

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

# LOOKOUT AVE.

VOLUME 5, ISSUE NUMBER 3

FEBRUARY 1982

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On May 1, 1981, Donald McKinney's physician determined that Donald could no longer live alone. He moved to a convalescent hospital and will not again be living in the McKinney House. As a result payments on the McKinney House have risen \$88 a month from \$175 to \$253 a month as the historical society promised to pay when Donald could no longer live there.

Other expenses have risen too. The historical society now pays all of the utility bills which were formerly shared with Donald. The cost of paper and printing has increased, and the non-profit postage rate has doubled.

All of this means that we are going to need about \$340.00 a month to keep the historical society in the black. The La Mesa Historical Society is a non-profit, tax exempt California corporation. We are an all-volunteer organization, and all of our programs, research, collections, preservation, restoration of the McKinney House and yard are funded only by membership dues, fund-raising, donations and bequests.

We need to study our future carefully and make the best use of the resources available to us.

Dorothy Griner, President

## ANNUAL DINNER REMINDER

Have you made your reservation for the February 9th Annual Dinner Meeting? This year the dinner will be held at the Lyric Dinner Theater, 7578 El Cajon Boulevard. The social hour begins at 6:30 P.M. followed by dinner at 7:30 P.M.

The Lyric Dinner Theater will provide a "Spotlight Review" and selections from its current production, "Man of La Mancha." Also featured will be performances by members of the San Diego Gilbert & Sullivan Repertory Company.

Reservations will close January 27, so don't delay. For information, call 466-5970 or 460-3726.

## MCKINNEY HOUSE RESTORATION

Solid green genuine linoleum has been installed on the floor and countertops in the kitchenette at the McKinney House. It replaces the floor linoleum which was worn and tearing, and the countertop vinyl covering which was not historically accurate.

The same green linoleum was also installed on the flat countertop in the kitchen. The old linoleum matching that on the kitchen floor was too worn to retain.

When the old linoleum was removed from the slanting drainboard to the right of the kitchen sink, the original Douglas fir drainboard with grooves cut into it to carry away the water was discovered. The original was cracked and water damaged, so it was carefully removed and stored for documentation and a replica, also of old Douglas fir, was made and installed.

The first step in restoring the Douglas fir floors upstairs was the replacement of boards which had been splintered by furniture legs or otherwise damaged. Replacement boards used were matching tongue-and-groove fir removed from the two-story porch. Pulling up boards in the west bedroom revealed the gas piping installed under the floor when the house was built. According to Joyce McKinney, gas piping for eight fixtures was built into the house, since it was expected in 1908 that gas lines would reach La Mesa before electricity did. Electricity preceded gas, however, arriving in about 1910. The McKinneys never used their gas lighting system, continuing to use kerosene lamps for several years until the house was wired.

The work on the upstairs floors was paid for out of the donation made by Joan Wilken for that purpose. The work in the kitchen and kitchenette came out of the Joan Wilken Memorial Fund, which eventually totalled \$500. This money was set aside by the Board to be used for restoration purposes.

Work in the back yard continued with the planting of eugenia bushes to fill in the gap in the hedge on the east side of the property. Two wisteria vines were planted for the arbor. The eugenia and wisteria were donated in Joan's memory.

— Donna Regan



## HUNTINGTON LIBRARY AND MUSEUM TOUR

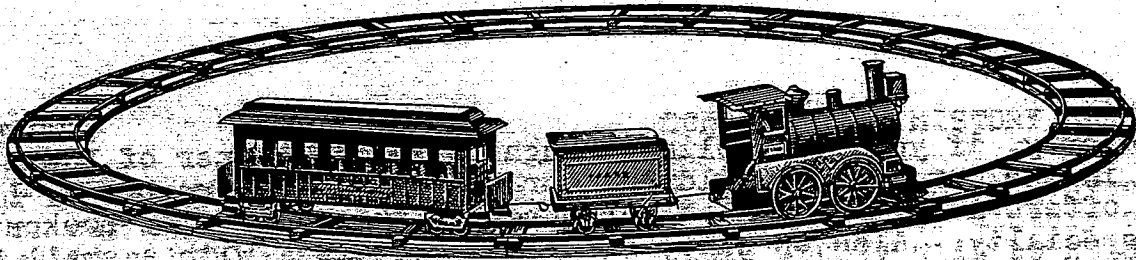
On Saturday, March 20, 1982, the La Mesa Historical Society will sponsor a tour to the Pasadena Historical Society Museum and the Huntington Library, Art Gallery and Botanical Gardens.

The present home of the Pasadena Historical Society and Museum is an 18-room mansion, with all the original furnishings, designed in 1905.

The Huntington houses hundreds of art treasures, primarily British, and more than a half million books and five million manuscripts in the fields of American and English literature and history.

Further details and reservation information will be mailed later.

— Kay Kester



#### DEPOT UPDATE

The La Mesa Depot Museum is now open on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Work on the exhibits inside the Depot and on the cars continues, with the Grand opening tentatively set for April 18.

Recent visitors to the Depot have included a group of children from the La Mesa Christian School and a Girl Scout Troop. The Scouts also toured the McKinney House. In February the teachers from the Curriculum Department of the Cajon Valley Union School District have scheduled a tour of the Depot Museum.

The need for staffers continues. The training period is short and the work is fun. For information call Eric Sanders at 469-1298.

- Eric Sanders

#### COME ALONG WITH ME... TO LA MESA, CALIFORNIA... MAY 15, 1907

Let's explore the town through the third issue of the La Mesa Springs Scout... with a circulation of 500... Wiley Magruder, editor... Henry M. Oliver, business manager.

We'll start with the meat market and leave our purchases there to be picked up on the way home. At the La Mesa Meat Market, S. G. Penoyer, Prop., claims he "...is in a position to offer the best services this side of San Diego." But the competition in El Cajon claims "...the best and freshest meat at the lowest prices. Wagon visits La Mesa every other day." D. S. Bascom, Prop.

Need to build a house and get out of your tent? La Mesa Lumber Company offers not only lumber, according to D. Frank Park, agent, but also hardware and other building materials. Buy La Mesa! Baldwin and Cheny, carpenters and contractors are available. Paperhanging and painting (calsoning and tinting a specialty) you can engage from William B. Krosse. And for your garden, Orcutt Seed and Plant Co. in San Diego will help. Mrs. Knudtson of La Mesa Springs will sell you eggs for hatching at \$1.00 per 15 and \$5.00 per 100. White Rocks and Leghorns only, please.

So you don't want to start from scratch? Let's buy a nice business - "a store and a good dwelling of five rooms, about 30 vehicles of all kinds, a barn, warehouse and stable on four lots, 200 x 140 at La Mesa, a healthy and beautiful place." J. H. G. Meyer makes this pitch. He's old and ill and compelled to sell. Lincoln McMillan says he'll sell

your property, if you are foolish enough to sell a corner of Eden. He's located in the Fox-Heller Building over there on the corner. W. L. Maxwell offers lots and ranches for purchase and sale, with Lookout Park lots a specialty. Also on sale is a five acre tract with a small house suitable "...for poultry, etc." for \$750. And you can get your fire insurance from the New Zealand Insurance Company--"...a dollar company..." at reasonable rates.

We can have our last year's clothes dyed, cleaned, and pressed at Earl Pearson's, and if you're into reading magazines, there's a summer special on the Saturday Evening Post and Youth's Companion from Henry M. Oliver. Culture? Why not? Grace A. Young gives piano instruction, and the La Mesa Women's Club will meet at the home of Mrs. Graves, today. We can drop in for a cup of tea.

Are you looking for a job or a business opportunity? La Mesa needs a restaurant, a barber, a bakery! Transportation isn't a problem, remember, what with the Cuyamaca R.R. on a new schedule: regular freight comes from San Diego at nine and returns about four o'clock. Or would you like a writing job? The Scout needs correspondents from La Mesa Heights and Spring Valley.

Or does Dobbin need a new pair of shoes? Horseshoeing and blacksmithing is done right at home by George Joslyn. Oh, and Mr. Wilson announces that his outfit for mending tinware has arrived and he will be prepared in a few days to do general tin work.

Well, it's been a pleasant explore, right? On the way home, we'll pick up our meat for supper and stop to watch workmen at the corner of Lookout and Palm as they work on Mr. Goessman's 24-room hotel.

Then, we'll wander up the main street of La Mesa Springs (elevation 539-830 feet), the sun behind our backs, the sky spilling Spring. Then supper. And after dark, a star-gazing session in the fragrant night and thoughts, perhaps, of La Mesa...down the 75 years until this very day.

- Eckoe Ahern

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MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is the true backbone of our organization! We look forward to a 100% renewal when July 1st rolls around.

Like most things today we have had to increase our fees, but we hope you will bear with us. The change in fees was approved by the Board of Directors and adopted by consensus at the October membership meeting.

The dues for the July 1, 1982 - June 30, 1983 membership year will be:

Individual	\$7.00
Family (2 adults)	\$12.00
Students	\$1.00
Sponsor	\$15.00
Patron	\$25.00
Individual Life Member	\$100.00

Bea Acers, Membership Chrm.

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QUILTERS

The Quilters have had a successful and fun year. The final total for the Christmas sales at the open house was \$229.10. We still have a few baby quilts all made up, so if anyone is interested in seeing them, you can call us at the McKinney House (466-0197) on Wednesdays from 10 to 12 A.M., or call Julie Bras at 698-0833.

We'd like to invite any interested member to come and join our group on Wednesday mornings. We are now piecing together our new quilt for 1982 which is called "Flower Pot." We should be ready to start quilting it in the next month or so, and it will be ready for the June Ice Cream Social.

Julie Bras

CONGRESS OF HISTORY CONVENTION

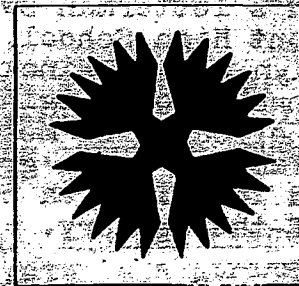
The 18th Annual Convention of the Congress of History of San Diego County will be held in the Chula Vista Public Library Auditorium, 364 "F" Street, Chula Vista, on Friday, March 5th and 6th, 1982.

The subject of this year's convention is "California Dreams," and many of the speakers will cover aspects of South Bay history. Among the topics included are "The Little Landers," "The Kimball Brothers," "The Otay Watch Company," "Montgomery's Glider," and "The National City & Otay Railroad."

Registration is \$6.00 per person if received prior to March 2, or \$9.00 if paid at the door. The cost of the Awards Banquet on Saturday afternoon is \$8.50.

Please send your reservations to: Mrs. Elizabeth Montgomery, Financial Secretary, Congress of History, 518 S. Orange Ave., El Cajon, CA 92020.

For further information, please call John Farleigh at 295-5404.



CHIPS AND WHETSTONE



### LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

The La Mesa Historical Society now has a small, but impressive collection of original photographs and copy prints of people, buildings and scenes of La Mesa in years past. The collection now contains around 500 original photos, 175 negatives, and around 135 copy prints.

The society recently received four substantial donations of original photographs. Mrs. Lillian Upp donated over 150 originals, a number of which are of Rosehedge Manor, interior and exterior views of the house and grounds, and of the Porter family. The remaining photos are of La Mesa from about 1895 to the 1940's.

Winnifred Badgar Green's donation includes scenes of La Mesa in the late 1920's, 30's, 40's, and 50's, as well as some artifacts related to La Mesa. One such piece of "memorabilia" includes her husband's letterman sweater from Grossmont High School.

Marilyn and Al Hinck donated a large number of original photographs of early La Mesa and the Hinck family. Al's grandparents arrived in this area before the turn-of-the-century.

Sheldon Hurlburt donated several original photographs of the Sheldon's service station on the blvd. in the 1920's and the old post office when it was located on the blvd. and 4th St. in the early 1940's.

Lloyd Donahoo's donation included original photographs of La Mesa around 1910 and an album of views of homes and buildings in San Diego in the 1920's.

In 1981 several people loaned their original photographs to the society for copying. Thanks to Anne Hall, Lloyd Donahoo, Sheldon Hurlburt, Olive Mannen, Loretta Cox, and Bill Orsborn. If room could only be given to name and thank all of those who, in past years, were so generous in their donation of original photos and loaning their originals to the society to copy. Please know that this historical society very much appreciates your thoughtfulness because it has made La Mesa's past available to anyone interested in our local history.

Xerox copies have been made of all the photos in our collection, placed by category in a loose leaf binder and can be viewed at the McKinney House on Saturdays from 1 to 3 P.M. or call for a special appointment. 463-0197

Pat Kettler, Photo Collection

### HISTORY OF LA MESA - SLIDE PROGRAM

The society's slide program on the history of La Mesa was originally put together by several board members to present at a La Mesa city council meeting in December of 1980. In 1981, the program has been presented to a history class at La Mesa Jr. High, the La Mesa Soroptimists, a La Mesa Methodist church women's group, the Crosstown Optimists, at a LMHS general meeting, at a Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting at La Mesa city hall, and to a real estate group. For further information regarding the slide program, please call 463-0197 or 460-3726.

# THE ACACIA STREET ZOO

by Jane Field



There is a zoo in La Mesa. Pedestrians who walk the east side of Acacia Street can enjoy it, the results of nature's and Francis Schiller's artisanship.

Schiller and his wife Mary Ann, a senior center bridge teacher, have lived in many American states and over twenty foreign countries during his career as a consultant and troubleshooter for paper mill machines. He is also a writer, having produced several books relevant to his profession and more than two hundred articles for the "trade" publications.

For the last ten or so years, the Schillers have lived at 4509 Acacia Street in one of the first La Mesa areas to be developed. Schiller still commutes all over the world to attend broken-down machines, some a city block long, but when he is home, he manages to have fun combining three of his hobbies: fishing, gardening, and decorating his house and garden.

In the process, he has established a zoo.

At the beach - he has "walked every foot from San Clemente to Punta Bunda," - Schiller plants a couple fishing poles in the sand which his dog, Coco, watches for any action. Then Schiller searches for shells and any other interesting flotsam the sea may have donated. There are two special (secret) places where the driftwood hunting is good.

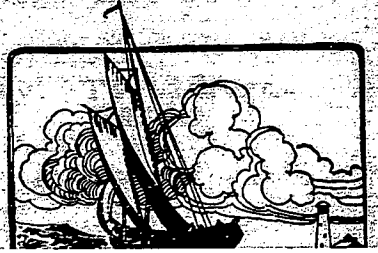
At home again with his bounty, Schiller digs the inedible fish parts into the garden soil, currently (in January) producing beans, beets, onions, big ears of corn, parsley, turnips, not to mention citrus fruits.

He may add some shells to the thousands that decorate the roofs and walls of his house and garage, outline the flower beds, and carpet the outside stairs. As for the driftwood, if any piece resembles some real or fanciful creature, it is added to the wonderful collection that is his zoo.

They stand in "cages" and niches in the light green fence: the "Trojan Horse," the "camel with two legs, now extinct," the "Holstein cow," the "European stork" protecting her nestling, and the "modern dog" with its own fireplug.

Some of the pieces resemble Olympic runners. Another (kept in the house) is a womanly Eve. Just inside the front gate is a strange lizard and at its rear a fox red as Reynard.

These interesting "animals" have been twisted into shape by nature, wind, rain, and the sea. Although Schiller does admit to a judicious bit of pruning, nothing has been added.



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