recording Secretary

Ray O'Connor (80-83)

Corresponding Secretary

Barry Kerns (82-85)

Treasurer

Earl Myer (80-83)

Whittier Historical Society  
offices at

WHITTIER MUSEUM  
6755 Newlin Ave  
Whittier, CA 90601  
(213) 945-3871

Owen A. Lampman, Director

The Whittier Historical Society invites all persons interested in the history and future of Whittier to become members of the Society. Membership year begins the date dues are paid. Student \$5; Individual \$10; Family \$15; Sustaining \$50; Supporting \$ 100; Grantor \$ 250; Benefactor \$ 500; Sponsor \$1000; Life Mbrshp\$2500.

Corporate memberships are also solicited and begin with \$50 for a Sustaining membership. Other categories are as above.

Whittier Gazette is the official publication of the Whittier Historical Society.

Editor: Virginia Mathony, 693-1194  
Ass't Ed: Marilyn Jensen, 943-9627

Send or deliver copy for Gazette to Whittier Museum, 6755 Newlin Avenue.

## Whittier Historical Society

P.O. Box 561

Whittier, California 90608

ART & BOUTIQUE  
FESTIVAL APR. 25  
12-4 p.m.

GENERAL MEETING  
MAY 2, 3 p.m.

LOS POBLADORES 200  
MAY 15, 9a.m.-4 p.m.

Bulk Rate  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 202  
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