



President's Report

Carol Libby

March 2008

The Conference of California Historical Societies' (CCHS) Annual Winter Symposium was held in Arcadia from February 14 to 17 with over 110 participants involved in the weekend activities. From all indications and responses, we hosted a successful symposium. Don Swenson and Vince Foley were our guest speakers. Don spoke on Henry E. Huntington and Vince on the films made at the Arboretum.

Both were highly rated for their presentations. Most of our attendees were from out-of-town; mainly from Central and Northern California. Our history and visitor attractions were new to many; our museum and its postcard display were of particular interest. Thank you Hwee-Ching and Dana for making the display come alive at the right time.

An enormous amount of planning went into the preparation for the Symposium and the team of assistants included Mickey Ball, Jaye Caldwell, Winnie Wong Christine, Ruth Dunlop, Nettie Frias, Gene Glasco, Scott Hettrick, Jack McCrea, Virginia Moseley, Roberta Ramsell, Lee Segal, Lindsey Sun, Sherry Wang, Al and Lori Bippert, as well as Hwee-Ching, Dana and our past curator, Alycia Wood. Janet Sporleder and her staff from the Library led an informational panel and tour of the library. Floretta Lauber and Dorothy Cunningham gave the event good coverage as did Scott Hettrick. With a team behind you, as was the case here, the Kudos belonged to everyone.

Outside help came from Donna Crippen, El Monte Historical Museum's curator; Pete Siberell, from Santa Anita Park, Dr. Mark K. Wourms, Tim Phillips, Eric Foemmel, Margaret Page and Lauragene Swenson and Sandy Snider from the Arboretum. Volunteers from the Arcadia Recreation Department assisted with serving dinners as did our own team of museum teen volunteers. Caterers Chef Dave, Matt McSweeney and the Peacock Café provided wonderful meals for our delegates.

My thanks to every one for a job well done.

Carol



Carol Libby gave the Secretary of the CCHS, Margarita Noyola, a tour of the Arcadia Historical Museum



Friday, February 15, 2008 Symposium dinner at the Arcadia Woman's Club

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Pictures from the Winter Symposium of the Conference of California Historical Societies. The Arcadia Historical Society hosted this annual event February 14-17, 2008



Don Swenson was our guest Speaker on Friday night at the Arcadia Woman's Club.



Saturday's dinner at the Arcadia Community Center



Guest Speaker Vince Foley spoke on "Filming at the Arboretum" on Saturday night



On Friday, Symposium attendees toured the El Monte Historical Museum



Saturday's tour included an inside look at the Arboretum's Queen Anne Cottage



Friday's Symposium registration at the Arcadia Historical Museum

Board of Directors

- Carol Libby—President
- Sherry Wang—Treasurer
- Lee Segal— Programs
- Scott Hettrick—Historical Marker Chair
- Gary Kovacic—Historical Marker Committee
- Jack McCrea—Caminos Editor
- Ruth Dunlop—Recording Secretary
- Winnie Wong Christine- Programs
- Gene Glasco- Membership
- Mickey Wagner Goland— Corresponding Secretary

Museum Exhibitions and Programs

Our next **General Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. in the Community Center. Don Swenson will speak on "Henry E. Huntington". Our next **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for May 18, 2008 in the Community Center. The *Friends* will present *Fashions from Broadway Shows*.

Now through May 31, 2008—**Arcadia Snapshots Exhibition**. Photographs from 1900 to present allows visitors to reminisce about Arcadia over the last century.

Adult Learning Series—Brown Bag Lunch Talks. Bring your own lunch or enjoy pizza (first come first serve). March 20 - Mary Beth Hayes - "*Preserving your Family Documents*," April 17 - Arly Barton - "*Carl's Sweet Corn*," May 15 - Carol Libby - "*Arcadia: Fact or Fiction*." Please call for reservations and program information (626 574-5468). Noon to 12:30 pm.

Family Fun Days—March 15 - Third Annual Egg Decorating at the Museum. Be inspired by the museum's Hazel Williams collection of decorative eggs from around the world and create your very own egg. April 26 - "*Celebrate Our Beautiful Earth*" in commemoration of Earth Day. May 17 - May is Asian Pacific Heritage Month and we'll be looking at Asian culture and inventions with "*Asian Creations and Fun*," June 21 - "*Hot Fun in the Summertime*" - Summer Solstice Faire.

In Brief

Did you notice our new logo on page one in the upper left hand corner??

Arcadia's Woman's Club: The Early Years

Part 1 - 1914-1931

by Jack McCrea

In 1912 the first promotional organization to appear in Arcadia was a woman's club called the Cooperative Arcadians. This group of approximately 15 women began by sponsoring programs that increased interest in matters of social enjoyment, civic improvement and good works in the community. After several years the Cooperative Arcadians went out of existence, but it was these women that have been identified as the foundation of the Arcadia Woman's Club.



Arcadia Woman's Club - 2008

In May 1914, Alice Billings invited several women to her home on South Santa Anita Drive for the express purpose of organizing a woman's club. After discussion the proposal for an Arcadia Woman's Club was approved and 12 names were placed on the roster as charter members. Many of the husbands of these women, including Alice Billings, were closely connected with Arcadia's municipal affairs. Dues were set at 25 cents a month and Alice Billings was elected as their first President. Interestingly, Anita Baldwin was given an honorary membership for her efforts on behalf of the welfare of military personnel in Arcadia at the Army's Ross Field Balloon School.

One of the organizations first efforts to promote Arcadia was to enter a float in the Tournament of Roses Parade. In his book, *Arcadia - City of the Santa Anita*, Gordon Eberly relates the story of how the new Club approached the Arcadia City Council and requested \$200 to cover the cost of the float. Their request was approved, but Anita Baldwin also offered to fund the construction of the float. Her offer was accepted and the City Council's money was set aside for the float in the following year. Anita Baldwin's impact in financing floats in the Rose Parade was notable in 1914, when she entered a float with a huge white peacock mounted in an oak tree. Some have said it was the most beautiful float in the first 25 years of the parade.

The library was also one of the organization's early civic projects. Mrs. Billings wished to establish a library in Arcadia and approached the County of Los Angeles library officials about establishing a branch library in Arcadia. The county approved the proposal and the new library opened in a small building at the south east corner of First Avenue and Indiana (Wheeler) Street. The post office was located in the same building. The Arcadia City Council paid the rental fee of \$10 a month. Gladys Roth was selected as the first librarian. When the library outgrew this location, it moved into the McCoy Building on the south east corner of First Avenue and St. Joseph Street. The library's expenses, including housing, buying new books and hiring the librarian were paid by the Woman's Club. Olive Palmer also served as the librarian in the early years. To better serve the students of Arcadia the library hours were set from 3:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.

In 1920 the Arcadia City Council placed a proposition on the ballot to establish its own city library. The

ballot measure passed and the library was given a small room in the new city hall. Arcadia's first city librarian was Mrs. George Grimes. In 1924 the library moved again to a small house adjacent to the city hall and fire department. This older building had several small rooms and a bath room, but no funds were available to modernize the building. Gordon Eberly notes in his book on Arcadia that since the fire department had no bathing facilities the firemen would sometimes drop into the library "...to have a good bath." In 1930 the City constructed a new library at 25 North First Avenue.

When the United States entered World War I, the Woman's Club became involved in the war effort. Red Cross supplies were obtained from Los Angeles and used for the soldiers stationed at the Balloon School at Ross Field. In one of the buildings at Ross Field a canteen was set up and dances were occasionally held at City Hall. Interestingly, it was the women from the Woman's Club who selected the dancing partners for the young men. Frequently, box suppers, coffee and other foods were served to the soldiers and their partners. The government may have furnished the money for these events, but it was the women who did all the work. There was no U.S.O. (United Services Organization) during the First World War, but during World War II it was the Woman's Club that housed the organization in Arcadia.

Woman's Club To Give Garden Fete In Nock Garden

Mrs. Wood Glover, chairman for the Arcadia Woman's club garden party to be given June 29 in the beautiful gardens of the Samuel J. Nock home, 240 West Foothill boulevard, announces that many reservations are being taken. Guests are expected from Los Angeles, San Gabriel, Pasadena and Monrovia.

A delicious dessert luncheon will be served at 1 p. m. at small tables which will dot the beautiful grounds. An informal afternoon is being planned and there will be games or bridge for those who care to play, or visiting under the oak trees for those who wish to chat.

A highlight of the afternoon will be the reading of handwriting by Mrs. Maddux of Arcadia, an expert who has entertained at many benefit parties.

This gala garden fete will be the first of three in a series to be given during the summer by Mrs. Glover, ways and means chairman of the club. At the final party, a beautiful hand-made banquet cloth with 12 napkins will be awarded to the lucky winners. Ladies are reminded to save their ticket stubs from each party.

For reservations call Mrs. Glover, DOuglas 7-1368; or Mrs. Harlan Lindell, DOuglas 7-1729.

June 1949

This Arcadia Woman's Club "garden party" was given on June 29, 1949 at the home of Samuel Nock on Foothill Blvd in Arcadia. The luncheon was served at small tables with many club members staying on for afternoon bridge. Guests came from many surrounding communities. A hand writing expert, Mrs. Maddux, was kept busy and Helen Philo played her accordion throughout the affair.



Nock Gardens

Major Sources: Meade and Ganther, *Thirty Nine Years of Progress- The Woman's Club of Arcadia*; Eberly, *Arcadia- City on the Santa Anita*; McAdam and Snider, *Arcadia- Where Ranch and City Meet*; Hendrickson, *The Tournament of Roses*; Kovacic, *Visions of Arcadia*; Internet.

Curator's Report—Dana Dunn



It has been a joy coming to work every day and engaging with the exceptional group of members that we have here in the Arcadia Historical Society. I've enjoyed hearing your stories and getting to know you better. Please...keep the stories coming! I'm looking forward to a bright future here with you as we work together with ideas, hard work and your vast knowledge of the history of Arcadia to create some new and wonderful exhibits and programs.

I've been enjoying planning future exhibits and programs for the year 2008. On June 6th the Arcadia High School honors history class, led by Oliver Beckwith, will be installing an exhibit on the oral histories they will be conducting with local Veterans. On June 7th we will be dedicating the new Arcadia Veterans Local History Room. I hope you will be able to attend this opening which will feature local Veterans as speakers. We will also be adding to our oral history collection by working on taped oral interviews with our local Arcadia Veterans. The veteran's exhibit will also be customized to tell Veterans' stories with their own personal collections and photographs. I would like to invite all Veterans to participate. We wish to honor and hold in memory those who have given their time, and in some cases their lives, in the service of the United States and its families.

Future exhibits will include two exhibits in September. One exhibit will be in collaboration with the local Tongva, who are the Native American people from Arcadia. The second exhibit will be featuring the artwork of our Chinese Brush Painting class. You won't want to miss these beautiful works of art! We will end the year off with an exhibition of "*Winter Holidays Around the World*" which will open in December. Along with these exhibits we will also have accompanying programs for both children and adults.

I want to thank you all for your kind support and down home welcome which you have extended to me. Please don't hesitate to call or stop by and chat. (626) 574-5440).

Historical Marker Committee

The Society's Historical Marker Committee has completed the first three historical markers for the city of Arcadia. The markers are entitled "History Lives Here" and will be located at historic locations throughout the city. Each sign is 30x32 inches and includes photographs of people, buildings and locations in Arcadia from our past, a written explanation for each photograph, as well as for that period in Arcadia's history. The markers are made of high quality aluminum and will be placed at the original location of the building or landmark. Until the markers are officially unveiled, they can be seen at the Museum. The City of Arcadia and the Historical Society are proud to be the sponsors of these markers.

Marker #1 shows the history of First Avenue School and will be located at the School. Marker #2 depicts Arcadia's first City Hall and other buildings near the intersection of Huntington Drive and First Avenue. The marker will be placed on the NW corner of Huntington Drive and First Avenue. Marker #3 depicts the historical area that is now the County Park. This double-sided sign shows Lucky Baldwin's first Santa Anita Park Racetrack (1907), the Army's Ross Balloon School (1918) and finally the building of the County Park in 1938. The members of the Marker Committee are Scott Hettrick (chair), Carol Libby, Gary Kovavic and Jack McCrea.

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Mailing Address

Arcadia Historical Society

P.O. Box 60021, Arcadia, CA 91066-6021

Location Address:

380 West Huntington Dr

Arcadia, CA 91007

Curator -- Dana Dunn

626 574-5468

Historical Society -- 626 446-8512

We are on the WEB!

<http://museum.ci.arcadia.ca.us>

Arcadia Historical Society Membership Application

Name: _____ **Address:** _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Enclosed are my membership dues for \$ _____. Make your check payable to the *Arcadia Historical Society* and mail to our address on the top of this page. Life memberships are non-transferable.

Annual memberships are renewed each June 1st. Please check membership category

Individual (\$25)____; Family (\$30)____; Business (\$35)____; Life (\$400)____

Arcadia Historical Society

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