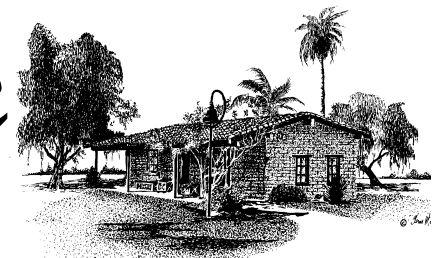


Fairview Register

Monthly Publication of the Costa Mesa Historical Society
Headquarters: 1870 Anaheim Ave

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President's Message



Each year, the Historical Society has made progress in its mission to promote and preserve the history of Costa Mesa, and 2012 has been no different. We have made connections with long time residents who have shared their experiences and stories with us. We have received additional items and photos related to the city's history. Our building has and is undergoing some changes to preserve what we have. Our technical capabilities and requirements are always being reviewed. The monthly programs at the Historical Society have helped educate the local community.

Although we are involved in the past, we must look to the future. There are projects and challenges ahead in 2013. The new year marks the 60th anniversary of the incorporation of Costa Mesa, and we'll be doing our part to celebrate the occasion. We are developing a more informative and entertaining newsletter. Our brochures are long overdue for a makeover as well as other handout information. Some of our key personnel are looking into improving our publicity for events, activities and programs. We are looking at different approaches to bring the city's history to young and old alike. The identifying, cataloging, and storing of items, and the documenting of photos in our collection are ongoing tasks. Our progress is controlled by funds and available volunteers. We are a non profit organization. Our job is a never ending one; each passing day is history in the making. There is much to do.

I must point out that what the Historical Society has accomplished is done through the efforts of volunteers; they are the heart and soul of the Historical Society. I want to thank all the volunteers for their help this past year and look forward to a good year ahead because of their continuing efforts.

Happy Holidays everyone.

Bob Palazzola

Building Facelift Features Costa Mesa Mural

Neither wind nor rain keeps noted artist and muralist Allyson Jones Wong out of the cherry picker for long. If you happened to drive down Elm Street in Mesa Verde recently you would have spotted Allyson at work on the back of the building at 1534 Adams Avenue, former site of Paul Mitchell School and Edwards Theatre.

The cherry picker enables Allyson to reach every inch of the 25' x 60' mural she is creating to depict scenes from Costa Mesa's history. The mural is a design collaboration between Allyson and property owner Tom Sparks who wanted to do something out of his own pocket for the community. What began as a response to neighboring residents' complaints about the structure blocking their view has become an opportunity not only to beautify a building but to commemorate long-gone eras in Costa Mesa's history. One scene in the mural will depict the ground-breaking ceremony for the property including city fathers, Edwards Theatres founder William James Edwards Jr. and retail center owner Gerald Sparks, Tom's late father.



Allyson spent many hours in preparation for the project including researching the authenticity of the mural with the help of the Costa Mesa Historical Society. In keeping with its mission to promote and preserve Costa Mesa's history, the Society stands ready to assist other property and home owners with their projects.



Promoting and preserving Costa Mesa's history is our mission.

Growing up on the West Side

Rachel Perez Hamilton remembers growing up on the West Side of Costa Mesa with her parents and siblings in the days when it was farm land. The following is the final excerpt from her collection of memories, "Escaping from Pancho Villa."

During the Depression, I remember the WPA (Work Project Administration). My dad worked for them in exchange for clothes, food, and a small amount of money. His job was killing rattlesnakes and poisoning squirrels in Laguna Canyon.

I remember the margarine of that time had to be colored. It was sold in a plastic container with a small tube of coloring. We had to burst the coloring and mix it by hand. This lasted for about five years.

In 1938 we had a tremendous flood. It rained for weeks. Fountain Valley was completely under water.



Newport Bay Sky Harbor Airport & West Side Costa Mesa in the late 1940's. Two runways ran east/west and north/south.

Our first house in Costa Mesa was on West 17th Street at Monrovia Street in a Latino barrio known as the "panal" (beehive.) We lived there for several years; in the very early 1940's. That house (which was a shack with a wooden stove, without running water or indoor plumbing) was moved to 2099 Placentia Avenue. My parents, Lydia & Cornelio, bought two acres adjacent to each other in West Costa Mesa, one for \$1,400 and the other for \$1,200.

Cornelio fed his family off the land. We had cows, horses, pigs, chickens, ducks, goats, dogs... My brothers would take the cows out to the pastures behind us (now the Freedom Homes.) They would ride on horseback with a sack lunch; at the end of the day they would return the herd of cows back to their pens on our property. Dad was very innovative - he and my brothers would pile the cow fertilizer in one area of the property. In the spring of each year he would shovel the fertilizer into 50 pound gunny sacks, tie them up, pile them into his truck and sell them door to door in the ONLY tract of houses across town known as East Costa Mesa - which was more populated. I recall, when we were young if a car was driving on Placentia Street (our street) we would run and see who it was because it was usually someone coming to our house to visit - we were in the country!

One spring day I must have been about 8 or 10 years old - I tagged along with my dad to sell fertilizer door to door. We were close to town and I had a small purse with probably a little change in it and asked if I could go the 5 and dime store on Newport Blvd. I walked there and was wandering around the store looking and looking (this was a really special trip for me.) I will NEVER forget what happened next. I believe, because I was Mexican, the store clerk thought I was shoplifting. She came up behind me (my little purse was hanging around my neck and had slipped behind me.) She opened my purse and was looking to see if I had stolen anything! I vividly recall quietly standing there letting her look into my little purse so that she could see that I hadn't stolen anything! When I recall this incident tears come into my eyes for that poor little girl. To this day, I'm honest almost to a fault (if that's possible.) I believe because of that incident I often have gone over and above the call of duty to return something that I've found!

In addition to the two acres we owned, my dad also leased the land around us and planted acres and acres of tomatoes and corn. I recall we younger kids would pick the tomatoes (summer time), and my older sisters would pack them in boxes (we called "lugs".) And my dad would then take them to sell in Los Angeles - I believe the Hunts Tomato Company. Honest story: One morning I recall hearing my dad tell my mom that "Mr. (whatever his name was) wanted to sell him the land on the Newport Beach bluffs - that he leased to graze the cattle - for about \$500 an acre. This land was around the intersection of Superior and PCH. My mom encouraged him to buy it (she could make Lincoln on a penny cry), especially since the terms were "pay me whenever you can!" My dad refused saying, "I don't want to stay in this country." My mom replied, "What has Mexico ever done for you?" Anyway, at that time one bought the mineral rights with the property and oil was discovered on this property. I guess I just wasn't meant to be an heiress, haha! Sometime later actor James Cagney owned this property. Now Hoag Memorial-Presbyterian Hospital is close to that site.

I recall when WWII broke out my oldest brother was drafted into the U.S. Army, he was terrified, didn't want to go. He asked sisters Emma and Dora to push the old truck and run over his foot so he wouldn't have to go!! Being an extremely nosy child I watched with interest as he put his foot next to the tire. The sisters would start to push, and he would jerk his foot out when it would get close. We were raised Holy Rollers (aka Pentecostal.) My parents called their minister who came over, and they all kneeled around my brother and prayed very loudly for him (I was outside listening, of course). He went to war, was injured twice, carried shrapnel in his body until he passed away, and also received a Purple Heart. He helped to liberate a concentration camp. After my brother died, his wife (my sister-in-law) Angela, told me a war story my brother told her - he seldom spoke about it. He was a medic in the Army and wore a hard cap with a red cross on it. A group of soldiers were surrounded, and the enemy was shooting the medics who were trying to get in to recover the injured. My brother Manuel took his hard cap off and ran in to help retrieve the injured.

On or about 1945-46 my older brothers went to Terminal Island, a U.S. Navy facility in Long Beach, purchased an army

Costa Mesa Historical Society

Presents

Aboard the Battleship of the Presidents: *The USS Iowa*



**Speaker: Michael McEnteggart
Public Affairs Officer, USS IOWA Navy Veteran**

***Costa Mesa Historical Society
Annual Installation Dinner
6:00 pm—Friday, January 18, 2013
Captain's Table, Orange Coast College
2701 Fairview Road, Costa Mesa***

Join us for the Costa Mesa Historical Society's Annual Installation Dinner of Officers and Board Members to be held Friday, January 18, 2013 at the Captain's Table, Orange Coast College. This year's featured speaker will be Michael McEnteggart, Public Affairs Officer with the Battleship IOWA, giving a presentation about the ship and his experiences while serving on board in the 1980's. Now docked in San Pedro, discount tickets to tour the ship (good for 1 year) will be available for purchase.

Join us for an entertaining and educational evening!

-----TEAR HERE-----

Please respond by Wed. January 9, 2013

Make your check payable to *Costa Mesa Historical Society*.

Send to Costa Mesa Historical Society, P.O. Box 1764, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

Questions? Contact us at 949-631-5918. All tickets will be held in Will Call night of event.

- ◆ Name: _____ Installation Dinner Tickets @ \$20 each
- ◆ Address: _____ Chicken dinner with salad, vegetable, roll
- ◆ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Please Indicate Your Preference Below: (Y/N)
- ◆ Phone: _____ Apple Pie: Iced Tea: Decaf Coffee:
- ◆ E-Mail: _____
-

barrack, dismantled it and carried it to Costa Mesa. Brother Mike hired "Cheto" an alcoholic carpenter to build a house for us. It was huge, seven bedrooms, large kitchen, dining and living room with one bathroom (at that time we were tickled to just have indoor plumbing!) On or about 1946-47 we moved in, what a TREAT, running warm and cold water and a bathroom! In retrospect two bathrooms should have been built with twelve people living there, plus my brother's friends. Mornings were extremely interesting fighting for the privy!!

I remember an incident that stays with me until this day. The Newport Bay Sky Harbor Airport was down the street, close to 19th Street. I was not yet a teenager when one day my siblings and I heard a small plane land very hard. We ran down the street to the Airport and saw the flames and heard people screaming. There was nothing we could do.

The property my dad leased was situated at Hamilton and ran south. There was a bar next door to us (where El Ranchito is now). Our family home was eventually torn down (I can't remember the year.) When I was married 53 years ago, we still had the house. My mother lived there for another 20 years after my husband and I moved. There are big storage buildings there now. If you took Hamilton Street going west, it dead ended at Placentia and would have continued into our driveway (in the days before Hamilton went through.)

About 1953, my father moved to Banning where he had 15 acres and had cows and rode a horse. He loved it.

I remember riding the bus to Newport Harbor High School. I rode with Bea Amburgey (her husband Orville passed recently.) And I remember riding the bus to OCC. My mother had said to us, "When you girls get through Newport Harbor High School, I want you to enroll in that NEW Orange Coast College so that you can have a better life and choose wisely."

When I graduated from Newport Harbor High School, I received a scholarship from the Newport Beach Business and Professional Women's Club and that bought my books at OCC. What a blessing!

I graduated from OCC in 1958 and served on the staff for many years. My husband and I bought a house in Costa Mesa and raised our family here. I feel lucky to call Costa Mesa my home - I love it here!

The *Orange County Register* Announces Special Gift Cheque Program to Benefit Non-Profits



In November, the newspaper's new publisher Aaron Kushner announced a special gift cheque program setting aside up to \$12.4 million in "ad dollars" for OC non-profits.

The *Register's* 124,000-plus seven-day subscribers will receive gold envelopes in the mail in the weeks before Christmas. Each envelope contains a \$100 gift cheque, which subscribers may designate to an Orange County-based 501c3 charitable organization they care about most passionately.

Subscribers will sign and mail back the \$100 gift cheques to the *Register*. Charities will be notified in the coming weeks on how many gift cheques they've received, and will be invited to redeem those cheques toward advertising in the *Register* and its community newspapers.

The program is designed to enhance a non-profit's ability to market its events, to recruit volunteers and build fundraising efforts.

We at the Costa Mesa Historical Society would like to believe there are those of you who may have wanted to help, but didn't have the right opportunity to do so.



WELL, HERE YOU GO ...
Can we count on you?!

In The Spotlight—

Kathy Bequette has served the Costa Mesa Historical Society for over 10 years and contributes much to our organization. She is an active board member and a docent for both the Diego Sepulveda Adobe and the Downtown Museum. As a retired school teacher with an appreciation for local history, Kathy enjoys leading the area scout troops and youth groups through the exhibits and sharing her knowledge.

Whatever needs to be done - from small tasks to special assignments - Kathy gives of her time where and when she can. She sees to the upkeep of the Adobe, maintains our news clipping file (which is gradually becoming digitized), and phones members about our events and programs. And, she brings home-made cookies for the gang at the monthly board meetings.

To say Kathy is an asset to our organization is an understatement. She is just a great all-around volunteer. She could very well be our poster woman for the model volunteer. Kathy is our person of the month In the Spotlight.

Bob Palazzola



Kathy Bequette


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DATED MATERIAL

What's Happening

- ◆ **Free Holiday Concert:** Wed. Dec. 12, 6:30pm in OCC Student Center. OCC Wind Ensemble's 10 Annual Christmas Concert—Dana Wheaton, Director. Come hear students and seasoned musicians perform holiday favorites. Free admission. Free parking begins 5pm in Staff Lots B and C; use Arlington Ave entrance off Fairview Rd.
- ◆ **Snoopy House Holiday Display:** 5-9pm, Fri. Dec. 14 - Tue. Dec. 25 at Costa Mesa City Hall.
- ◆ **In Memoriam:** Ruth McCartin, Society member in the 1960's passed away in November. Our condolences to her family.
- ◆ **Like us on Facebook:** www.facebook.com/costa_mesa_historical_society 

Costa Mesa Historical Society
P.O. Box 1764
Costa Mesa CA 92628

— Membership Form —

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Membership Categories

Annual		Special	
Individual	\$ 15.00	Historical Society Life Member	\$ 1000.00
Family	\$ 20.00	SAAAB Wing Annual Member	\$ 10.00
Student (under 16)	\$ 5.00	SAAAB Wing Life Member	\$ 50.00
Contributing	\$ 50.00		
Business & Professional	\$ 100.00		
Public Agency	\$ 100.00		
Benefactor	\$ 250.00		

Make your checks payable to the Costa Mesa Historical Society.
The Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, operates under the Corporation Laws of the State of California.