



La Mesa Historical Society LOOKOUT AVENUE



VOLUME 14 NUMBER 1

AUTUMN 1991

1991 ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Thanks to the efforts of many people, our annual Ice Cream Social was a big success. About 200 people attended and the weather cooperated fully this year - it was sunny and warm - no rain like last year. The chicken was deliciously prepared by Conrad and Patricia Anderson. Special thanks to Beverly Decker and her husband Bill for overseeing the food operation and donating the printing of the drawing tickets, and to all of those who helped.

Entertainment was provided by the Jim Dandies Band with the addition of the Parasol Strutters (three of their members are pictured above).



Winners of the drawing were:

- 1st (quilt) - John Reynolds
- 2nd (dinner at Jamar's) - Kay Taylor
- 3rd (lunch at Langley's) - Mary Wyatt
- 4th (Victorian Cottage gift certificate) - Ken Kjoller

We are sincerely grateful to all who volunteered their time to sit at HomeFed, Glendale Federal, and Security Pacific banks to sell tickets. And a very special thank you to the LMHS Quilters who provided the beautiful first prize quilt.

Our plant sale did quite well, too. Than you to all who donated plants, and to Ed Blackman, our expert gardener and plant seller.

* * * * *

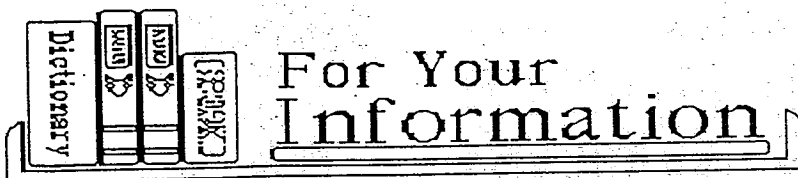
GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 19th INCLUDES PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGES

At our next general meeting on October 19, 1991 (flyer in this issue) we will be voting on proposed changes in our by-laws. The proposals are:
* Article 4, Section 1: There shall be an annual meeting of the Society held in the month of May . . .

change "month of May" to "Spring of the year".

* Article 10, Section 1: Sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting, a nominating committee shall be chosen. The election of the nominating committee shall be announced in the meeting notice.

change so that section reads: A nominating committee shall be chosen prior to the annual meeting. (Delete second sentence)



The LMHS has an (almost) complete set of Grossmont High annuals through the 1950's, except for 1936. Perhaps you or someone you know would be willing to donate your 1936 El Reguerdo to the Society. Please call Pat at 463-0197.

* * * * *

A book of tickets for our annual Christmas Open House drawing was recently mailed along with a cover letter. Since 1975 the Society has depended on the generosity of local banks to let us display our main drawing prize and sell tickets in their lobbies, but just this past year most of them have stopped allowing organizations to do this. We do sell tickets at the Oktoberfest and wherever else we can, but the banks were our main source of sales. We will continue to contact those banks that are willing to let us use their lobbies.

This year's Christmas Open House will be held on Saturday, December 7 from 1-4 pm. The drawing will be held at 3:30. The prizes are:

- 1st - Ingraham oak mantle clock, American, c. 1900
- 2nd - \$20 gift certificate from Elizabeth's Attic antique shop
- 3rd - dinner for 2 at Jamar's Restaurant in La Mesa
- 4th - milk glass pedestal cake plate
- 5th - gourmet food basket from The Country Loft in La Mesa

* * * * *

Contributing to this issue were Beatrice Acers, Pat Kettler, Jean Murrell, Donna Regan, and Betty Teague.

* * * * *

The Society extends its sympathy to the family of Vivian Higgins, a founding member and active participant in the the LMHS, who passed away recently. A service was held at the Bancroft Memorial Church.

* * * * *

FROM THE QUILTERS

About 24 members of the LMHS Quilters entertained Thelma V. Palermo with an elegant and tasty pot luck luncheon on September 25th, in the building named for the honoree, in celebration of her 90th birthday. In addition to the quilters, LMHS board members Pat Kettler and Donna Regan were present. The Society presented Mrs. Palermo with a video of the Mt. Helix Amphitheatre construction. Not to be outdone, Mrs. Palermo presented the Society with a beautiful antique water pitcher, with hand painted flowers and a lovely gold trim on the handle and rim.

A favorite dessert of Mrs. Palermo was prepared by Julie Bras, with candles showing "90". Pictures were taken for our memory book and to share with Mrs. Palermo. A good time was had by all.

La Mesa Historical Society

GENERAL MEETING

&

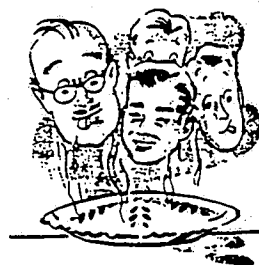
PIE FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, October 19, 1991 from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M.

The Thelma Palermo Building
AT THE MC KINNEY HOUSE
8369 UNIVERSITY AVENUE (CORNER OF PINE)

In towns like La Mesa where there are historically significant buildings, LANDMARKING is becoming more and more common. The Assistant Planning Director of the City of La Mesa, BRAD RICHTER will be our guest. He will discuss with us the broad overall picture of why so many cities are now enacting Landmarking Ordinances.

Please bring your favorite pie
to share with members and friends.



For further information call:
Betty Teague - 463-5250

NEW INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR LA MESA HISTORIC LANDMARKS

Since our program for the October General Meeting will feature a presentation on landmarking, the following is presented as general information on La Mesa's process.

For the past seven years, La Mesa residents who have allowed their homes or other buildings to be designated La Mesa Historic Landmarks by the city council have had the satisfaction of knowing that they were helping preserve their community's heritage for future generations. Under a new program approved by the city council in May, these property owners now have a series of benefits available to them as well. Also approved was a demolition review process making it less easy to demolish historically significant structures.

In 1984, the city adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance and General Plan Element which identified a Historic Resources Inventory of over 260 structures, set up procedures for city landmark designation, and created a Historic Preservation Commission to review proposed changes to these structures. La Mesa Landmark designation, which imposes certain restrictions on alterations and demolitions, is applied only with the owner's consent. At present, there are eight landmarks, including the McKinney House and the La Mesa Depot.

Early last year the threatened demolition of the Nan Coutts House (later moved to another location) demonstrated how easily La Mesa could lose its many historic structures which have not been landmarked. This potential loss underscored the need for the city to discourage demolition of these structures and to encourage more owners to seek landmark designation.

After studying the ordinances of other cities, the Historic Preservation Commission developed the following program of incentives available for landmarks, now adopted by the city council:

- 1) Adaptive reuse - this allows landmarks to be used for certain uses not traditionally permitted under the site's zoning: professional offices, specialty retail sales (such as antique shops), bed and breakfast inns, multiple unit residential, and restaurants.
- 2) Flexible parking standards - To facilitate an adaptive re-use, a landmark may be converted to commercial use without having to meet the strict parking requirements. This would be especially useful in the areas close to downtown.
- 3) Density bonus - A density bonus of one unit is allowed in a multiple-unit development if an existing landmark on the site is retained. In addition, an accessory dwelling unit (granny flat), which is currently permitted in single family neighborhoods, may be detached from the main house rather than the attached as is normally required.

- 4) Fee waiver - For work done on a landmark structure, the city may waive fees for building permits, sewer connections, and development review applications. First to make use of this are Tim and Gwen Campbell, who are building a Victorian-style garage and workshop behind their 1891 A.W. Gray House on Culowee Street.

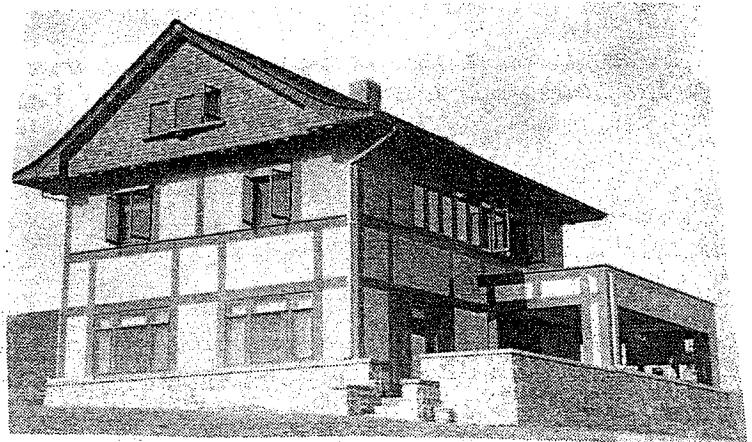


SD Historical Society Ticor Collection

A.W. Gray House c. 1895

- 5) Mills Act - Landmark owners may use state legislation to substantially reduce their property taxes by entering into a 10-year renewable preservation agreement with the city. For example, it is estimated that the taxes on an existing landmark residence, currently \$1,127, would be reduced to \$270 under the Mills Act.
- 6) Property tax fund - The city is studying the establishment of a low-interest loan program for landmark maintenance and restoration work. The fund would be created from property tax revenues that the city receives from properties listed in the inventory.

The city also approved a demolition review process for a Potential Landmarks Registry of about 110 structures identified by the Historic Preservation Commission as eligible for landmark designation. This process would allow time to find an alternative to demolition. A demolition permit for a Registry structure would not be issued until the property owner had received approval for a new project on the site and had shown why the reuse of the existing structure would be architecturally and economically unfeasible. If the new project was approved, the owner would have to pay for placing newspaper ads offering the structure for relocation, and the demolition permit would not be issued until six months after the first advertisement had appeared.



Grable House on Date Avenue c.1910
(another La Mesa Historic Landmark)

For further information, plan to attend the program on October 19th. You can also contact Brad Richter or Barbara Kennedy in the La Mesa Community Development Department at 462-0171.

(The following is a letter received by Betty Teague from Michiko Hashimoto of Chicago)

September 12, 1991

Dear Mrs. Teague,

Although I was too young to remember La Mesa, it was a nostalgic visit when my niece, Sharon, drove me there in April and we were able to find the Porter Home. My father came to work for Dr. Porter around 1909 and tended the lemon trees. He returned to Japan to marry my mother in December 1916 and they returned to La Mesa in June 1917. She is now 92 but clearly remembers how kind the Porter family was to her & my father. All 5 of the children were born on the land. The little house that my father built there moved with us to Spring Valley & then to Tijuana Valley.

My mother has a picture of the whole Porter family on the front steps and also a postcard of the area sent by Mary Porter. She learned English from the family & from the cook. It was a happy beginning for her in a strange land. She was only 17 when she married my father.

I wonder if you know anything about the Randlett family? My mother recalls that the sister (Mary) & brothers of Dr. Henry (James & Edward) purchased & lived in the Randlett home. I understand it has been demolished. My mother received an old wooden trunk that was in the Randlett home and she was able to bring it to Chicago. My son just this year spent some time cleaning it and found the name J.P. Randlett stenciled in the trunk & the city Anadarko, OK. My mother says it belonged to Capt. Randlett & he carried it in the Civil War. It would be interesting to learn more about the Randlett family & the history of the trunk.

Sharon told me of her pleasant visit with you & has sent me brochures of La Mesa. I hope soon we can go through your historical museum.

Sincerely,
Michiko Hashimoto
family name Furuta



*Note: The Roach-Porter House on Porter Hill Road was built in the 1890's by Maj. Henry Roach. In 1904, it became the home of Dr. Henry Porter, his wife Elizabeth, and their three sons. The Porters had spent many years in China, where Dr. Porter was a medical missionary. The family gave their new home, with its 10 acres largely planted in lemon trees, the name "Ping An Shan", Hill of Peace

(pictured above c. 1912). On the adjacent 10 acres to the east lived Col. James Randlett. Following Randlett's death in 1915, Dr. Porter's brother James purchased the property and lived there with his brother Edwards and sister Mary. From the Cherokee Rose hedge bordering the property came the name "Rose Hedge". Rose Hedge was demolished in the 1960's, but the Roach-Porter House still stands and today is the home of Henry and Elizabeth's granddaughter, Anne Hall.

"THE WAR YEARS" EXHIBIT

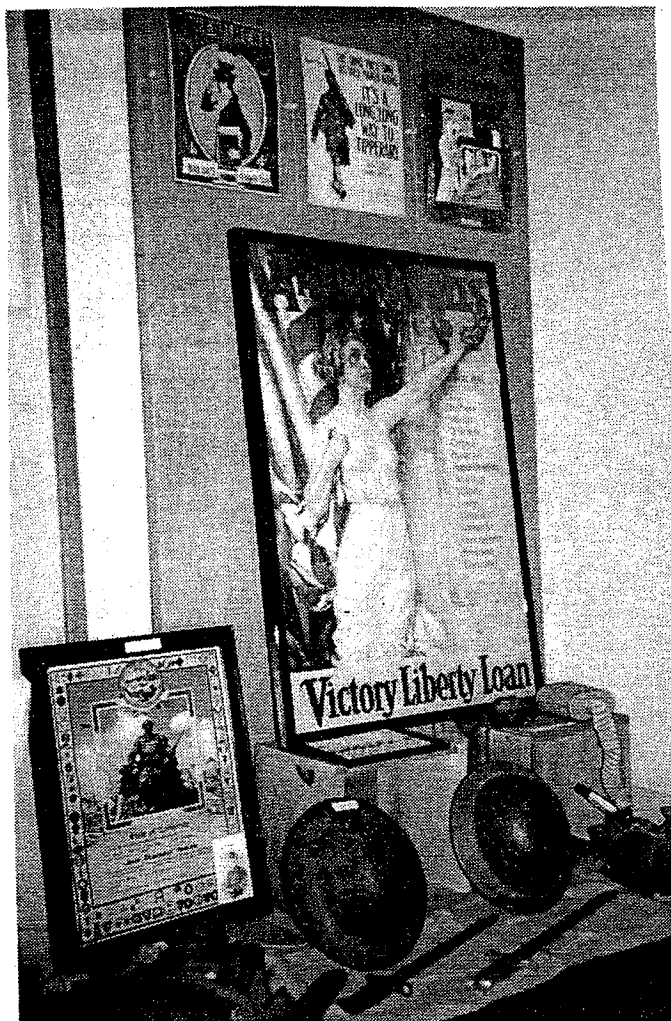
"The War Years: World Wars I and II" was the theme of this year's Ice Cream Social exhibit. In the exhibit room upstairs at the McKinney House the two periods were portrayed by photographs and artifacts such as uniforms and equipment, medals, bayonets, gas masks, dress swords, helmets, and newspapers announcing the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Also displayed were "home front" materials such as war bond posters, ration books, patriotic sheet music, and local civil defense materials.

Photos and mementos of those who entered the service from La Mesa included: WWI - John Haslam and Orrin Orsborn; WWII - Robert and Donald McKinney, Florence McKinney Drury, Henrietta Schupbach, Eugene Hall, and William Beamish, Jr.

The dining room was set for a World War I wedding reception, with a buffet table, Army uniform, satin and lace wedding dress, and other dresses. Day dresses from the 1940's were in the front room, and a 1942 wedding dress in the west bedroom.

Preparing the exhibit were Nancy E. Neffson, Donna Regan, and Jo Pearson, who also contributed some of the materials. Other generous lenders who helped make the exhibit possible were Dr. George Holland, Richard Thompson, Ed and Beth Blackman, Anne Hall, Bill and Ruth Beamish, Bill Orsborn, Helen Cullen, Jean Murrell, Ethel Averbach, Margaret Barksdale, Florence McKinney Drury, Henrietta Shupbach, and Helen Odom.

The exhibit will continue, in modified form, until November.



**LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OFFICERS and DIRECTORS**

PRESIDENT	.....	Betty Teague
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT	.....	Ed Blackman - Membership
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	.....	Beth Blackman - Publicity
THIRD VICE PRESIDENT	.....	Brenda Neill
SECRETARY	.....	Beverly Dostal
TREASURER	.....	Pat Kettler
PAST PRESIDENT	.....	Beverly Decker - Hospitality
DIRECTORS	.....	Mary-Em Howard
		Doug Neill - Newsletter
		Donna Regan
		Gay Tulp

QUILTER'S REPRESENTATIVE

REV. MCKINNEY HOUSE MUSEUM
(619) 466-0197

LOOKOUT AVENUE is the official publication of the La Mesa Historical Society.
The newsletter is published quarterly. Articles, photos, and letters are
welcome from all members. Submissions may be edited due to space limitations.
Contact Doug Neill at 697-7765 or 463-2230 for submissions.



P. O. Box 882, La Mesa, California 92044

La Mesa Historical Society

Museum: Rev. Henry A. McKinney House (1908)
8369 University Avenue

Address Correction Requested

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID La Mesa, Ca 92041 Permit No. 208
--