

La Mesa Historical Society LOOKOUT AVENUE



Volume 18, Number 1

Fall 1996

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Karna Webster

The Board and Officers of the La Mesa Historical Society are planning a year that will bring more activities, extra newsletters and events to our members. In addition, we hope to make great strides in creating a children's bedroom at the McKinney House. All of us are ever so grateful for the donations we have received for this project, but will still need more for completion.

In this issue of *Lookout Avenue* you will find a schedule of events. Mark your personal calendar now so you won't miss out on our **Trolley Trip**, the **Grossmont Alumni Reception** for the Grossmont High School 75th Anniversary Exhibit at the McKinney House, and the **Christmas Open House**.

LMHS Exhibit Chairman, Pat Kettler, is hard at work installing a very special exhibit, "**Grossmont High School - 75 Years of Tradition**," at the McKinney House Museum. The exhibit will include photos and memorabilia spanning the 75 year history of the school. Coach Jack Mashin, one of Grossmont's outstanding and dedicated teachers, who taught and inspired students from 1924 until his retirement in 1960, will be highlighted.

Pat would like to borrow one of the school "middys" or school uniforms worn at Grossmont in the 1920's and 1930's. **Anyone who has any photos or Grossmont High School items for loan is invited to call Pat at 463-0197.**

Part of the exhibit will be installed by mid-October and most by November 3rd for the Grossmont Alumni Reception. The completed display will also be available for viewing at the Society's Annual Christmas Open House on Saturday, December 14th.

We need lots of volunteers. If you would like to help weed, dust, docent, "pour" at the Christmas Open House, decorate the house for Christmas, help inventory or work on the archives or collections, research the history of pioneer families, transcribe oral histories, or just lend a hand for an hour or two, just let us know. Everyone is welcome.

LA MESA DEPOT & RAILROAD MUSEUM TOUR

Members of the La Mesa Historical Society are invited to join the Board on a Trolley Tour on Saturday, October 19th. We will meet at 10 a.m. at the La Mesa Depot for a special tour given by LMHS 1st V.P. Betty Teague and Art Paget of the San Diego Railroad Museum Association. Betty will tell us the story of the "Timken Bell" at the depot and other interesting facts. Art also has considerable knowledge about the depot and the "rolling stock" located there. We will board the Trolley and travel to the Kettner Blvd station in downtown San Diego, where we will stop for lunch at a nearby restaurant. Then we will visit the unique San Diego Railroad Museum Library housed in the northern end of the Santa Fe Station building facing Kettner Blvd. Afterwards, we will return to La Mesa by Trolley. Don't forget to bring change for the Trolley!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, October 19th

Depot & Railroad Museum
Trolley Trip. Begins 10 a.m. at
La Mesa Depot

Sunday, November 3rd

Grossmont Alumni Reception
& 75th Anniversary of
Grossmont H.S. Exhibit 1-4
p.m. at the McKinney House

Saturday, November 30th

Decorate McKinney House for
Christmas

Saturday, December 14th

Christmas Open House at the
McKinney House 1-4 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON SET FOR MAY 3

This year there will be several changes in the Membership/Annual Meeting. In accordance with the LMHS By-laws, the **Annual Meeting will be held on the first Saturday of May which will be Saturday, May 3, 1997.** It will be a luncheon meeting from 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. at Nan Couets Cottage adjacent to the La Mesa Community Center.

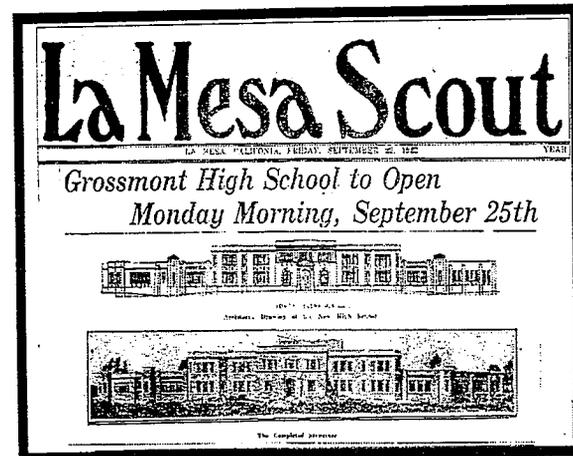
We will have a special speaker and an interesting display as well as a review of the society's business affairs, election of officers and other appropriate business. Additional information and reservation information will be sent out later in the year so mark your calendar for this special event.

GROSSMONT HIGH SCHOOL - 75 YEARS OF TRADITION

by Pat Kettler, Display Chair

A La Mesa Historical Society Display coming soon to the McKinney House.

From the time of the formation of the Grossmont High School District in 1921 and up to the present, Grossmont High has been a shining example of excellence in education and in athletics. Coach Jack Mashin will be one of the outstanding and dedicated teachers who will be highlighted. For those who don't know about this man, he taught and inspired Grossmont kids from 1924 until his retirement in 1960.



La Mesa Scout - September 22, 1922

time in September of 1922 to an enrollment of 365 students from 13 different elementary school districts. Today the District's enrollment is more than 21,000 students in 11 high schools, with a 12th high school - Steele Canyon on the drawing board. Eight elementary districts send students to the Grossmont District which remains, as it has for 75 years, the only school district to connect all of the east county of San Diego.

Most of the photos and memorabilia spanning Grossmont's 75 years will be on display at the McKinney House starting in mid-October. The completed display will also be available for viewing at the Society's annual Christmas Open House on Saturday, December 14.

RESTORATION OF CHILDREN'S BEDROOM

At long last, thanks to the generosity of donors, restoration of the children's bedroom at the McKinney House is underway. The first step was to find temporary storage space for extra furniture, and La Mesa Historical Society member Lloyd Kitzman has generously donated space at her commercial storage facility just off Baltimore Drive in La Mesa. Some items have been moved there already.

The next step is to repair the badly cracked plaster in the ceiling and walls of the bedroom. A specialist in this work is being contacted and bids considered.

Meanwhile, Past President Jo Coffey and her committee are planning the furnishings. This involves research into appropriate furniture, toys, and other items for the room. Anyone who would like to help with this project or has items to donate is invited to contact either Karna Webster, President, at 463-1029 or Jo Coffey at 462-5692.



The La Mesa
Historical Society
is pleased to offer our
Friends and Neighbors
an opportunity to
participate in the
Annual Christmas
Drawing

Call 463-1029
for ticket information.

1st prize: Seth Thomas
Clock valued at \$150

2nd prize: Large original
painting, beautifully
framed

3rd prize: Mr. & Mrs.
Santa Claus hand-crafted
dolls

4th prize: \$50 Gift Certi-
ficate- J & J's Garage Sale
Store

Mark your calendar now!

Christmas Open House
Saturday,
December 14th, 1- 4 p.m.
at McKinney House

The drawing for prizes
will be at 3:30 p.m.

Bring your friends and
neighbors.

LA MESA WOMEN IN POLITICS

Helen Stoddard - 1912

Only woman candidate to run for U.S. Congress

Helen was born in Wisconsin in July of 1850. In 1871 she earned a teaching certificate from the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary in Lima, New York.

After graduation she married Mr. Stoddard, about whom we have no information. In 1874 she bore their son, Robert. Around 1881 the Stoddards moved to Ft. Worth, Texas, where Helen taught school for the next 11 years. She resigned her teaching position around 1892, when she was elected president of the Texas Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), a post she held for the next 17 years. She also obtained passage of a bill to establish a women's industrial arts college (now Texas Woman's University) in Denton, Texas, in 1901. The legislature named the first hall there in her honor, and she served as a representative of the college under three governors.

In 1909, Helen, with her son and his wife, Stella, moved to La Mesa, where she resided for four years. The following year she became president of the San Diego County WCTU. In the fall of 1911, women in California won the right to vote, and shortly after, Mrs. Stoddard announced her intention to run as the 1912 Prohibition Party candidate for the Eleventh District U.S. House of Representatives seat, which included all of San Diego County. She didn't win—in a four-way race she received 1,327 of a total of 20,867 votes cast, losing to William Kettner — but she had the distinction of being the only woman candidate for Congress in the 1912 election.

In 1913 Mrs. Stoddard and her family moved to Lemon Grove, where they resided for the next ten years. She became president of the California WCTU in 1920. Due to her son's declining health, a decision was made to move to Ramona about 1923. The Stoddards lived in a home on I Street until Robert's death in 1936.

Helen and her daughter-in-law moved to Dallas, Texas, some time after Robert's death, where she died in December of 1940 at the age of 90. Her body was brought back to San Diego to be buried near her son.

Helen Stoddard was a strong supporter of women having the right to vote. She was also strongly opposed to the sale of alcohol and traveled to Washington D.C. to voice her opinions on the subject. Mrs. Stoddard was a woman who had a clear idea of what she felt to be right and a determination to make a difference.



Jerri Lopez - 1980

First woman elected to the La Mesa City Council

Jerri Brock was born and grew up in Richmond, Indiana. After graduating from high school she attended Earlham College and Indiana University. She then moved to the Los Angeles area where she met and married Arthur Lopez in 1953. They later moved to the new community of West Covina, where their three children were born.

During the 1960's Jerri became involved in the Junior Women's Club in Covina, where she won local and state awards for a children's safety program which she initiated and for a recycling program in her community (a program ahead of its time). In 1965 she was named Covina's Citizen of the Year.

In 1973 the Lopez family moved to La Mesa, and shortly after, Jerri Lopez volunteered to help her neighbor, Judge Alfred Lord, with several projects in La Mesa. This included attending numerous City Council and Planning Commission meetings, which piqued her interest in local government. In 1977 Jerri became a member of the city's Planning Commission, serving until 1980, when she ran for and won a seat on La Mesa's city council.

Jerri had a strong desire to represent and to communicate the views of the average citizen and report back to them, in everyday language, what was going on at the local level of government. She felt, and still does, that people should not ignore their right to vote. She said many times that local government—the government closest to us—influences our lives the most; we need to be informed citizens by attending city council meetings and getting involved whenever we can. Jerri served as La Mesa councilwoman until 1991, when she retired due to ill health. She also held the position of ViceMayor at various times during the nearly three full terms she served.

Mrs. Lopez has the distinction of being the first woman to be elected to La Mesa's city council. She has served her community well, proving herself to be an intelligent, professional, straightforward, and committed council member throughout her eleven years in office.



Your Points of Contact

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1996-1997

If you have any comments or suggestions concerning your Historical Society, please feel free to call the appropriate Officer, Director or Committee Chair.

President:	Karna Webster	463-1029	Publicity Restoration Comm. Chair Christmas Open House Co-chair
1st V.P.	Betty Teague	463-5250	Sprites Depot Liaison Bylaws Revision Chair
2nd V.P.	Mary Kelley	463-5667	Accessions Committee Chair Annual Meeting/Spring Brunch
3rd V.P.	Mary Lou McClellan	287-1617	Membership
Secretary	Pat Kettler	463-0197	Minutes & Mailing of Minutes Photo Archivist & Librarian Exhibits Chair
Treasurer	Bill Hastings	463-5667	Treasurer, Budget
Directors	Ed Blackman	588-5932	Grounds
	Roger Coffey	462-5692	Newsletter
	Dorothy James	465-5617	Ice Cream Social
	Kathy Tinsley	461-4088	Christmas Open House Co-Chair
	Carol Lockwood	463-5648	Docents
Past Pres:	Jo Coffey	462-5692	Ice Cream Social Chair Children's Room Furnishings
Quilters:	Sandy Campbell	461-3919	Quilters' Representative
	May Ann Ehlers	466-5017	Mailing
	Beth Blackman	588-5932	Historic Pres. Comm. Liaison
	Donna Regan	460-3726	Artifacts Chair

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Martha Baptie
Mrs. Clifford H. Baker (Life)
Elsie Campbell
Donald and Kathleen Dodson
David and Joyce Edgar
Irene Fromer
Dr and Mrs Charles James
Robert James
Barry and Colleen Jantz
Lillian Killman
Donna M Niemeier
Dr Thomas J Olinger DDS (Life)
W E and Lela M Ridgeway
Tom Ridley
Mrs Alfred K. Shipley
Ruth Sterling
Jacquelyn Stevens
Larry and Donna Wiens
George and Carolyn Wildberger

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

If you are a member, new or renewal, who has not received your membership card, please call Mary Lou McClellan as soon as possible and she will be happy to correct the oversight.



MEMBERSHIP IN LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

An Invitation to Join

The Society depends upon membership dues, bequests and fund raising activities to support restoration and preservation of local history. *Memberships and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.* Membership categories include:

___ Benefactor	\$250.	___ Sponsor/Organization	\$25
___ Life (Single)	\$125	___ Family (2 adults)	\$15
___ Patron	\$ 40	___ Individual	\$10
___ Student (under 18 yrs.)	\$1		

To join the La Mesa Historical Society, please complete and return this form with your check to:
LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P. O. BOX 882, LA MESA, CA 91944.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to become involved in the Society's work.

Fall 1996

RECENTLY ACQUIRED PHOTOS FOR THE LMHS ARCHIVES

by Pat Kettler, Photo Archivist

Three original photos and nine copy prints dating from the 1930's through the 1940's were donated to the Society by Charles B. Griggs, a long time east county resident who retired after 45 years with the California Forestry Division. He worked many of those years at the La Mesa Division. Most of the photos are of the California Division of Forestry building which stood on the east side of north Date Avenue just off La Mesa Blvd. The building was one of the many demolished for Phase II development in the 1980's and stood just south of the backside of the Baptist church which faces onto Orange Avenue. Other photos are of early forestry fire trucks that were housed in La Mesa.



Division of Forestry Building and Trucks



Division of Forestry Fire Truck

Jean Snook Asher donated an original photo dating around 1915 which shows a view of the La Mesa Band marching up Third St. past the Congregational Church toward La Mesa Blvd. Many townspeople can be seen in the band. She also donated a panorama photo of the June 2, 1937 La Mesa Elementary School student body and teaching staff. Jean grew up in La Mesa and attended La Mesa Grammar and Grossmont High schools.

Three photos of **Rose Miller Parks** were loaned by **Mary Smith** for copying.

Our photo collection is quite impressive to date. We have over 725 photo negatives and well over 1,000 photographs which include early views of La Mesa, La Mesa businesses, residents of La Mesa, area schools, houses, and street scenes.

RECENT ACCESSIONS ADDED TO LMHS COLLECTION

by Mary Kelley, Accessions Chair

During the last few months the La Mesa Historical Society has been fortunate to receive a number of gifts to be added to its collection for the McKinney House Museum and the general collection. The Accessions Committee, which includes the Chairs of the Exhibits, Artifacts and Photograph Committees as well as the President, has researched these items and has presented them to the Board for acceptance. We would like to acknowledge these items and thank the donors.

- Quilt made by **Eva May Maxwell** and donated by her granddaughter **Marjory Varney**.
- Potato masher and wooden butter mold donated by **Jo Coffey**.
- Two children's books originally belonging to the late **Evelyn Holcomb Fegan**, formerly a member of the LMHS, and donated by the **Friends of the La Mesa Library, Inc.**
- Four young adult books donated by **Mary Kelley** which belonged to her late father.
- A copy of *La Mesa Yesterday and Today* by Anna M Gilbert donated by **Dorothy James**. This will be added to the Reference Library.
- A number of issues of the *Old House Journal* magazines and yearbooks and a set of La Mesa Historic Preservation Element and Inventory donated by **Dr. Chip Splinter**. These will also be added to the Reference Library.

The Accessions Committee is still researching several additional donations and which will be acknowledged at a later date. If you have items such as clothing, books, photographs or other items related to La Mesa history of any period or appropriate for the McKinney House from the period of 1908-1920 please contact me at 463-5667. We are especially interested in obtaining children's toys from the early part of the century for the Children's Room Collection. Dolls, games, and toys of all types would be most appreciated.



P. O. Box 882, La Mesa, California 91944

La Mesa Historical Society

Museum: Rev. Henry A. McKinney House (1908)
8369 University Avenue
(619) 466-0197

Address Correction Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
La Mesa, CA 91941
Permit No. 208

La Mesa Historical Society Officers and Directors 1996-1997

- President* **KARNA WEBSTER**
- First Vice President* **BETTY TEAGUE**
- Second Vice President* **MARY KELLEY**
- Third Vice President* **MARY LOU McCLELLAN**
- Secretary* **PAT KETTLER**
- Treasurer* **BILL HASTINGS**
- Director ('96-'97)* **CAROL LOCKWOOD**
- Director ('96-'97)* **ROGER COFFEY**
- Director ('96-'98)* **KATHY TINSLEY**
- Director ('96-'98)* **ED BLACKMAN**
- Director ('96-'98)* **DOROTHY JAMES**
- Past President* **JO COFFEY**
- Quilters Representative* **SANDY CAMPBELL**
- Mailing Chair* **MAY ANN EHLERS**
- Publicity Chair* **KARNA WEBSTER**
- Grounds Chair* **ED BLACKMAN**
- Newsletter Chair* **ROGER COFFEY**
- Historic Preservation Liaison*... **BETH BLACKMAN**



The La Mesa Historical Society operates the Rev. Henry A. McKinney House, a 1908 house museum located at 8369 University Avenue (corner of Pine Street) in La Mesa. Hours are 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoons or by appointment. Docent tours are available. Call 466-0197 for further information.

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