

Fairview Register

Monthly publication of the Costa Mesa Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3)

MEMBER: CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY



VOL. 48 NO. 4 • APRIL 2018

Phone: 949-631-5918 Mail: P.O. Box 1764, Costa Mesa, CA 92628 Web: costamesahistory.org Email: cmhistory@sbcglobal.net



Going, Going, GONE!

By Art Goddard

Changes are coming to the west side of the Costa Mesa Historical Society building. In the middle of February, the west yard was stripped of its trees and turf to make way for a stormwater reservoir and parking lot in connection with the new public library and community center projects at Lions Park. Although we are sorry to see the trees go, the society still has eleven mature trees on its east and north sides. Another “benefit” of the tree removal is better visibility of our signage from Anaheim Avenue. Stay tuned for further progress reports.

The Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum as seen from Anaheim Avenue on three separate days.



Vintage, Not Rummage

By Art Goddard

If you were one of the several dozen smart shoppers who visited the Costa Mesa Historical Society on Sunday, February 18, you know the difference between “vintage” and “rummage”. Everything from school yearbooks to picture frames, small furniture pieces to historic bric-a-brac was available at reasonable prices. The sale of these collectible items not only generates cash for your society, but also frees up storage space at the society building. OK, you’re a smart shopper



Smart shoppers at the Costa Mesa Historical Society's “Vintage Sale” on February 18.

but missed the sale. No worries — get yourself down to the society museum ASAP to see what’s left to buy. Last call!



Sunday Speaker Program April 15, 2018

Award-winning journalist Chris Epting will join us to discuss the “1903 camping trip that changed America.”

The campers in question were none other than John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt, and their fateful trip shaped the destiny of both



Yosemite and the National Park System. Epting's presentation will include little known stories, never before seen images, and the only known footage from Roosevelt's trip to the West. Copies of Epting's best-selling book, *Teddy Roosevelt in America*, upon which the talk is based, will be available for purchase and signing.

(Please note: the Anaheim entrance to the Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum will be closed due to construction. Please use the entrance on Park Avenue.)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The College Center Office Building
Society Bookshelf: Ralph Welsh's *Wow!*
This Month in Costa Mesa History

Promoting and preserving Costa Mesa's history is our mission

FAIRVIEW REGISTER, FAIRVIEW, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 2, 1889

5 FACTS ABOUT THE COLLEGE CENTER OFFICE BUILDING



College Center is a \$2 million shopping complex that first opened in 1965 on the corner of Harbor and Adams near OCC. It is perhaps best known as the site of the West Coast's first Howard Johnson's Restaurant (later a Ground Round and now Coco's) and as Pier 1 Imports' home for the past 49 years. Less noticed is the College Center Office Building (AKA San Joaquin Office Building or Harbor Plaza) which is interesting in its own right.

It was Costa Mesa's first commercial high-rise.

One could quibble with the definition of "high rise," as the papers of the time labelled it, but there's no question that the building, promoted as "ultramodern in design, architecture and construction," marked a dramatic break in Costa Mesa architecture. The 3-story air-conditioned office building boasted "30 large office suites designed to fit your needs."

It was designed by a world-renowned architect whose work helped shape the Southland.

This building is just one of the countless offices designed by Ernest C. Wilson, the man said to have designed more office buildings in Orange County than any other architect. Wilson worked with partner Robert Langdon for 41 years as Langdon Wilson, designing iconic structures across the region, including the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades, the Nixon Library, the Orange County Museum of Art, the Irvine Spectrum, the Koll Center in Irvine, and the Bank of America Building in Beverly Hills.

It was once clad in Italian marble.

The building featured green Cipollino marble called Verde Scuro and Verde Chiaro, a variety favored by ancient Greeks and Romans. It was imported from the Cardosa Valley in the Apuan Alps, just a few miles from Michelangelo's quarry in Monte Altissimo.

It was originally landscaped with a palm tree donated by a Juaneño (Acjachemen) chief.

When fronds from Clarence Lobo's 17-year-old palm began disrupting the Santa Fe Railroad's signal wires, the railroad threatened to chop it down. So Lobo offered it to anyone who would take it away. The College Center owners agreed, carting the 50-foot palm 25 miles to their new building. Lobo is better known as an activist for indigenous peoples. The Clarence Lobo Elementary School in San Clemente is the first school in California named after a Native American.

It was opened by a real estate supergroup.

College Center was the first project opened by San Joaquin Associates, founded by M. Keith Gaede with partners William Ring, Michael Schlossman, and Richard H. Dodd.

Gaede's résumé defies summary. Besides founding the San Joaquin Associates, he served on the boards of the Irvine Company, the Irvine Industrial Complex, Children's Hospital of Orange County, Chapman College, and the Santa Ana Boys Club, among others, and also served on the Commission of the Californias, the Republican State Central Committee, and the Governor's Citizen's Advisory Commission. In 1970 he was honored with the Torch of Hope award "in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Orange County, to his state, and his devotion to the humanitarian precepts and scientific ideals of the City of Hope, a pilot medical center." The award was presented by F. Donald Nixon, the president's brother, with congratulatory messages from Ronald Reagan and President Nixon himself. Gaede, with then wife Linda Irvine, was among the last Irvine Company board members with connections to the family.

William Ring, president and owner of Harbor Realty, developed the Irvine Country Club and co-developed the Dover Shores, East Bluff, and Irvine Terrace housing communities. Among other honors, in 2004 he was awarded the "Citizen of the Year" award by the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce.

Richard H. Dodd, AIA, is an award-winning architect and writer who has practiced in Orange County for over 50 years. Dodd specializes in residential architecture, but also designed the building at 1617 Westcliff, now home to Cafe Gratitude, and oversaw the construction of the Howard Johnson's at College Center. He is the author of *Architectural Styles: Orange County* and historical society members will remember his talk from 2012, "Traveling the El Camino Real." ■

Society Bookshelf: *Wow!* by Ralph Welsh

SAAAB graduate Ralph Welsh (1943) has compiled 150 vignettes in *Wow!*, an anthology depicting the trials, triumphs, and daily lives of B-24 bomber pilots during World War II. Third-hand reports and interviews provide context, but the beating heart of the book is found in the vivid recollections of the pilots themselves. Highlights include the author's original diary of his 33 missions over France and Germany in 1944, the lively account of a downed

pilot who managed to escape from behind enemy lines not just once, but twice, and a talk between Albert Speer, the Nazi minister in charge of producing armaments, and Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker and Arthur G.B. Metcalf, the men whose job it was to destroy them. Both WWII buffs and casual readers will find something of interest here. *Wow!* is also available as a two volume set, *Bombs Away!*, and is on hand at the Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum. ■

THIS MONTH IN COSTA MESA HISTORY

1888 The Fairview Hotel, "first class in all its appointments," with "good table, good rooms, and reasonable rates," opens near today's Harbor and Adams.

1889 Margaret Jeannette is born to George and Susan Catts on April 12, the first birth in what is now Costa Mesa. In October her family moves to Stockton, where her father, former secretary of the Fairview Company, opens the Lauxen and Catts furniture store, serves as mayor, and presides at the inauguration of the San Joaquin Pioneer and Historical Society. But what happened to Margaret?

1903 The Fairview Post Office is deactivated, signaling the end of the boomtown.



1923 The Friday Afternoon Clubhouse is dedicated on April 17. The building, later a bicycle shop, stands at 1747 Newport. The civic organization changes its name to the Costa Mesa Women's Club in 1962.

1943 The Student Officer School opens at SAAAB on April 12. The school offers pre-flight training to officers transferring from other branches of the military.

1955 The Rheem Dream Home contest saturates the media, drawing widespread attention to Costa Mesa real estate. The prize for submitting the winning name for the house is the \$20,000 dream home itself. The house stands on the southwest corner of Cabrillo and Irvine.

1966 McDonalds first opens in Costa Mesa.

1968 The Harbor to Jamboree segment of the San Diego freeway opens April 17, joining the Beach to Harbor segment that opened 16 months earlier. This completes construction of the Costa Mesa portion of the 12-year project, which fully opens the following year.

1973 A Holiday Inn opens at 3131 Bristol Street, near South Coast Plaza. The complex is later re-branded as a Crowne Plaza Hotel.



Shop with us on Amazon

Every time you start your order with Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate to the Costa Mesa Historical Society. Visit smileamazon.com before making your next purchase, being sure to check "charitable organization" and selecting the Costa Mesa Historical Society when prompted. You can use your existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile.

New Business Membership Level

For the first time, memberships for the life of a business are available for \$1,000. If you care about local history, this is a great way to show your support. To join, please fill out the membership form on the back of this newsletter or call us at 949-631-5918. Together we can preserve the history of our community.

Dues Overdue?

Your dues provide **essential support** for the society's major programs and projects. Make sure you're up to date by looking at your **dues expiration date** on the address label to the right of your name. If your dues are due, send us a check, c/o Susan Weeks, Treasurer. Or drop it off on a Thursday or Friday from 10am to 3pm. Membership dues are listed on the back page.

Make a Difference – Volunteer

Help the society meet essential needs while meeting others who share your love of Costa Mesa history. We're looking for a volunteer to **set up refreshments** at our monthly programs as well as members to sit on two new committees: the **Newsletter Assembly Committee** prepares the newsletter for mailing, while the **Adobe Committee** recruits volunteers to plan an event, become a docent, or work on exhibits. Committees meet monthly and are chaired by board members. Interested? Call us at 949-631-5918. Isn't it more fun to work as a team?

Temporary Parking Instructions

For the next two months, please enter the parking lot serving our society, the Donald Dungan Library and the Recreation Center by entering from Park Avenue only, not Anaheim. The Anaheim entrance is completely blocked off.

Visit Us

Diego Sepulveda Adobe

1900 Adams Ave. • Open 12-4 p.m. the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month or by appointment.

Costa Mesa's oldest building presents 200 years of OC history from its beautiful setting in Estancia Park, overlooking the Santa Ana River bed.

Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum

1870 Anaheim Ave. • Open 10am-3pm Thursdays and Fridays or by appointment.

The museum and society headquarters displays a mind-boggling array of artifacts from nearly 5,000 years of Costa Mesa history – from the first peoples to the City of the Arts.

Share Your Story

History is made by people like you. We'd love to hear your Costa Mesa stories. Many changes have taken place and we want to hear from those who lived through them. Write the memories yourself or come to the museum and we'll transcribe them for you. It's that simple!

Thank You, Copy 4 Less NB

Our printer discounts our costs throughout the year. Thank you so much for this, **Copy 4 Less NB** – we really appreciate it! Visit Copy 4 Less at 4360 Campus Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660 near the John Wayne Airport or call (949) 252-8960.

ROBERTO'S AUTO TRIM

In Costa Mesa Since 1964

Raul Jara

ralndb@earthlink.net

2033 Harbor Blvd. Costa Mesa, CA 92627

949.642.8113

Fax 949.642.7150

Alan Kumura

Independent Owner/Operator

Grocery Outlet • Bargain Market

COSTA MESA GROCERY OUTLET

1835 Newport Blvd, #C140 Costa Mesa, CA 92627 (949)

642-5800 Office • (949) 642-5803 Fax

costamesa@groceryoutlet.com • groceryoutlet.com

[facebook.com/CostaMesaGroceryOutlet](https://www.facebook.com/CostaMesaGroceryOutlet)

COSTA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1764
COSTA MESA, CA 92628
Phone (949) 631-5918

NON PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SANTA ANA, CA
PERMIT NO. 4352

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

**Costa Mesa Historical Society
P.O. Box 1764
Costa Mesa, CA 92628**

— *Membership Form* —

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Membership Categories

Annual		Lifetime	
Individual	\$20.00	Individual Life Member	\$500.00
Individual Senior (60+)	\$15.00	Business Life Member	\$1,000.00
Family	\$25.00		
Student (under 16)	\$10.00		
Contributing	\$50.00	Special	
Business and Professional	\$100.00	SAAAB Wing Annual Member	\$10.00
Public Agency	\$100.00		
Benefactor	\$250.00		

Make your checks payable to the Costa Mesa Historical Society.
The Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, operates under the Corporation Laws of the State of California.