

La Mesa Historical Society's Lookout Avenue

Quarterly Newsletter



Volume 24, Number 1 Winter 2002

Senior softball league making history of its own

By Norrie West

Some cities, like New York, have had long-running championship teams, but very few can equal the La Mesa/San Diego senior softballers now in their 80's and still going strong.

Led by long-time La Mesan Don Berg, pitcher and manager, the Silver Hawks (once the La Mesa 65s) continued their phenomenal winning ways in 2001, capturing national championships for senior softballers age 80 and over.

Their first victory last year was the Senior Softball World Series with a six win-no loss performance in Detroit, followed by a two-and-zero World Championship in Las Vegas.

Those victories brought their total national titles to 16. Almost unbeatable for 14 years, Berg, 81, a gifted athlete, is still their leader, and has been since 1988 when he pitched the La Mesa 65s to their first championship, and has continued to lead them ever after they became the Silver Hawks in 1992.

In those 15 years, he has had the inspired help of four other senior softball stars, shortshop Bob

Kennedy (80), who's still team captain, and first-baseman Dick Osborn (81).

Other Silver Hawks are second baseman Rex Finley, third baseman Fred Massey, who was their leading hitter with a .765 average; outfielders Clay Harick, Russ Counter and Dewitt Hooks. Others who filled in now and then were Herk Ranieri, Gil Miranda, Roscoe Speak, Sef Torres and Maury Schlesinger.

How have they managed to keep fit and play all those years? Of course, everyone had some problem. Berg, for example, has had cancer surgery and a knee replacement.

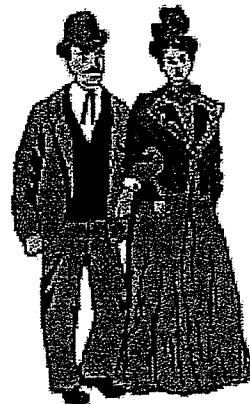
"Of the 55 who have played for us, only three are no longer here. All the others have survived, although some had to give up softball," Berg said.

The 45-year La Mesa resident was an outstanding athlete at Hoover High, running the hurdles, pole vaulting and captaining the Aztec track team in the

See Senior Softball on page 3

In this issue:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Cover | Reflections by Norrie West |
| Page 2 | A note from the president
Board of directors
Thank you to sponsors |
| Page 3 | Walking tours
LMHS at Oktoberfest
Next meeting |
| Page 4 | Need for docents
Annual report
Newest La Mesa landmark |
| Page 5 | Holiday party
List of new members
Web site
Meet the newsletter editor |



Coming
Soon:
**Walking
Tours**

See page 3
for details.

A note from the LMHS president

by Gordon Jones



This is the first newsletter of this operating year and we can be thankful for the special services of many people and events. We will, in future issues of Lookout Avenue, recognize as many as those as we possibly can.

Linda Michaels has performed

a great service in getting out the newsletter in past years and **Stephanie Glazer** has volunteered to get it done in the future. **Karna Webster** has worked with a level of dedication most organizations would like to emulate. **Norrie West** ensured that LMHS would have a history book of which to be proud, and adding, at the same time, to the solvency of our society. **Don Mathis**, a long-time member now living in Hesperia, has again ensured our having a first-rate mantel clock in good working order for our holiday raffle. We also wish to thank our business sponsors (see photos below) for their continued support.

We have several new board members who are becoming active with new sets of knowledge, skills and abilities and you will see the results.

I especially want to thank my wife, **Carol**, for her telephone conversations with almost 40 new members who have joined this past year. She's very good at doing this and imparting an enthusiasm that spills

over to others. The responses from those members give me high hope for the further of the organization.

We continue to search for new docents, individuals who might spend up three hours a month, hosting visitors to the McKinney House and our archives. It would be nice to have docents at the La Mesa Depot, too. Perhaps you know some young people who

need community service hours for school, scouts or such and would like to be a part of our history? Ask them to give us a call. No experience is required and we'll provide the necessary training. Lastly, look for future activities built around La Mesa's landmarked structures, Spring membership brunch and tour of the Springhouse in Collier Park.

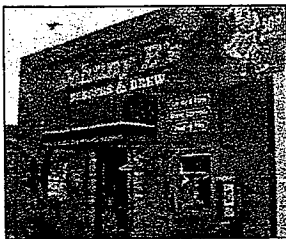
What else do we do? Oktoberfest sees us in two locations, we did a land-office business in La Mesa's 90th

birthday celebration, we participated in a kids' history event in the Gaslamp District, and we have an annual Easter Egg Hunt with the bunny present. We'll do the summer lawn party and the holiday open house, plus the newly designed special members' event. We have something for just about everybody, and I hope to see you at a future event.

Gordon

**La Mesa Historical Society,
Board of Directors**
July, 2002-June, 2003
President: Gordon Jones
1st Vice President: Donna Niemeier
2nd Vice President: Carol Lockwood
3rd Vice President: Ruth Contino
Secretary: Sharon Crockett
Treasurer: Donna Niemeier
Past President: Karna Webster
Directors-at-Large:
Leslie Tonkinson
Stephanie Glazer
Ed Blackman
Kathy Tinsley

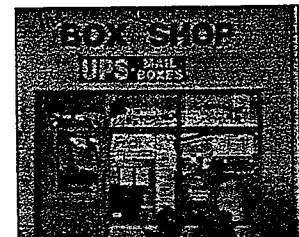
Thank you to our sponsors. We couldn't do it without you.



Johnny B's
4738 Fourth Ave.
(619) 464-2465



Stone Ground Coffee Works
8278 La Mesa Blvd.
(619) 698-4217



The Box Shop
8749 La Mesa Blvd.
(619) 463-9800

Coming soon... Walking Tours!

We have had many inquiries from members and visitors regarding the availability of walking tours of La Mesa. The trial run of such a tour in the Date Avenue area was a rousing success. We have set out to create two tours, guided and self-guided.

Date Avenue Historic Area

Member Allyson Carico is refining the details of the walking tour of the Date Avenue area that we made a trial run on last September. (Recently, she wrote, produced, and, with Fire Chief Doug Matter, narrated a 7.5 minute videotape of La Mesa history.) Not only will the La Mesa Historical Society conduct guided tours of the area in the near future, we will publish a special monograph – designed by Allyson - for those wishing to guide themselves.

Downtown La Mesa

Members Gordon Jones and Kathy Tinsley are researching the historic buildings and development of the downtown area of our city – and it is a good deal more interesting than you might think. We will conduct a trial of the walking tour for our next general membership meeting (see details below). Many buildings date from the 1920's and earlier and represent a nice selection of the architectural styles of different periods. La Mesa has spent more of its life as a self-contained independently functioning smaller town than it has as a suburb with shopping and strip malls. As with the Date Avenue tour, we will publish a monograph for later escorted tours and for self-guided tours.

Senior softball continued from page 1

early 40s.

He is in Hoover High's Hall of Fame and was high-point man for the San Diego State University Aztecs in 1942-43.

How did he get into softball? He was looking for some recreational outlet in the 50s and a friend suggested it. The rest is history.

Of course, it was fast-pitch then, but as the years went by, it became slow-pitch softball. That's what Don does these days.

At least three days a week, he is out at Sunset Park in north La Mesa playing his favorite game and getting the team ready for two championship tournaments they keep winning year after year. It's part of our athletic history for sure. And something to look back on with pride.

LMHS at Oktoberfest

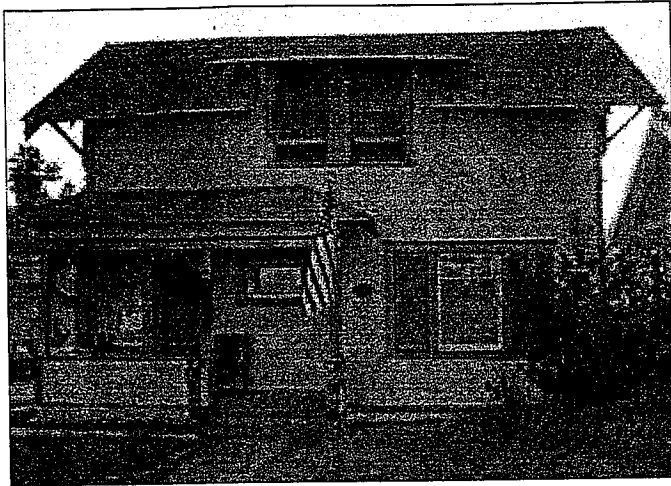


The LMHS had two booths at the La Mesa Oktoberfest. The booths provided information on the society, sold the book, "La Mesa Through the Years" and provided general information on La Mesa's history. Above, LMHS treasurer Donna Niemeier points out an old photo of downtown La Mesa to festival-goers.

General Membership Meeting

Mark your calendar for 3 p.m., Sunday, November 3. We will have a brief meeting at the McKinney House/Palermo Annex, followed by an introductory walking tour of downtown La Mesa. Afterward, we will enjoy light refreshments and get your input regarding the walking tour. Corrections and observations will be critical since we hope to offer an outstanding tour on a more regular basis. The number of individuals we can take on the tour is limited to 35, so we ask you to reserve your places by calling Gordon or Carol Jones at (619) 465-1883. There is no charge for LMHS members, but guests and non-members will each pay a \$10 fee, assuming room is available.

La Mesa's newest Historical Landmark, Robertson House, No. 16



This 1910-built house, known as the Robertson House, was declared a historical landmark by the La Mesa City Council on July 9. In doing the research, owner Stephanie Glazer found one owner to be a survivor of the Quantrill Raiders (Civil War conflict). Other owners included a builder, painter, major general (as a boy), chiropractor, real estate salesman, engineer, dry good salesman, mechanic (at Elmer Drew's garage) and now a copywriter.

How do you spell relief?

D-O-C-E-N-T

Are you interested in volunteering, but not sure where to start? Well, by becoming a docent, you can help others walk through history, or at least through the McKinney House, up to one Saturday a month.

As a docent, you will be teamed up with another volunteer (one Saturday a month) from noon to 3 p.m. and answer any questions concerning the house or the archives.

For more information on becoming a docent or to learn other ways to get involved, call Carol Lockwood at (619) 463-5648.

LMHS, Annual Report FISCAL YEAR ENDING 6/30/02

As of June 30, 2002, the La Mesa Historical Society had a total of \$43,426.99 in monetary assets. The Histories CD, Capital Improvements CD and \$2,495.42 of savings accounts are restricted funds and can be used for designated expenditures.

Monies were distributed to the following:

Checking \$9,426.43
Savings \$17,358.23
Histories CD \$9,153.28
Capital Improvement CD \$7,489.05

Total gross receipts \$23,248.29

Contributions \$5,017.25
Special event fund-raising \$2,417.00
Sales of publications \$11,977.13
Memberships \$2,672.00
Investment income \$1,164.91

Total expenses \$18,361.15

Special event fund-raising \$938.64
Sales of publication \$9,857.06
Promotion, adm. and postage \$1,238.71
Utilities and maintenance \$6,065.68
Preservation \$261.06

The large increase in contributions and sales categories are due to the promotion, publication and printing of the book, "La Mesa Through the Years". Contributions of \$4,100 were received in July to help cover the cost of the first printing. Total gross income for book sales was \$11,455.20. Total expenses, including cost for the second printing, were \$9,827.06. Net profit for sales of the book for the 2001-2002 fiscal year was \$5,728.14.

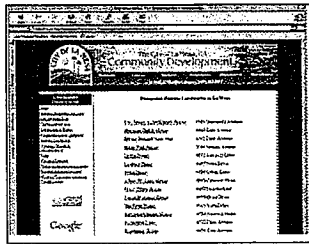
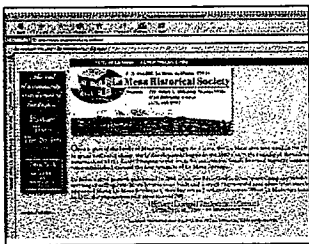
If you would like a copy of the line item spreadsheet showing specific income and expense in each general categories listed above, contact LMHS Treasurer Donna Niemeier at (619) 461-2419.

LMHS welcomes new members since September 2001

Paul and Majel Carter, Dave and Carie Allan, Houston and Trish Burnside, Stephanie Glazer, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Grant, Daisy and Bruce Johnson, Ben and Carol Lynnet, Robyn Natwick, Andy Phemister, Gene and Fran Powers, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ramsey, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Shepard, Sandra K. McNulty, Lucy Ann Albert, Ronda Brewer, Ted Doughty, Dr. Robert Freeland, Kristin Hobbs Kjaero, Eugene Robeson,

Beth Smith, Susan Stowe, James W. Woods, Kevin and Knikki Hewitt, Edward Woodruff, Julie Jessop and Foster Marshall, Daisy and Bruce Johnson, Dorothy Young, William and Grace Fradenburg, Mark and Lorraine Kelley, Paul and Michele Cowdery, Susan Mullert, Bill Baber, Judy and Bert Randlett, Michael P. Rummel, Paul Richmond, Tamara Huntress and Bill and Kathryn Hunsucker.

As seen on the Web



Did you know that the LMHS is online? To visit their site, log onto <http://www.grossmont.k12.ca.us/lmhs/> The city of La Mesa's Web site contains information on the historic landmarks in La Mesa. To visit their Web site, go to <http://www.cityoflamesa.com/Departments/CommunityDevelopment/HistoricLandmarks.htm>

Meet the new newsletter editor...

Taking over the responsibility for the LMHS quarterly newsletter is board member and historic preservation committee member Stephanie Glazer.

Stephanie lives in a historic house (Robertson House, Landmark No. 16) and has been involved with the LMHS for the past six months.

She brings with her a journalism education and experience from The San Diego Union-Tribune, where she works in advertising.

If you have any comments or suggestions concerning the newsletter, please give her a call at (619) 460-2826 or e-mail stephanieglazer@yahoo.com.

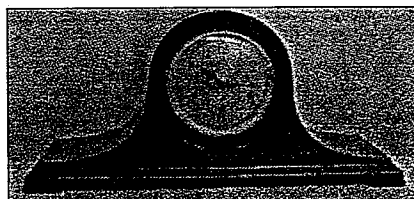
Everyone welcome!



FREE!

**La Mesa Historical Society
Christmas Open House
Sunday, December 8,
McKinney House
8369 University Ave., La Mesa
1 to 4 p.m.**

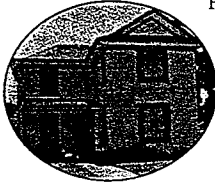
Join us as we sing Christmas Carols, munch on refreshments and wait for a visit from Santa Claus. An exhibit of antique toys will be on display. Grand prize raffle drawing is a Seth Thomas mantel clock, ca. 1920.



FREE!

Happy Holidays





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

La Mesa Historical Society

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

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

Change service requested

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 Ave. (at the corner of Pine Street) in La Mesa.

Open noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday 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
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.

\$500 Benefactor

\$20 Family

\$250 Patron

\$15 Individual

\$100 Sponsor
/Organization

\$5 Student

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Ph () _____

Memberships and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.