

VOLUME 6, ISSUE NUMBER 3

APRIL 1983

General Meeting & Potluck

May 15, 1:00 P.M.

LA MESA SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER, 8450 LA MESA BOULEVARD

Bring a casserole, salad, or dessert for eight people and join your friends for the afternoon as we celebrate National Historic Preservation Week by viewing a slide presentation entitled "Bungalow-mania" by Francine Mortenson and hear the song "In the Land of the Bungalow." At this meeting we will elect the Society's Board of Directors for next year.

Our speaker, Francine Mortenson, has studied the popular bungalow and its many variations. She will illustrate her talk with slides taken in La Mesa and the San Diego area. Francine and her husband are the owners of several historic buildings in San Diego including a Victorian mansion in Golden Hill, a building in the Gaslamp Quarter, and a former church in the Uptown area.

The nominating committee has submitted the following slate for the 1983-84 year:

President	Patricia Kettler
1st Vice Pres.	Donna Regan
2nd Vice Pres.	Mabel Perrapato
3rd Vice Pres.	Beatrice Acers
Secretary	Henrietta Schupbach
Treasurer	Clifford Asay

Directors 1983-1985:

Brice Lockwood
JoAnn Knutson

John Ahern will serve as
Associate Treasurer

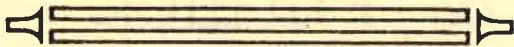
Nominating Committee: Helen Odom, Chairman; Pat Kettler, Karna Webster, Lloyd Kitzman, Clifton Coates.

Directors 1982-1984:
James Polak
Nadine Washburn
Karna Webster

IT IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM INSIDE

CALENDAR

- May 10 - Historic Preservation Element Hearing; La Mesa City Council Chambers, 7:00 P.M.
- May 15 - LMHS General Meeting & Potluck; La Mesa Senior Citizens Center, 1 P.M. to 4 P.M.
- June 12 - Ice Cream Social at the McKinney House, 11 A.M. - 4 P.M.



LMHS RECEIVES \$5000 CDBG ALLOCATION

On April 12, 1983, the La Mesa City Council approved the allocation of \$553,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for 1983-1984, which included \$5,000 for exterior painting of the McKinney House.

CDBG funds may be used for the preservation of designated historic sites, and in 1979 the La Mesa Historical Society applied for and received a \$25,000 grant for McKinney House restoration under this category. This grant enabled the Society to undertake several major restoration projects, among them reshingling the roof, plastering, interior painting, concrete work, and relocating the garage. Exterior painting was not yet needed and so was not included in the proposal at that time. By the beginning of this year, however, it had become apparent that painting was necessary to prevent deterioration of the exterior wood, and in February the Society submitted its request for CDBG funds.

These funds, which will become available in July or August, will cover carpentry and minor repairs to window casings and siding in certain areas, in addition to the painting itself.

The members of the La Mesa Historical Society truly appreciate the continuing support by the La Mesa City Council.

MCKINNEY HOUSE WINDOW SHADES AND CURTAINS PURCHASED

Traditional dark green window shades were installed in the McKinney House in March, and lace curtains will soon follow.

The window shades, similar to those used at the McKinney House throughout its history, will not only be an appropriate furnishing but will help to protect the interior from the ultraviolet light and heat of sunlight. The cost of the installation itself was donated by Ralph Smith of Smith Shade and Linoleum.

Curtains for the front room, dining room, and office have been ordered and should be in place by the Ice Cream Social. These machine-woven cotton Nottingham lace panels, with their border design and scalloped edges, are much like ones that could be purchased through the Sears catalogue in 1908.

We would like to thank those who contributed toward either window shades or curtains: Captain and Mrs. M. T. Wordell, Mabel Perrapato, Pat Kettler, Ruth Swanson, Donna Regan, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Judy, Shirley Holtz, and Karna Webster. Mrs. Swanson had a special reason for her donation - in the late 1920s she lived with her husband and child in the little McKinney House "apartment" (now our office and kitchenette), and she wished to provide curtains for the windows of her former home.

-Donna Regan



ALWAYS IN ORDER.
At once the simplest, surest and most durable window curtain fixture.
Does not interfere with window draperies.
Carries shade easily to top of window.
Often imitated. Never equalled. See that "HARTSHORN'S SHADE ROLLER" is plainly stamped on each roller.
Sold everywhere by the trade.
STEWART HARTSHORN,
FACTORY, E. NEWARK, N. J. 486 Broadway, New York City.

Ice Cream Social

SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 11 A.M. TO 4 P.M. AT THE MCKINNEY HOUSE

Building on past successes, the Ice Cream Social gets bigger and better each year. Last year for the first time our net profits were just over \$2000, and we hope to exceed that this June.

Entertainment, which will begin at 12:30 P.M., will be provided by the Music Makers of El Cajon and the San Diego Highland Dancers Association. The Music Makers, an all-male chorus, will perform a variety of traditional songs. The program of Scottish dances will be accompanied by bagpipes.

For lunch there will be barbecued chicken, cole slaw, baked beans, potato salad, chili, hot dogs, and of course lots of Swensen's ice cream. Baked goods; white elephants, plants, and items made by the Quilters will also be sold.

DONATIONS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE NEEDED:

Plant Table

Needed are house plants, herbs, trees, shrubs, anything that is well rooted. Please, no Creeping Charlies, spider or jade plants unless they are

an unusual variety. The plants may be left on the McKinney House back porch on Saturday, June 11, or may be brought the day of the Social before 10 A.M.

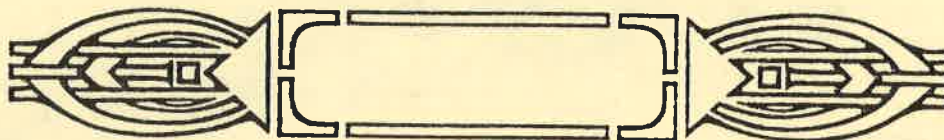
Baked Goods Table Mabel Perrapato
466-7819

We need all kinds of baked goods plus home-made jams and jellies. No cream fillings or cream frostings, please. Items may be left on the back porch of the McKinney House on Saturday, June 11, or brought the day of the Social before 10 A.M.

White Elephant Table Nancy Neffson
469-8731

We need small items, particularly jewelry. No clothing, please. Donations may be left on the back porch of the McKinney House.

WORKERS IN ALL AREAS WILL BE NEEDED - baked goods, white elephants, food service, setup, and take down. Volunteers please call Pat Kettler at 463-0197.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION UNDERWAY IN LA MESA

On Tuesday evening, May 10, the City Council will vote on the adoption of the Historic Preservation Element for the City of La Mesa. If the proposal passes, it will represent the culmination of four years of hard work by members of the La Mesa Historical Society and other citizens.

In 1979, a historical society committee with Barry Worthington as chairman, began work on a proposed Historic Preservation Element and Ordinance to protect the cultural resources in La Mesa. After a year of work, a draft element and ordinance were submitted to the La Mesa City Council in October 1980 by the La Mesa Historical Society and the La Mesa Citizens Advisory Committee.

As a result, city staff recommended to the Council that a plan development program and a cultural resources inventory be undertaken simultaneously. The Council allocated \$35,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funds for the project. In April 1981, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and Dr. Ray Brandes of the

University of San Diego were selected to perform the work. In August 1981, the City Council appointed a ten member Historic Preservation Citizens Advisory Committee to provide citizen input and project direction. Historical society members who served on this committee were Pat Kettler, Helen Odom, Betty Teague, Jim Hart, Sheridan Hegland, Barry Worthington and Gordon Austin. Donna Regan and Karna Webster attended the meetings as additional volunteers.

While the inventory was underway from August 1981 to August 1982, the Citizens Advisory Committee developed preservation goals for the city, oversaw the inventory and rated the historic sites. They also worked on the development of the Historic Preservation Element with Rick Alexander of SANDAG.

In April 1983, the La Mesa City Council reviewed the proposed Historic Preservation Element and allocated \$17,000 in CDBG funds for expenses and staff to support a commission or committee that would develop an ordinance and create and oversee a Register of La Mesa Historic Places.



The Winslow House (1908) at the southwest corner of Third and Finley is an excellent example of the many Craftsman bungalows in La Mesa.



Roach/Porter House c. 1910.

One of the few ranch houses remaining from the 1890s, the Roach/Porter House appears eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Built by Major Henry Roach, it became the home of retired medical missionary Rev. Henry D. Porter in 1904. Porter's son, James Tank Porter, was a noted sculptor.

Adoption of the Historic Preservation Element by the City Council and the eventual adoption of an Historic Preservation Ordinance will be key steps in saving the cultural resources discovered by Dr. Brandes in his historic site survey.

The completed inventory contains 316 structures built before World War II that are in good condition and without major modifications. The inventory uncovered new information about the Artists' Colony on Grossmont and the famous people such as Carrie Jacobs Bond, Madame Schumann-Heink, Owen Wister, Kate Sessions, and William Gross who had cottages or houses there. Other famous people who lived in La Mesa were Adm. William H.

Standley who owned the Villa Zee Zaw while he was ambassador to Russia in 1942-1943 and Allan Dwan, the movie director.

The survey discovered many homes of historical and architectural value in the Date Avenue area and suggested a historic district for Date and Acacia Streets.

A number of important structures were identified in La Mesa including the Alvin W. Gray House at 8045 Culowee Street built around 1891 and the late Victorian Porter House (c. 1897) at 4990 Porter Hill Road. The Porter House appears to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

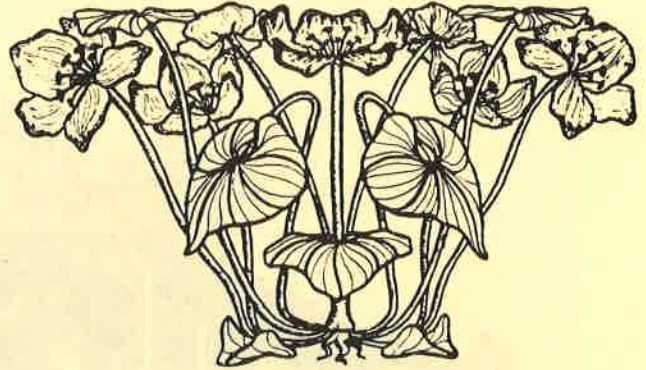
Bungalows represent an important style in La Mesa. "Bungalow-mania," the fascinating story of these houses will be presented at the La Mesa Historical Society annual meeting on May 15th.

Buildings in La Mesa run the gamut of styles from Victorians, bungalows, Tudors, Spanish Colonials, Prairie, Art Deco, and even a Chicago School bank. Several important architects have buildings still standing in La Mesa including Richard Requa (Owen Wister House, Mt. Helix Nature Theatre), Theodore Kistner (Grossmont High School), Emmor Brooke Weaver (Grossmont Inn); William Wheeler (Anderson-Erickson Mortuary).

La Mesa's rich architectural heritage will not last unless the citizens and the City Council take steps to protect it. Already two buildings in the survey have been demolished. Although the depot has been returned and restored, other treasures such as "Rose Hedge" are gone forever.

Listing a building on the proposed Register of La Mesa Historic Places will not take away the property owner's right to demolish or alter the structure if he so chooses. But it will make available economic incentives for restoring the buildings or retaining it with its historic exterior appearance intact. It will help the owner realize that he owns an architectural treasure that could be damaged by misguided improvements.

For the past four years the La Mesa Historical Society has been a leader in promoting historic preservation in La Mesa but continuing effort by our members is needed in the months and years ahead. Further research is necessary on a number of buildings; walking tours must be developed. Pat Kettler has presented many slide shows about early La Mesa to service organizations, clubs, and school groups, but more publicity about our city's heritage is needed. All members are invited to participate in this effort to save at least part of La Mesa's visible history. Historical Society members are urged to attend the City Council meeting on May 10th at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council chambers.



SLIDE SHOWS AND HOUSE TOURS POPULAR

In response to the request in the last Lookout Avenue, La Mesa Camera and Sound was contacted by Beatrice Acers and has offered to lend a slide projector to LMHS without cost whenever needed and to donate a reconditioned carousel projector when one becomes available.

The projector is used in the presentation of slide lectures on La Mesa history to school classes and community groups. Programs have recently been given by Pat Kettler to several Girl Scout Troops, a class at St. Martin's School and members of St. Luke's Lutheran Church. Scout and school groups usually follow the slide lecture with a tour of the McKinney House.

Tour groups ranging in size from 12 to 56 have been visiting the McKinney House this spring. Visits have been made by Girl Scout troops from Dailard, Loma, Riverview, and Murdock Elementary schools; a seventh grade class at St. Martin's School; and groups from Mt. Miguel Covenant Home and Foothills Methodist Church.

McKINNEY PARLOR ORGAN COMES HOME

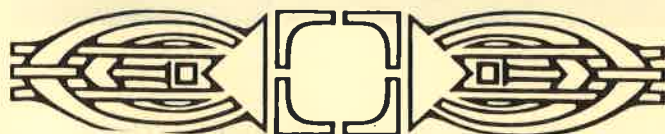
The McKinney parlor organ is once again back in the corner of the front room where it stood for over 50 years.

In February the original McKinney organ was donated to the La Mesa Historical Society by John and Virginia Wurzburger, who had purchased it from the McKinney family after Florence McKinney's death in 1956. The Wurzburgers had known Mrs. McKinney through their membership in La Mesa's Methodist Church. When they could no longer use the organ, the Wurzburgers wished to see it returned to its former home.

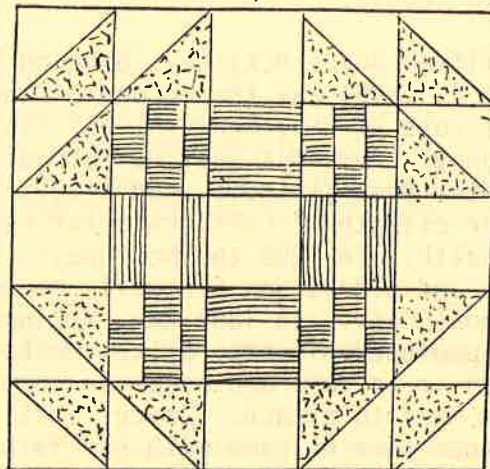
The Waters Concerto Parlor Organ, made in New York, has a walnut case with a high back, ten stops, two swinging brackets for candles or lamps, and a storage cupboard on either side below. The patent dates listed on an attached paper label range from 1861 to 1876.

Joyce McKinney believes that the organ probably belonged to his mother before her marriage to Henry McKinney in 1891. After the McKinneys settled on La Mesa's Date Avenue in 1901, they had the organ shipped out to them from Illinois. Once their new home was completed in 1908, the organ was moved into the northwest corner of the front room. Joyce remembers his mother playing hymns; she had served as organist for the Methodist Church in La Mesa while it was meeting in the Allison Schoolhouse.

Tom and Dorothy McCarthy donated the transportation of the organ back to the McKinney House. The Society is very pleased that this impressive family heirloom has come home again and wishes to express its appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Wurzburger.



Goose in the Pond



THE QUILTERS

The Quilters are back again at Thelma Todd's home, starting on their latest quilt, the Nell Cherry design. Come and join them and work on the quilt or the other handmade items they are getting ready for the June Ice Cream Social.

The quilt to be raffled off at the Social this year was donated to the group by Mrs. Glenn Adams and was hand pieced probably in the 1930s or 1940s by Mrs. Artie Blackwell. Mrs. Blackwell's son, Powell Champion, affectionately known as "Champ," will be remembered by many La Mesans. The Quilters put it together and did the hand quilting. The pattern is called "Geese in the Pond."

If you have any cotton or cotton blend printed materials you don't need, please bring them to the Quilters group. They will make use of them. They meet Wednesday mornings at Thelma's home, 8069 Vista Drive, La Mesa from 10 a.m. until noon. You can also call Julie Bras at 698-0833.

JOYCE AND RUTH McKINNEY

When Joyce McKinney first saw La Mesa as a child before the turn of the century, it was a small community of scattered lemon ranches surrounding a few buildings near the depot and lemon packing house.

Wilfred Joyce McKinney, born on November 4, 1895, was the second of the three sons of Rev. Henry A. and Florence McKinney. Rev. McKinney, a Methodist minister from Illinois, had sought the warmer climate of California for reasons of health. In 1898 the McKinneys, with Joyce and eldest son Cromwell, moved to National City. In 1899 Rev. McKinney was appointed minister of the Methodist Church in La Mesa and began to commute to La Mesa to preach. Joyce first saw the area when he came with his father on Sundays.

In 1901 the McKinneys settled in La Mesa on Date Avenue where they took care of a small lemon ranch for its absent owner. Until 1904 Henry served as a supply minister for the Methodist Church, after which time he preached when needed.

When the McKinneys first came to La Mesa, the area was in the midst of a drought that had lasted for several years. Water piped from the flume was delivered to their property, but Joyce remembers that his mother would take the laundry to the springs in the present Collier Park to save the flume water.

The McKinneys kept a cow, and it became one of Joyce's chores, both on Date Avenue and later on University, to deliver the milk which they sold to other people in the town.

Cromwell and Joyce attended the Allison School and spent much of their free time exploring the hillsides and open countryside around them. Surrounded by the chaparral and the shooting stars, chocolate bells, and other wild flowers, Joyce was to discover a life-long interest in native plants.

The area around the depot and lemon packing house was a favorite place to

play. Inside the packing house Joyce watched the lemons being sorted for size; the fruit was transported on belts to a table with slots of different sizes. Women wrapped each lemon in tissue paper before it was crated; men made the wooden crates and carried them to the railroad cars. When Joyce was about ten years old, he worked for a short time nailing the boxes together for a penny a box.

While still in grammar school, Joyce also worked for the La Mesa Scout, which had been founded in 1907, putting on address labels and doing some typesetting.

After the birth of the youngest McKinney son, Donald, in 1906, and the arrival of Joyce's maternal grandmother, Mrs. Cromwell, to live with them, the small house on Date Avenue became crowded. In 1908 the McKinneys purchased a 2½ acre lemon



Joyce and Ruth McKinney on their wedding day, August 21, 1921.

orchard on University Avenue and had their new home built. In addition to two cows the McKinnys kept chickens and rabbits and with fruit trees and a vegetable garden were able to produce most of their own food.

La Mesa was then entering a period of rapid development. About the same time as the house was built, Henry McKinney opened on La Mesa Boulevard the community's first furniture store. He had previously been in the furniture business in Illinois before becoming a minister. Both Joyce and Cromwell helped in the store after school.

Joyce commuted to San Diego High School by train, graduating in 1913. For the next year he worked with surveying crews, and at one point helped lay out La Mesa's only cemetery. The Evergreen Cemetery, located at Bancroft and Lemon, was in existence from 1914 to 1926, after which the caskets were removed to Glen Abbey for reburial and the land was developed.

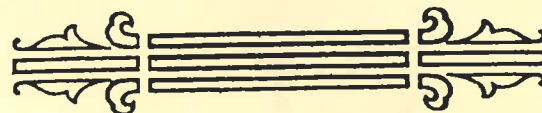
Joyce was a member of the first class at San Diego Junior College, which graduated in 1916. He graduated from the University of Southern California in 1919 and then went to work as a chemist for the forerunner of the Richfield Oil Company, a profession he followed until his retirement in 1952.

While attending USC, Joyce lived in a boarding house where he met Ruth Huntington, a young kindergarten teacher originally from Iowa. On August 21, 1921, Joyce and Ruth were married by Rev. McKinney in the front room of the McKinney House.

After their marriage Ruth and Joyce continued to make their home in the Los Angeles area where they raised their two children: Carl, born in 1923, and Ann, born in 1927. Following their retirement, the McKinnys moved to the San Diego area.

Through the generosity of Joyce and Ruth and their sister-in-law Marie McKinney, the La Mesa Historical Society was able to purchase the McKinney House for use as a house museum. The McKinnys have continued their interest in and support of the Society.

Joyce and Ruth McKinney will soon be moving to Northern California to live near their daughter Ann. The Society wishes them happiness in their new home.



COMMUNICATION

Dear Mr. Editor:

I was pleased to note your account of the program given at the last Rotary luncheon on the slogan, "Know Your Home Town," and am greatly interested in the data collected and tabulated by your committee on the development of La Mesa.

I am quite sure you will pardon any amusement I may have entertained, however, on reading the statement that "La Mesa was founded in 1907," when ten years earlier would have been late for its actual birth.

I came to La Mesa about the middle of June 1899 and have been a permanent resident of the city since the first of November, 1901, and at that time I was told that the little town was about ten years old, and that it was founded by A. Smith Crowder, who laid it out by platting and recording and putting on the map of the county the La Mesa Springs townsite, which included four blocks and two half blocks lying between Lemon avenue on the south and Orange avenue on the north and extending from Palm avenue on the east to half a block west of Date avenue.

I have not the complete data of this townsite at hand, but if memory is not at fault this statement approximates nearly the date of the founding of the City of La Mesa though that given is the data referred to above and I submit them only for what they may be worth in making up complete data of our city.

I presume the date 1907 would be about the time that La Mesa was found by the Park-Grable people, and having found it dead they put new life into it, until through their efforts and others who came after them, together with the hearty cooperation of the people, the little townsite of La Mesa Springs has grown by additions and subdivisions until it has come to be the splendid city of La Mesa of today with almost boundless possibilities for the future.

H. A. McKinney
(from the La Mesa Scout Sept. 9, 1927)



LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
P.O. BOX 882
LA MESA, CA 92041

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Renewal Time

We Need Your Support Again This Year

Membership dues for fiscal year July 1, 1983, through June 30, 1983, are payable NOW.

The La Mesa Historical Society depends upon membership dues, contributions, bequests, and fund raising activities to support restoration and preservation programs. Memberships and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Membership categories:

- ☐ Life \$100
- ☐ Patron \$25
- ☐ Sponsor/Organization \$15
- ☐ Family (2 Adults) \$12
- ☐ Individual \$7
- ☐ Student (under 18 years) \$1

Please fill in the information below:

Name

Address

City State Zip

Telephone

Make your check or money order payable to: LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY and mail to:

La Mesa Historical Society
P.O. Box 882
La Mesa, CA 92041

We thank you for your support. The La Mesa Historical Society has many activities and committees. The Board of Directors invites your participation.

_____ I am interested in being involved in the Society's work. Please call me.