

La Mesa Historical Society

LOOKOUT AVENUE

Volume 38, Issue 3 **Summer 2013**

President's Address

Jim Newland, LMHS President

It is with great honor that I write to the membership as the new president of the La Mesa Historical Society.

For those you may not know me personally or professionally, I thought I would provide a little bit of information about me, and my involvement with the Society.

I originally grew up in Northern California before moving to La Mesa to attend San Diego State in 1985. I lived and worked in La Mesa while I earned my bachelor's degree in Social Sciences (with emphasis on history and cultural geography) and my master's degree in Public History.

Since 1991 I have been employed as a professional historian and historic resources specialist, first as a private consultant, then with the USDA-Forest Service and for the last 17 years with the California State Parks department.

My wife Jennifer and I moved to nearby Rolando in 1994 and I got involved in the College Area's local history as well as serving on the Advisory Council for the development of the Kroc Center, amongst other community efforts.

In 2003 we, along with our daughter Lindsay, re-located to La Mesa.

My initial involvement with the Society dates back to 2008. Former president Gordon Jones had asked me to help out with the Society's Home Tour as a bus guide. Next Gordon asked me to write a new La Mesa history book for the Society through Arcadia Publishing. That led to my appointment on the Board of Directors, and concurrently to writing history columns in the local *La Mesa Patch* and *Courier*.

During this time former councilman Dave Allen nominated me to serve on the City's Centennial Committee. This was a very rewarding experience, especially in helping guide some of the Society-sponsored events during 2012, including a History Roundtable reunion of our 1957 Colt League and 1961 Little League Champions, Retro-Jerseys for the Grossmont-Helix football game and our successful "Flying A" Silent Movie night event (to name but a few of the Society's contributions).

With all that Centennial excitement behind us, the Board has strategized to re-focus our next year on the McKinney House Museum and the Society's archival collections.

We are working to complete a re-inventory and cataloging of our museum and archive collections. In addition, thanks to committee leadership from Board Member Linda Rankin, we have just recently completed some long-awaited interior restoration work at the McKinney House (I hope you all can attend the "Re-Opening" House Party on August 10th).

Also keep an eye out for our new, and expanded, website (which should be active this July), and for more of the same—"good old history stuff—that the Society is renown—but also some new and exciting activities that will allow us to enhance our service mission to our membership—and the Greater La Mesa community.

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. information@lamesahistoricalsociety.com

The McKinney House Reopens

As you may have noticed, the McKinney House has been closed for the past two months. During this time, the house was given some much needed repairs to almost every room. Cracked walls and ceilings were patched and repainted, all window frames and sills were sanded and repainted or re-stained, plus other needed details were achieved. All this work was accomplished while maintaining the existing colors and character of each room.

This past month a hard working team made up of Donna Niemeier, Pat Stromberg, Penny Brawner and Linda Rankin have been carefully putting each room back in order. The team has washed curtains, dusted, swept, vacuumed and decorated each room, including reinstalling the Garfield Art Exhibit.

The House will reopen starting July 13th from 1-4pm and continue to be open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. We hope you will find time to stop by and enjoy the freshly renovated rooms.

In case you can't visit the House on an upcoming Saturday the Society will be hosting an OPEN HOUSE PARTY later this summer. Please mark your calendars for August 10th 2-5pm. More information will be mailed out later to members.



Upcoming Events

Open House Party – McKinney House, Saturday, August 10th 2-5pm

History Roundtable Lecture - date tba

Home Tour – Saturday, Nov. 2

Christmas Open House – McKinney House, December 8th 2 – 4pm

Archives – Open Saturday 1 – 4pm

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

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

In the Spotlight

Judy Jo Beardslee in La Mesa:

A Road Well Traveled

Judy Jo Beardslee is a proud La Mesa native. Her family roots go back to Judy's great grandfather who came to our area in 1897. He bought ten acres at 63rd and El Cajon Boulevard. Her parents are native to our region. Her mother is a graduate of Grossmont High School.

Her parents first lived on Guava Avenue. Her mother eyed moving to an undeveloped area in La Mesa. Judy Jo grew up on Alvarado Road near the current Kaiser Permanente when it was "in the country", an outlying area to downtown La Mesa. Her parents had a ten-acre spread in this outlying section of La Mesa. Ten-acre land purchases obviously run in the family.

Judy Jo graduated from Grossmont High School in 1961. She worked for Pacific Southwest Airlines for five years. She then devoted her energies in raising a family. She has two children—David and Melissa. She is a grandmother with four grandchildren, all boys.



Car Talk

A seminal event in her life was the purchase of a 1931 Model A Ford in 1959 as a student at GHS. She paid $150 for it. She saved all the money for it herself from baby-sitting and house cleaning.

The car was originally black. It was painted red as a Christmas present. It was nicknamed "La Cereza" ("The Cherry" in Spanish) at GHS. Her high school graduation present was the rumble seat for this vehicle.

What makes this car purchase so momentous is that this Model A Ford is still running and is her usual mode of transportation around town and elsewhere. She has now owned this car for 54 years. At one time she had a Samoyed dog named Nikka who used to ride in the rumble seat. She does the necessary work on this vehicle. Her father taught her the ins and outs of Model A maintenance.

You may have seen Judy Jo tooling around in this vehicle. If you haven't seen her driving around town, you may have seen her as the representative of the La Mesa Historical Society in the annual Flag Day Parade. She has been our representative in this annual event since its inception 16 years ago.

She also enters her car in other parades, car shows, and Model A events. She is the longest active member in the San Diego Model A Restorers Club. She met Ray, her husband of 15 years, in the Model A club. His pickup truck and her 1931 Ford were part of the wedding ceremony.

Judy Jo's Favorite Things

Food: Chinese
Movie: "Paint Your Wagon"
Book: Biographies
Place Traveled To: Camping on the CA Coast
Music: 1940s Big Bands
TV Show: "Project Runway"
Color: Red
Animal: Cats
Holiday: Halloween
Fashion: Victorian era

Rose Garden Celebration and Annual Meeting

On Saturday, May 4, 2013 the La Mesa Historical Society held its Rose Garden Celebration and Annual Meeting.

The McKinney House museum rose garden was started in March of 1996, it was a portion of the landscape reassessment for the McKinney House grounds. Spots for 27 roses were laid out along the east side of the house. The roses were selected based on research showing what roses would have been popular in La Mesa from the date the house was built until about 1920.

Each year, for the Rose Garden Celebration, names are submitted for recognition and a ceremony is held to commemorate these individuals. Their names are then placed on a plaque in the rose garden. Those recognized this year were **Bob and Laura Duggan, Mary Garfield and Ben Polak.** Ken Kuhlken, Mary Garfield's grandson, spoke about times he spent with his grandmother while

she painted and wrote poems. James Polak told stories about his father being La Mesa's Mayor.

After the Rose Garden Celebration the annual meeting was held. A brief summary of the centennial year activities was given by first-vice president Jim Newland and the election of 2013-2014 La Mesa Historical Society officers was held.



The day was concluded with a raffle and an ice cream social. A quilt, an afghan, gift baskets and gift cards were raffled before the ice cream social began. Participants were also invited to visit the museum and view the newly opened plein air art display with paintings by local artist, Mary Garfield (1881-1966).

Board of Directors

President	Jim Newland
1st Vice Pres.	Wade Douglas
2nd Vice Pres.	Ruth Contino
Secretary	Sharon Crockett
Treasurer	Rod Whitlow
Directors-at-Large	Ed Blackman
	Suda House
	Linda Rankin
	Pat Stromberg
	Kathy Tinsley
	Donna Niemeier
Past President	Aaron Landau

Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM.

Arti**FACTS!**

Victorian Kerosene Lamp

The kerosene lamp that presently sits in the front room of the McKinney house next to the piano is hand painted glass with a cast bronze base. It was given as a wedding present from Rev. Henry McKinney to his wife, Florence in 1891.



Early kerosene lamps were known as wick lamps. They have a small fuel tank in the base with a lamp burner attached to the top. The burner has a wick adjustment mechanism that controls the intensity of the flame. The glass chimney acts as a protector of flame, keeping it from blowing out.



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
Ken Kuhlken	Rights to copy family pictures from Mary Garfield's album
Celeste Carter	1930's Friendship Quilt Top
Karna Webster	Two early movie books: D.W. Griffin Films and Allan Dwan movies One framed poster-La Mesa Scout article re: Movies in La Mesa
Susan Olson	Blue and Tan Woven (Jacquard) room dividers
Dr. Bill Pogue	Seven Grossmont Hospital Oral History DVDs
Sandy Pugliese, Community Relations Manger, Grossmont Hospital	Copies of archival materials re: Grossmont Hospital history



Flag Day

Dita Whitelock and Audrey, her daughter , pictured, rode in the rumble seat. Dita and Audrey are LMHS members. Audrey,age 9, is our youngest member. Judy Jo Beardslee is the owner of the 1931 Model A Ford pictured here.



About Town

Growing up in La Mesa

Kathryn (Nolan) Greene

I was born in San Diego and we moved to La Mesa when I was in the third grade. When my father joined the La Mesa Engineering Service, we moved to the end of Third St. where my grandparents lived. It was right in the middle of La Mesa. There were two houses on a five-acre lot. My parents, my younger brother, Dick, my baby sister, Jane, and I lived in the big house.

My grandfather was retired and raised chickens, oranges, and avocados to sell. My brother and I would load his little red wagon with oranges, go around the neighborhood, and sell them.

This was a wonderful place to grow up. We had a huge pepper tree that became a playhouse as well as an old tool shed that was another fun place to play. In the summertime, I would invite my girlfriends for a slumber party and we would sleep on the front lawn. Sometimes my cousin and I would sleep in the sawdust bin. When I became a

teenager, we would have parties and dances on the patio. The holidays were always at our house because there were so many fun things to do.

In the early '60s, my father sold the five acres and it became condos.

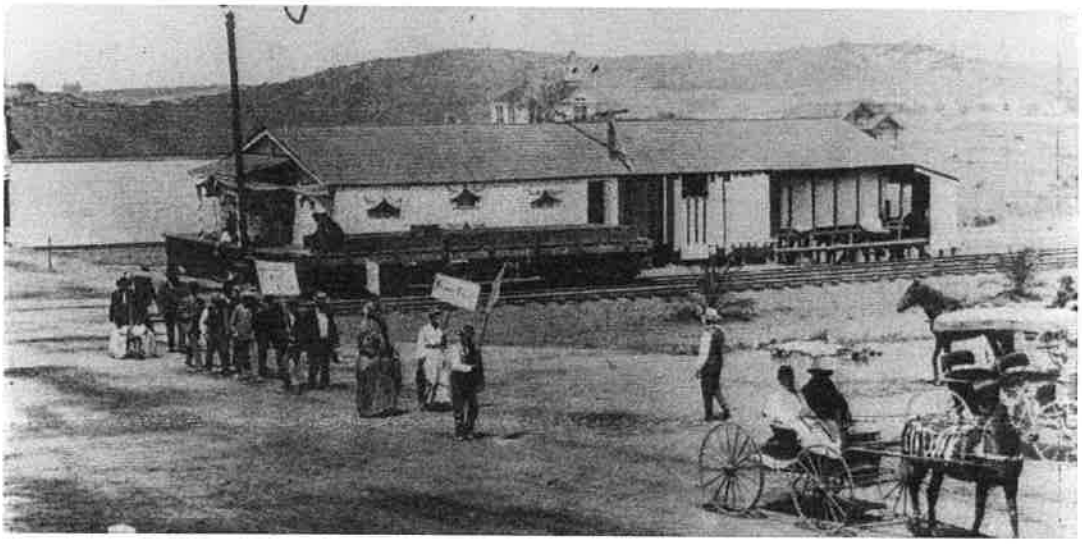
There are lots of fun memories from 4515 Third St. I still live in La Mesa. I went to Helix High School and all three of my children went there too. I plan to stay here for the rest of my life.

A Special Welcome for the Society's New Members

Bill and Sue Ehlers
Noah, Molli, & Lucille Alvey
Robert Wildfong

Do you know what event these pictures portray?

(Answer found on page 7)





On Board

A Snapshot of Suda House

Born in Du Quoin, Illinois in 1951. Suda lived there only for two years. Her father worked for the dairy industry at Southland Corporation. Suda's family moved frequently as her dad climbed the corporate ladder. She lived in Chicago, Memphis, Dallas, and San Diego. Coincidentally, she was living in Dallas at the time of John F. Kennedy's assassination and in Los Angeles at the time of Robert Kennedy's murder.

Suda's post-secondary education includes a Bachelor of Fine Arts from USC. She received her MA at Cal State Fullerton in 1976. Subsequently, she taught part time in LA area community colleges and at UCLA Extension.

Suda came to San Diego in 1980 to teach full time at Grossmont College in the photographic arts program in the art department. She has been there ever since. Picture that.

Suda has one daughter. Emma is 21 and graduates from UCLA in 2014.

Suda's interests include landscaping her back yard, home remodeling, and photography is still her passion.

Suda has been on the LMHS board for 3 years. She has an avid interest in La Mesa's history especially via our photo archives.

Suda Exposed

Suda's Top Ten

Favorite book-- Currently reading "The Ocean at the End of the Lane"
Favorite movie-- "To Kill a Mockingbird"
Favorite form of exercise—Swimming
Favorite animals-- Her dogs Leo and Lucy
Favorite food-- Mexican
Favorite place visited—A recent trip to the Big Island in Hawaii
Favorite TV show-- Mad Men
Favorite pastime-- "Working" in her photo studio
Favorite San Diego museum-- Museum of Photographic Arts
Favorite color-- Black

Suda's plan for world peace: Women would start worldwide by boycotting shopping for one day (or longer if necessary). This would adversely affect the global economy demonstrating the power women have collectively and further boycotts could follow. Hopefully, these actions would get our leaders' attention and bring about dialogues for peace.



Proudest moment: Raising her daughter and seeing her become a flourishing adult.

Off the beaten path: Suda pays for six months of maintenance every year for the upkeep of the House family cemetery, a registered cemetery in Illinois. Oldest family members fought in the Revolutionary War.

Funniest memory: First day her daughter, Emma, goes to daycare Suda introduces Emma to her day care provider, Judith. Judith asks Suda if Emma knows her ABCs. Shy Emma exclaims: "I know my ABC's, NBC's, CBS's, and HBO's". Suda replies: "We don't allow Emma to watch TV at home".

Visit Suda's website: sudahouse.com to learn more about her photography and career as a working artist.

Photos on page 6: They are from the 1908 4th of July Parade, the first community parade in La Mesa Springs.
The signs reference pioneers from the east and "Those that Built La Mesa."

La Mesa Historical Society

McKinney House Museum and Archives:
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Mailing address: P. O. Box 882, La Mesa, CA 91944
(619) 466-0197
www.lamesahistory.com

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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 91942

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone: _____

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

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