

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

LOOKOUT AVE.

VOLUME 6, ISSUE NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER 1982

General Meeting & Pie Festival September 12, 2:00 P.M.

LA MESA SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER, 8450 LA MESA BOULEVARD

Pie lovers, your time has come. This is your opportunity to sample a wide variety of delicious pies provided by you and your friends. Bring your favorite pie and join us for an afternoon of friendship and conversation.



Main Street

The Movie

Our program for the afternoon will be Main Street, a presentation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This lively 29-minute color film is about the downtown revitalization phenomenon in small cities and towns. In hundreds of towns throughout the country, downtown is experiencing a rebirth. Bypassed by an automobile-oriented society, urban renewed for better or for worse, now downtown is emerging from neglect and is increasingly being seen as the asset it always was. People are beginning to work together to capitalize on its strengths.

Filmed in towns from Massachusetts to the Dakotas, Main Street features the merchants and civic leaders who are making downtown succeed. The film is part of the National Trust's program to encourage downtown economic development within the context of historic preservation. It focuses on such issues as: the image of downtown; the hidden profits in downtown's older buildings; public improvements and private action; and the value of personal service. The examples of other cities may provide us with ideas for preservation and revitalization in our own community.



MARIE MAXWELL MCKINNEY

A special event at this year's Ice Cream Social was the commemoration of Marie Maxwell McKinney's 90th birthday. After those present joined in singing Happy Birthday to the accompaniment of the City Guard Band, La Mesa Mayor George Bailey presented Marie with a framed certificate from the City congratulating her on her birthday. Marie, one of La Mesa's pioneer residents, is the widow of Henry Cromwell McKinney, the eldest of Henry and Florence McKinney's three sons.

Marie McKinney was born on June 19, 1892, in Ohio and came to the Logan Heights area of San Diego in 1903 with her parents, William and Eva Maxwell, and her brother, Leonard. Her father became a salesman for the Park-Grable Investment Company and in June, 1906, the family moved to La Mesa. Marie still remembers getting off the noon train at the little red station and being surprised at how small La Mesa was.

Marie attended the one-room Allison School, graduating in 1908. Some of the students coming home from San Diego High School on the train would stop by Allison School to see old friends, and it was here that Marie first saw Cromwell McKinney.

Following her graduation from San Diego High School in 1912, Marie taught school for the Nazarene Church in San Diego until her marriage. By 1915 her parents had opened a restaurant in La Mesa and Marie worked there on weekends, serving 35¢ meals and the 50¢ chicken dinners on Sundays. The Maxwells went into the furniture business in the 1920's, opening the Braque Shop and then building Maxwell's Furniture Store on La Mesa Boulevard, which Leonard Maxwell operated until 1969.

Marie and Cromwell McKinney were married in September, 1915 and left La Mesa to attend the Bible Institute of Los Angeles to prepare for missionary work. Two years later they joined the Bolivian Indian Mission, serving in villages in the Bolivian back country. Here their three children were born: Marjory in 1919, Florence in 1921, and Robert in 1925.

For approximately ten months in 1922 and 1923 Marie, Cromwell and their two daughters

visited La Mesa, living at the McKinney House in the new apartment that had been created by the addition of the kitchenette to the downstairs bedroom. Marjory and Florence played in the swing that hung in the back grape arbor.

From about 1926 to 1928, Marie and her family lived in Cristobal, Panama, where Cromwell worked as a translator for the American Bible Society.

In 1929 Marie and Cromwell brought their family back to La Mesa to stay, and in 1936 built a house on the Palm Avenue lot originally purchased by Cromwell around 1909. Both taught adult school, and Cromwell later worked for the County Welfare Department, retiring only 16 months before his death in 1960. Marie began teaching under a special credential and then went back to college when she was a grandmother, graduating in 1949. After getting her regular credential she taught San Diego Evening High School classes until she retired in 1957.

Marie still lives in her house on Palm Avenue, and remains actively interested in the past but involved in the present. She is a member of the United Methodist Church, which she joined in 1906. This year she was present at the 100th anniversary of San Diego High School and saw other members of the class of 1912, and each month she meets with the Schoolmates Club, a group whose original members attended elementary school with Marie in Logan Heights. The group now also includes the children of the original members.

- Donna Regan

Sources: Oral interview with Marie McKinney 11/30/1978; additional interview 8/29/82.



THE QUILTING BEES

Wednesday is quilting day at Thelma's historic house. She's up early because some ladies come at nine; others, not till ten. They work at the big frame Mr. Swearengin made. It lives on the glassed in front porch where on dark days the porch vines filter the outside light greenly. Then the floor lamp is brought out and placed just so to keep its shine from anyone's eyes.

Four work on each side of the frame, though sometimes Julie sits apart and sews on the baby quilt. Not everyone comes each week. Bea wandered Europe for two months. Margaret and Nadine were homebound with broken bones. Mildred went to a silver wedding. Jane and Ethel had company.

Carol fills in during the summer days, temporarily freed from teaching.

Champ's mother made this quilt top. It must be forty years old - quaint cotton prints, no polyesters. A book says the pattern is "Goose in the Pond." But it's strictly geometry, triangles and rectangles.

Talk flows as the needles go in and out. Old times, old happenings, the morning's newest horrors, the future's promises.

Thelma calls. The coffee is cooling in the kitchen. Come and have a cup, and a cookie too, or some avocado bread.

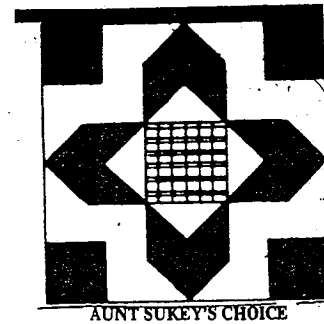
Now there's nothing left to stitch where anyone can reach. Take out the pins and the bastings at the frame's ends. Loosen the big cog, twist the poles till virgin territory appears on both sides, then do everything up again.

Pass the thread. Pass the scissors. Pass the stories around.

The morning's passed. Cover the goose, the pond, the needles, the thread with the ancient bedspread to keep out the dust, and maybe even some honey, if the bees that live in the porch's perimeters should move overhead.

Goodbye. Thanks for the coffee. Goodbye, goodbye. Goodbye till Wednesday, quilting day again.

-Jane Field



Note: The LMHS Quilters were formed to practice a traditional craft and to raise money for the Historical Society. Their efforts have been very successful. The Quilters meet on Wednesday mornings from 10 to 12. For further information call Julie Bras, chairman, at 698-0833.



This year the annual yard sale will be held at the McKinney House on Saturday, October 23, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. We will accept any donations including clothing if it is CLEAN and in GOOD CONDITION. Donations may be left on the back porch of the McKinney House

Refreshments will be sold at the event so contributions of baked goods would also be appreciated.

Last year the yard sale made a net profit of \$371, and with your help we can do better this year.

For further information, please call 460-3726 or 463-0197.

THE ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Building on past successes, our Ice Cream Social gets bigger and better each year.

This year we enjoyed potato salad, chili, pie, Swensen's ice cream and Vern Kettler's barbequed chicken as we commemorated the 70th anniversary of La Mesa's incorporation in 1912. The mood was set by the San Diego City Guard Band, part of the Heritage Band Society, as it played marches and airs appropriate to the period. The La Mesa of 70 years ago was presented in an exhibit of photos, La Mesa Scout articles, and records of early businesses. Also displayed were women's summer dresses dating from 1909 to 1912.

We shared in the celebration of Marie Maxwell McKinney's 90th birthday as Mayor George Bailey presented her with a commendation.

Once again the Bake Sale, White Elephants, Plant Sale and Quilters table drew many customers. The Marie Callender pies donated by Lloyd Kitzman disappeared as fast as they arrived. Buyers gathered at the White Elephant tables before the Social had officially begun.

The Social ended at 4:00 P.M. with the drawing of the winning tickets in the raffle. The first prize, the Flower Pot quilt made by the La Mesa Historical Society Quilters, was won by Helen Beamish. The second prize oil painting donated by artist Betty Meyer was won by Betty Ketelsen.

The Ice Cream Social is a success each year because of the contributions of time and effort by many dedicated members of the Society.

Receipts

White Elephants	\$ 412.67
Baked Goods	310.70
Plants	126.80
Food	753.05
Ice Cream	262.23
Quilters	195.44
Quilt Drawing	643.00
Donations	65.00
Sales	8.80
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Expenses

Ice Cream	\$ 114.71
Price Club	93.58
A Rental World	77.17
City Guard Band	75.00
Chicken	101.25
Food Basket	97.51
Longs Drugs	9.03
Smart & Final	16.90
La Mesa Blueprint	3.53
Wrights Party Supply	15.90
Knudsen Food Products	65.88
Printing	42.47
Mailing	30.56
Fed Mart	4.71
Tarp	15.88
Fabric Land	9.38
<hr/>	
	-\$ 773.46

Net \$2004.23

-Dorothy Griner

RENEWAL REMINDER

Our membership year extends from July 1 through June 30, and dues for the 1982-1983 year are now payable. If you have not sent in your renewal, please do so at this time.

The La Mesa Historical Society depends upon membership dues, contributions, bequests, and fund raising activities to support restoration and preservation programs. Memberships and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Membership Categories:

- _____ Life \$100
- _____ Patron \$25
- _____ Sponsor/Organization \$15
- _____ Family (2 adults) \$12
- _____ Individual \$7
- _____ Student (under 18 years) \$1

Make your check or money order payable to: LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and mail to: La Mesa Historical Society, P.O. Box 888 La Mesa, CA 92041

FOUNDER OF SCOUT PAYS LA MESA VISIT

Wiley Magruder, who founded the La Mesa Scout in 1907, had occasion recently to visit his old home town of La Mesa. Magruder is now editor of the Roseville Tribune of Roseville, Calif., the railroad center metropolis of Placer county, 18 miles north of Sacramento, and he writes the following account of his visit in a personal column which he conducts in his paper:

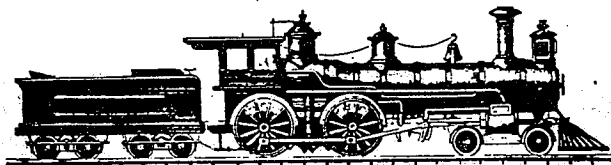
There are many interesting things to see when one returns after long years to the scene of his childhood. There are some things that are sad too.

At San Diego the other day a friend said he would take us to his house at La Mesa and permit us to sleep within a stone's throw of the scene of many boyish memories. We drove with him out a strange Fifth St., traveled an unfamiliar University Ave. and a transformed El Cajon Blvd. "Turn here," he directed presently. "We're within three blocks of the place." "There's a catch to this," we remarked. "You do not live anywhere near La Mesa, because we haven't rounded Fellow's Hill yet." "There is no more Fellow's Hill," he said. "The road goes straight through it, and we passed it several minutes ago."

In the morning we rose early and searched the landscape for the sage covered mesas once so familiar. There were none in the vicinity. Instead, there was a bewildering expanse of graded streets, service stations and well ordered homes. Even the citrus groves that once sprinkled the hill-sides had given way to the new order. One old house on a knoll stood out. There was about it a familiar appearance, and we said: "Could that be the Hibson place?" Our friend answered that it was. "Why, we lived across the road from that house," we exclaimed. "We walked to school over this road and we roamed the sagebrush mesa on which all these homes now stand." We went up to the old place and inspected it, identifying it positively. Though painted and whitewashed it was patched and old. The shrubs that once decorated the yard were dead or dying. It was Mr. Hibson, we recalled who owned the greyhound "Bump" and drove a team of perfectly groomed blacks. He was especially proud of his citrus grove. Now Mr. Hibson was gone, and so was

his sister who lived with him. The 5 greyhound "Bump" was not there, nor the team of blacks. All that was left of the lemon grove was the old hillside, checkered with dead or dying stumps. We moved across the road, and there was no house where we used to live. All that remained was a few hardy eucalyptus trees and a century plant or two. Even the barn that used to stand a distance away from the house had disappeared and the citrus grove that once set off that slope of the knoll was gone too. We looked back over the mesa, remembering it as it was - sagebrush waste, scorned as good for nothing. A thriving city had seized upon it and engulfed it. The ugly duckling had come into its own.

-from the La Mesa Scout
Aug. 28, 1931, page 1



LA MESA CANNONBALL II

The La Mesa Cannonball is scheduled to run again on Saturday, October 3 during the Oktoberfest. Cannonball I, which ran last May 23rd, was the first passenger train through Lemon Grove, La Mesa and El Cajon in 54 years.

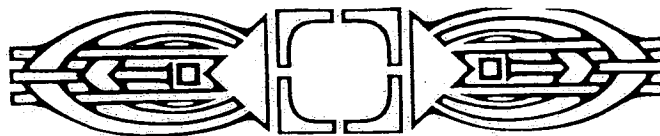
There are also plans to have the Shay logging locomotive under steam and running back and forth on the siding. For those who have children or grandchildren who have never seen a steam engine in operation, this is an excellent opportunity. All plans at this point are tentative. For further information contact Eric Sanders, 469-1288.

-Eric Sanders

LA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT
Statement of Receipts and Disbursements July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1982

	<u>7/1/81-6/30/82</u>	<u>1981-82 Budget</u>
Cash balance, beginning of period	\$1,468	
<u>Receipts</u>		
1. Membership Dues	1,075	\$2,500
2. Fund Raising	830	1,300
3. Ice cream Social	1,239*	1,200
4. Quilters	1,307	1,200
5. Yard Sale	396	250
6. Tours	34	300
7. Directory	280	250
8. Dinner Theatre	40	
9. Restricted Fund	336	
9a. Donations	2,605	
Total Receipts	<u>8,142</u>	<u>\$7,000</u>
<u>Disbursements</u>		
10. Mortgage Pay (J.M.)	1,698	\$1,440
11. Mortgage Pay (D.M.)	1,013	1,596
12. Mortgage Pay (M.M.)	270	
13. Postage	298	250
14. Supplies & Misc.	409	400
15. Museum Restoration	620	400
16. Insurance	595	625
17. Preservation Photos	507	200
18. Preservation of Collection		50
22. Newsletter	543	400
23. Oral History		50
24. Yard Maintenance	67	200
25. Contingency		189
27. Quilters	235	300
28. Utilities	699	900
Total Disbursements	<u>6,954</u>	<u>\$7,000</u>
Cash balance, end of period	<u>2,656</u>	

* The total net receipts for the Social were \$2004, which included \$643 raised on the raffle of the quilt. The raffle profit is part of the total receipts shown for the Quilters.



Statement of Financial Position June 30, 1982

Assets

Cash in Bank - Unrestricted	2,320	
- Restricted	<u>336</u>	2,656
- Savings		
Membership	1,437.50	
Wilken Memorial	<u>466.50</u>	1,904
Museum Building		59,333
Certificate of Deposit (reserved for publication of histories)		2,035
Organization Costs		<u>63</u>
Total Assets		<u>65,991</u>

Liabilities

Mortgage Payable-first	22,127
Mortgage Payable-second	<u>7,790</u>
Total Liabilities	29,917

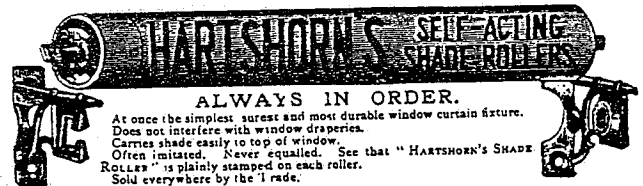
Equity

Restricted	\$ 2,820	
Unrestricted	<u>33,254</u>	<u>36,074</u>

RESTORATION NEWS -
SHADES, CURTAINS, AND LEMON TREES

Our principal restoration goal this year is to purchase window shades and curtains for the McKinney House. We had hoped to have acquired them before now, but in the past it has been necessary to spend the restoration budget on the house itself rather than on furnishings.

Window shades were used at the McKinney House throughout its history and were typical of our period of restoration. They will not only be an appropriate furnishing, but will help to protect the interior from the heat and ultra violet light of sunlight. To have cloth window shades made for the house will not be inexpensive, however; the cost has been estimated at from \$20.00 to \$30.00 per window. This project offers an opportunity for members to make a donation for a specific purpose: pick your window and contribute the purchase price for one shade. Smaller amounts may of course be



STEWART HARTSHORN,
FACTORY, E. NEWARK, N. J. 486 Broadway, New York City.

Life, December 1885

Those who attended the Ice Cream Social or who have visited the McKinney House have seen three small Eureka lemon trees along the fence at the southern end of the property. When the McKinneys bought their 2½ acres in 1908, the land was planted as a lemon grove and lemon ranching was the major industry in the area. The Eureka, which has long been the principal commercial variety, was developed in Los Angeles in 1872, according to Edward Wickson's California Fruits (1891 edition.) These three trees were donated to the Society in April by Moennig's Nursery of La Mesa.

LA MESA DEPOT MUSEUM

La Mesa's Chamber of Commerce is promoting a "Railroad Park" alongside the SD&AE railroad track in the downtown area. The intent is to attract some of San Diego's conventioners and tourists. The plan would include the following elements: two railroad cars leased from PSRMA (a remodeled diner and a club car) and a museum building to house a model railroad and PSRMA and La Mesa Historical Society exhibits. The Chamber of Commerce would operate the two-car dining and club car facility, offering a catering service for convention groups.

Add to the above an improving downtown area, the La Mesa Springs Shopping Center, the second phase redevelopment facilities and, of course, the La Mesa Depot Museum.

The two railroad cars would be those presently located respectively at the National City depot and in Escondido's Grape Day Park.

The project is still in the proposal stage although the City of La Mesa has financed the move of the National City car to La Mesa.

Since June 1, the La Mesa Depot Museum has hosted student groups from Fuerte School, El Cajon; Loma School, Spring Valley; La Mesa Dale School, La Mesa; La Mesa Village Children's Center,

two groups from La Mesa Parks & Recreation day care program and a La Mesa Cub Scout pack. Slide programs have been presented at the La Mesa Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis. An exhibit was in place at La Mesa's 70th Anniversary Picnic at La Mesita Park.

Additional member help is needed for staffing, display preparation, managerial tasks, maintenance and custodial work. Will you volunteer? Call Trig Stanley, 444-1648; Eric Sanders, 469-1288

-Trig Stanley and Eric Sanders

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