

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

# LOOKOUT AVE.

VOLUME NUMBER 3, ISSUE NUMBER 7

FEBRUARY, 1980

## — CALENDAR OF EVENTS —

- April 12th — Repeat of Tour to Riverside
- May 18th — Pot-Luck Dinner and General Meeting
- June 7th — Tour of J. Paul Getty Museum
- June 29th — Ice Cream Social

## McKINNEY HOUSE RESTORATION — UPDATE

Donna Regan

On February 4th repairs were made on the two McKinney House chimneys, which had been weakened by deteriorating lime mortar. The repairs involved taking the chimneys down to the roofline and rebuilding them, plus installing a galvanized steel liner in the kitchen chimney to eventually accommodate a functional wood-burning stove.

Following the recommendations of the Restoration Committee, the LMHS Board voted at its February meeting to retain Roy Houston as general contractor for some of the major work to be done, including the reroofing of the McKinney House and the relocation of the garage. All plans and specifications will be prepared and approved by the Restoration Committee.

Restoration work is proceeding on the interior of the house with the removal of later coats of paint from the office woodwork. Volunteers are still needed . . . if you would like to help, please call: Donna Regan, 460-3726.

## THE LA MESA STEPS

Eckoe Ahern

Beverly Drive . . . Summit . . . Canterbury . . . Sheldon . . . Windsor . . . Alta Lane . . . Valle Drive . . . Fairview and Pasadena. Aged concrete steps scramble among these streets on the steep sides of Mt. Nebo in southwestern La Mesa. The La Mesa Steps.

Built on land deeded by C.C. and Fannie Park and S.C. and Lillian Grable of the Park-Grable Investment Company in March, 1907, the steps were intended to give access up the sparsely-populated mountain to Prospect Point in Lookout Park. And reason enough! The view must have been spectacular, indeed. Too, the area would be developed by the realtors. Ordinary footpaths would have been too difficult because of the grade, so eventually, the concrete steps with handrails were built and much used in earlier days.

Now, Mt. Nebo is heavily populated, and the several sets of steps, if you can find them by asking friendly neighbors, will take you between houses so close you feel, while climbing down or puffing up them, like a trespasser or a window-peeper.

Weeds have overgrown the steps in some places. On one set, ivy trails prettily across them. Handrails have disappeared . . . either in the structure next door or in decay. In one place the top section of a set is gone, and one walks down a steep, bare piece of ground to reach the "top" step. Trash accumulates, of course.

People, especially school children, use the steps, dangerous as they are. As automobile transportation becomes more difficult, who knows? Perhaps the residents of Canterbury and Fairview, Sheldon and all the other streets with the pretty names may find themselves climbing up and down the scrambling La Mesa Steps.

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## SOME FOND MEMORIES OF THE FEBRUARY DINNER MEETING

For those of you who missed this dinner meeting at *Anthony's*, you missed a lot of fun! But there's always next year so don't despair. Around 159 cheerful souls were there to say "hi" and catch up on the activities of those they hadn't seen for a year or longer. Vivian Higgins' skillful and detailed coordination of arrangements with Vi Pleasants, Manager of *Anthony's*, La Mesa, and her staff of top-notch chefs, waitresses and assistants truly made our evening run smoothly and deliciously. (My mouth still waters when I think about that succulent fish). The decorations were beautifully arranged and attractive name tags were made by Mabel Perrapato. Reservation details were impeccably handled by Jean Guy and Thelma Todd. The evening's entertainment began with our Master of Ceremonies, Lee Knutson, who got things off on a lively pace. John Jenkins, Rudy Wissler, George Cabezy and Jack Ades, a barbershop quartet from El Cajon sang some old favorites such as "Mandy," and "God Bless America." They were fantastic and it just made you happy watching these guys have so much fun singing. Then came Vivian Higgins and her home-made poem about past La Mesans which brought back a lot of memories for many. One name I remembered fondly was "Champ" - remember him? A portion of a 1934 film of La Mesa Elementary School was viewed which showed some great scenes of the courtyard where a girl's tumbling group performed and folk dancers "did their thing" around the flagpole. Also the WPA was seen building a stone wall around the playground. A lot of memories went flashing by on the screen . . . especially when the film ended with school buses loaded with children rode off into the sunset . . . goodbye, LME. Then came the reminiscences of Jim Polak and Lloyd Donahoo of life in La Mesa during W.W. II, and a certain pinball machine and a judge. Sound confusing? Ask Lloyd and Jim about that if you weren't at the dinner. The evening's festivities concluded with an old-fashioned sing-along led by Lloyd Donahoo with Dorothy Blaha at the piano. She plays for the *Sweet Adelines* and can play almost anything by ear and in any key! Eckoe and John Ahern loaned us their piano which Tom and son, Pat McCarthy, kindly picked up, delivered to *Anthony's* and returned to the Aherns. So, thanks to everyone for a fun evening and a fondly remembered bit of local history.

*Pat Kettler, Program Chairman*

## CHIPS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S WOOD BLOCK

During the last month Certificates of Appreciation were presented to two of our members. *Jack Barnes*, whose advice and expertise in printing was much appreciated in the Society's early years. *Gayle Martin*, former City Manager of La Mesa, received his at a Recognition Dinner in his honor. He and his wife, Jayetta, have been very supportive.

Personal thanks to Vivian, Pat, Mabel, Jean, Thelma and Jane, and all those who contributed their camelias for the Annual Dinner.

**WE NEED** - Two people to serve on the Mailing Committee. This means about two hours each month at Asay's office, to use the Addressograph, sort by zip code, and deliver to La Mesa Post-Office. Could you do that for the Society? Call Woody at 469-9988 or answering machine at 462-9940.

**WE NEED** - More people to serve with the Fund Raising Committee especially to help with the Ice Cream Social - plans are now underway. Call Jean at 466-7385.

**WE NEED** - An old (or old-fashioned) desk and a typewriter (any vintage) for the McKinney House office. We will arrange pick-up. Call Lloyd at 466-0975.

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### GIFT SUGGESTION -

Has a friend done something nice for you? Return their favor by buying him or her a membership in the *Historical Society* as a "thank you" . . .

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### DRAWING FOR "CLASSIC" CHRYSLER TO BE HELD AT ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Jean Guy

The La Mesa Historical Society has been given a wonderful gift by one of our members, Mr. C.D. Mathis. It is a "classic" 1959 Chrysler Imperial, four door sedan, which will be given away at a drawing to be held on Sunday, June 29th at our 5th Annual "Ice Cream Social." Between now and June 29th the sale of tickets for this beautiful prize will be available through members of the Board and at antique car shows throughout the county.

Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc.

SALUDOS AMIGOS!

JOIN US FOR PSRMA'S GRAND RAILROAD EXCURSION TO MEXICO'S  
COPPER CANYON AND CREEL

WHEN: Saturday May 3rd through Friday May 9th, 1980

WHERE: We will ride on chartered Pullman cars in regular service through Mexico's famed Canon del Cobre on the spectacular Chihuahua al Pacifico railroad to the mountain village of Creel, high in the Sierra Madre range of north-western Mexico. We will stay three days in Creel for tours of the canyon area, hiking, horseback riding, fishing or just plain relaxing and taking in the scenery. From the train and in and around Creel we will see the Tarahumara Indians in their homes and villages.

HOW: We will travel to Mexicali by chartered bus. From Mexicali we will have Pullman cars to Sufragio where we will be switched to the Chihuahua al Pacifico Vista Tren for a daylight trip to Creel. We will return the same way. Our excursion will take us over three foreign railroads: the Sonora-Baja, the Pacifico and the Chihuahua al Pacifico, the highlight of our trip. It is one of the most spectacular train rides on the North American continent and one which you will long remember.

HOW MUCH: Cost of the trip will be approximately 275.00 U.S. Included are round-trip bus to and from Mexicali, round trip Pullman with bedroom or roomette and four nights in our motel in Creel. Not included are meals, tours in Creel or gratuities.

RESERVATIONS: Limited to 40 passengers only. PSRMA members will have first choice, but you must reserve early. To hold your place send a deposit of \$150.00 to: Shirley Simpson, 8721 Elden St., La Mesa CA 92041. Please make your check or money order payable to PSRMA.

For further information please call Ann McVeagh, 444-3808 eves or 236-4517 days or Shirley Simpson 463-3791.

Detailed information will be sent to you on receipt of your deposit and we are planning an orientation meeting. We hope you can join us for our Copper Canyon adventure.

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NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Pickup Point  
Santa Fe Stn.

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

6:45 am

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Parkway Plaza

El Cajon

7:15 am

Reservations: \$150.00 each deposit. Balance due April 1st to hold your place.  
No refunds after April 11 unless your seat can be resold.

(This mailing courtesy Lookout Avenue and the La Mesa Historical Society)

## HISTORIC RIVERSIDE TOUR TO BE REPEATED APRIL 12th

Dorothy Griner

To accommodate the many people who were unable to go on its February 2nd bus tour to historic Riverside, the La Mesa Historical Society will repeat this trip on Saturday, April 12th.

The tour will again include visits to Heritage House (1891), a beautifully restored Queen Anne Victorian; the Mission Inn (1902-1931), famous as a resort hotel and cultural center since the turn of the century; and the Riverside Municipal Museum.

The tour of the Mission Inn will be preceded by a buffet luncheon served in the dining room.

The cost of the tour is \$18.00, which includes bus fare, lunch and tour fee at the Mission Inn, and a donation to Heritage House. Departure will be at 7:45 a.m. from the Civic Center in La Mesa, and return by 6:00 p.m. Reservations are limited and should be received by March 29th.

Please make your check payable to the La Mesa Historical Society and send it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

LMHS TOUR, 8671 Tulare St., La Mesa, Ca., 92041. For reservations and information call: Dorothy Griner or Donna Regan at (714) 460-3726.

## ANNUAL "ICE CREAM SOCIAL" SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 29th

Jean Guy

Our 5th Annual "Ice Cream Social" will be held on Sunday, June 29th, at the McKinney House. This date was chosen so it would not conflict with the following long 4th of July weekend. Beside the drawing for our "Classic" Car we will have our delicious Chicken Bar-B-Que Dinner, and Baskin-Robbins famous Ice Cream.

Also on hand will be "The Quilters" with their many beautiful handmade gift items. Once again, the White Elephant Table will "have something for everyone." You will have to come early for our bake sale with loads of homemade goodies.

Our "Florist Shop" with many varieties of both indoor and outdoor plants will be open again this year, so won't you help us by taking cuttings now and donate them to us? Please label them so we know what they are.

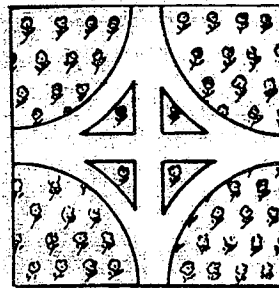
When you do your Spring house cleaning this year save all your goodies for the White Elephant Sale. All items may be left at McKinney House on any Thursday in June from 1 to 4 p.m., as that is the time McKinney House is open to the public and the Docents will be there to accept your donations.

## QUILTING NEWS

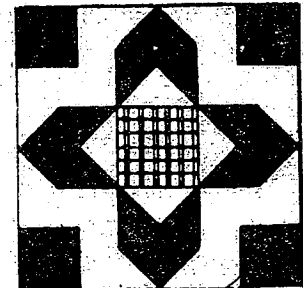
On February 12th, the LMHS Board accepted with regret the resignation of Gail Chance as Quilting Chairman, who resigned because of illness. Here is a note from her:

*"I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the small but dedicated group of women who worked so very hard and diligently this past year. Their hours of labor were fruitful and profitable, and it was a pleasure to work with them. Printing this in the next Newsletter would at least let them know that their very successful fundraising projects are gratefully acknowledged."*

(signed) Gail Chance



COUNTRY CROSSROADS



AUNT SUKEY'S CHOICE

## ATTENTION!!! ATTENTION!!!

Are your Mondays dull and blue? Want something to do? Come to the La Mesa Historical Society Quilters group, starting Monday, March 3rd. All are welcome, beginners and experienced quilters. We need you and your ideas. This is a chance to get out, meet new people and be creative. We quilt and do other hand work.

Last year our group made over \$800 for the Society, by the sale of our items. This year we hope to have some guest speakers come to our meetings occasionally, who will show us their hand work and share their ideas with us. The new co-chairmen are Julie Bras and Nadine Washburn assisted by Mildred Bryan.

WHERE: The McKinney House - 8369 University Avenue, La Mesa.

WHEN: Every Monday, starting March 3rd.

TIME: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

P.S. We'd also welcome your donations, such as cotton blend materials in small prints, lace, seam binding, trim, etc. We would also welcome the loan of a small sewing machine to use in the house.

If you have any questions call: Julie Bras at 698-0833.

We hope to see you there. Bring a friend!

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