

La Mesa Historical Society

LOOKOUT AVENUE

Volume 38, Issue 4 **Fall 2013**

President's Address

Jim Newland, LMHS President

It's that time of year again-- when the Historical Society gets very busy. And just like last year, our board members and volunteers have outdone themselves. Make sure your calendars are up to date with all of our exciting and entertaining Society events!

Up first is our Historic Photography Demonstration Event on Saturday October 26th from 1 to 4pm. Thanks to Board Member Suda House, we will be partnering with the Grossmont College Photography Program to sponsor an entertaining and educational afternoon of historic tintype production. The McKinney House will be the backdrop for our guest photographers to demonstrate turn-of-the-century photographic techniques with period-costumed subjects. The Society will also display some of its varied photographic media collections.

Our big annual event, the Historic Home Tour, is coming up on Saturday November 2nd from 10am to 3pm. Once again we will be featuring five wonderful and eclectic classic La Mesa homes dating from 1908 to 1946. Discounted advance sale tickets are available from the Society and day-of tickets will be available at this year's Shuttle Center at the northeast corner of Date and Allison. We hope that you can attend, as this is not only our most popular event, it is a key fund raiser for the Society.

This year we will also be featuring our own McKinney House as a tour participant. As most know the Society, under the leadership of Board Member Linda Rankin, we completed a long-needed interior restoration. So if you haven't had the chance to see the recently refurbished house, make sure you stop by.

Also thanks to all those that have answered our call for funds to defer the costs of this work, and some upcoming capital needs for the archives. At press time we have received approximately one-third of our goal number (remember all contributions are tax-deductible).

In addition, the Board has taken some of the direction and ideas brought up at our Spring "strategic workshop" to update our membership categories. Due to significant increases in mailing and printing costs over the last few years, we have accordingly added $5 to our lower membership levels, but have also re-ordered the benefits for our higher levels. One particular note is that renewing $100 annual members will now receive two home tour tickets. New Lifetime and Business Memberships will also be part of the revamped membership system (These changes will take place for 2014 and more details will be included in the next newsletter).

Another exciting announcement is the partnership being finalized with the La Mesa Rotary Club to fund additional historic photo plaques for key prominent historic sites in the historic downtown core. Many should remember our placement of the "Flying A Movie" plaque in 2011, commemorating our community's pioneering role in motion picture history on the Wolf Building.

Following that success, the Rotary will help us fund additional new plaques. This will allow both organizations to promote our missions to educate on La Mesa's history and instill pride in our

community. Look for more on this exciting public interpretation program in the near future.

We will again partner with the Theatre Organ Society of San Diego (who installed and maintains the historic pipe organ in the Church) for a night of family fun for our Silent Movie Night in January. Noted San Diego organist Russ Peck will accompany a locally produced Flying A one-reeler along with the 1929 Douglas Fairbanks classic "The Iron Mask." You can get your tickets from the Society Archives or at our other events.

In order to keep up with all our events, please check our new website. Thanks to the efforts of Vice President Wade Douglas and our consultant/friend Keith Newby, you can now get updated event data and other information on the Society. Make sure to check it out: lamesahistory.com.

Thanks again for all your support. If you are interested in helping out as a docent for the McKinney House or in the Archives, please contact us here at the Society.

As always, feel free to contact me directly to discuss any ideas you might have to help us continue our invaluable mission for preserving La Mesa's history.

A New Website Unveiled!



To help preserve what's old and important, we've created something new and exciting. LMHS has been on the internet for the better part of a decade, and remains one of only a small number of community-centered historical societies to have an online presence. About a year ago we came to the realization that our website, although attractive, lacked the space and functionality to keep up with our growing schedule of activities and the need to provide easily accessed historical information for our members and the public. It was time for more than a facelift. We needed to start with a clean sheet of (digital) paper.

A friend of the Society with extensive web design experience, La Mesa IT specialist Keith Newby, developed an entirely new template for us that not only better showcases what the La Mesa Historical Society does, but also, for the first time, gives our website a fully searchable database.

If you haven't already been to the new LMHS website at **lamesahistory.com**, take a tour. We think that you'll be pleased by what you see.

Wade Douglas

In the Spotlight

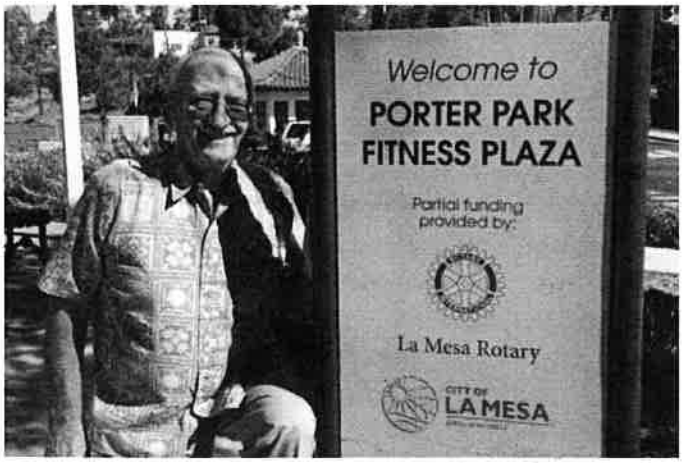
Keith Dindinger

Keith Dindinger is a prominent member of the La Mesa Rotary Club, which he calls, "La Mesa's best kept secret." Keith and the other members of the Rotary Club are engaged members of the community, donating time and money throughout the area to a number of causes. They quietly work for the good of the community.

The La Mesa Rotary Club has been in existence since 1925, originally starting with only sixteen members. Keith was president in 1986-87, the year that women were first allowed to join the club. He has also served as Governor of the Rotary District 5340 – consisting of all clubs in San Diego County and part of Riverside County.

Through Rotary, Keith has traveled to Ecuador several times and to many places throughout the United States. He first went to Ecuador with a group of teachers from the U.S. They stayed in the homes of Ecuadorians and visited the schools there, teaching the Ecuadorian teachers what they knew and learning from the people. Keith, with the La Mesa Rotary Club, and along with the help

of other Rotary clubs have built over 300 homes in Ecuador in just three short years.



La Mesa Rotary is involved in many projects throughout our community. They are involved with local schools: sponsoring programs and donating dictionaries. Their programs have benefited Boy Scouts, YMCA, and La Mesa Parks and Recreation, to name just a few.

According to Keith, Rotary "opens your eyes and exposes you to new people and new possibilities." Besides exposing Keith to international travel and the conditions in other countries, it allowed Keith to meet other people who share his love of traveling by motorhome. He is in a RV fellowship through Rotary and has been to two rallies within the last year. Fellow RV enthusiasts meet for a weekend of camping fun and discussions.

Keith has lived in the San Diego area for some 60 years and has been a part of the Rotary Club for over 30 years. He is originally from Arizona and moved here with his family while a senior in high school. Keith owns a commercial real estate business that his son and daughter now operate. He's been married for almost 50 years and has 3 kids and 2 grandkids that all live in the area.

Keith has only been a member of the La Mesa Historical Society for the last year. What introduced him to our Society is a joint effort between LMHS and La Mesa Rotary to install plaques on several buildings in downtown La Mesa. LMHS and Rotary are working together to get approval and raise money for the plaques. For the Rotary, it means showcasing some of the buildings that were originally owned or chartered by Rotary members. For both, it is shining a light on a part of La Mesa's history in a way for all who walk in downtown La Mesa to see.

A few fun facts about Keith:

Favorite book: Biographical histories

Favorite Musical: Oklahoma

Favorite T.V. Program: Aerial America or anything on the History Channel

Favorite Vacation Spot: Likes to go someplace different every time or to his sister's B&B in Hawaii.

Favorite Food: Mexican food

Upcoming Events

Historic Photo Demonstration – McKinney House, Saturday, Oct. 26th, 1 – 4pm

Home Tour – Saturday, Nov. 2nd

Christmas Open House – McKinney House, Dec. 8th, 2 – 4pm

Silent Movie Night – Trinity Presbyterian Church, Saturday, Jan. 11th

Archives – Open Saturday 1 – 4pm

McKinney House – Open 2nd & 4th Saturday 1 – 4pm

Check our website www.lamesahistory.com for the latest on Society events.

A Special Welcome for the Society's New Members

Andi Esposito

Chris and Nancy Faulkner

The Sidney Holland House



The Sidney Holland House at 8463 Lemon Avenue is being considered for designation as a Historic Landmark home at the October La Mesa City Council meeting. The La Mesa Historical Society is delighted to have the recently restored Holland House as one of our featured homes on this year's Home Tour.

The Sidney Holland House is significant as an architectural survivor of La Mesa's early development. It was built in 1910 when the community was beginning its transition from an agricultural to a residential area and is a well-preserved example of a turn-of-the-century transitional house which exhibits both Victorian and Craftsman architectural features. It has a simple design and, except for the rear addition, the original footprint is unchanged.

In June 1909 Park-Grable Investment Company established Outlook Terrace subdivision. William J. and Emma E. Abbott purchased Lot 7 in Block 3 of Outlook Terrace on December 14, 1909 and built the Sidney Holland House in 1910. The first Grant Deed for the property stipulated that if the Grantee was to build a house on the lot, the porch, front steps or the building must be 20 feet from Lemon Avenue and the sides of the house equal distance from the sides of the lot. Also written in the deed was the stipulation that no building on the front half of the lot could cost less than $1000.00. Perhaps this was the first attempt by developers to maintain property values in La Mesa!

The Abbott's lived in the house less than two years, selling it to Sidney Holland on November 22, 1912. Sidney's husband Leonidis died March 29, 1914 and Sidney continued to live in the house with other family members until 1921. Records show that Helen, Nellie and William Holland lived with Sidney. Elizabeth (Nellie) was Sidney's daughter and William, a salesman, was her youngest son. Helen Holland, who served as Secretary of the La Mesa Women's Club in 1915, was Leonidis' sister.

After 1921, the property changed hands several times until 1942 when Harry Herbert Lewis and his wife, Mary, purchased it. For nine years Harry and Mary Lewis owned but never lived in the Holland House. During WWII the second floor of the house was remodeled and made into a duplex. In 1951 the Holland House was sold to Earl and Ruth Beach. The Beach family returned the house to á single family residence.

The Sidney Holland House has stood for 102 years as an excellent example of an early La Mesa home. As you view it from the street with its original rock-faced concrete block walls, steps, and rectangular piers it looks almost as it did when it was built. Thus giving us a wonderful visual example of what Lemon Avenue must have been like in its beginning development years.

Join us on November 2, 2013 at the Home Tour and enjoy an up close view of the property and interior of the newly renovated Sidney Holland House.

1927 Grossmont High School Southern California Champion team



Don't miss the renewal of our local autumn high school football classic, the Grossmont-Helix game for the "Old Musket." This year's Nov. 1st game will feature LMHS sponsored retro style jerseys reminiscent of the school's first meeting in 1951.

ArtiFACTS!

Electric Washing Machine



An artifact that is quite often overlooked, the electric washing machine sits on the back porch at the McKinney House. The first electric washing machine was available on January 20, 1908. This machine was made in Sandusky, Ohio. The Easiest Way Manufacturing Company, which was incorporated in 1912, manufactured a variety of washing machines in Sandusky. It was probably used here c1920.

The owner of this particular washing machine was Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink. Madame was an opera singer and actress who lived in her home at the top of Grossmont from 1912 to 1922. She was the first artist approached by Ed Fletcher and William Gross to buy property on Grossmont.



Share story ideas, comments and suggestions with Editor Erin Ben-Judah at erin.benjudah@hotmail.com

Collection Connection

We thank all of these donors individually and collectively.

Donor	Donated Items
Bonnie Barr	Framed portrait of Henry Porter
Bob Duggan	Evening Tribune Windsor Hills Advertisement
Charlene Craig	125 Digital Images of La Mesa and the surrounding area
Bobby Barrett	La Mesa Police Department Employees Collection
Sharon Fitzpatrick	Notebook with information and pictures of the Hurlburt House
Ken and Mavis Lane	Mavis Lochman's diploma from La Mesa-Spring Valley School District. Music award for Mavis
La Mesa Thrift Shop	Bound editions of the San Diego Union – April 1936

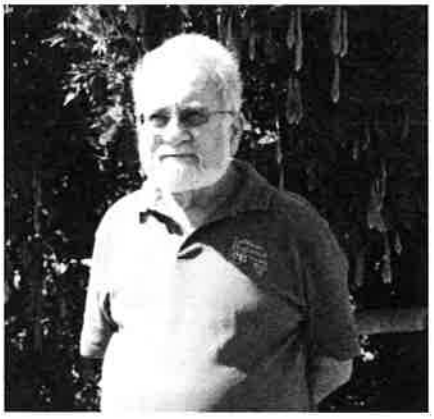
On Board

Wade Douglas

Wade has only been a part of the La Mesa Historical Society for a short time, but has made a big impact. He first joined LMHS in 2009 after receiving the Society's support to raise money for the Flying A plaque. Wade had created a committee in order to raise money for the plaque which got the attention of Gordon Jones and Jim Newland. They joined the committee, Wade joined the society. Wade's committee was successful; the plaque was installed during the centennial year on the Wolf Building in downtown La Mesa.

Wade is a movie enthusiast and hated that there was no indication of such a significant film studio's existence in La Mesa. The next project Wade has his eye on also concerns the Flying A's.

He would like to see a picture of the Flying A's Office Manager enlarged and hanging inside the Wolf building above where the picture was taken.



Wade has been on the Board of Directors at LMHS for two years. His current role is Vice President. In this capacity he works as a second hand to the President, standing in when needed. He also maintains the LMHS website, you can find Wade's announcement regarding the new and improved website in this issue.

If you have listened to the radio in Southern California in the last 45 years, then there is a good chance that you've heard the voice of Wade Douglas at one time or another. He's worked all over Southern California on a number of stations as a radio personality. But it wasn't a career he had always dreamed about. Wade started radio as a summer job between school years. But when he found out how much fun radio was, he never made it back to school.

Wade retired in 2008, but has had no trouble keeping busy between his responsibilities with LMHS and his hobby of restoring old British motorcycles. He currently owns four running motorcycles and has six more in line to restore. He's been restoring motorcycles for the past 25 years. Even though he does not ride anymore, Wade enjoys going to events and meeting lots of interesting people through this hobby. Wade and his wife of 30 years currently live in La Mesa.

Wade's Favorites!

Book: Parts manuals and shop books

Movie: Any Lina Wertmüller directed film

TV Program: Breaking Bad

Music: 80s classic Japanese pop music

Food: Thai, Japanese

McKinney House Celebration Event

On a sunny Saturday afternoon this past August 10th over seventy friends and members gathered at the McKinney House to enjoy the freshly refurbished interior of our 1908 historical landmark.

Visitors were treated to special tours featuring the restored finishes and long-awaited repairs as well as two new exhibit rooms, one featuring a display on Mary Garfield, noted La Mesa artist and author of our city motto "Jewel of the Hills."



Outside on the back lawn vintage automobiles were available for viewing while visitors enjoyed appetizers and conversation with old and new friends. One of our long time members mentioned that the McKinney House had never looked so good.

But, don't worry if you missed the event, the house is still open each 2nd and 4th Saturday from 1 to 4pm and will be featured on the upcoming Home Tour this Nov. 2nd.



Thanks to all the volunteers for helping in another fantastic event.

Linda Rankin,
Restoration Project Chair

In Memoriam

Mary-Em Howard (1918-2013)



It is with sadness that we report on the passing of long-time Society member Mary-Em Howard. Mary-Em was a vital member of the La Mesa community for well over 50 years. She spent thousands of hours doing volunteer work for Mercy Hospital, the Salvation Army, Mission San Diego de Alcala, La Mesa Beautiful and the La Mesa Historical Society.

A native of Oklahoma, her family moved to California in 1925 when she was 7 years old. She attended school in Pacific Beach before graduating from La Jolla High. She received her B.A. degree from UCLA before getting her teaching credential from San Diego State College.

In 1941 she married Robert Howard. Robert was a career officer in the Army and they traveled the world while raising six children before settling here. She also has nine grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Mary-Em earned significant honors for her local volunteer work. In 1992 she was named Mercy Hospital volunteer of the year and also received the Salvation Army's Women of Dedication Award, Queen of the Holy Rosary at Mission San Diego de Alcala and Citizen of the Year from La Mesa Beautiful.

She will be missed.

Tintype Photography Event

In collaboration with the La Mesa Historical Society, the Grossmont College Photography Program presents hourly tintype demonstrations by Nick T. Hidek. Nick will be recreating classical turn of the century portraits of students dressed in vintage period clothing while using the McKinney Museum House as a backdrop.

Saturday, Oct. 26th, 1 – 4pm

Everyone is invited!

Eighth Annual
HISTORIC HOME TOUR
10 AM -3PM

Saturday, November 2, 2013

Staging and Will Call center at Allison and Date Avenues

For more information call Donna at 619-461-2419

Board of Directors

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1st Vice Pres.	Wade Douglas
2nd Vice Pres.	Ruth Contino
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Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM.

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www.lamesahistory.com

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Cut along line and mail the section below with your check.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Membership Application

The Society depends on membership dues, bequests and fund-raising activities to support the restoration and preservation of local history.

The La Mesa Historical Society operates the Rev. Henry A. McKinney House, a 1908 house/museum located at 8369 University Avenue (at the corner of Pine Street) in La Mesa. Open 1-4pm every second and fourth Saturday of the month or by appointment. Group tours are available. Call (619) 466-0197 for further information. Lookout Avenue is the official quarterly publication of the La Mesa Historical Society. Our address is:

La Mesa Historical Society
P.O. Box 882
La Mesa, CA 91944

Lookout Avenue was the original name of La Mesa Boulevard from the 1890s until the city council voted to change the name in 1940. Lookout Avenue was La Mesa's main street.

- ☐ $250 Patron
- ☐ $100 Sponsor/Organization
- ☐ $50 Sustaining
- ☐ $20 Family
- ☐ $15 Individual
- ☐ $5 Student

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I would like to be a volunteer in the following areas:

- ☐ Docent/Education
- ☐ Events
- ☐ Grounds Building
- ☐ Archives/House