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**La Mesa Historical Society** is an all-volunteer non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation charged with preserving the greater La Mesa area’s history.

The La Mesa Historical Society operates the Rev. Henry A. McKinney House Museum and the Society’s Research Archives both located at 8369 University Ave, La Mesa, CA 91942.

The Archives are open every Saturday 1-4 p.m. The House is open every second and fourth Saturday of the month or by appointment. Group tours are available. Call 619-466-0197 for further information.

**Newsletter:**

The *Lookout Avenue* is the official quarterly publication of the La Mesa Historical Society.

**Closing dates** for quarterly newsletter contributions are:  
**Mar 1, Jun 1, Sept 1, Dec 1.**

Provide text in Word document and photos in jpeg format.

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 Glenna A. Bloemen at  
[gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com).



*“New Legacy Park”*

## ***Legacy Park:*** **The City of La Mesa’s Centennial Heritage Project Opens!**

The Centennial Legacy Project located on the former traffic island (now Legacy Park) at La Mesa Boulevard, 4<sup>th</sup> and Allison Streets, opened officially on June 29, 2016.

The wonderful design of local artists Jesus, Mary Lynn and Amy Dominguez features images and dates incorporated into a gazebo, the park landscape and a special city centennial clock.

The La Mesa Historical Society was a donor to the City of La Mesa’s Centennial year-long 2012 celebration and is subsequently listed on the Legacy Project’s recognition plaque.

Former LMHS President Aaron Landau and his wife Bernie also donated the most popular feature--“Felix the Helix,” the large snail sculpture that is a must “selfie” photo stop. Make sure and visit this new landmark to the City of La Mesa’s heritage.

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Rod Whitlow (thru 6/17)

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***Home Tour (2016)***

James Newland

***McKinney House***

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***LMHS Newsletter Staff***

**Glenna Bloemen**

Newsletter Editor

[gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)

**By Jim Newland  
LMHS President**

Hope you are having a great summer here in La Mesa. As I write we are instituting some new and exciting changes to our organization. At our Annual Meeting in May the membership ratified the new Board slate, including four talented and energetic members; Directors Natasha Bliss and Susan Stowe, Secretary Tracey Stotz and Treasurer Jeremy Martinson. Of course we also said thank you to outgoing directors Suda House and Kathy Tinsley, Secretary Sharon Crockett and Vice President Wade Douglas. They all served admirably over the years in support of the Society.

These new Board members arrive as we move toward undertaking some important activities. The first is to update our By-Laws. You will be hearing more on this during the new fiscal year. This is important to ensure compliance with our non-profit status and assure that our activities continue to meet our mission.

At our July meeting new Membership Vice-President Ken D'Angelo presented, and the Board approved, the report that he, Committee Chairman Mickey Moreau and Communications Chair and Vice President George Fahouris worked on for updating our Membership categories—including new Sponsor (business/institution) memberships.

This is just the first step in helping move the Society forward and re-investing in our future. Soon you will all be asked to help participate in informing that future. Within the next few months we will be undertaking a Members Survey. We will be sending this out to gather information on what we are doing well and what we can improve on. Please take the time to provide candid feedback when the survey is released.

*on next page*

## President's Message—*continued*

You are already seeing some additional changes in the format of our newsletter. This is thanks to new editor, and long-time Society member Glenna Bloemen. You can contact her at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com).

We are looking forward to another busy autumn, including a special History Roundtable on October 8, 2016 and our feature event and fundraiser, the Historic Home Tour on November 5<sup>th</sup>. You can read more about the Tour in the feature article included.

Of course, don't forget to check our website to keep up with all our activities, purchase books and DVDs, donate—and renew your membership! [www.lamesahistory.com](http://www.lamesahistory.com).



## **Announcements**

### **Arrivals and Departures:**

#### **New Member Jay Alexander Bliss**

We are very pleased to announce our newest family member arrival. New Board of Director Natasha Bliss and husband Dan welcomed son Jay Alexander Bliss (8 lbs, 13 oz.) into the world on July 28. We all look forward to seeing both Natasha and Jay soon.

#### **Goodbye to Ed and Beth Blackman**

Change can be both positive and negative, or in this case bittersweet. Long-standing Board Member and former Society President Ed Blackman and his lovely wife Beth have recently moved to Irvine, California. This is a great positive for them as they will be closer to family members. For those of us at the La Mesa Historical Society and greater community this is a great loss. Ed has been a pillar of the Society for some 28 years. He was a key leader in the restoration and care of our McKinney House grounds and a supporter of all Society activities.

In recent years, he has also been a great inspiration in his courageous fight back from a serious bicycle accident. On July 14<sup>th</sup> many Historical Society and La Mesa friends met at The Hills Restaurant to wish the Blackmans the best in their new adventures in Orange County. We hope they find time to drop down and visit us regularly. They will both be greatly missed.



## **Have newsletter feature articles/ideas? Send them to Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)**

We are currently seeking articles and submissions for the upcoming issues of the newsletter. If you've read something great or have an idea or an article that you believe would be of interest to your fellow members, please submit it to our Editor, Glenna. Thank you for your continued support.

## **Want to be profiled in the newsletter?**

Would you like more exposure to fellow members? One way to do that is to be featured in the Member Profile section of LMHS's monthly newsletter, *The Lookout Avenue*. All you have to do is be an active (read "current") LMHS member, answer six questions in some depth, provide a JPG head shot, and optionally provide one to two JPG images related to your work or historical interests. Getting profiled is an effective way to become better known to your fellow members. It's easy to be profiled; just submit your name to editor Glenna Bloemen and let her know if you wish to participate. We are currently scheduling member profile features through October. Thanks, and let Glenna hear from you soon!

## **McKinney House Docent Opportunities**

We are looking for additional docents for working the McKinney House Museum. The House is open from 1 to 4pm the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. We will be providing docent training on Saturday, September 17th at 10:30am for those who are interested in becoming a House docent. Come join us in educating the public on our wonderful historic site and museum.

Contact Linda Rankin [2LJRankin@cox.net](mailto:2LJRankin@cox.net) with any questions or just show up at the Palermo Building directly behind the McKinney House during the training session.

## **MCKINNEY HOUSE OBJECTS: TABLE CRUMBERS**



Table crumbers are part of an "ancestral service tradition". These tools are used to sweep stray crumbs and bits of food off tabletops. They can be a small brush and pan, a brush on its own (which sweeps crumbs into one's hand), or a flat metal scraper or blade, with or without a handle. Vintage crumbers of celluloid, silver, aluminum, copper and wood can be found in today's antique market.

The table crumber set on the McKinney House dining table is ornate embossed silver with a flat pan and scraper.

## Mt. Helix' Mid-Century Modern Architectural Heritage featured in Society's 2016 Historical Home Tour"

The Society has reached out to our eastern area boundaries to feature seven amazing homes reflective of the Mid-Century Modern lifestyle that was a key element of the development of Mt. Helix's rural suburban landscape. On **November 5, 2016**, the La Mesa Historical Society Home Tour will feature seven outstanding Mid-Century Modern homes in the Mt. Helix area.

Don't miss this opportunity to see these wonderfully restored and landscaped examples of homes that reflect Mt. Helix's role as a forward-thinking Mid-Century modern rural suburb. Enjoy homes designed by noted architects and designers such as Lloyd Ruocco, Henry Hester, Homer Delawie, John Mortenson, Tucker-Sadler and John Mock (who is scheduled to be on-site during the tour).

Tour Check-In this year will be at the Mt. Helix Fire Station and Shuttles will transport ticket holders to the homes. Due to no parking and narrow streets at these sites, no driving to the homes can be allowed this year.

Don't miss our pre-event **History Roundtable on Saturday October 8, 2016, 9am-12 noon**. This event will feature presentations from historians Jim Newland, Todd Pitman and Keith York as well as architects John Mock and Hal Sadler. The Roundtable will be held at St. Andrews Episcopal Church 4816 Glen (corner Lemon Ave). Continue to check the Society website for the latest on the Roundtable and Home Tour.



*One of the homes featured in this year's LMHS Historical Home Tour.*



*This issue of Lookout Avenue features a reprint of historian Jim Newland's article on visionary Modernist architect and planner Lloyd Ruocco and his visionary plan for Post-War La Mesa. Although this Plan would fail to catch civic leaders' support, our 2016 Historic Home Tour provides a glimpse of his La Mesa area design brilliance--and his influence on other local architects. This year's tour features one of Ruocco's visionary designs for Modern suburban residential lifestyle. For the original article:*

<http://patch.com/california/lamesa/history-gems-november-4-visionary-architects-homes-fed296ee3af4>

## **Envisioning A “Spectacular” Post-War La Mesa**

*“What will La Mesa be like 25 years from now? Will San Diego have a shed over it, leaving a wake of down-at-the-heels neighborhoods? Or will it be planned otherwise? The answer lies with you.”*

Lloyd Ruocco, August 15, 1944

The articulate and erudite 37-year old architect and planner, Lloyd Ruocco, stood before an august group of La Mesa City officials, planning commission members and interested citizens.

The group had gathered that Tuesday evening at the San Diego State College Art Gallery to hear and see the results of a select group of young designers and planners led by Ruocco.

The La Mesa Planning Commission had commissioned, and the Chamber of Commerce funded, the design team to provide plans for “a face-lifting program for the business section of the city.”

City Planning Commission member and renown sculptor James Tank Porter (of the pioneering and influential La Mesa Porter Family) had been a key mover in getting the design group formed--and the Chamber's support funding for their efforts. Porter was also a founding member of Mayor Ben Polak's “Greater La Mesa Committee.”

Polak had formed the Greater La Mesa Committee in the summer of 1943 to help prepare the small city for dealing with its existing growth due to World War II, and the expected exponential Post-War growth to follow. As Mayor Polak directed sub-committees for how to plan and fund the perceived needs for a civic center, park and recreation facilities, war memorial and community auditorium, Porter suggested the need for a more professional and visionary plan to guide it.

He apparently contacted the duo of Ruocco and Miss Ilse Hamann. Hamann was a professor of art and interior design at San Diego State College (the origins of today's Art & Environmental Design program). She was also Ruocco's fiancée. Lloyd and Ilse would marry in late 1944. They gathered a number of Ilse's student artists and Lloyd's associate architects, engineers, and city planners including Laura Andresen, Francis Box, Mary Ellen Bowlby, Jack Dertola, George Storz, Jack Hillmer, Jack Schoberg and Carl Wieger for their team.

Ruocco was working at the time as the Navy's head draftsman in the 11<sup>th</sup> Naval District offices—where many local designers settled while waiting for the private building industry to re-engage after the war.

## **The Vision for “America's New Model City”**

James Tank Porter himself had introduced Ruocco to the aforementioned crowd of dignitaries that Tuesday evening for the initial presentation.

Ruocco presented the group's three planning and design concepts to the La Mesa civic leaders.

*La Mesa Scout* reporter Dave Barnes detailed the proposals in an August 18, 1944 article as did *San Diego Union* reporter Etta Mae Wallace in a September 17, 1944 article prior to the public unveiling of the plans.

One wall of the gallery featured a study of the existing La Mesa Boulevard business district. Taking a composite photograph of the street façade the designers presented an updated and thematically unified decorative treatment. The team’s goal was to show how a unified architectural treatment could “beautify” the eclectic existing facades.

The second wall featured the title and exhibits for “Greater La Mesa, A Better Town Thru Bold Planning.” Ruocco and the team took a new approach to the existing development plan of downtown while expanding on ideas for accommodating a civic center and other land use changes through enhancements of existing facilities and landscape in benefitting “traffic, travel and trade.”

Barnes quoted Ruocco on “the importance of making La Mesa a pleasant, even exciting, place to go to for trade or recreation.”

It was in the third exhibit wall, titled “Total La Mesa—The Greatest Benefits from the Broadest Vision” that reflected the Modernist style and land use philosophy that Ruocco would display in his future groundbreaking work.



***“Total La Mesa” sketch published in San Diego Union September 17, 1944.***

Considering La Mesa’s natural landscape and resources along with its planning potential the group considered all factors in their vision for La Mesa’s future full of freeways, shopping centers, and even a heliport, all within its natural landscape considering its existing “topography and soil structure.”

The exhibits featured sketches representing what Barnes described as “a vivid and exciting total La Mesa”. The new, visionary downtown was clustered around a civic center core “constructed in the exposition spirit.”

Ruocco described his concept thusly:

*“Actually the big steady attractions at the expositions have been those which gave Americans a look-in on the possibilities of future living, free from over-crowding, the din and confusion that have played havoc with urban nerves.”*

Residence areas featured a Ruocco design concept he called “superblocks.” These residential zones of quiet, traffic calmed streets all focused into common park and recreation facilities that formed not just streets, but neighborhoods “safe for children and the old to live and play in”.

The concept would have created a “new” La Mesa, one that the visionary designer and his team acknowledged would create a City of the future from the small municipality.

Ruocco summarized the opportunity, although radical, that he hoped to convince the La Mesa leaders to embrace:

*“Only a plan that is fundamental, taking in the entire community, including streets, roadways, parks, sewers, police, fire prevention, can cure the “disease of cities.” [if implemented] it would become the mecca for both sightseers and those who want to live in tomorrow’s town, today.”*

## **A Visionary Architect**

So, who was this visionary architect/designer? Lloyd Pietrantonio Ruocco was a native of Maine whose family had moved to San Diego County in the early 1920s.

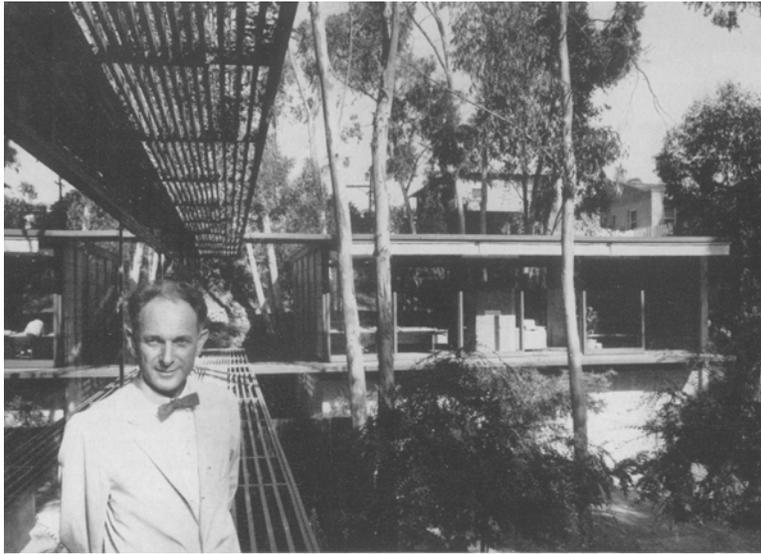
As Ruocco’s biographer Todd Pitman (a Mt. Helix resident and owner of a Ruocco designed home) has documented in various lectures and articles, such as at the modernsandsiego.com website, Lloyd was inspired by his high school drafting teacher at San Diego High, the noted architect Lillian Rice, to consider architecture and design.

After graduating from U.C. Berkeley, he returned to San Diego, gaining experience in the office of leading architects Richard Requa (designer of local landmarks La Mesa Grammar School and the Mt. Helix Theatre) and William Templeton Johnson.

Ruocco gained practical experience in architecture and design working on the 1935 Panama-California Exposition, the County Administration Building and with Requa associate Rice on the master plan for Rancho Santa Fe.

Yet, his work with these masters of the popular inter-war “Spanish and Mediterranean revival” styles did not sway Ruocco from his interest in the cutting-edge ideals of Modernism and Modern design.

For his contemporaries such as noted San Diego Modernist architect Bob Mosher, Lloyd Ruocco was the leader of the local San Diego Modernist movement. Mosher remarked on Ruocco that *“He was the person to whom you turned for inspiration. He was the modernist.”*



*Lloyd Ruocco at the Design Center.*

In 1949, Lloyd and Ilse established the Design Center in San Diego on Fifth Avenue in Hillcrest. From here many of San Diego's notable Modernist architects and designers would gain knowledge, experience and inspiration until Lloyd's passing in 1981.

Ruocco's influence would lead to many notable projects and in 1961, after one of his visionary speeches, this time to the League of Women Voters, he and several local designers and planners formed the Citizens Coordinate for Century 3.

The C-3 group became an important and influential civic organization having recently celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year in its Ruocco-inspired mission to "...achieve the highest standards of environmental quality, physical design, economic benefit, and social progress" for the region."

Such were his lifetime achievements that recently the San Diego Unified Port District named its new \$7.3 million public project north of Seaport Village—Ruocco Park.

### **“Super Dream for Model City Deemed Not Practical”**

Today, urban historians and planners may see the concepts of “new urbanism” and “smart growth” in Ruocco's then visionary planning ideas, but for Mayor Polak and the civic leaders of 1944 La Mesa it may have been interesting, but it was considered at minimum, impractical.

Mayor Polak was quoted: “It [Ruocco's plan] is not connected in any way with the Greater La Mesa Committee's plans and activities. Someone was a super-dreamer [poking fun at Ruocco's “super-blocks”]. It is not our plan by any means.”

The *Scout* noted that the first two concepts for upgrading and unifying the existing business district and presenting some concept of placing a new civic center into the city core had some merit.

The editorializing article then reiterating that Mr. Ruocco's initial charge was to undertake these two initial tasks but that “the third plan, however, is purely his own.”

Adding another political as well as personal critique of Ruocco's plan the article noted that although “the plan was interesting and focused much attention on La Mesa, it represented the using of this community as a “guinea pig” for the progressive architectural enthusiasm of its author.”

The “progressive” label being a veiled attack on the concepts of New Deal era public housing and planned community projects as “socialist” ideas--ideas that many in the building and construction industries of the time challenged as un-American in concept for decades to come.

After the Plans were exhibited at the San Diego State College gallery, the City leaders dismissed such radical development plans as Ruocco proposed.

Within a year the City would engage another local architect and native La Mesan, Sam Hamill, to design a plan for a new civic center and war memorial building (none of which would be built either).

As such Lloyd Ruocco’s plans for turning La Mesa into “America’s Model City” were forgotten as the small city would focus on the practical challenges of raising the funds and building its new civic center (eventually finished in 1958—only George Hatch’s City Administration Building is currently left from that complex).

As Urban Historians such as this author note: La Mesans should not be too hard on its forefathers for rejecting Ruocco’s visionary plan. Our larger neighbor to the west, San Diego, twice ignored the efforts of the world-renown city planner John Nolen and his 1908 and 1926 plans for creating a “city beautiful” vision for that city.

## **Ruocco Still Makes His Mark on the Local Landscape**

Luckily the rejection of Ruocco’s plan for La Mesa in 1944 did not end his work in the area. According to Todd Pitman, shortly after this project Lloyd and Ilse were married in a small ceremony on Mt. Helix. As a wedding gift he designed a house for her nearby in La Mesa in which he named “Il Cavo.” (The house was demolished during expansion of Interstate 8).

Ruocco also built and sold numerous spec and custom houses in the Grossmont, Helix and La Mesa areas over the next few years as Lloyd and Ilse built up their practices and the Design Center.

As Pitman has documented, these early houses reflected Ruocco’s interest in the natural landscape of the region. Ruocco built most of these houses with redwood and glass to maximize their relationship to the natural resources of the sites. He would use local stone and when feasible incorporate boulders or other landscape elements of the sites into his buildings.

These early Organic design elements were a practical and literal interpretation of his building philosophy of the time to take advantage of the indigenous materials of the area to create a harmonious building within its natural landscape.

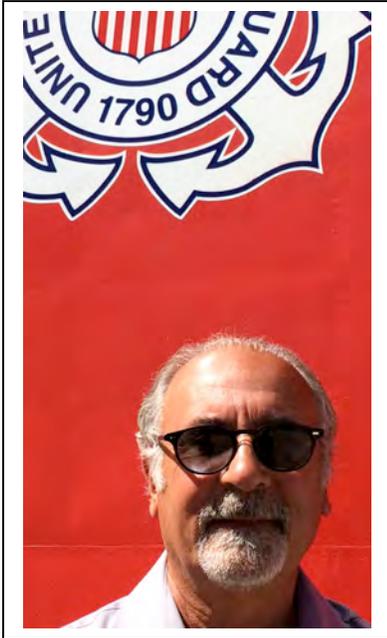
The following statement illustrating his basic approach:

*“Good architecture should call for the minimum use of materials for the most interesting and functional enclosure of space.”*

## **2016 Home Tour Provides Glimpse at Ruocco’s Design Brilliance**

Although Ruocco’s Il Cavo has since been demolished along with the equally impressive 1945 Grossmont “spec house,” Saturday November 5, 2016 the La Mesa Historical Society presents a rare opportunity to visit one local Lloyd Ruocco designed home, along with six additional Mid-Century Modern gems.

*Getting to know your neighbors is the theme of this column. Enjoy. Editor Glenna Bloemen*



**Kenneth D'Angelo**  
La Mesa Historical Society  
Vice President Membership

**LMHS: What is your background?**

**D'Angelo:** My career background is in real estate development, specifically developing new cities internationally but also involved as the director with developing a major new university in Qatar and some other large development projects here at home, in the time I've been home that is. I've also done some of my own development of apartments, homes and commercial properties in San Diego.

Graduated from Crawford High School in 1966 not knowing what I wanted to do in life. My classes had been auto shop, wood shop, metal shop and home economics (where the girls were) and ended up in the bottom 13 of my 1,017 graduating class. I "sort of spent" one year at City College, and before being drafted, I joined the Coast Guard. It was the Viet Nam era and I had wanted to go to sea to learn to be a ship's navigator so I could later join San Diego's rich tuna fleet. But as fate would have it, I landed in a very hard to qualify for aviation school right out of boot camp. Little did I know the form my future 'sea' time would entail.

During my 4 years in the Coast Guard, for my real first duty station, I was trained to do open water rescues jumping from helicopters into the cold and stormy waters of Alaska. Today they call those kids "rescue swimmers". In my day it was just called crazy. I was credited with having saved many lives and even had the distinct experience of delivering two babies. After about eighteen months of flying in Alaska, I sustained injuries that sent me home to San Diego where I finished out my 4 years. The water was much warmer here! In the end I had received numerous medals for my rescue actions, 179 Sikorsky "Winged S's" for those rescues and made many lifelong friends from the adventure. It truly taught me how precious life was and you need to do something with it while you have it.

Using the GI Bill, I set my sights to get an education. Unlike my high school years, I'd grown to know that an education was essential in life. I went to Arizona State University and then the University in Florence Italy, finally returning and getting my Bachelor in Architecture in 1977. Next I went straight into my first graduate program earning a Master's Degree in Land-Use Planning in 1979 from CalPoly.

One of my first positions, I was hired as a project director of Eastlake for their master planned new city development in Chula Vista, California. I did the Hills and Shores and The Greens projects. That experience was a keystone career developer as it taught me a lot about the design, marketing and economics of a community. It gave me the stepping stones for more real estate development that was to follow for 28 years internationally.

That first step off to foreign shores took me for 8 of those years to Indonesia as a CEO of the largest real estate development new township project in Asia at that time, 15,000 acres outside of Jakarta. The size of Irvine Ranch here. Following my evacuation during their 1998 revolution, I landed for three years in Costa Rica for some time off. However, not being able to sit still, I studied and received an International MBA from the university there sponsored by the United Nations. It was tougher doing that college degree than any job I've ever had. Over the years overseas, I also earned an MBA, a MSc in Economics along with the International MBA and also studied at Northumbria University in the UK where I completed coursework toward an LLM in Advanced Commercial Property Development and Real Estate Law.

My career ended up not being what I thought when I was in high school, a kid who's only future looked like Viet Nam. In my professional years, I have presented a paper on privatized new city development to the United Nations Habitat II Conference in 1996 in Istanbul, have developed the large international university for the Emir of Qatar, established a new city in Palestine working with the Tony Blair peace efforts and ultimately, taking charge of 5 entire new cities in Libya from which I was evacuated in 2011 "Arab Spring" revolution. My sister once asked me how many presidents, emir's, prime ministers, first ladies, ambassadors and yes, dictators I've met, known as friends or worked for in my career. I stopped counting at 47. Not bad for an almost high school dropout.

Over these years my insight into the world has become one that few local San Diego boys get to experience, part by luck, part by skill. I've taken those lessons (and aversions to AK47's) home with me and decided in my retirement that it was time to give back to my local home town some of what I've learned in creating better environments for others.

**LMHS: What attracted you to La Mesa?**

**D'Angelo:** Simple. My wife did. She lived here. However, my parents moved here from East San Diego about 1972 so my kid sister could go to Grossmont College. I've always liked La Mesa as I thought of it as the "Pasadena of San Diego". It was always just too far from the ocean for me though. Right after my evacuation from Libya, and while being a happy bachelor on my sailboat on Shelter Island, I met and married my wife, Donna. We now have a beautiful home atop what is technically called Mount Gross, to the general population however, it is Grossmont Summit. Yes, that big gray rock at the top of the hill North of Mt. Helix is part of my backyard.

**LMHS: What contributions would you like to make to La Mesa and the Historical Society?**

**D'Angelo:** To bring awareness to the community members of La Mesa, Grossmont and Mt Helix, the importance of preserving their history, heritage and culture.

**LMHS: In your opinion, what is the importance of preserving history?**

**D'Angelo:** Your heritage is very important as it is who you are. "Who you are and who your family is, matters throughout everything you do in life".

While working on the East Lake community, there was an old farm house that was to be removed to make way for the 125 freeway. I knew the importance of this house as I'd been going to it since I was about 3 years old. I was able to move the freeway alignment about 900 feet to allow the house to remain and the family I grew up with to remain in their home.

However, another time, I was party to having to have an old blind man being carried out in his chair so the home he had lived his entire life could be destroyed to make way for new road construction. All in the name of progress. I learned then, up close and personal, the deep heartbreak of real estate development.

When Telegraph Road through East Lake had to be widened, there was a spot on road leading to Otay Lakes where my grandfather and I had gone fishing a lot when I was a boy. There was a fig tree that he and I would pick and eat from on the way to our favorite fishing spot. Although the tree and the adjacent “sitting” fence had to be removed to make way for progress, I kept a piece of that fence to remind me of those happy days and how suddenly the past can be lost to progress.

There is heartbreak in development and making progress. There is a cost when you lose the patina of somewhere as you can never recover or recreate the charm, character, worth or memory of that object or that place.

At one time while home, when I was developing the Pechanga Indian Reservation golf course, I was confronted with an old weathered house that was to be removed from the middle of the planned fairway. I did some investigation and found out that Marshall Hicks, the first law enforcement officer in Riverside County from the late 1800’s, had lived and died in the house. I decided that the history of the home was important so I ordered the re-aligning the golf course and to restore the house and so the superintendent of the golf course could utilize the building as a starter building. During the course of the renovation, we unearthed a large granite stone from under the house that had the name “HIX” hand etched on it. Everyone had previously believed the name had been spelled “Hicks”. That one little act corrected history or it proved he couldn’t spell.

Another challenge I encountered, was to be the re-location of a very large and stately oak tree believed to be sacred in a special way to the local tribal members, which was unknown to me at the time. Even though the tree was an obstacle on the golf course, I decided it was to stay and designed the fairway around the tree over very strong arguments by the famed golf course architect. The head tribal elder came to me afterwards and thanked me for saving the tree. Apparently, the “bucks” in the tribe would propose to their “squaws” under that tree making it very special to their community. I’ve heard they still use that tree for the same purposes, but after the course is closed in the evening. There’s supposed to still be the tire swing hanging from that tree.

Seems a persimmon tree also posed a problem on that same golf course. It was located right by the old Hicks house. Again after, the head tribal chief came and thanked me for preserving their persimmon tree. He presented me with loaf of homemade bread made by the wives of the tribe from the persimmons from that tree. I was becoming quiet the hero among the tribe, at least the women folk.

I think daily of the importance of doing any job right and keeping what’s worthy of keeping.

### **LMHS: Vision for the future?**

**D’Angelo:** My vision is to live every day, get up and do the best I can to better my environment and those of the community. I have built cities all over the world and always look at what was needed and right for that community. I would then develop the growth plan to make it happen. First comes the educational programs and schools to train the personal to work in and run the upper levels of the local companies and industries. Then comes the environment to enhance the human capacity of the community. Wages go up and property values go up. It is a part of the generating a localized economic growth pole as a technical term. La Mesa has the framework of the quality of the people and the environment, it just takes constant working at it to make it better for the next generations.



**Membership Directory Update**

**Attention LMHS Members:** Have you updated your Member Directory profile yet to make it more robust? You now have the opportunity to upgrade your photo to color, if it isn't already, and to expand your profile description if you wish, including social media links, contact info, book-cover images and descriptions, and more! Check out

**New Annual Personal Membership Levels:  
Sponsor/Memberships:**

**Business/Organization**

- |                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • \$1000 Jewel Lifetime | \$250 Basic Sponsorship               |
| • \$250 Benefactor      | \$500 Entrepreneur Sponsorship        |
| • \$100 Patron          | \$1000 Premium Sponsorship            |
| • \$25 Family           | \$1500 Silver Sponsorship             |
| • \$20 Individual       | \$2000 Gold Sponsorship               |
| • \$10 Student          | \$3000 Platinum Home Tour Sponsorship |

**Welcome, New and Returning LMHS Members!**

Congratulations on joining the La Mesa Historical Society, dedicated to preserving the history of La Mesa, California. You have made a wise investment. While there are many benefits to being a member of LMHS, you'll need to take the following two steps to optimize your membership:

1. **Subscribe to LMHS Lookout Avenue** at [www.lamesahistory.com](http://www.lamesahistory.com). This is necessary for you to receive any and all notices from LMHS. Receiving the email that accompanied this newsletter does not mean your name has been added to the regular notice distribution list.
2. **Enjoy a spot in the Membership Directory** with LMHS. Go to [www.lamesahistory.com](http://www.lamesahistory.com) to promote your business by sending your JPG photo, brief contact information, and an expanded description to webmaster George Faharis.

You'll also enjoy these additional benefits of membership:

- **Quarterly electronic newsletters, *Outlook Avenue***, containing information about local, regional, and national publishing activities;
- **An opportunity to stay in touch with other members** by signing up for the LMHS Directory.
- **Regional collaborative marketing efforts;** and

Let us know if you have any questions or comments about your membership with LMHS, or any ideas to improve upon our mission. Again, welcome to LMHS.

## 2016 – 2017 Events Calendar

*Have an event/resource to report to the historical society community?  
Send your information to  
Newsletter Editor Glenna Bloemen at [gab11853@aol.com](mailto:gab11853@aol.com)*

### **McKinney House Research Archives Every Saturday**

Research Archives open every Saturday from 1 to 4 pm (except holiday weekends).

### **McKinney House Museum 2nd & 4th Saturdays each month**

McKinney House Museum is open the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 1 to 4 pm (except holiday weekends).

**October 8, 2016: History Roundtable: Mt. Helix Mid-Century Heritage, 9am – 12noon**  
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4816 Glen (corner of Lemon Avenue)

**November 5, 2016: 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Society Historical Home Tour, 9am – 3pm**

More information on page 5 and at [www.lamesahistory.com](http://www.lamesahistory.com)

### **Current Featured Exhibit: May 2016 — September 2016**

#### ***WWII Internment and the Japanese-American Students of Grossmont High School***

The Society has partnered with Donald Ginn, GHS history teacher and his talented Grossmont High AP History students in displaying their research projects to discover the stories of those local students and families affected by Executive Order 9066 and the internment of the United States Japanese-American citizens.

Come learn about Grossmont High's Japanese-American students and families affected by the jingoistic frenzy caused by the attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States' entry into World War II. The exhibit features photographs, records and reminiscences of individual Grossmont students, friends and their families in response to one of the most controversial and challenging events, and periods in U.S. history.

The budding GHS student/historians searched out the stories of those former Grossmont students who had previously served as school officers, club members, athletes and academic standouts prior to their and their families' internment.



***Poster announcing Executive Order 9066***

McKinney House Museum and Archives  
8369 University, La Mesa, CA 91942  
Mailing address: P.O. box 882, La Mesa, CA 91944  
619-466-0197  
[www.lamesahistory.com](http://www.lamesahistory.com)

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*Summer Traditions, 1908 July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade: The La Mesa Improvement Club, formed 1907, started up a popular but short-lived July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade event that helped promote La Mesa Springs as a progressive and inviting community for suburban home seekers and businessmen.*

**LMHS Likes Facebook!"**  
**Visit us on Facebook today**  
**and let us know  
you like us!**

