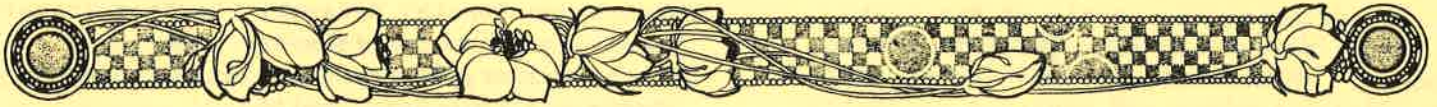


VOL. No. 3, ISSUE No. 4

MAY, 1979



CALENDAR

May 19.....Train Tour to Santa Barbara
May 20, 4:30...LMHS Dinner and Election
June 6, 7:30...LMHS Board Meeting
July 1, 11:00-4:00... OLD FASHIONED ICE
CREAM SOCIAL and BARBEQUE CHICKEN DINNER

A PLACE IN TIME

An award-winning film is to be shown to the Historical Society in La Mesa at the Senior Recreation Center on May 20. All the way from The National Trust for Historic Preservation in New York City comes the pièce de resistance for the program at the Annual LMHS Potluck dinner, the film: A Place in Time. After research in 200 communities for two years, 25 were selected for visits narrated by the people who are making preservation happen.

Following brief visits to New London, Taos, Evansville, Williamsburg, Louisville and New Orleans, are shown longer segments about San Francisco, Brooklyn and others. Preservation is growing into an environmental movement which makes good sense. The theme for National Historic Preservation Week, May 6-12, is "Preservation is Good Business." Winner of the Golden Eagle Certificate of the Council on International Nontheatrical Events (CINE), the film we are to enjoy is a candidate to represent the United States in international film competitions.

The film and annual election will take place following the 4:30 dinner.

PRESERVATION WEEK
MAY 6-12, 1979



PRESERVATION IS GOOD BUSINESS

ANNUAL LMHS POT LUCK DINNER MAY 20

The word from Vivian Higgins, social chairman, is: "Let's all make a success of the May Annual Meeting as we did of the February dinner! We hope the members will come out for a good time and an inspirational and informative program, so we can end the year as it has progressed so far--with enthusiasm! Bring your OWN SERVICE and a dish for eight: casserole, salad or dessert. Hot drinks, rolls and butter will be provided by the Board." Mabel Parrapato's telephone committee will call to find out who is coming and what you will bring, but if you find at the last minute that you can come, just bring what you wish and arrive!

Attendance of the members is necessary for the success of OUR Preservation Week celebration, even though a bit late. 4:30 P.M., May 20.

JAMES E. MOSS

The California Historical Society has chosen Executive Director of San Diego Historical Society, James E. Moss as their new Executive Director. His experience with historical groups in Missouri and Texas as well as in San Diego "compliments many aspects of the Society's ongoing programs," according to a March release of CHS. Mr. Moss said, ".... Through its programs and activities, CHS can bring us insight into our times, expand our awareness of the world around us, enlighten and educate us, and even entertain us. It can convey to us a sense of the worth of the individual and transmit the knowledge that life in California reflects many cultures -- skills, customs, backgrounds, ideas, beliefs, ethics, hopes and dreams of many people that constitutes contemporary California." It is fortunate that such a person can bring to the state his understanding of Southern California. (Ed.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The present Board of Directors, after two years of service to the Society, will retire on June 30, and a new board take over, although some faces will be the same, perhaps wearing different hats. Their years represent many hours spent at monthly board meetings or in carrying out the numerous activities of the Society. Our appreciation is due them for their unselfish and loyal participation.

In reviewing the events of the past two years, we can all take pride in accomplishment. Membership is now near the 400 mark. Major restoration projects at the McKinney House have been accomplished, including exterior painting, rewiring, and plastering. Work is hopefully to be completed by June 30 in refinishing wood, papering, and painting in the dining room.

Of course, funds were necessary for these processes and have been raised, thanks to the hard work of numerous fundraisers in selling grapefruit, preparing Directories, holding Old Fashioned Ice Cream Socials, Tours, etc.

Our program of historic tours is nicely underway with more to follow. Our dinners are enjoyed. We are participating in workshops and conventions of other historical groups.

Our collection of pictures, furniture and other memorabilia grows gradually. We are hoping to assist in bringing about a Historic Sites Board in the City of La Mesa and are currently identifying such sites.

We stand ready to assist with the La Mesa Depot when the time is right for restoration to begin. Our attractive newsletter is appreciated by our membership.

Born as we were as part of La Mesa's official bicentennial activities, we appropriately look forward to the use of federal funds awarded us by the La Mesa City Council which should be available in the fall and which should make the balance of the restoration of the McKinney House a reality.

Hats off to you, the members, for your support and participation. Let's all keep up the good work! See you on May 20!

Sincerely,

Joan L. Wilken, President

.....
A DESIGNER'S SHOWCASE, 1015 Ocean Blvd., Coronado, presented by The American Society of Interior Designers and The San Diego Historical Society, April 28-May 20. This 1902 Gill/Hebbard English style ocean-front house of many rooms blends 'traditional elegance with today's fresh and imaginative styles.' For information or reservations, call 231-3863.
.....

ORCHIDS



To...

Leonard de Vore--loan of old typewriter
Mrs. Hazel Porter--gift of quilt
Gail Chance and her mother, Mrs. Harriett Berge--Leadership for Quilting Group
Donna Regan--Organization of McKinney House Restoration volunteers
Dennis Tuttle, Lucile DeWaide--Library Display (and to the Library for the space)
Patrick and Dorothy McCarthy (La Mesa Transfer)--moving piano for February Dinner
Dorothy Griner, Donna Regan, Eric Sanders--Santa Ana Tour Coordination
Betty Teague--for organizing our docent program and keeping the House open on Thursdays, 1:00-4:00 P.M.
Historic Sites Committee--Jim Parker, Chairman, Barry Worthington, Donna Regan, Dorothy Griner, Thelma Todd, Karna Webster, Dennis Tuttle, and Pat Kettler
Telephone Committee--for letting us know
Bill Teague, Calligrapher--design and production of certificates of appreciation for donors of time, labor, resources
Cliff Asay--two years of detailed, painstaking work as treasurer, giving monthly reports to the Board.
Debbie Morgan--Assistance with books and mailings

BUSINESS

The 1979 NOMINATING COMMITTEE were Margaret Cauthen, Lloyd Donahoo, Jean Guy, Eunice Pyper and Vince Odom, Chairman, who announces the following slate:

President - Woody Linke
First Vice-President - Pat Kettler
Second Vice-President - Jim Parker
Third Vice-President - Jean Guy
Secretary - Julie Bohnsack
Treasurer - Cliff Asay
Assoc. Treasurer - John Ahern

Directors at Large: (Terms expire in 1981)
Robert Browne
Donna Regan

Continuing on the Board of Directors:
Jim Orsborn, Eva Quicksall
Andy Smith (Terms lapse in 1980)
Immediate past president, Joan L. Wilken

California Historic Preservation Conference May 10-12. Workshops, panels, and SOHO Tours of Gaslamp Quarter, Victorian Houses, Irving Gill Architecture, Missions and Ranchos of San Diego County. For details, call Joan Wilken, 466-72

(Editor's note: There is a house in the City Hall Lobby! You will find it surprisingly like a house you know. Yes, the doll house was inspired by The McKinney House. When asked for a story about its construction, Roy Swearengin submitted the following. Thank you, Roy.)

BUILDING A SMALL HOUSE

By Roy B. Swearengin



MEMORABILIA

About Christmas time in 1978 I decided I could build a replica of the La Mesa Historical Society House, and I started to make plans for it. I took measurements several times before I was ready.

I knew it had to be built to scale—one inch per foot, from the inside to the outside and everything finished and painted before assembling.

I used two and one-half sheets of 1/4 inch plywood, special nails, three pints of white glue, enough seasoned redwood to make 800 shingles and one and one-half inch wide white pine to make all the siding, corners, moldings, door casings, window casings, stairs, etc.

I found there were six mullion or double windows plus all the small ones. All the windows had to be cut from plywood before assembling then given three coats of the paint which I had kept for over twenty years.

Mr. Varley came four different times and took pictures as the house progressed. I have an album of pictures from the time I started the house until it was finished.

Plexiglass was used in all windows and doors with striping tape to make the sash. All windows were made to fit so they can be removed for placing furniture inside. 739 shingles were used on the roof—each glued on one at a time. Also, 294 pieces of siding were put on the same way. I then added a fireplace, chimney, kitchen cupboards, dining table, entry table and a small table in the kitchen.

During the building of the house I sharpened a circle saw three times as most of the work was as close as a half pencil mark.

It took at least 320 hours to build. I hope members of the La Mesa Historical Society and friends of mine will get as much pleasure looking at the little house as I have had in making it. R.B.S.



.....
JULIAN WOMAN'S CLUB Annual (53rd) WILDFLOWER
SHOW, Julian Town Hall, May 12-May 20. Free.
9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Julian Museum also open.
.....

We have recently received a variety of gifts. Mrs. Hazel Porter donated a very nice old quilt made by her grandmother, Martha Gelica Loffborrow. The exact date is not known. Mrs. Porter said that it was between 1870 and 1880.

Valery Halverson of the "Tea Cozy Collectibles Shop" gave us a lovely silver collector's spoon depicting some of the historical places in California; i.e., Ramona's Marriage Place, Cliff House in San Francisco, Catalina Island, and Santa Barbara Mission. It also has on it the California Seal, our flower (poppy) and the California Bear.

In 1928 "The Festival de las Flores," sponsored by The Chamber of Commerce and the floral associations was organized. It became an annual tradition of La Mesa. The last one was held in 1954. Vivian Higgins has given the LMHS the ribbons she won during those years. They range from "Special Award" through first, second and third prizes. She also gave us a pair of earrings made of medallions from flower show prizes.

The Festival de las Flores was a beautiful event. It was truly "La Mesa" in feeling and background. Wouldn't it be fun to revive it?

By Thelma Todd

SANTA BARBARA ONE DAY TOUR

Saturday, May 19, 1979. Pacific Southwest Railroad Museum Association. (Call Eric Sanders immediately for possible openings.)
\$38.50 Adults \$24.50 Children
Includes train ride, Santa Barbara Mission tour, and El Paseo-Mediterranean Shopping Arcade, built in and around "historic adobes." Eric Sanders. 469-1288

.....
SOROPTIMISTS of La Mesa invite us for "An Evening to Remember" at the Fiesta Dinner Theatre, May 8 to see Same Time Next Year, starring Kirk Scott and Jan Leverenz. \$11.00. Advance reservations. Mail to Margaret Lewis, 3666 Alabama St., S.D. 92104 or call 296-2431.

RESTORATION



The removal of paint from the woodwork in the McKinney House dining room will soon be complete and work will then begin on the entry. More than 80 hours have so far been spent in stripping paint so that the wood can be restored to its original appearance. Those who have helped in this effort include Nadine Washburn, Owen Acers, Irvine Smith, Jay Fischer, Joan Wilken, Dorothy Griner, Lucile DeWaide, Pat Kettler, Arnold Wilkens, and Donna Regan. Irvine Smith has adopted as his project stripping all of the doors that need to be done. Owen Acers is also re-hanging the windows in the room--removing the window sash, repairing the sash weight pockets, and replacing broken or deteriorating sash cord.

In late February Lloyd Donahoo and his crew patched the upper part of the kitchen walls and the ceilings in the dining room and office and then applied a finish coat of sand finish plaster.

Further research needs to be done for the restoration of the yard of the McKinney House. If you can identify plants (especially in photographs), enjoy the detective work of historical research, and would like to help recreate this example of semi-rural La Mesa in the early years of this century, please join us.

Also needed are volunteers for current yard maintenance--winter rains have made both grass and weeds healthy and fast growing.

If you would like to assist in any of these activities, please call Donna Regan, 460-3726.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL SUNDAY JULY 1

Save this date! The Third Annual Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social will be held at The McKinney House, 8369 University from 11:00 to 4:00. Again this year we will have all the ice cream favorites: banana splits, root beer floats, cones, brownies à la mode, etc. Chef Felix will serve his barbecued chicken, potato salad, fire-cracker chili and hot dogs.

We will need YOUR GOODIES for the Bake Sale, your "white elephants" and, finally, your presence. If you would like to serve on any committee, please call me. We need your help in many ways. Also, see the "Quilters" notice and read how to help with the "Plant Sale."

Woody, Chairman, Fund
Raising
469-9988 or 462-9940

LOOKOUT AVE.



LOOKOUT AVE. is the official publication of the La Mesa Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 882, La Mesa, CA 92041. Tel. (714) 466-0197. Quarterly. Editor, Lucile DeWaide. Reporter, Eckoe M. Ahern. Artist, Clete Gress.

MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY fiscal year is July 1-June 30. Memberships are delinquent June 30 unless you joined after April 1, 1979. Renewal notices will be in the mail May 15. Please return them promptly with a check in order to be in the new Directory.

--Jean Guy

Hi, Jean! Those little brown books are really useful! (Ed.)

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Memorial gifts have been made in the names of Jean Sinclair and Ed McNulty.

SANTA ANA TOUR

Sixty-one people enjoyed the train ride and viewed four historic sites. The GETTY MUSEUM TOUR, originally scheduled for June 23, is CANCELLED, because the Getty is closed on Saturdays in the summer. a replacement tour is being considered.

SOMETHING NEW

"The houses are there for people to see if pointed out," stated Jim Parker, Historic Sites Committee Chairman. The Committee is identifying a list of older homes in La Mesa, built early in this century or before. A brochure is planned for use as a self-guided tour. Here are two of the houses listed:

Wm. Gilcher House 4800 70th Street 1894
Part of La Mesa Colony, developed before La Mesa townsite. Two-story frame house. Little alteration. Porch changed in 1920's. Said by former owner, Mike Donovan, to have been the ranch house for an extensive lemon grove.

Sherman C. Grable house "Hillcrest"
4344 Date Avenue 1909-1910
Designer not presently known but the half-timbered two-story structure shows many characteristics of the work of the noted architect, Irving Gill. Little alteration. Restoration currently being carried on by owners, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Worthington.

★ ★ NOTICES

OLD-FASHIONED ICE CREAM SOCIAL JULY 1 SUNDAY
11:00 to 4:00 The McKinney House 8369 University, La Mesa

The La Mesa Historical Society Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social and Chicken Dinner is a yearly, traditional affair for all La Mesa and surrounding area to enjoy.

This day is a coming together of the whole gamut of LMHS activities. Everyone comes early and helps wherever needed. Fund-raisers sell plants and elegant elephants (white or other color); quilters raffle and sell quilted items and take Christmas orders; delicious chicken, beans and salad make a full meal for members, friends, and passers-by; everyone looks at the McKinney House to share the excitement about what's new in restoration; and ICE CREAM in all its delectable forms is enjoyed by all in the old-fashioned ICE CREAM SOCIAL manner. Dress up and come!

NEW THIS YEAR: PLANT SALE

Now is the time for planting. Everything grows in the Spring. Pop some of those little excess plants into styrofoam cups, cans or flower pots to share on July 1.

We want small plants, slips, large plants, slips, cut flowers, hanging macrame holders, dried flowers or branches--anything of this nature that might sell.

We will need small, strong boxes--lots of them--tin cans, juice cans, pots, etc. Please collect these and leave them at the House. Plants should be marked by name, sun or shade and color of flower if possible. Plants can be left at the back door the day before the sale or brought at 8:00 A.M., July 1. Any questions? Call Dawn Stanley, 281-8660.

WOOD SCRAPS NEEDED

A fun, creative activity for CHILDREN is planned for July 1 at McKinney House. Please donate any scraps of wood--the weirder the better--any shape, and leave them at the rear of the House. Thank you. Remember to save for donating: white elephants, jewelry, used clothing, framed pictures, antiques, etc.

QUILTING

We are resuming our Monday Quilting Bees. Workers are needed to complete the quilt for the July 1 raffle. Faithful quilters, working together need assistance of flying needles to finish a stock of the many exciting articles (quilted-style) we make for gifts and decoration. We also need RED, WHITE and GREEN cloth. Orders will be taken from samples shown at the May 20 Dinner. Gail Chance. 461-5722



MC KINNEY HOUSE DOCENT PROGRAM

The docent program is just beginning. This is an opportunity to learn about restoration and preservation as well as local history. We hope to share with the community what it was really like to live in La Mesa in 1911.

If you would like to be a part of the committee--if you'd like to hostess even occasionally, or just meet with us while we learn about the furnishings of the house and about our city--please give me a call.

Betty Teague
463-5250

.....
MC KINNEY HOUSE, 8369 University
Now open every Thursday 1:00- 4:00
.....





Leahy issues challenge

Waking up the private sector

By Sen. Patrick J. Leahy

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.), a leading spokesman for preservation, was a guest speaker March 16 at the National Trust-sponsored conference, "Preservation: Toward an Ethic in the Eighties" (Story on page 1) in Williamsburg, Va. His remarks follow.

We are all here today because we share one belief: that it is the knowledge and preservation of our nation's past that gives dimension to the present, direction to the future. We believe that the dreams of the future are built on the history of the past.

Getting down to brass tacks

Until recently, many people have thought that the main goal of the historic preservation movement has been only to provide a brass plaque for every one of the more than 1,000 beds in which George Washington managed to sleep. Until recently, historic preservation has meant nothing more to people than the restoration of individual monuments, the rehabilitation of historic landmarks, battlefields and homes associated with figures or events of national importance.

In the past, local officials and city planners, unaware of the advantages and economic potential of historic preservation, and possessed by an "edifice complex," chose to construct new buildings rather than restore old, familiar ones. The tearing down of historic buildings often resulted in the breaking down of local community pride and integrity.

Labor intensive

Today it is a well-known fact that historic preservation projects are much more labor intensive and cost effective than new construction. An analysis by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of the projects funded under the Economic Development Act has shown that while demolition and new construction yielded an average of 70 jobs per \$1 million expended, renovation—including historic preservation—created 109 jobs per \$1 million expended. Restoration results in almost twice as many economic opportunities as new construction.

Further, restoration also conserves raw materials consumed by new construction, and the energy needs are often far less during both the restoration process and the subsequent operation of the structure.

Preservation is good business

Taking a look

The federal government is coming to terms with the realization that if we don't stop and take a long sober look before we demolish our past, then its role as providers for the future is based on a shallow understanding for where we came from and where we are headed. A great deal of progress has been made at the national level to ensure that federal grant programs make special considerations for the reuse of historic structures in lieu of new construction.

However, the federal government can only provide the impetus for the preservation movement. It is the beneficiaries or the private sector that must come forward and meet the challenge.

"We challenge you."

For it is only through the public's awareness and the financial support of the local communities that they will be able to say to the federal government, "We challenge you." It is the responsibility of all of us here this evening to stimulate the public's interest and to educate private business on the economic benefits of historic preservation.

Some examples of how federal grant programs can inspire private investment and at the same time create new jobs and revitalize downtown areas are occurring in my home state of Vermont. The city of Winooski has received preliminary application approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for an Urban Development Action Grant of \$1.6 million. The funds will be structured as a loan to the developer of the historic woolen mill. The mill will be rehabilitated into 150 rental units and 22,000 square feet of commercial space. The private financial commitment totals \$4.6 million. That amounts to three private dollars for every one federal dollar. And in addition, 50 new permanent jobs will be created.

In the second largest city in Vermont, Rutland, a historic preservation project to revitalize the downtown area resulted in the creation of 60 permanent jobs. The federal investment in this project was \$350,000. Were there 60 individuals on welfare or unemployment compensation, the cost to the federal government would have been \$360,000 annually. These are just a couple of examples of how cooperation between the public and private sectors can provide an important link in preserving the past for the future.



NEBO HALL...THE FIREHOUSE...REMEMBER

By Eckoe M. Ahern

Nebo Hall on Nebo near La Mesa Boulevard beside the railroad tracks is a stubby little creamy colored building with a rickety tower in the back, and not long for this world because of the La Mesa redevelopment project. In the center of town, yet seemingly off the beaten path, the building doesn't look like a firehouse, yet once it was, and for a goodly time.

Early in the century, however, a volunteer fire department kept its equipment in a livery stable on the south side of La Mesa Boulevard between Date and Nebo Streets. Some of those volunteers were Rube Levy, Frank Parks, Austin Lott, and Walter Hubbard. Chief Harry Smith was electrocuted during a storm in 1916 while making repairs on a utility pole. Luther C. Gordon succeeded him.

Mr. Gordon's widow, Julia, remembers her house had an alarm, and when a call came, she'd ring the Firehouse. Whoever was around sent out the word, and volunteers would scramble from nearby offices and shops. One summer, before freeways, the Gordons drove a Moreland Fire Truck cross-country from Columbus, Ohio. Imagine them on a summer day, steaming along dusty Kansas roads in their splendid topless chariot emblazoned with the seal of La Mesa... Jewel of the Hills! Astonished Kansans stopped them, one to drawl, "First time I seen anybody joy-ridin' in a fire truck."

The night the Flying A Film Studio burned, two of the Gordon children were dressed and tearing out to beat the Department to the fire. Took Mrs. Gordon a little longer. She dressed her two little ones before running along. "The whole family chased fires," she says.

The Department grew out of the livery stable eventually and into Nebo Hall, and when Mr. Gordon left the Department, Ray Lyles became chief. He lived upstairs, and so did some of the firemen, Bob Gordon and Jim Orsborn among them. They went to school or worked by day and served as a resident night shift staff. Jim Orsborn says he has pictures of all the apparatus in use from the beginning and one helmet of each type ever bought for the fighters. He also says the fire bell, no longer in use, was purchased by volunteers from Coronado and is now in a mini-park between the present station and the Ben Polak Fine Arts Building. When asked about how things were in Nebo Firehouse he says, "Crowded!"

Nebo Hall was the Firehouse until May, 1952, when the Department moved to its shiny new quarters at University and Allison, and has since been used for classrooms, meeting places, and housing for an extensive miniature railway system.

Bill Orsborn, with the Department since the 1940's, reports that the present Department has three stations, modern equipment, and a professional staff under Chief Robert Sever. Instead of the relay of alarms of Mrs. Gordon's days, a single number, for both police and fire departments reaches the switch board, and in seconds, trucks are on the road, serving a population of 54,000.

Nebo Hall knew none of this...but as it sits quietly beside the tracks, waiting to be demolished, it must have some mighty fond memories of young fire-fighters interrupted by fire alarms and leaving their homework...of the one jail cell on the south side...of Chief Lyles at the helm... until 1966...forest fires and house fires... wars and depressions...checker games and rescued kittens...and the fire bell which signaled the moment to roll out the trucks which bore the legend--Jewel of the Hills. Nebo Hall...Hail and Farewell!

(Editor's Note: Pictures of the old Moreland Fire Truck hang in the La Mesa Fire Stations.)

La Mesa Historical Society Committees are listed below. Some require only two members, some need twenty. Please check those you are willing to help serve. If you have questions regarding any, please call Woody at 469-9988. You may return it by mail or bring to the next general meeting. Thank you.

Archives	Newsletter
Bequests & Mem.Gifts	Oral History (Taping)
Community Relations	Programs
Depot & Railroad	Publicity
Directory for 1980	Publication (Magazine)
Docents (House Tours)	Quilters & Handcrafts
Fund Raising	Restoration - House
Garden Group	Furniture
Historian & Scrap Book	Landscaping
Historical Sites	Talent
Hospitality	Telephone
House "keepers"	Tours (Bus & Amtrak)
Insurance	Others? _____
Mailing	
Membership	
Memorabilia	
Museum	

We also need talents such as musicians, actors and actresses, script writers, extroverts, etc. who would enjoy taking part in plays, etc. at our general meetings. Will you please indicate below what you would like to participate in and your special talent. Thank you.

Music / Arts / Writing / Acting / Whatever ? / _____

I play (Instrument) or sing. _____

I will _____

Signed _____ Address _____

Tel No.(s) _____

Mail to Box 882 La Mesa, CA 92041

DO IT NOW!

MEMORABILIA IN ACTION

In August, 1921, Ruth Huntington married Joyce McKinney in the McKinney family home. Rev. Henry McKinney, Joyce's father, officiated.

September 7, 1979, their daughter, Ann McKinney Jacobs, married Bill Robinson, literally standing on the same spot. Rev. Michael Reese-Cowan, pastor of the Normal Heights Methodist Church officiated.

When Ruth McKinney announced that Ann would like to be married in the old McKinney home, many members of the La Mesa Historical Society sprang into action. There was much planning and there were many consultations. The house was cleaned; the people working on the restoration of the dining room speeded up their efforts; the silver was polished; and the cake was ordered.

The day arrived. Flowers were donated by members, and a linen table cloth, a silver service, and a punch bowl were brought. The table was set up and a very talented member arranged a beautiful centerpiece of rosebuds in a silver bowl, and made arrangements for the living room and hall.

The wedding party arrived, and the little bride-to-be went upstairs to put on her wedding dress.

Donald McKinney took this opportunity to brief the groom-to-be. "Yes," he said, "I remember, Ruth came down the stairs and Joyce met her at the foot of the stairs and took her hand and led her to that very corner. My father stood in front of them with his back to us."

DOCENT MEETING

Thursday November 1 2:00 P.M.

For all docents and anyone interested in the docent program at the McKinney House, there is to be a meeting at the House November 1 at 2:00.

Time spent by all of you—even before there is a real tour program in action—is much appreciated. All who go to the House on our "Thursdays" are making it possible for us to keep the McKinney House going.

The last meeting with the McKinneys was very interesting as we heard about "Life as it was lived in the McKinney House."

Thank you, all of you faithful docents. See you November 1. Betty Teague



FIGURE NO. 5 L.

Following the script, Ann, dressed in a lovely new "old-fashioned" dress started down the stairs. As there was no music, the group sang, "Here comes the Bride," more or less on key. Bill met her, took her hand and led her to "the spot in the corner."

Rev. Reese-Cowan conducted the very meaningful ceremony. Running true to form, the groom had trouble putting the ring on Ann's shaking finger.

Following Ann's wishes, the guest list was small: her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Joyce McKinney, Mrs. Cromwell McKinney, Donald McKinney and Bill's mother, Mrs. Helen Robinson.

Three members of the La Mesa Historical Society were there to serve coffee, tea and punch after the bride cut the cake.

We were very happy that the dining room was finished and that everything looked so well. The McKinneys were delighted and appreciative.

Ann went around remembering—pointing out things to Bill— "I can remember my making cookies in this kitchen at that table," ...

She will have another beautiful memory. It was truly Memorabilia in Action.

By Thelma Todd

PORTER HALL--A PART OF HOME

There it is...on the northwest corner of La Mesa Boulevard and University Avenue in La Mesa. A small octagonal building with a red tile Chinese Hat roof. Now, a Johnny-come-lately, rectangular red-roofed wing reaches to the north. Little Chinese Hat building hasn't always been here. It began early in the century across the street in a large nursery featuring lemon trees. From those beginnings, one couldn't really guess what the importance of its future and present could mean to our town, La Mesa. Porter Hall.

Porter Hall. Conveyed to La Mesa in 1929, lots 16-22 inclusive in "...Block 1 (one) of Outlook Terrace..." with the right and privilege of said City ...to erect a public library building thereon..." by Sherman and Anna Goble, who were carrying out the wishes of Edwards W. Porter, former La Mesa Mayor. The area became Porter Park, and at the time, the San Diego County Library occupied the structure.

Mrs. James Porter of La Mesa says the building looked the same then as the original part of the structure does today. One County record reports that Porter Hall, in its nursery setting, was a flower shop. One hopes so. Somehow that fits the building very well.

Early-on, Porter Hall was the La Mesa branch of the San Diego County Library and also housed the La Mesa Public Library, a collection of books donated by interested citizens. Space was very limited, and every imaginable community agency --AAUW, service clubs, churches, women's clubs-- promoted the addition of what is now the North Wing.

They worked to earn money to help the City with financing the project. Carrie Jacobs Bond (the End of a Perfect Day lady) gave a whopping benefit tea, for example, for the cause.

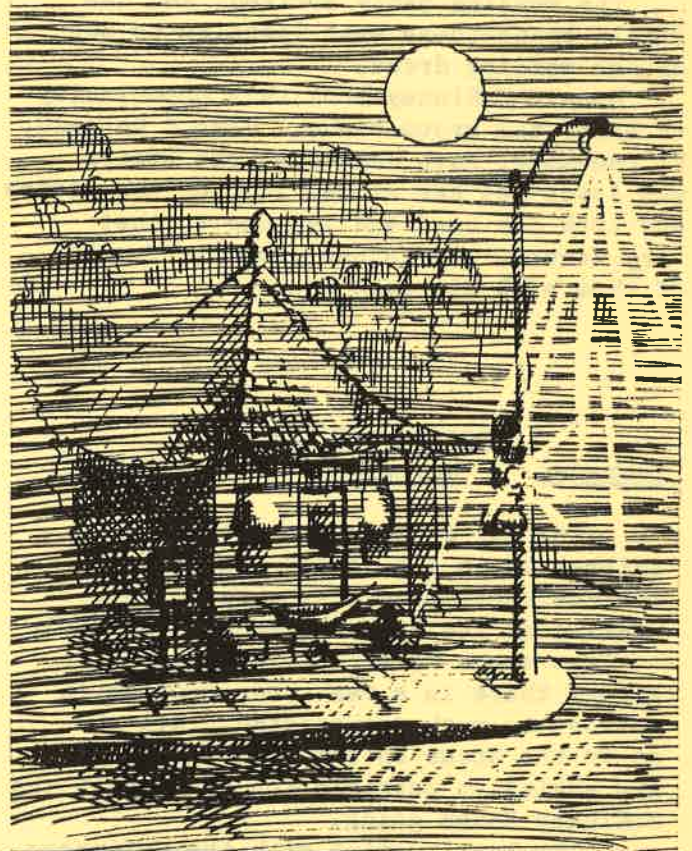
So the new wing was born. However, crowded conditions weren't improved that much, and one wonders how Porter Hall, already bursting at its several seams, could possibly have found space for one to get a California State Driver's License in 1954. But so it was.

Porter Hall breathed a sigh of relief when, in 1958, the County Library moved to its present site in the Civic Center, and the La Mesa Library, as such, was no more. But the long rest Porter Hall anticipated was instead a short one. The building which by now had a snack-bar arrangement with kitchen facilities became a recreation center for senior citizens and a meeting place for civic groups.

Then, in 1974, when the present Senior Citizens Recreation Center was constructed, Porter Hall had to pack up its Chinese Hat, its smooth floors, its casement-like windows, and its pretty doors and move across the street, where today it serves the community, almost around the clock.

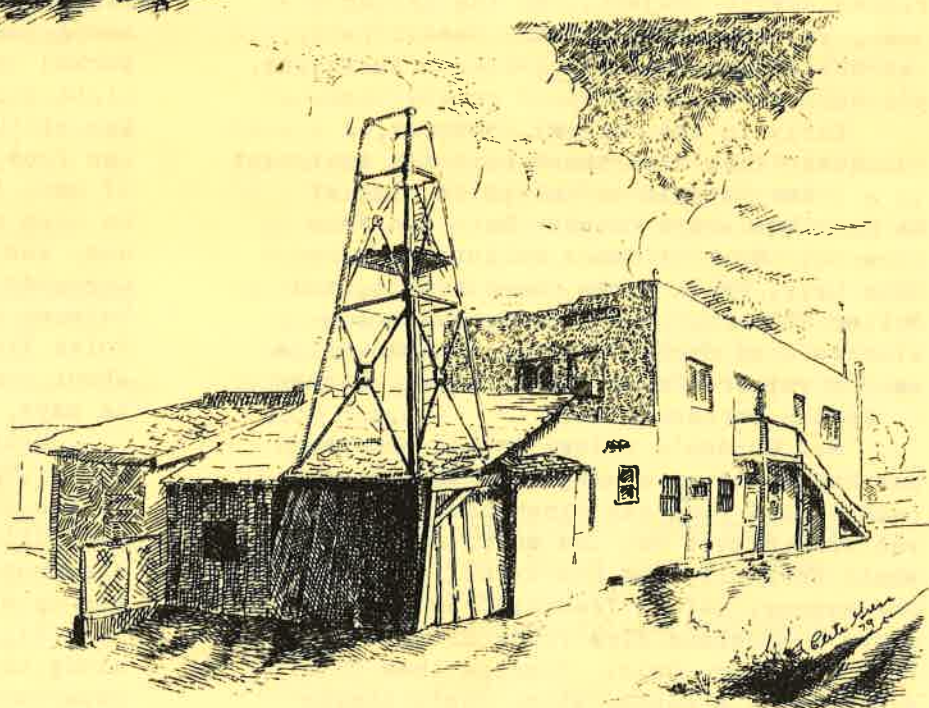
Today, Porter Hall hears writers read their works as the La Mesa Showcase Writers' Club and a Writers' Workshop under Helix Adult School meet there. The La Mesa Camera Club clicks away there, and the Southwest Fossilers call it home. La Mesa Movie Makers, The Numismatic Society, and the Sign Language Folks gather there. A Stamp Club, a Men's Alcoholic Anonymous group, the La Mesa Toastmistress Club, and the La Mesa Chess Club keep the building alive.

At the end of a busy day and evening, lights out and the streets now almost still... the stop signal casting eerie light and shadow through the windows, the North Star and Black Mountain out there on duty... Porter Hall can relax a bit...remembering borrowers of books, buyers of flowers-- dear thoughtful people who gave life to it ...the smell of coffee brewing, laughter, good talk. Another sigh.



Better sleep fast, dear Porter Hall, under your Chinese Hat. Tomorrow is another day.

By Eckoe Ahern



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