



Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month
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April, 2001

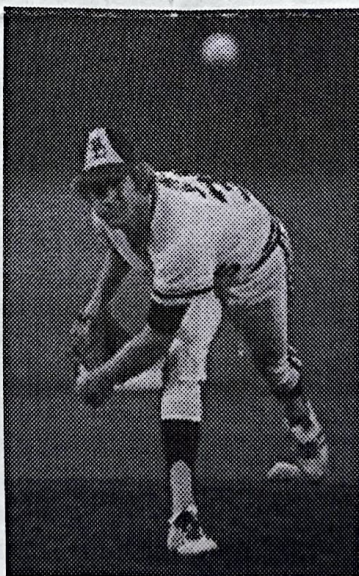
Randy Jones Makes Major League Comeback

by Kathy Canon

Former Brean and award-winning National League Baseball pitcher Randy Jones is about to make a comeback...of sorts. The hometown hero will be coming back to Brea, making a special guest appearance at the Brea Historic Society's Spring Fling, set for Thursday, May 3, 2001 at the Brea Bistro.

After attending Arovista School and Brea Junior High School, Randy graduated from Brea-Olinda High School in 1968, pitching for four years on the Varsity baseball team. Enrolling at Chapman College after graduation, he continued to develop his skill and control with the slider while pitching for the college varsity team and playing semi-pro baseball for the Anchorage Glacier Pilots in Anchorage, Alaska for two seasons in the early 70's. While playing with the Glacier Pilots, Jones and his team played teams from all over the country, winning the National Semi-Pro Championship Title in 1971. After graduating from Chapman, Randy was scouted by Major League Baseball and drafted by the San Diego Padres in the 5th round, spending a very brief period in the minor leagues. The 22-year-old continued working

on his control and technique and was called up to play in the Major Leagues in early 1973. During Randy's first full season in the National League, he went 8 wins, 22 losses. However, the following year in 1975, Jones lead



Randy Jones: 1957 Brea Pee-Wee Baseball Champ and 1976 NL Cy Young Award winner.

the league with 20 wins, earning him a spot on that years National League All Star Team and finishing second to Tom Seaver in voting for the Cy Young Award. That season, Randy earned The Sporting News Comeback Player of the Year Award. On

May 19, 1975, he pitched a 10-inning nail-biter, besting the St. Louis Cardinals and his 9th inning appearance on the mound in the '75 All Star Game effectively stopped the American League, earning him the game save.

In 1976, Randy led the National League with 22 wins, earning him another spot on that years All Star Team. Tapped as starting pitcher that year, Randy is the first to have pitched 4 consecutive innings of All Star play and received credit for the win that year. On June 22, he pitched his 13th win, leading the Padres to a 4-2 victory over the San Francisco Giants, tying Hall of Famer Christy Matthewson's 63-year old National League record of 68 innings without a base-on-balls. On July 8th, Randy set a National League record for most wins before the All Star break, beating the Chicago Cubs 6-3 in his 16th win that season. On November 2, 1976, Brea's Randy Jones beat out New York Mets pitcher Jerry Koosman for the National League Cy Young Award, leading the league with 315 innings pitched and posting a 22 game win, 14 game loss record

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A History of.....part one

by Kathy Canon

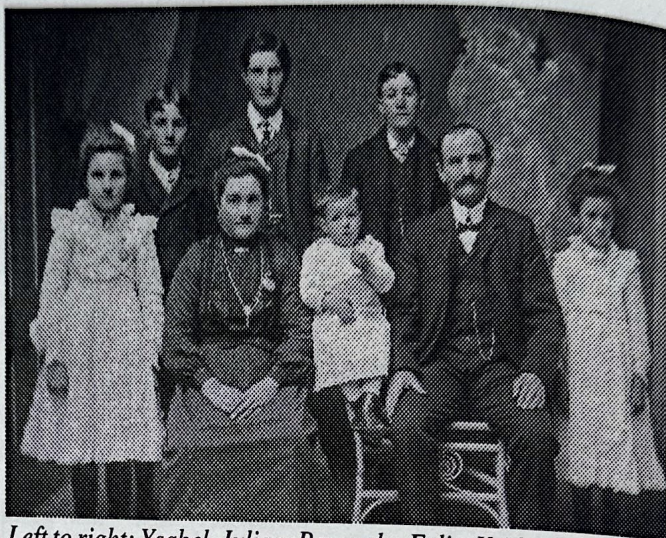
A new feature of *Historical Happenings*, focusing on an individual or event in the history of Brea that helped shape the city as we know it today. Our very first "History of..." tells the story of John Yriarte and his family.

John Yriarte and his family have seen and lived much of the story of Brea. This thoughtful, soft-spoken man was born in Brea on August 11, 1917, the year of Brea's incorporation, at the home of his Uncle Felix at 127 S. Orange.

John's grandfather, Patricio Yriarte, immigrated to the United States from the Basque province of Spain in 1885. After spending a short time in New Orleans, Patricio came to California, finding work at the Bastanchury Ranch, a local gathering place for Basques. Before long, Patricio set out on his own to find his fortune in what is now the Placentia/Yorba Linda area. Soon, he sent word to his wife, Pascuala Arresa Yriarte to join him. By 1905, they had settled and began to raise a family in Randolph, the small town that would become Brea.

Patricio began acquiring land to farm oats, barley and hay. He purchased 30 acres of the W.H. Hole tract and part of the Abel Stearns tract and soon had 160 acres. Those acres would prove invaluable to the city of Brea over the years, eventually providing the city with one of its first water wells. The acreage owned by the Yriarte Ranch encompassed the area from today's Elm Street, south to just east of the old Brea City Hall, the western boundary was today's Imperial Hwy, then east to Laurel Ave.

As the Yriarte Ranch grew, so did the Yriarte family. Felix, Augustin, Julian, Ysabel, Mary and Ysidoro were brought into the world over the span of about 15 years. Ysidoro, during a trip back to Spain with the family, became ill and died in his infancy. The family left Spain shortly after his death



Left to right: Ysabel, Julian, Pascuala, Felix, Ysidoro, Augustin, Patricio and Mary Yriarte. Circa 1905

to return to their home in Brea.

The Yriarte Ranch thrived, providing employment to local area residents and forming bonds with other area Basque families such as the Landa's (the early ascendants of Sam Landa, owner of "Sam's Place"), the Oxandabourne's and the Bastanchury's.

The early years of Randolph attracted farmers and ranchers because of its open space, fertile land and perfect climate for agriculture. Basque sheep herders tended flocks in the hills near Puente Wells. They cursed the "black stuff" that dirtied their clothing after long days, not realizing that the tar they cursed was the precursor to the discovery that would change Randolph forever...the discovery of oil.

The Yriarte family worked their ranch, the children raised by Pascuala and working in the fields alongside Patricio. Eventually, the Yriarte children married and started families of their own. Felix married Celestina and started a family; Ysabel married Garrett Prendiville and eventually had five children; Julian married Inez Dolley of Whittier and had one child; Mary wed Joe Nichols.

Augustin Yriarte met a young woman on a trip to Spain. Although they were only 15-years old at

continued, next page

the time of their first meeting, he remembered the dark-eyed Lorenza Lorea from the village of Abaurrea Alta, near Pamplona. Lorenza emigrated from Spain in 1909, taking work as a domestic at the Yriarte Ranch shortly after her arrival. Augustin Yriarte, then 20 years old, fell in love with the Basque beauty and soon they married and started a family of their own.

In 1915, Patricio and Pascuala Yriarte passed within months of each other. By 1918, the property of the Yriarte Ranch that had been left to their surviving children was divided equally into five parcels. The property west of Laurel went to Felix; Augustin received the northern area of the land; Mary, the area from South Birch to Laurel Ave.; Ysabel received the Yriarte Ranch property on East Elm St.; Julian received the remainder of the acreage. Felix would eventually become part of the investment group that brought Brea its first theatre, "The Red Lantern". Ysabel eventually sold five acres of the Yriarte Ranch property on Elm St. to Frank Schweitzer, Sr., one of Brea's earliest and most influential pioneers, where he built his home.

The close-knit family lived and worked together for a time, but eventually, Felix built a

home and moved to the property at 127 S. Orange St.

Although he was born in the house on Orange St., John lived the early years of his life at the ranch house on Elm St. with his older sister, Anita. Lorenza took care of the household chores and raising of the children, while Augustin worked his area of the ranch, growing oats and hay and eventually planting citrus trees. While some of the harvest from the ranch went to market, much of what was grown went to feed the family, who continued to live in the ranch house, and into storage to feed

the livestock over the winter. In time, John's brother, Patricio was born and Augustin built a house for the small family on Ash St. and the family moved in soon after.

Lorenza could speak only basque, an extremely difficult Spanish dialect, and spoke to her children in her native tongue. Augustin, who was born in Los Angeles, spoke both english and basque but spent much of his time working the fields, with little opportunity to teach his children english. Since the city was still sparsely populated, with few neighbors nearby, the children had little opportunity to interact with the english speaking families in the city.

When John enrolled in the first grade at Laurel Grammar School in 1923, because he wasn't able to speak english, he was asked to leave school soon after and learn english before returning. John still recalls W.E. Fanning walking up the driveway of his family home to bring the news to his parents. John learned english quickly and was back in the first grade within a few months, catching up with his classmates and excelling in the second grade.

John, Patricio and Anita walked to school from their home on Ash St., even walking home at lunch and racing back to school afterward in order to return before the bell rang to resume the days lessons.

In the countryside dotted with ranches, farmhouses and oil derricks, John and his brother and sister occupied themselves by exploring the fields, playing in and around the family's ranch barn (where swallows nested with mud from nearby creeks), wading into the creeks to catch tadpoles and frogs or making kites to fly from newspaper, old wood scavenged from oil derrick sites and butcher string tied together to make the tether.

Next issue:

Changes come to Brea and the Yriarte Family



Lorenza Lorea Yriarte and Augustin Yriarte in front of their Ash St. home

Randy Jones

cont'd from page 1

for the Padres.

Three years later, on May 13th, he set another Padres record by stealing second base in a 5-4 victory over the NY Mets, the first San Diego pitcher to do so in the teams then 11-year history. He also established another Padre record by pitching three consecutive shut-outs in May, 1980.

The following season, Randy was traded to the New York Mets, where injuries affected his pitching and he retired from Major League Baseball in 1982.

Randy left Brea in 1972, when he was drafted into the major leagues, but Brea hasn't left him. His parents still reside in their home on Elm St. and he visits often. His 1957 Brea Pee-Wee League trophy is one of his "two favorite" awards - the other being his 1976 Cy Young Award. He now resides with his wife of 30-years, Marie (also a former Brean) and his two daughters, Stacy and Jamie, in Escondido, just north of San Diego. He's been affiliated with the San

Diego Padre organization for the last nine years, appearing at speaking engagements and participating in community relations events on behalf of the team. He also appears at every Padre home game, greeting fans and signing autographs. Randy also broadcasts pre- and post-home game commentary for the Padres on 600 KOGO and co-hosts "Baseball Talk" with John Kentera on XTRA 690 after every Padre game, Monday through Friday.


Seven years ago, while playing golf with his friend, Ken Wilson of Service America, he suggested that fans at the stadium needed a new "feeding place". The "Randy Jones Ballpark BBQ" was born and fans have loved the fresh barbeque served

from his Dad's recipe brought from Weatherford, Texas in 1950 ever since.

In 1996, he opened a restaurant and catering service in Poway, CA. "Randy Jones Big Stone Lodge" is a 1925 Historic Landmark that serves Randy's red-oak fired, Santa Maria style barbequed meats. It's also the base for "Randy Jones Buckboard Catering", that serves up the same delicious barbeque, cooked over pits from the back of buckboard wagons.

The former Brean remembers his hometown as a "great community to grow-up in". He misses the small town that used to be, but still visits his friends and family that live here. He doesn't miss the travel, hotels and schedule associated with his Major League career, but the competitive nature of the game and close rapport with teammates are things he will always remember. Fans still approach him to sign the 1976 Sports Illustrated cover he appeared on, or to sign baseball cards. The big league man from our small town does this willingly for his fans. And in Brea, we're all fans of Randy Jones.

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August, 2001

Brea Welcomes You...

By
Kathy Canon

...and Brea welcomes its beloved sign back to the Downtown!

Originally constructed in 1934 by the Brea Lions Club, the "Brea Welcomes You" sign was dedicated in a ceremony on April 5, 1934 attended by Mayor Mike Hogue, Councilman Frank Schweitzer, Sr. (who designed the original cantilever bridge that held the sign), W.D. Shaffer (who funded a significant part of its construction), former Mayor, Assemblyman and soon to be Speaker of the California Assembly, Ted Craig and other local dignitaries.

Placed near the intersection of Birch St. and Pomona Ave. (now Brea Blvd.), the sign could be seen by all who passed through the city and quickly became a beloved landmark to Breans and visitors alike.

After 58 years, in 1992, the "Brea Welcomes You" sign was carefully removed and stored in order to be renovated and reconstructed once the Downtown Redevelopment Project was completed.

Finally, on June 22, 2001, Brea's most famous landmark was returned to the intersection of Birch and Brea Blvd.

But, wait a second! That's not how we remember the sign! Is that really the original sign? Well, yes....it really is! And just as the original one changed the face of Brea in 1934, the newly renovated sign plays an important role in the history of our "new" Downtown.

In July, 2001, I spoke with Nate Cherry (of Los Angeles based RTKL Architects), project architect for the Downtown Redevelopment Agency. Our conversation lasted almost an hour and a half, and it was obvious, as

Nate recounted the steps taken to re-place the sign in the Downtown, that he respects and cherishes the history behind it.

According to Nate, the "Brea Welcomes You" sign was "an interesting design challenge" and his first question was "how is it going to be integrated into the new Downtown?"

In the years between the removal of the sign and redevelopment, "Brea grew up", said Nate. Brea Blvd. grew from 4 lanes to 6 lanes and new code requirements, truck height restrictions and right-of-way requirements had to be considered.

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The "Brea Welcomes You" sign, shortly after its original placement near the intersection of Birch Street and Pomona Avenue in 1934.

The Stewart Tank Farm Fire

by
Brian Saul

Although it's been written about many times before, we thought you might like to take a new look at the biggest disaster to ever hit Brea, the Stewart Tank Farm Fire of 1926. I say "new" because the photographs on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter are from Union Oil archives and have never been seen before.

Seventy-five years ago, a bolt of lightning struck the farm, igniting 2 of the huge oil reservoirs and sending massive towers of smoke up into the air over Brea. A 3rd tank later caught fire.

Hurriedly, 250 Union Oil workers tried to setup 7' to 8' high metal barriers to direct the boiling oil that was spilling over the sides of the burning tanks.

Unfortunately, their efforts weren't entirely successful and there was major damage from the oil, both to the tank farm, as well as the surrounding citrus and walnut groves, the Pacific-Electric railway tracks and the homes of three local people. One of these, William Sievers, son of prominent landowner J.D. Sievers, only discovered his home had been destroyed when he returned home

from his honeymoon.

Also causing damage was a fire-induced cyclone that tore through town, ripping off the roof of the Sutphen family home at the corner of Madrona and Cedar St. (later to become Imperial Highway).

Lasting almost a week, the fire was witnessed by crowds from all over Southern California who rushed here to witness the amazing spectacle. Now, 75 years later, the Stewart Tank Farm is a quiet place, much different from what it was prior to the fire. The last remaining underground tank, similar to those that exploded, was converted years ago into a city water reservoir.

In this year of 2001, the days of the tank farm are now coming to an end. Plans are currently underway to clear the land, subdivide and build an industrial complex.

For almost 100 years the farm was, and still is, a Brea landmark, both because of its history and as a local employer. When it finally does disappear, another page of Brea's past will go along with it. Let these photos then be a way to remind you of what once was.

On Sale Now at the Brea History Museum

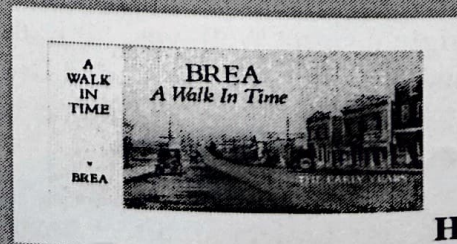
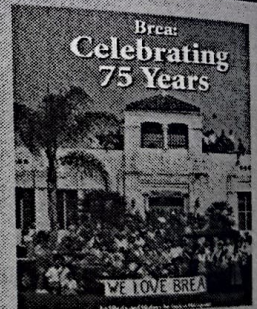
Brea: Celebrating 75 Years. Written by Teresa Hampson, the book is 246 pages of photographs and recounts Brea from its early days as a major oil-production and agricultural center to the early 1990's.

Brea: A Walk in Time. An entertaining 2 hour video, hosted by Brea Historical Society Vice President, Brian Saul. Join Brian as he takes you on a tour of Brea's historical landmarks and visits areas of the city that you didn't know were there.

All proceeds from sales of the book and video go to assist the Society's preservation efforts in Brea.

**Brea:
Celebrating 74 Years**
By
Teresa Hampson

\$28.00, including tax.



**Brea: A Walk in
Time**
2 hour video of
Brea's
early history.
Hosted by Brian Saul

\$14.95, including tax.

Brea Welcomes You...

continued from page 1

The actual sign is 3' X 10' wide. If it were to be put back at its original location with a cantilever bridge, that bridge would have been 50 feet across. Half a football field holding up a 3' X 10' sign. As Nate said, "imagine that!"

Design architects created photo montages of the sign, each suggesting various possibilities for placement. Among ideas suggested: mounting it on the side of a building. This was taken out of the equation immediately though, since they didn't want to make a private building owner responsible for the sign. Another idea was to span it across and above one of the paseos (the bricked walkways between some of the businesses), but the sign needed to be visible from a prominent location. This idea was rejected, too as being impractical.

The Redevelopment Agency and design architects liked the idea of placing the sign on a "100% corner", making it centralized and viewable from all directions because it is "an icon of the Downtown area." Placement at the corner of Birch St. and Brea Blvd. allows it to be seen from Imperial Hwy.

To make the sign prominent enough to be seen easily, a rotating (4 rpm) design was decided on, with the eventual addition of shade trees, benches around its base and the those of the trees and an informational Directory/Kiosk to the Downtown.

Restoration of the sign was performed by Ampersand,

Inc., a company specializing in historic renovations. Nate says that it has been "interpreted in a modern way, while respecting its history and integrity." The neon around the sign has been added, as well as the brass plaque at the top that says "Downtown". The post it sets on is painted in black, but toned down "a shade or two" from the black on the sign itself. This was done intentionally to make the sign more prominent. With the exception of these additions, the "new" sign is the same



The newly renovated and restored "Brea Welcomes You" sign at it's new home at the corner of Brea Blvd. and Birch Street.

one built and dedicated in that ceremony that took place in 1934.

The official re-dedication of the renovated "Brea Welcomes You" sign is anticipated to take place in the Fall of 2001. By then, the restored Brea Clock is expected to be installed at its new, permanent location, near the northwest end of Birch Street.

Downtown and Historic Home Tour Planned

Something very special is coming to the Downtown area in October 2001. Brian Saul, in association with the Brea Historical Society and the Brea Downtown Merchants Association, will be hosting and leading a walking tour of some of the historic homes on Redwood Avenue, along with a walking tour of the "new" Downtown. The home tour will feature "walk-thrus" of at least two

homes on Redwood. The Downtown tour will feature interesting, "behind the scenes" facts and information on its architectural and ambient planning and design.

There will be a minimal charge for the tours, with proceeds going to support the proposed Brea Museum and Heritage Center. Current plans are for the tours to take place in the evening, twice a month.

Look for even more information about the upcoming tours in next months "Historical Happenings" newsletter.

If you would like to assist with the tours and become a "tour guide" or if you are interested in reserving a spot on one of the first tours, please contact Brian Saul or Kathy Cano at (714) 256-2283.

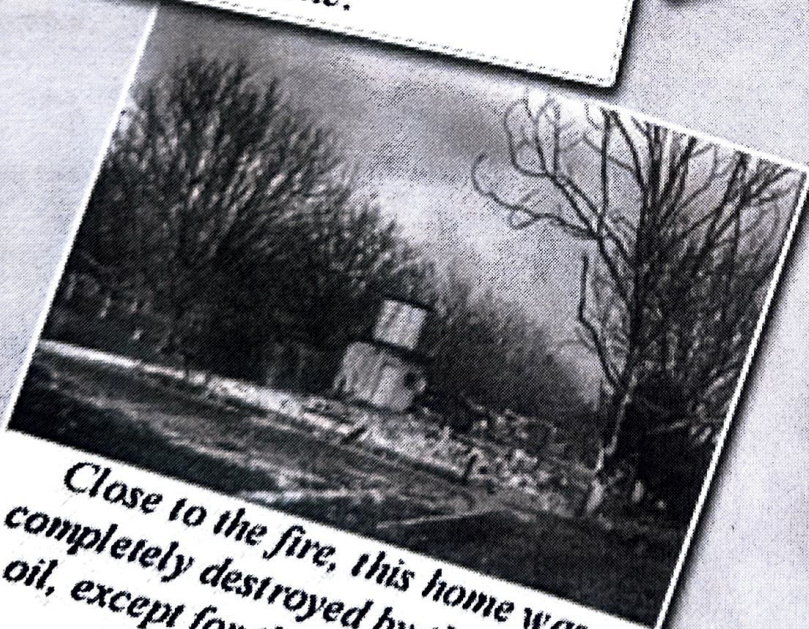
The Most Disastrous Day in Brea's History



The Sutphen family home, partially destroyed by the fire-induced cyclone.



Another view of the Sutphen home, minus the roof.



Close to the fire, this home was completely destroyed by the boiling oil, except for the water tank and pump house beneath it.



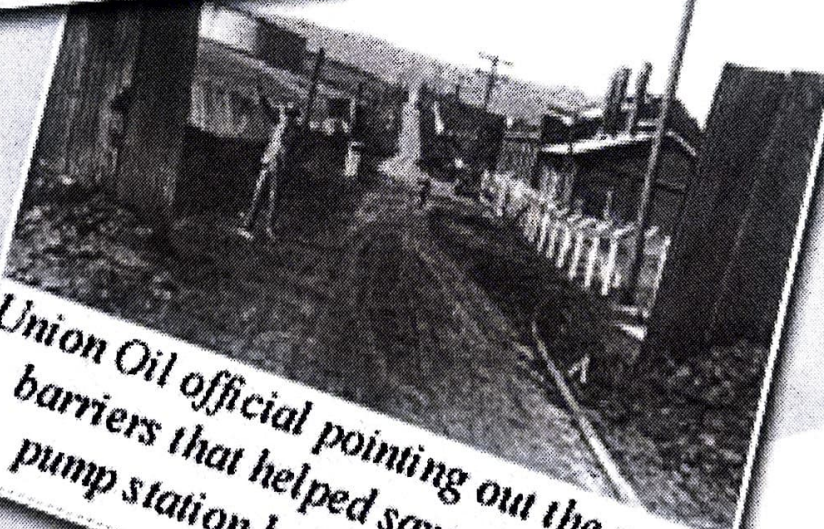
Plumes of oily smoke from the burning tanks rise into the air, raining soot over the city.



Aerial photographs were taken of the disaster to show the damage caused by the flowing oil to the surrounding groves.



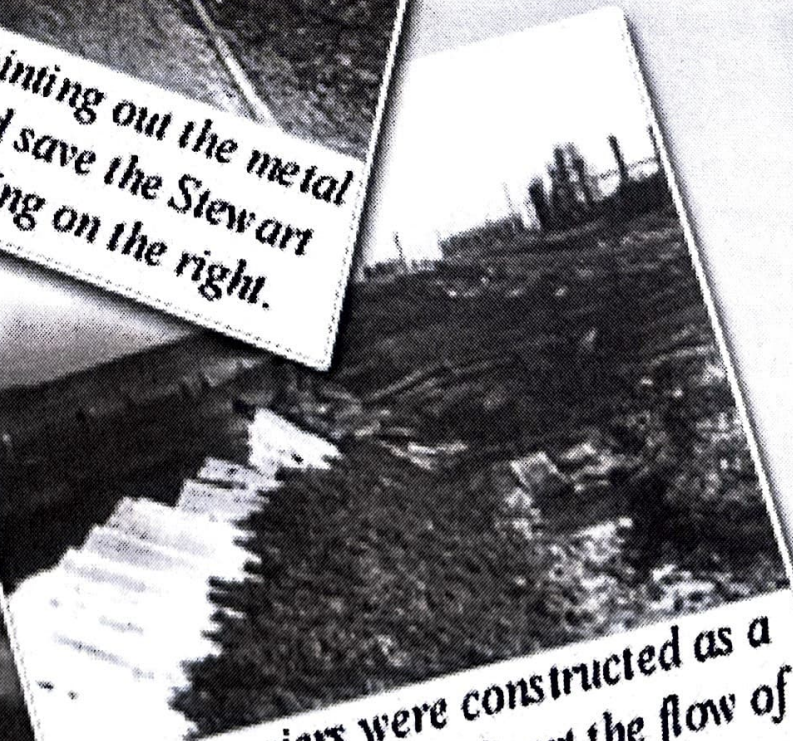
After nearly a week, the tanks continued to burn.



Union Oil official pointing out the metal barriers that helped save the Stewart pump station building on the right.



Another view of the barriers after the boiler...



Metal barriers were constructed as a way to control and divert the flow of burning oil away from the structures at the tank farm.

West Brea...the way it was

By

Elsie Bergman

Thank you, Elsie, for sharing your memories of "West Brea...the way it was". We are pleased to print and share them with the Historical Society membership. (Note: clarification of some information appears in italics and are not part of the original article as submitted.

Moving from the state of Washington to Brea, California back in 1944 (at age 31) was rather traumatic...it was still wartime and housing was tight. My sister-in-law Evelyn Bergman (who Elsie did not meet until she arrived in Brea in 1944) knew of ONE rental available. It was rather small and a bit shabby, but for rent of \$18.00 a month, it was a "find". A vacant lot even went with the property (at 208 W. Birch) and upon Jake's (Elsie's husband) return from overseas, he transformed it into a beautiful mum garden in his spare time.

Those were the days of wooden oil derricks on the hillsides. Nearby orange groves permeated the air with the scent of their blossoms. Also, those were the days of great camaraderie when neighbors shared their flowers and produce and nobody locked their doors.

With fond memories, I recall some of the "old timers" who lived in our neighborhood. First, my dear in-laws, Jim and Minnie Bergman gave up ranch life in Aguanga to buy the house (formerly owned by the Russell family) around the corner from us on Madrona. Mrs. Phillips lived next door to them. Stella and (former Brea School Superintendent) Will Fanning lived across the street and Florence Harvey, a few doors away. The McDowell Family lived close by, and Bill (Elsie's son) and Jerry (McDowell) went all through school together as great buddies. Jerry grew up to be Brea Fire Chief. Frances and Florence Nipp lived across the alley from us (owners of Cannings Hardware at the time).

One Thanksgiving, my old gas stove gave out on me and Florence insisted I finish baking our turkey in her oven as they were going to be away for the day.

After the Nipp's moved, the Jack Algers were our neighbors. Mayme Mays lived next door to them and Dave and Cuba Brown lived across the street. There was the McKinley Family next to our vacant lot...she an invalid and he an excellent handyman who so skillfully replaced the screening on our long front porch. The parents of Inez Fanning lived next to them. Johnny Char,

the baker, lived kitty-corner from us and enjoyed raising squab for a hobby. We were often the recipients of his leftover bakery delights. Alexander's Market was on the corner of Pomona Ave. (now Brea Blvd.) and Birch St.

In 1949 (January 11), Brea had its first snowstorm. I so vividly remember our little girl looking out the window and crying because she thought her sandbox was gone, for everything was covered with snow. We lived in that little house at 208 W. Birch until December, 1950. Today, it would be hard to mark the spot where it stood.

Bill adds these memories from the perspective of an 8-year-old:

We kids collected tinfoil from cigarette packages and rolled it up in balls for the war effort. We collected grease for a neighbor who made soap from it with ashes from her hearth. We helped with paper drives and scrap metal drives.

Took piano lessons from Mrs. Curtis (wife of Dr. C. Glenn Curtis). Jerry and I played a lot across the street at the home of the Troup family. They raised chickens in their backyard.

We collected pop bottles and earned 2 cents a piece for them at Alexander's Market. Sometimes we got a free weenie from Mr. Gheen, the butcher. Mr. Dump owned the Brea Theatre and we could get in for 27 cents, which included a cartoon between double features. The malt shop uptown was neat and so was the 5 & 10 cent store. Liked looking in the window of Haddad's Haberdashery; had fun hunting "crawdads" down in Brea Creek by the railroad tracks.

Went to Cub Scouts and in the summer, to camp at Osceola.

The Brea train depot is gone now, as is the (old) high school and the entire old city center. All that remains is the Brea Plunge, the Old City Hall and the American Legion Hall at the park.

Do you have memories of Brea you would like to share? We would love to print them! Even if you don't want to write them yourself, we will tell your story...but we can't unless you tell it to us! Contact Kathy Canon, Brian Saul or Jim Schweitzer at 714-256-2283 so we can help you share your memories of Brea.

Letters Home to Brea from WWII

Letter to Mrs. Adele Anderson
from T.S. Anderson
Dated: March 19, 1945
Passed Naval censor
Hi Darling.

You may think I am nuts when you receive my first letters because it will come in four different parts. When I left the States I started a letter and wrote a little each day. It totaled 12 pages. Well I mailed them when I first arrived. The next day they give it back to me, say they limit each letter to three pages. So darling your letter will come in four different letters.

I haven't received any mail as yet but sure am looking forward to some news from home.

They hooked us today, I should say this afternoon. First we had to dig a pipe line across the concrete road. After doing that they made us load 2 trucks loads of dirt so they could plant a lawn in front of the Personnel Office. They call it landscaping but I call it loading dirt into a truck and then unloading it.

We are supposed to get paid tomorrow so maybe you'll get some money one of these days. We are also supposed to get liberty Friday. I sure want to see what Honolulu looks like. Most of the boys that have been into town say it isn't so hot.

They sure have some beautiful rings here at the ship stores. I wished I had a couple hundred I would send you one.

Have you received any word on your income taxes?

Well darling there isn't much to write about so I'll close. I love you and hope everyone is well. Kiss the kids and tell them their Dad loves them both.

Loads of Love,
Tom

Letter to Judy Anderson
from T.S. Anderson
Date: June 12, 1945
Passed Naval censor
Hello Judy Darling.

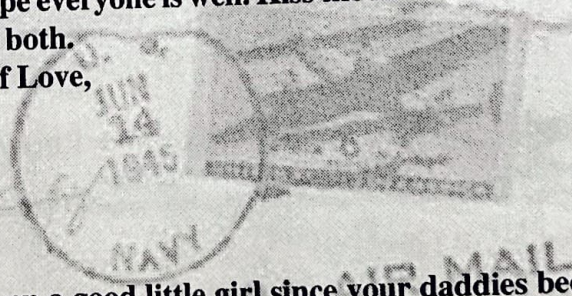
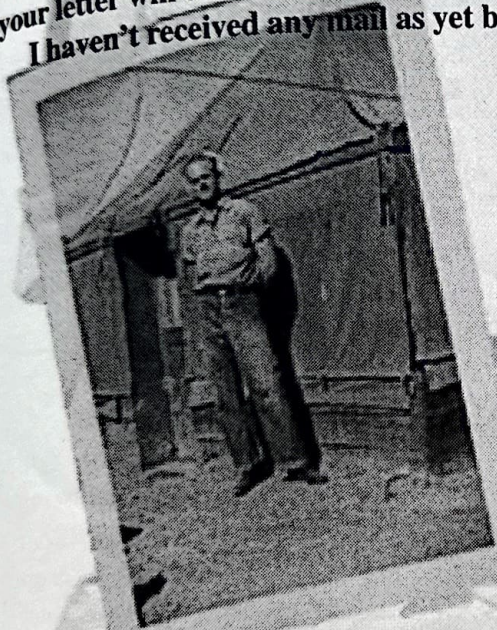
How is my little sweetheart today? Have you been a good little girl since your daddies been away? Are you taking good care of little Mike and helping your mother? I know you have.

They have lots of little Kanackie boys and girls over here. I know you could have lots of fun playing with them. They never wear shoes and I don't think they ever take a bath. (A Kanackie is the Navy name for the natives here on the island). When they are real small, like little Mike, they sure are cute. Someday after daddie makes his first million, I'll bring you Mike and Moma over here and we'll have lots of fun.

Did you enjoy your trip to Yosemite? What did you think of the big bears and the pretty deer? Ask Grampa if he is going to take you deer hunting this year. Also tell him he had better do a little practicing before he goes or you will kid him again this year.

Well honey you be a good little girl until Daddie gets home. Take good care of your Mom and Mike. Tell your mother Daddie loves her very much and misses her. I can't think of anything more to say at present so I'll say goodbye. Tell your Gram and Gramp hello.

Love,
Dad



Brea Historical Society

Jim Schweitzer, President
(714) 529-0635

Brian Saul, Vice President
(562) 698-5339

P.J. Mansur, Secretary/Treasurer
(714) 528-4240

Jim Crow, Board Member
(714) 529-3295

Marie Domenico, Board Member
(714) 529-6641

Lloyd Dudding, Board Member
(714) 256-4324

Edna Makins, Board Member
(714) 529-1755

September Board Meeting:
Monday, Sept. 10, 2001, 7:00pm
at the Brea History Museum,
652 S. Brea Blvd.

Museum/Office Location:
652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea
Heights Shopping Center)
(714) 256-2283

Museum Hours:
Thursdays: 11am until 1pm
Saturdays: 11am until 2pm
Or call to arrange a special tour!

Special Thanks to our Corporate Sponsors

Pacific Western National Bank

located at
275 N. Brea Blvd

Taps Fish House & Brewery

located at
101 E. Imperial Hwy

Corrections

In the last issue of "Historical Happenings", we inadvertently omitted the following members from the membership list. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

The Weddle Family, Family Membership

Howard Phelps, Individual Membership

In memory of Walt Bergman

On Thursday, August 16, Brea lost one of it's most beloved, long-time residents, Walt Bergman, after a brief illness. He was 95-years-old.

Walt was not just a valued Brea resident for his knowledge of our history. He was well-loved by everyone who knew him for his kindness and generosity and he will be deeply missed.

The family has asked that any donations be made in Walt's memory to the Brea Historical Society.

Volunteers

Volunteers! We need your help down at the Brea History Museum between the hours of 11am and 2pm on Saturdays. You can help us set up displays, assist with research, meet new friends and learn something about Brea's rich history. C'mon, you know you wanna. We have air-conditioning!



Brea Historical Society

P.O. Box 9764

Brea, CA 92822-9764

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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month

Mailing Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month

VOL. XVIII, No. 9
September, 2001

Whatever happened to the Brea Clock?

by
Kathy Canon

The Brea Clock is back!...finally returned to the Downtown and placed at its new home in early August, 2001. But, just where did they put the clock, anyway?

In researching and interviewing people about this Brea landmark, its history and renovation, I found out many things I didn't know before. As a Brean who's lived in the city since 1981, the most surprising of those things is...it hadn't been a fixture in the Downtown area until 1975!

The Brea Clock was originally the stationmaster's clock at the Santa Fe Railyards in Riverside, CA. In 1975, it was placed on Brea Blvd. by Charlie, the owner of a clock shop located in the old Brea

Hotel building, as an advertising gimmick. Nicknamed "Charlie's Clock", it was purchased by the City when the shop was closed up and Charlie left town. It had become a landmark in Brea and fit right into the "Good Old Brea" concept for redevelopment of the Downtown.

Over the years, because of vandalism and just plain



City workers replace "Charlie's Clock" near the old Brea Hotel after it was removed and repaired due to damage from a car accident in 1979.

not working, the clock was continually being taken down and repaired. In 1979, a car actually ran into the post, causing major damage to the clock. Subsequently, it didn't reappear again for a very long time.

Continued vandalism, age, and a failing mechanism plagued the clock, and finally, in 1994, it was carefully disassembled and placed in storage to await its restoration and re-emergence at the corner of Birch Street and Madrona Ave.

According to Nate Cherry, project architect for downtown redevelopment, who oversaw each step of the process, the renovation of the Brea Clock was "an amazing

and difficult job" that took 6 months to complete. When the job was turned over to Ampersand, Inc. (a company specializing in historic renovations), it received a clock that was "beaten up" and in general disrepair. The glass facing was broken, the numbers and lettering were faded

continued on page 3

President's Message

THE CALL GOES OUT FAR AND WIDE

WANTED

I have taken up the project of gathering a copy of every newsletter that has ever been published for the Society, which dates back to September of 1983. Thus far, I have been fortunate enough to locate quite a few, but there remains scattered issues missing as well as a few big holes, such as every issue from the 1990's.

Jane O'Brien, fortunately, had the foresight to save several years worth and place them in the museum files. Also, Catherine Seiler made a great contribution by donating a tremendous amount and nearly supplying a complete set.

As opposed to printing either a list of what I do or don't have, I will ask that if anyone "out there" has any issues that they would like to donate, or at least allow me to photocopy. Please give me a call and I will check my list to determine if I do, indeed, need them. *My home phone number is (714) 529-0635.*

Also, it would be nice to collect a complete set of the football "charms" that the Brea-Olinda High School varsity football teams were awarded for winning the CIF title in 1959, 1961, 1962 and 1963. Bill Preston of Fullerton has already donated his from 1959 and that is a start! If anyone would like to donate any of the remaining years, please be so kind as to give me a call.

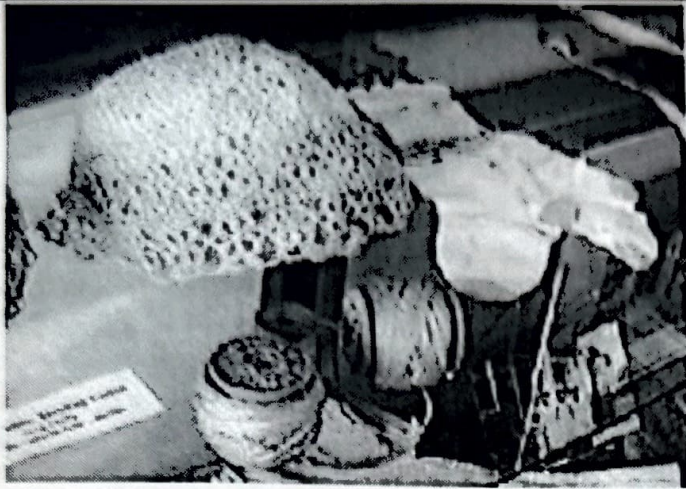
Thirdly, if you have an opinion, whether it be pro or con, regarding my letter to the editor that appeared in the August 23 issue of the Star-Progress, feel free to give me a call. I would be interested in hearing what you have to say.

Finally, if you haven't yet sent in your American Legion building survey form, please do so! We greatly appreciate those that have already responded and look forward to hearing from the rest of you.



Jim recently met with Sherry Farley at the Portola Monument to discuss plans to repair and refurbish the it and beautify the surrounding area. Sherry is current President of the Grace Parlor #242 of the Native Daughters of the Golden West. It was the Native Daughters who erected the monument in June of 1932. Recently, Jim was initiated into the Santa Ana parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden West and hopes to gain his club's support and participation in this project.

Jim



Do YOU Know What This Stuff Is???

Several new and very interesting displays have just been added at the Brea History Museum. This is just one small glimpse of what you can enjoy and learn about while visiting. When was the last time you were here, anyway?

Downtown and Home Tour Info

You've been asking and now we have more information regarding the upcoming *Downtown and Home Tour*.

The "walking" tours will begin in early November, with the tentative date scheduled for the weekend of November 2nd/4th, taking place in the late afternoons and lasting approximately 2 hours. The route will take us from Redwood Avenue to Brea Blvd. and then to Birch St. and the "New Downtown". We are very excited that two homes on Redwood have agreed to allow us inside for a "peek". Plus, we have tons of interesting facts and information to share with you about the buildings and architecture on Brea Blvd. and Birch St. Now that we know when, its time for you to sign up! We want to keep the groups small, so make your reservations early by calling Brian or Kathy at 714-256-2283. The cost per person is \$5.00 with proceeds going to the proposed Brea Museum and Heritage Center fund.

Re-emergence of a Landmark - The Brea Clock

continued from page 1

the housing for the mechanism was rusted and the mechanism itself was frozen and didn't work at all.

World-class craftsmen created an "exact reproduction" of many of the clock's components. The unique handpainted calligraphy of the original numbers and lettering was painstakingly recreated. The original hands were carefully removed and outlined exactly to use as patterns to punch new hands out of the same metal as the original. The clock mechanism was carefully taken apart, molded and recast, then put back together by master clock makers. The mechanism now runs perfectly.

The exterior casing is the original, repaired and repainted in its original color. The clock face is the original, refurbished and repainted. The "Good Old Brea" placard on top of the clock has been remade to the exact specifications as the original, made from the same metal in the same thickness.

The glass on the face is now frosted and surrounded by soft lighting to provide night-time luminescence.

With the re-placement of the Brea Sign and now, the Brea Clock, the landmarks of "Good Old Brea" are back where they belong. Brand new, to be enjoyed now and by future generations in Brea's new Downtown.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge Brian Saul's assistance in researching and providing background in-

formation on the history of the Brea Clock.



The newly refurbished Brea Clock at its new, permanent location at the corner of Madrona and Birch St

The Shaffer Fountain - Then and Now

by
Brian Saul

Now that the old "Brea Welcomes You" sign and Charlie's Clock have returned to the downtown area and been placed on the Birch Street Promenade, I thought this might be a good time to tell you about the third Birch St. landmark, the new Shaffer Fountain — how it came to be placed there and why it was given that name.

In the late 80's, when I was first bitten by that Brea history bug, one of the first things I learned about was the story of City Hall Park, its buildings and other features, some of which were no longer there. The original American Legion Building, sitting on the corner of Elm and Pomona Ave (Brea Blvd.) had been sold in 1929 to the Anaheim School District and, according to the Brea Progress, was moved there to be used as a "Mexican school". In the 1940's there was a pond at the southwest corner of the park that became a constant sore point to neighbors who complained about the nightly croaking of the pond's frog population.

The "feature" though that really interested me, one that had also disappeared, was the Shaffer Fountain. Sitting right where the present Memorial Rose Garden is located, it was a huge, octagon-shaped, 3-tiered thing that must have been really something during the 21 years it dominated the park.

And why was it built? Well, it's name partially gives that away. It was placed there to honor a very special man in our history—William D. Shaffer, or, as he was commonly known, "W. D."

The next questions naturally are, who was he and what makes him so special that he was honored in such a way?

Born in Springtown, N.Y. in 1877, Shaffer first came

to this area in 1903 when he became superintendent of a tool shop in the little oil town of Olinda. After some years there, he left for Santa Paula but returned to Brea in 1922, becoming a partner in the Brea Tool Works Co.

When the company was sold, he bought it back himself, giving it the name Shaffer Tool Works.

That first plant was located on the southwest corner of Birch St. and Redwood Ave., and it produced a wide variety of oil tools which led to the success of the company. Over the next 24 years that success continued and enabled the firm to expand around the country.

According to everyone I've talked to who knew Mr. Shaffer, and likewise from the articles I've read, he was a well-loved boss who went out of his way to care for his employees, including during that bad times of the Depression.

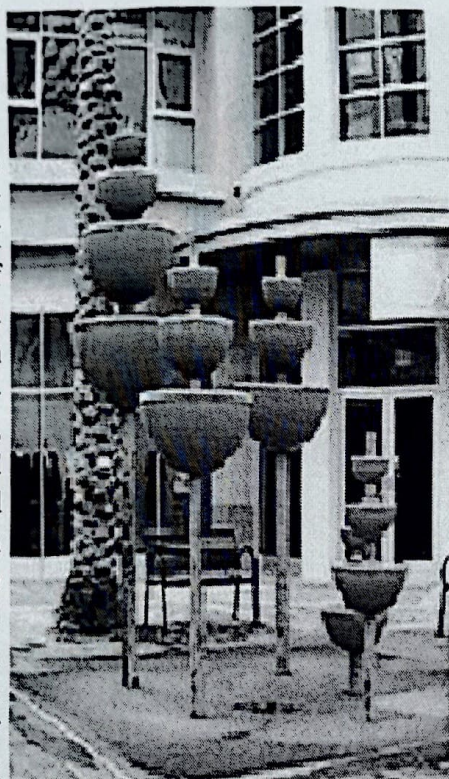
In a 1981 newspaper article, his one-time secretary Lois Muzzall Smith recalls that during the company's heyday, workers

were more than just employees, they were family. "Mr. Shaffer was a man with a heart who would always smile and say hello to everyone. He would also throw big company picnics," she recalls, "and only a broken leg could stop anyone from coming."

He was so respected by his many employees, especially those here in Brea, that when he died in 1946 they wanted to do something very special in his memory. What they finally decided upon was a fountain, a really big fountain to be located in City Hall Park. Plans were developed and many local firms and citizens contributed their materials and skills at little or no cost.

On the evening of Sunday, Sept. 12, 1948 a big dedi-

continued on page 6



Fulfillment of a promise - The new Shaffer Fountain on the Birch Street Promenade.

"Another" Museum Survey

Dear Historical Society Member,

In their report to the City Council, City staff would like to include results from specific questions concerning our proposal for a Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center. We all want to be assured this is a project the citizens and especially the Historical Society members want to see happen.

Please take a moment and answer these four brief questions. For or against, we would like your input. This is the only way we can get a pulse on the community's desires.

1. Would you like to see the Old American Legion Building (aka: Old Police Station) on the corner of Elm St. and Brea Blvd. in City Hall Park used as a Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center? _____
2. Would you be supportive of the City providing the building to the Historical Society (a non-profit) for \$1.00 per year to operate a Museum? _____
3. Are you supportive of the City providing other or additional financial assistance to support the ongoing operation of the museum? _____
4. Would you be willing to provide volunteer hours and/or financial donations to help in the operation of the museum? _____

You do not have to sign this, but please return it as soon as possible to:

The Brea Historical Society
P.O. Box 9764
Brea, CA 92822-9764

Thank you in advance,

Don Schweitzer
Museum Chairman



Mr. W.D. Shaffer



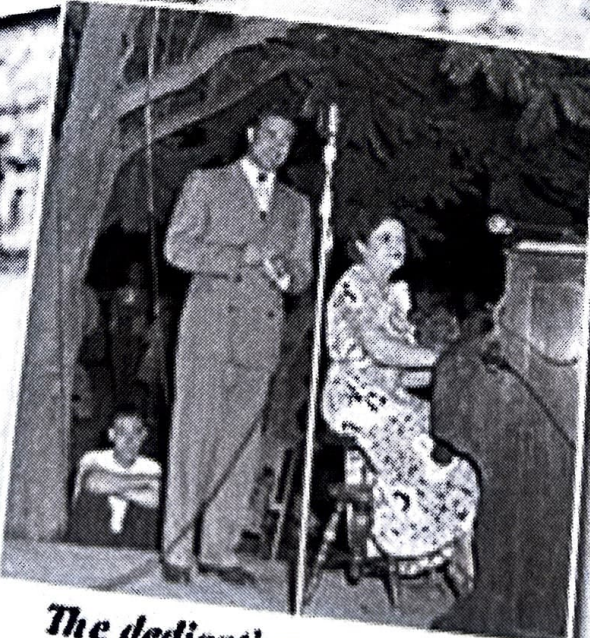
The original Shaffer Tool Works plant, located at Birch St and Redwood Ave.



A wind machine rises next to the Shaffer Tool Works plant on Pomona Ave. (Brea Blvd.)



When everything was working perfectly, the fountain was a beautiful sight along Brea Blvd.



The dedication ceremony took place in 1948.



Built in an octagon shape, the fountain graced City Hall Park for 21 years.

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The Shaffer Fountain - Then and Now

continued from page 4

cation ceremony was held in the park with music, crowds of people and a speech by then Mayor McCart. All this was then followed by the big event of the night — the ceremonial turning on of the fountain. Jets of water rose high into the air “to the surprise and amazement of the crowd.” They were even more impressed shortly thereafter when the changing colored lights were illuminated, making the fountain “a thing of beauty and a restful picture to watch.”

All went well for several years, but then by the early 60’s the fountain wasn’t working more than it was. The piping had deteriorated, and work was constantly being done to keep the water flowing. With all the problems, there was even talk in 1963 of turning the whole thing into one big planter!

Finally, in 1969 the City decided that it was time for the fountain to be removed, but a promise was made to the Shaffer Family that one day another fountain would take its place.

Eleven years later it looked as if that promise was going to be fulfilled when plans and a fountain model were shown to the public. Nothing ever happened though. Why not?

I became curious and contacted former Mayor Weddle who had been in office during that time. According to him, it was a period of drought and water conservation so building a fountain at that moment just wasn’t the best thing to do.

Unfortunately, it looked like the idea of a fountain had died, but six years ago when I heard the City had plans to place fountains in the downtown area, I had meetings and wrote letters asking that one of those be dedicated to Mr. Shaffer. No promises were made, but I began to hear positive comments by the City that it just might happen. A couple years later I moved away from Brea. Still nothing had been done fountainwise, but, as I learned later, Don Schweitzer whose father had worked for Mr. Shaffer, had picked up the ball and was trying to make the fountain a reality.

Finally last year, with the sound of falling water in the background, that long ago promise to the family was fulfilled. In a ceremony on the Birch Street Promenade, reminiscent of the one 53 years ago and attended by several members of the Shaffer Family, City officials and the public, Don, serving as emcee, spoke of Mr. Shaffer, his

accomplishments and his caring for his employees.

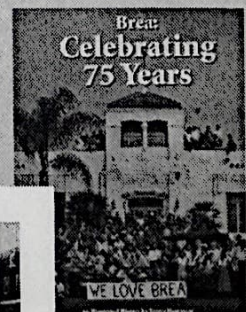
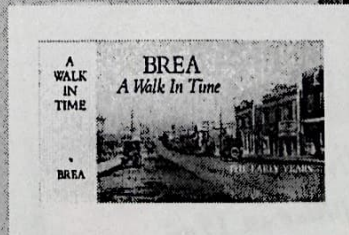
Sure, the new fountain with its oranges and green stems doesn’t look anything like the original one in the park, but that’s okay. I think Mr. Shaffer would have been pleased with it because after WWII one of the things he produced here in Brea at a plant on Pomona Ave. was a large wind machine on a high tower that was used to prevent freezing of citrus groves during periods of frost.

So, next time you’re down on Birch St. stop and take a look at the fountain, think of the original one, and, oh yeah, one last thing — don’t forget to glance down at the plaque.

On Sale Now at the Brea History Museum

Brea: Celebrating 75 Years. Written by Teresa Hampson, the book is 246 pages of photographs and recounts Brea from its early days as a major oil-production and agricultural center. \$28.00, incl. tax

Brea: A Walk in Time. An entertaining 2-hour video, hosted by Brea Historical Society Vice President, Brian Saul. Join Brian as he takes you on a tour of Brea’s historical landmarks and visits areas of the city that you didn’t know were there. \$14.95, incl. tax.



All proceeds from sales of the book and video go to assist the Society’s preservation efforts in Brea.

An early Brea remembers...

Letter to the Editor
Dear Editor,

I always enjoy the articles in your "Historical Happenings" publication. The August article, "The Stewart Tank Farm Fire of 1926" by Brian Saul really got my attention, especially the paragraph "The fire-induced cyclone that ripped off the roof of the Sutphen family home at the corner of Madrona and Cedar St." You may be interested in my experience during that fire and that particular incident.

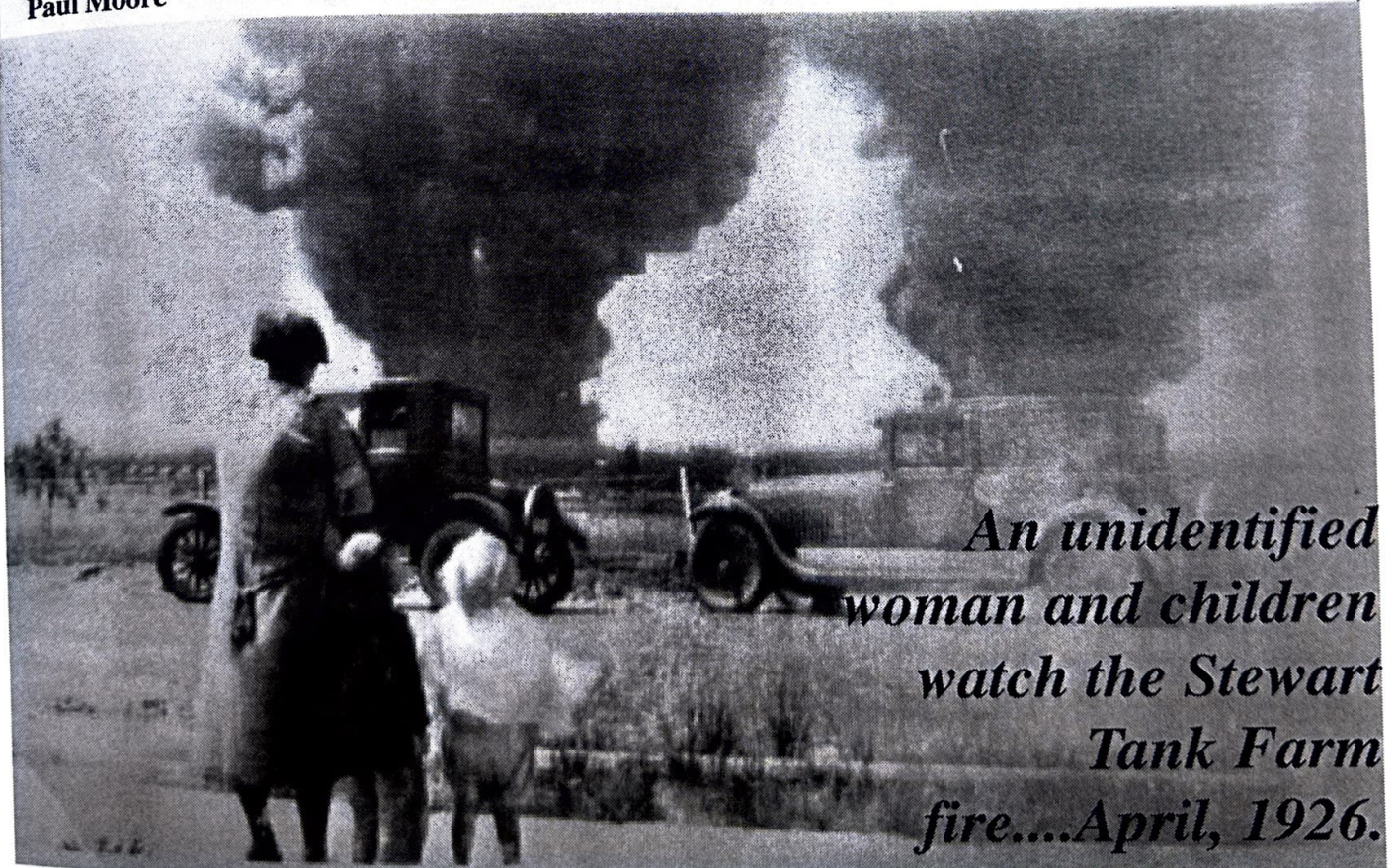
My parents, Elwood and Isabella Moore, were early (1913) residents of Brea. I was nine-years-old. My sister, Caroline, was thirteen. We lived at 201 Sievers Ave., on the west side of Brea. There was a walnut grove between us and the Tank Farm site.

That morning, when the fire started, I was outside playing and saw the lightning strike the two tanks. The following days were hectic with horror stories of how the hot, burning oil would boil over the tank walls and run through the grove towards our home.

One day, it was so bad my mother, sister and I were really frightened. Dad put us in our 1925 Maxwell, drove about two blocks and parked us on Cedar St. He then returned home to protect our property from those crazy people going through the yard to get closer to the fire. We stayed where Dad parked us, for a short time, then the wind started to blow. Things began falling on the car roof. It was scary.

A few minutes later, the wind really blew and howled. That is when the fire-induced cyclone ripped the roof off Sutphen's home. That cyclone picked the roof up then set it down right on top of our first parking space. We were fortunate and our home was safe from the fire. Years later, "Redevelopment" moved ahead.

Signed,
Paul Moore



An unidentified woman and children watch the Stewart Tank Farm fire....April, 1926.

On Cable Channel 3

You probably wonder what Brian Saul does with his free time....well, wonder no more! You can see him this month, Monday thru Thursday at 10a.m. and Thursday evenings at 7:30p.m. on Video Brea Line on Channel 3, talking about the history of the Shaffer Fountain. In early October, his new segment will give you facts, history and information about the Brea Sign and the Brea Clock. We all know how much Brian loves Brea history...and he always has some "tidbit" that makes his "Did You Know" segment fun and interesting. Be sure and watch!

Special Thanks to our Corporate Sponsors

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101 E. Imperial Hwy

Brea Historical Society

Jim Schweitzer, President
(714) 529-0635

Brian Saul, Vice President
(562) 698-5339

P.J. Mansur, Secretary/Treasurer
(714) 528-4240

Jim Crow, Board Member
(714) 529-3295

Marie Domenico, Board Member
(714) 529-6641

Lloyd Dudding, Board Member
(714) 256-4324

Edna Makins, Board Member
(714) 529-1755

During this time of National Mourning...

*The Brea Historical Society wishes to express
its prayers for the victims,
sorrow for their families,
and
gratitude to those that help and continue to
give.*

God Bless America

October Board Meeting:
Monday, Oct. 1, 2001, 7p.m.
at the Brea History Museum,
652 S. Brea Blvd.

Museum/Office Location:
652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea
Heights Shopping Center)
(714) 256-2283

Museum Hours:
Thursdays: 11a.m. until 1p.m.
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Or call to arrange a special tour!



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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 2nd Monday of the month
Mailing Deadline: 3rd Friday of the month

Vol. XVIII, No. 2
March, 2001

A Walk In Time: Part Three

by Brian Saul

In August of 1903 the long-awaited water pipeline finally reached its destination, but three months later something happened. The pipes were taken out and hauled back to Whittier. The Randolph Townsite Co. had canceled its contract with the E. Whittier Water Co. and had arranged to develop and pipe its own water to the entire Randolph tract.

"Mansions" to be built in the new town by Epes Randolph, fellow Pacific Electric Railway executive George E. Pillsbury and wealthy local land developer W.J. Hole were put on hold and then never constructed.

Finally, in an article in the Fullerton Tribune dated Dec. 10, 1903, it was reported that "the Randolph Townsite (Co.) people have been offered a good price by a Los Angeles syndicate for its 2,000 acres of La Habra (Valley) land and may sell in a few days."

What had happened? Why had events taken such a negative turn? And why were there very few references to Randolph in the newspapers during the following years?

It's felt that the failure to establish Randolph as a town probably was because of not being able to get enough water to the townsite. Also, from the start, it has been promised by developers that the Pacific Electric Railway would reach the area, but unfortunately they hadn't been able to get the right-of-way to Randolph.

Was Randolph dead? Not entirely. C.E. Utt continued growing peanuts on his land until 1906 when he sold it to Truman Berry of Whittier for approximately \$20,000. The "temporary" Brea Canyon School remained in use until 1910, when the new Randolph School was built on the southwest corner of what is now Brea Blvd. and Lambert Rd.. 1910 also saw in Randolph the arrival finally of the Pacific Electric Railway and the improvement of the water system.

Just as the lack of the railway and sufficient water

WHERE IS RANDOLPH

The La Habra Valley Land & Water Co. have just subdivided into 10 and 20 acre lots in the beautiful and fertile La Habra valley 2,000 acres of fine land as ever lay out of doors. It has no superior in South California for oranges or walnuts. An abundance of pure, fresh salt water is conveyed to the land by 36 inch cement pipe, and distributed on the land by smaller mains.

Your choice of this tract for \$150.00 per acre with one inch of water conveyed with every ten acres of land

TERMS: One-third cash, balance on one and two years terms at 6 per cent. OFFICE at RANDOLPH, the new townsite on the tract.

Parties wishing to make inquiries or to purchase lands at RANDOLPH can call on

J. F. ISBELL and CHESTER ROBINSON

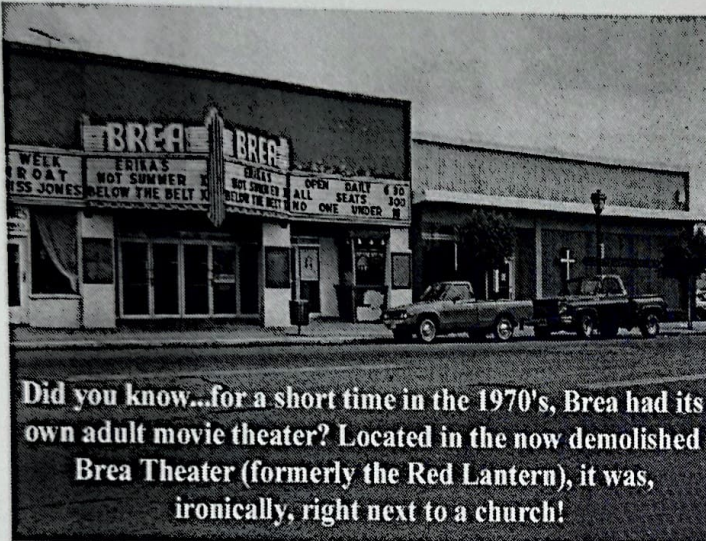
Agents for La Habra Valley Land & Water Co. at Randolph, J. C. Hunt at Whittier, or Townsend & Robinson at Long Beach.

The community of Randolph eventually failed as an enterprise, despite the efforts of developers to lure settlers and investors. This ad appeared in the Whittiers News, January 31, 1903.

had spelled the end of the town in 1903, ironically the arrival of these things also brought about the demise of Randolph, but this time it was only the name. In 1911, Randolph was changed to Brea, people began building homes on their newly-purchased townsite lots, businesses sprang up along Pomona Ave. (now Brea Blvd.), in 1917 we became an incorporated

continued on Page 4

Did You Know?: Little known facts about Brea.....Past and Present



Did you know...for a short time in the 1970's, Brea had its own adult movie theater? Located in the now demolished Brea Theater (formerly the Red Lantern), it was, ironically, right next to a church!

1. In the original plans for the current Civic Center, built in 1980, the courtyard was to be covered by a decorative canopy. The steel beams you can see now when you look up were to be for its supports.
2. The last remaining section of the site where the huge 1926 Brea oil tank fire took place will soon be developed into an industrial park. Located just west of Berry St., south of Central and north of Lambert, the area is currently covered with oil tanks. During Brea's 75th Birthday Jubilee in 1992, this was a stop on the Living History Bus Tour. Actors, as well as our historic Seagreaves Fire Truck, were on hand to recreate the 1926 disaster.
3. Speaking of fire equipment, Brea's first "fire station" was a wood shed on Ash St., just west of Brea Blvd. Located behind the original 1912 La Habra Bank Building, (later to be the post office and finally The Frame Place), the shed supposedly contained all that was needed in the early years to put out fires by the towns volunteer firemen.
4. There used to be a small town (in the 1880's) called Petrolia at the mouth of Tonner Canyon, located near the 57 Freeway Tonner Canyon exit.
5. At the top of the new Scout House, formerly old Brea City Hall, there's a black metal spire, or finial, that was made in our sister city of Lagos de Moreno, Mexico. At its very tip, shaped like an arrow, it says "Brea" on one side and "Lagos" on the other. The spire was put there

to replace the original one which was moved to the park's gazebo in the 1970's.

6. Among the items placed in the Civic Center time capsule to commemorate Brea's 75th Birthday, there is a Nintendo machine and a game belonging to then 15 year-old Miguel Saul. The capsule is to be opened in 2017 to celebrate our centennial.

7. When Brea Blvd. was being widened in the early 1990's, workmen, during their excavation, uncovered sections of the original cement street pavement. This narrow section of street, originally laid prior to 1920 was later covered with asphalt and then forgotten.

8. During the filming of an episode of the history video "Brea: A Walk in Time", near Brea Blvd. and Ash St. in 1992, the on-camera host's car was struck by a hit-and-run driver who tried to flee the scene. Fortunately for the host, the cameraman was able to zoom in on the car's license plate. This video was later turned over to the Brea Police and the driver was found and apprehended.

9. In 1995, while excavation was being done at Brea Junior High, an Indian stone metate and mano (a ancient mortar and pestel) were discovered, yet another sign of the original inhabitants of Brea.

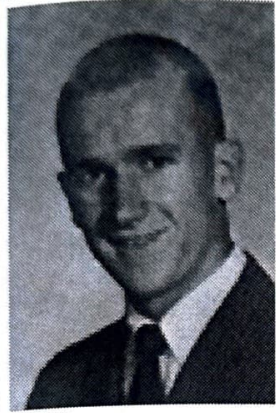
10. Back in the 1920's, there was serious talk about building a county dirigible base at the site of the Brea Airport, near the intersection of today's Imperial Hwy and Kramer. However, after much discussion, the plans were scrapped because of safety reasons. There were too many oil derricks in the vicinity and the hills were too close to the proposed site.

A Suggestion

Have you been to the third floor lobby of the Civic Center and seen the 1914 photos of old downtown Brea, plus the updated photos taken in the early 1990's? Wouldn't it be a good idea to now take a third set of photographs of our new downtown?

Spring Fling!!!

Make your reservations early for our Spring Fling to be held on May 3, 2001 at the Brea Bistro. This fund-raising event for the Brea History Museum begins at 5:30pm with a no-host bar and cocktail hour, followed by dinner at 6:30pm. Our very special guest



Randy Jones - 1968

is former San Diego Padre pitcher and Cy Young Award winner, Randy Jones, a 1968 graduate of Brea-Olinda High School. The 1923 Seagrave Fire Truck will be on display, as well as a classic car exhibit, musical entertainment and other fun and surprises! The cost per ticket is \$25 for an unforgettable evening that will benefit the preservation of history in

Brea. Tickets are limited, so make plans now to RSVP by contacting Edna Makins 714-529-1755, Marie Domenico 714-529-6640 or Jim Schweitzer 714-529-0635.

The Brea Bistro is located at: 600 S. Brea Blvd., Brea, CA.

Building Your Family Tree

SIGN-UP NOW for classes to be held at THE BREA HISTORY MUSEUM and learn how to build your family tree. The class is scheduled for six consecutive Tuesdays, beginning on April 24, 2001 through May 29, 2001 from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. Our instructor will be Allyson Smith. A \$6.00 material fee will be due at the first class.

If you have specific questions you would like answered about searching for your ancestors and/or wish to enroll in the class, contact P.J. Mansur at 714-528-4240. Your name and questions will be given to our instructor.

The Brea History Museum is located at: 652 S. Brea Blvd., Brea, CA. We hope we see you there!



Brea Historical Society

- Jim Schweitzer, President (714) 529-0635
- Brian Saul, Vice President (562) 698-5339
- P.J. Mansur, Secretary (714) 528-4240
- Edna Makins, Board Member (714) 529-1755
- Jim Crow, Board Member (714) 529-3295
- Marie Domenico, Board Member (714) 529-6641

April Board Meeting:
Monday, April 2, 2001, 7:00pm
at 180 Olinda Dr, Brea, CA

Office Location:
652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea Heights Shopping Center (714) 256-2283

Let Us Know

This is your newsletter and we really want to make it both enjoyable for you to read as well as informative. In order to do that we need your input about its content as well as the kinds of articles you'd like to see in the future. Please write us or include your comments with your membership application at the Brea Historical Society, P.O. Box 9764, Brea, CA 92821 or leave a message for Brian at 714-256-2283.



Membership Application

Individual	\$ 15.00
Family	\$ 25.00
Sponsor	\$ 50.00
Patron	\$100.00
Business Patron	\$250.00

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Email Address: _____
 Comments: _____

A Walk in Time, continued

city and 84 years later we're celebrating our 84th birthday.

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Brea Historical Society

P.O. Box 9764

Brea, CA 92822-9764

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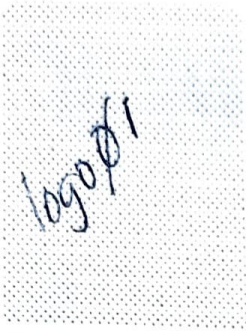
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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 2nd Monday of the month
Mailing Deadline: 3rd Friday of the month

Vol. XVIII, No. 2
March, 2001

A Walk In Time: Part Three

by Brian Saul

In August of 1903 the long-awaited water pipeline finally reached its destination, but three months later something happened. The pipes were taken out and hauled back to Whittier. The Randolph Townsite Co. had canceled its contract with the E. Whittier Water Co. and had arranged to develop and pipe its own water to the entire Randolph tract.

"Mansions" to be built in the new town by Epes Randolph, fellow Pacific Electric Railway executive George E. Pillsbury and wealthy local land developer W.J. Hole were put on hold and then never constructed.

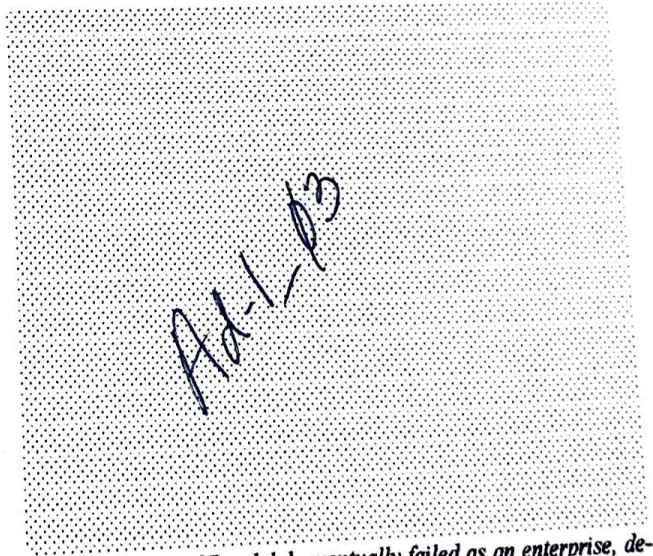
Finally, in an article in the Fullerton Tribune dated Dec. 10, 1903, it was reported that "the Randolph Townsite (Co.) people have been offered a good price by a Los Angeles syndicate for its 2,000 acres of La Habra (Valley) land and may sell in a few days."

What had happened? Why had events taken such a negative turn? And why were there very few references to Randolph in the newspapers during the following years?

It's felt that the failure to establish Randolph as a town probably was because of not being able to get enough water to the townsite. Also, from the start, it has been promised by developers that the Pacific Electric Railway would reach the area, but unfortunately they hadn't been able to get the right-of-way to Randolph.

Was Randolph dead? Not entirely. C.E. Utt continued growing peanuts on his land until 1906 when he sold it to Truman Berry of Whittier for approximately \$20,000. The "temporary" Brea Canyon School remained in use until 1910, when the new Randolph School was built on the southwest corner of what is now Brea Blvd. and Lambert Rd.. 1910 also saw in Randolph the arrival finally of the Pacific Electric Railway and the improvement of the water system.

Just as the lack of the railway and sufficient water



The community of Randolph eventually failed as an enterprise, despite the efforts of developers to lure settlers and investors. This ad appeared in the Whittiers News, January 31, 1903.

had spelled the end of the town in 1903, ironically the arrival of these things also brought about the demise of Randolph but this time it was only the name. In 1911, Randolph was changed to Brea, people began building homes on their newly purchased townsite lots, businesses sprang up along Pomona Ave. (now Brea Blvd.), in 1917 we became an incorporated

continued on Pa

Did You Know?: Little known facts about Brea.....Past and Present

BreaThoi

1. In the original plans for the current Civic Center, built in 1980, the courtyard was to be covered by a decorative canopy. The steel beams you can see now when you look up were to be for its supports.
2. The last remaining section of the site where the huge 1926 Brea oil tank fire took place will soon be developed into an industrial park. Located just west of Berry St., south of Central and north of Lambert, the area is currently covered with oil tanks. During Brea's 75th Birthday Jubilee in 1992, this was a stop on the Living History Bus Tour. Actors, as well as our historic Seagreaves Fire Truck, were on hand to recreate the 1926 disaster.
3. Speaking of fire equipment, Brea's first "fire station" was a wood shed on Ash St., just west of Brea Blvd. Located behind the original 1912 La Habra Bank Building, (later to be the post office and finally The Frame Place), the shed supposedly contained all that was needed in the early years to put out fires by the towns volunteer firemen.
4. There used to be a small town (in the 1880's) called Petrolia at the mouth of Tonner Canyon, located near the 57 Freeway Tonner Canyon exit.
5. At the top of the new Scout House, formerly old Brea City Hall, there's a black metal spire, or finial, that was made in our sister city of Lagos de Moreno, Mexico. At its very tip, shaped like an arrow, it says "Brea" on one side and "Lagos" on the other. The spire was put there

to replace the original one which was moved to the park's gazebo in the 1970's.

6. Among the items placed in the Civic Center time capsule to commemorate Brea's 75th Birthday, there is a Nintendo machine and a game belonging to then 15 year-old Miguel Saul. The capsule is to be opened in 2017 to celebrate our centennial.

7. When Brea Blvd. was being widened in the early 1990's, workmen, during their excavation, uncovered sections of the original cement street pavement. This narrow section of street, originally laid prior to 1920 was later covered with asphalt and then forgotten.

8. During the filming of an episode of the history video "Brea: A Walk in Time", near Brea Blvd. and Ash St. in 1992, the on-camera host's car was struck by a hit-and-run driver who tried to flee the scene. Fortunately for the host, the cameraman was able to zoom in on the car's license plate. This video was later turned over to the Brea Police and the driver was found and apprehended.

9. In 1995, while excavation was being done at Brea Junior High, an Indian stone metate and mano (a ancient mortar and pestel) were discovered, yet another sign of the original inhabitants of Brea.

10. Back in the 1920's, there was serious talk about building a county dirigible base at the site of the Brea Airport, near the intersection of today's Imperial Hwy and Kramer. However, after much discussion, the plans were scrapped because of safety reasons. There were too many oil derricks in the vicinity and the hills were too close to the proposed site.

A Suggestion

Have you been to the third floor lobby of the Civic Center and seen the 1914 photos of old downtown Brea, plus the updated photos taken in the early 1970's? Wouldn't it be a good idea to now take a third set of photographs of our new downtown?

Spring Fling!!!

Make your reservations early for our Spring Fling to be held on May 3, 2001 at the Brea Bistro. This fund-raising event for the Brea History Museum begins at 5:30pm with a no-host bar and cocktail hour, followed by dinner at 6:30pm. Our very special guest

RSVP

is former San Diego Padre pitcher and Cy Young Award winner, Randy Jones, a 1968 graduate of Brea-Olinda High School. The 1923 Seagrave Fire Truck will be on display, as well as a classic car exhibit, musical entertainment and other fun and surprises! The cost per ticket is \$25 for an unforgettable evening that will benefit the preservation of history in Brea. Tickets are limited, so make plans now to RSVP by contacting Edna Makins 714-529-1755, Marie Domenico 714-529-6640 or Jim Schweitzer 714-529-0625.

Randy Jones - 1968

The Brea Bistro is located at: 600 S. Brea Blvd., Brea, CA.

Building Your Family Tree

SIGN-UP NOW for classes to be held at THE BREA HISTORY MUSEUM and learn how to build your family tree. The class is scheduled for six consecutive Tuesdays, beginning on April 24, 2001 through May 29, 2001 from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. Our instructor will be Allyson Smith. A \$6.00 material fee will be due at the first class.

If you have specific questions you would like answered about searching for your ancestors and/or wish to enroll in the class, contact P.J. Mansur at 714-528-4240. Your name and questions will be given to our instructor.

The Brea History Museum is located at: 652 S. Brea Blvd., Brea, CA. We hope we see you there!

tree\$21

Brea Historical Society

- Jim Schweitzer, President (714) 529-0635*
- Brian Saul, Vice President (562) 698-5339*
- P.J. Mansur, Secretary (714) 528-4240*
- Edna Makins, Board Member (714) 529-1755*
- Jim Crow, Board Member (714) 529-3295*
- Marie Domenico, Board Member (714) 529-6641*

April Board Meeting:
Monday, April 2, 2001, 7:00pm
at 180 Olinda Dr, Brea, CA
Office Location:
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Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month
 Mailing Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month

“The Easterly 90 feet of said lot...”

by
 Kathy Canon

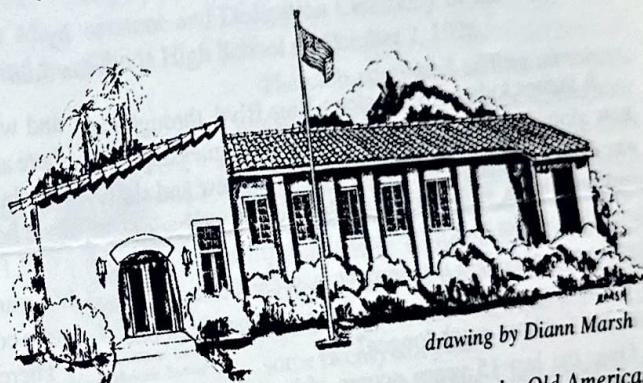
Lot 13 in Block A Tract #154 was once just a block drawn on a map dividing properties in the City of Brea, but today it is known as Old City Hall Park. On April 11, 1928, the title-holders to this tract of land, Brea Post #181 American Legion, represented by H.C. Yarbrough, Ted Craig and R.H. Stegemen, entered into an agreement with the city to “sell said property to the City of Brea, for the sum of \$4000 upon the following conditions”.

Among the conditions agreed to were the “absolute and unconditional right” of Brea Post #181, American Legion “to use the Easterly 90 feet of said lot for Legion purposes”. This included the right to “have a new building erected on the Easterly 90 feet of said lot” (to replace the original wooden structure built in 1920) and that the building would be erected “within a reasonable amount of time”.

On February 4, 1930, Brea Post #181 accepted the report of their building committee and contracted with Fullerton builder, P.N. Schmoker to build the Spanish-style structure presently located at the corner of Elm St. and Brea Blvd.

In 1934, the Legion Post transferred ownership of the building to the City of Brea with the provision that it could be reclaimed at any time during the next 10 years by paying the city one dollar. Brea Post #181 continued to occupy the building for many years in conjunction with the City Police Department.

In 1984, the former American Legion Hall was placed



drawing by Diann Marsh

The “Easterly 90 feet of said lot...” now known as the Old American Legion Building.

on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Dept of the Interior.

Now, in 2001, the “Easterly 90 feet of said lot” begins a new chapter in its history. The proposal recently put before the City Council by Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center Chairman, Don Schweitzer, is the first step towards a new future for this historic building.

This proposal would give a much needed renovation to a fine, old building and create the perfect environment to house the photographs, artifacts and memorabilia entrusted to the Brea Historical Society. The Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center would provide children and adults in Brea, as well as surrounding communities, with research facilities, interactive historical plays, meeting and conference facilities and an educational center to connect our schools to our rich history.

continued on p



Colonial Revival Home at 400 S. Madrona

drawing by Diann Marsh

Caring About History is Important

by

Brian Saul

A visitor today driving along Brea Blvd. through the new downtown would have a hard time guessing that our city is 84 years old. Everything is all new and shiny and very little, if anything, of the old Brea remains. A few blocks east though, everything is different, at least for the present. Here is where our past can be seen. Here is where the old homes tell the story of what Brea once was, but for how much longer?

Over the last 15 years, scores of houses have been torn down. Even whole neighborhoods have disappeared to make way for redevelopment. And why did they have to go? The answer is simple. The neighborhoods got run down, most people didn't care any longer and the area became ripe for change.

Now the question is, why didn't people care? That question is also easy to answer. Many just didn't appreciate what they had. To most Breans, this area had simply become "that old neighborhood."

Every time I go to the Fullerton Library, I pass through some very special areas of that city. Street after street in the downtown area is lined by simple, older homes built about the same time as many of those here in Brea. There are literally thousands of them, and what's great about these neighborhoods is that they have become places where people *want* to live, not where they *have* to live. Houses are well-cared for, the neighborhoods are clean and the owners seem to be proud of their areas.

Coming back to Brea, we too have sections in the downtown area where older homes are well cared for

and where there is pride of ownership. Unfortunately, there aren't many of these places left. Beautiful old craftsman bungalows, provincial revival and Mediterranean-style homes on the 100 and 200 blocks of Flower, Redwood, Poplar and Laurel Avenues became run-down over the years and were replaced by apartment houses and condo complexes.

There is one area of the city, though, that is still almost totally intact and looks in many ways like it did when the houses lining its streets were built 80 years ago. I'm speaking of the neighborhood surrounding old City Hall Park.

In the early years of Brea's history, this land belonged to the Union Oil Co. Then on June 8, 1921, it was announced that Union would sub-divide part of this land into 62 lots and build homes for its employees. These homes would be along what is now the 400 block of Walnut (west side), the 400 block of Madrona (both sides) and the east side of Sievers.

Described at the time in the local "Brea Star" newspaper as "one of Brea's best locations for a beautiful residential district," this new tract, continued the "Star", "shows the faith the Union Oil Co. has in the future of the city. It encourages others to make definite plans for the large city that is bound to develop here in the future."

Construction began soon after the announcement was made in the paper. Besides the popular craftsman bunga-

continued on page 6

Masonic Gateway Lodge No. 339 - A Rich History in Brea

by

Kathy Canon and Jack E. Dotson

The history of Masonry goes back hundreds of years. No one is sure just when and how it was formed, but a widely held belief among Masonic scholars is that it developed in Europe during the Middle Ages from stonemason's guilds that built the churches, cathedrals, castles and battlements that were part of everyday life.

The oldest document making reference to Masons is the Regius Poem, printed in 1390. This document is believed to have been a copy of an even earlier work.

Documented history shows that in 1717, four Masonic Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of England in London. Masonic Lodges quickly formed throughout Europe and across the Atlantic in Colonial America.

Because of their desire to restore the dignity of man, Freemasons promote liberty of the individual, the right of people to worship as they choose, the formation of democratic governments and the importance of education to empower individuals economically, intellectually and as citizens.

Many of our America's founding fathers were Masons, including Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere and John Hancock. George Washington was the Master of his Lodge even as he served as President (the only to have done so) and was sworn into office on a Masonic Bible. That Bible has been used in almost every presidential inauguration since and is now brought out from the Grand Lodge in New York only for that purpose.

The symbols on today's dollar bill related to Masonry. The all-seeing eye is Masonic symbology and the pyramid denotes America as a spiritual nation with additional work to do - this is why the capstone is not connected to the base of the pyramid, symbolizing the unfinished work.

Freemasonry grew rapidly throughout the United States during the 1800's and 1900's. Since government did not provide social entitlements during the earlier years, the Masonic tradition of founding orphanages and homes for the aged and infirm, along with support for free public education, became a touchstone for society.

On April 3, 1926 five Master Masons met in the Brown

building in Brea to discuss the forming of a new Masonic Lodge. The group included Lester L. Lemmon and Charles C. Kinsler (serving as chairman and secretary respectively), J.H. Robinson, Albert Boyd and R. E. Critchlow. They continued meeting with other Masons in the area, and their ranks grew rapidly.

As more Masons joined the group, it soon took on the name of Brea Masonic Club. That club assisted Deputy Grand Master Will H. Fischer during the Cornerstone and Dedication Ceremony of the "old" Brea-Olinda High School on October 2, 1926.

The club continued adding members, meeting at various locations throughout the city. On November 8, 1926, the club decided to lease part of the Sewell Building on Pomona Avenue (now Brea Blvd.) - a lease was signed on December 1, 1926 and their leasehold converted into a Lodge Room in which they subsequently met for some twenty-six years.

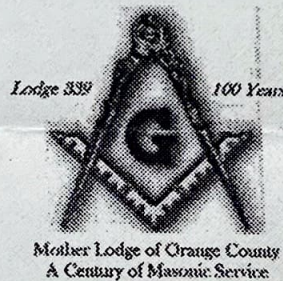
The Brea Masonic Club evolved into Citrol Masonic Lodge (for citrus and oil), so named to avoid confusion with LaBrea Lodge then in existence near Los Angeles.

Dispensation for Citrol Lodge was granted early in 1926, and was instituted by Henry MacMaster, Inspector of the 97th Masonic District, on March 4, 1927. Citrol Lodge grew to more than 200 members and sponsored affiliated organizations such as Eastern Star, DeMolay, Job's Daughters and Rainbow for Girls.

Groundbreaking for the Citrol Masonic Hall at Imperial Hwy and Sycamore took place in April, 1952, and on March 6, 1954, Frank Harwell, Jr. became the first Grand Master of California Masons to officially visit Citrol Lodge when officiated during the Cornerstone and Dedication Ceremony.

With a cash outlay of "about \$4,000" and "all other work and material donated", the "Brea Star" newspaper reported on March 3, 1954 that "The temple will house a large lodge hall with a mezzanine, a dining room with a

continued on page 8



A History of John Yriarte and his Family

Part Two

by Kathy Canon

Part One of the History of John Yriarte and his family was published in the April issue of Historical Happenings. After immigrating to the United States from the Basque province of Spain, John's grandparents, Patricio and Pascuala Yriarte settled in Brea (then Randolph) in 1905. Soon, Felix, Agustin, Julian, Ysabel, Mary and Ysidoro were born. After Ysidoro died in infancy, the five surviving children grew to have families and farms of their own in Brea. Agustin Yriarte met and married Lorenza Lorea and their family soon included John, Patricio and Anita Yriarte. The following is Part Two of the History of John Yriarte and his Family.

John and his family were living on East Ash St. on April 8, 1926. He remembers this day, as do so many other early Breans, as the day of the huge oil storage tank fire near what is now Berry St. and Lambert Rd. He recalls the storm coming in the night before with heavy rain and winds. By dawn, thunder was rolling across the sky. At approximately 9a.m., lightning struck at least one of the storage tanks, setting it ablaze with an explosion loud and strong enough to blow open the door of their East Ash St. home. The fire raged throughout the day, filling the sky with black smoke and raining soot and ashes onto the city into the night.

John also recalls sitting on his back porch on Ash St. with his family,

watching the planes and their death defying maneuvers in the Air Shows held at the Brea Airport (near today's intersection of Kramer and Imperial Hwy).



Left to right - Patricio, Anita and John Yriarte. Photo circa 1935.

After completing his elementary education, John attended the old Brea-Olinda High School, then located on Birch St. He graduated in 1935, third in his class and is remembered in his yearbook as "...solitary as an oyster". He was on the school honor roll, participated in track for 3 years and served as president of the schools Spanish Club in his senior year. When John graduated, there were a total of 49 people in his class,

including Harvey Sweet and Katherine Fanning.

Sadly, 1935 brought tragedy to Agustin and Lorenza Yriarte and their family. After battling tuberculosis a few years earlier, Anita Yriarte had contracted the disease again. Conventional treatment at the time was to collapse the infected lung and then, prolonged rest. After what was believed to be a full recovery, Anita became ill again shortly after grammar school and her remaining lung became infected. In August 1941, Anita died, just a month short of her 21st birthday.

After high school, John enrolled in Fullerton Junior College, taking business courses until 1937. During these years of "The Great Depression", jobs were hard to find, even in Brea. John worked as a warehouseman until December 5, 1939, when he went to work for Southern Counties Gas Company, known today as Southern California Gas, for \$100 per month. Shortly after taking this job, John bought his first car, a 1938 Chevy, for \$800 from Barton Chevrolet on Brea Blvd. at Birch St., which later became Pawlack Tile.

Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, John registered for the draft in Fullerton and was drafted November 12, 1941 and sent to Fort Crockett, near Galveston, Texas. He served just over four years in the 20th

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John Yriarte

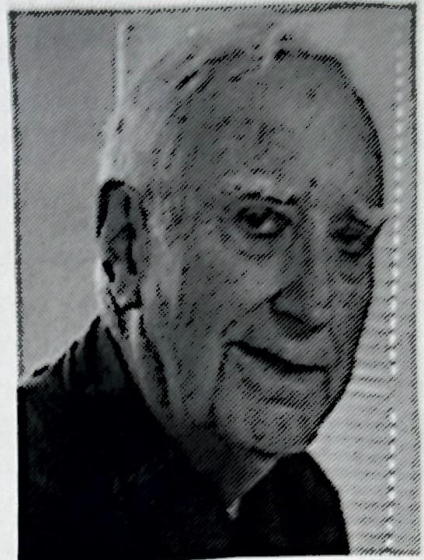
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Coastal Artillery Unit. This was John's first time out of California.

In December 1945 when John returned home to Brea from the service, he found his job waiting for him, where he stayed until his retirement in 1982. During those years, Lorenza Yriarte died of a stroke in 1950 at the age of 61. Four years later, John moved to Orange and lived there until 1968 when he returned once more to Brea. In 1983, Agustin Yriarte died at the age of 94.

Over the span of John's life here in Brea, he has experienced much. He's seen Hollywood production companies come to town to shoot movie back-grounds and scenes for stars like William Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy) as well as Lana Turner in "The Postman Always Rings Twice". When he first started

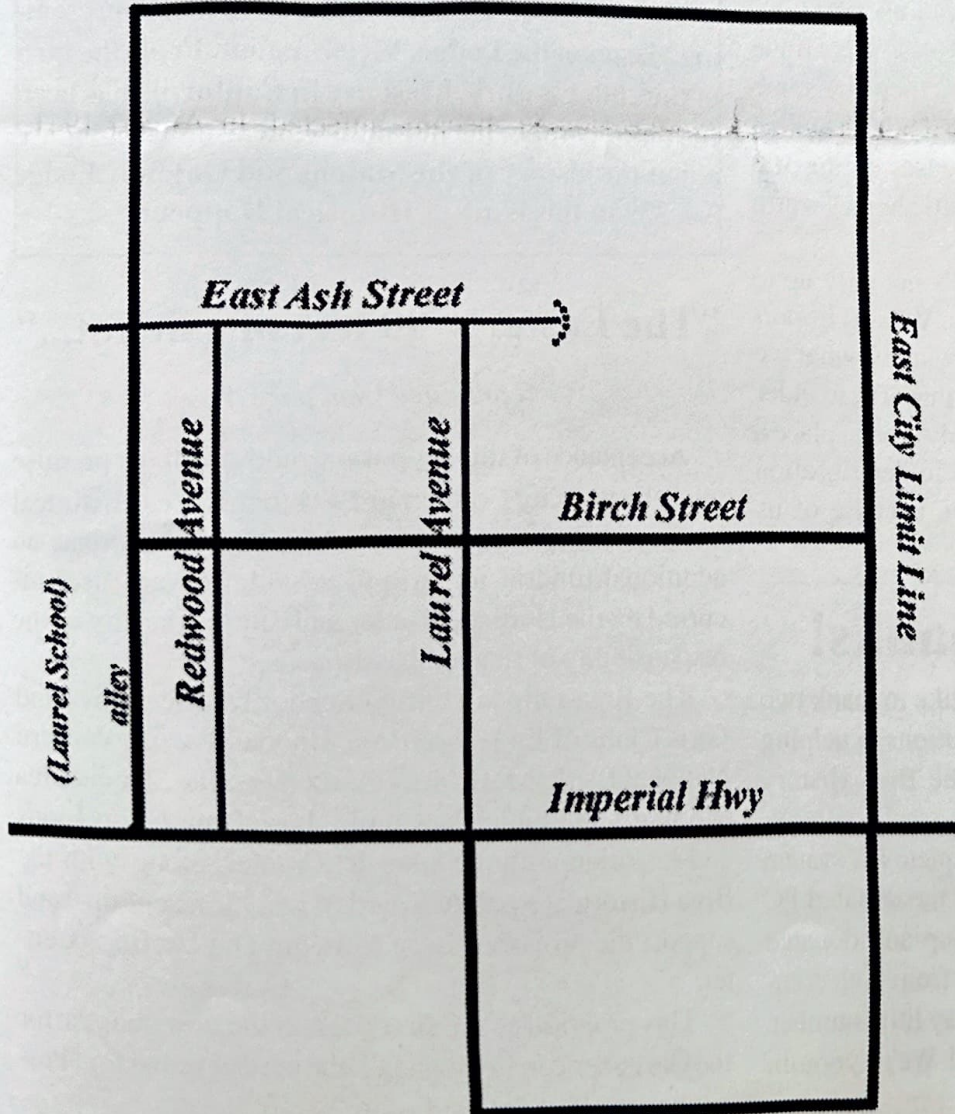
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John Yriarte at his home in Brea. April, 2001

~N~

Pacific Electric Railroad



working for the Gas Co., they serviced 50,000 meters. When he retired, they were servicing 600,000.

Over the years, groves and orchards were subject to disease and development and the old Yriarte Ranch eventually turned into much of what is now the City of Brea. Only Ysabel Yriarte's heirs still own a very small portion of what was the Yriarte Ranch, The Brea Ranch Center located on Imperial Hwy.

Imperial Hwy., Laurel Avenue, Poplar, Elm, Ash, Randolph, Birch Streets...names we all know. Streets we all drive. Once part of the Yriarte Ranch, now a very large part of Brea's history.

The Brea Historical Society would like to thank John Yriarte for sharing his memories and photographs of Brea and his family for this article.

Do you have an interesting topic or know a Brea resident who would be a perfect subject for a future Historical Happenings article? Let us know by calling the Brea Historical Society at 714-256-2283 and leave a message for Kathy Canon.

Caring About History is Important

continued from page 2

low homes with their low-pitched roofs, wide porches and horizontal windows grouped in threes, there were also Mediterranean-style homes covered by red tile roofs. Interspersed amongst them were three or four beautiful colonial revival homes.

Especially interesting today is the 400 block of Madrona. Just as in Fullerton, the houses here are well-cared for, and there is neighborhood pride in keeping the street a special place to live. I've always said that if I could move to any place in the city, this is where it would be.

My hope for this area is that it becomes a place appreciated for what it is. No, it's not filled with big Victorian houses that everyone seems to love, but it is filled with homes that represent the lifestyles of the early Breans who settled this community.

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Of course, my answer is yes, but it's not only up to me. It's the responsibility of all Breans. What is important is that we are aware and remain aware of what we have before we lose it. It's as simple as that. These older Brea neighborhoods that still exist are truly special places. They certainly don't deserve to be lost to deterioration or redevelopment, as others have been, because of us not caring until it's too late.

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Vannoye Mastrejuan donated a complete PC system to the Museum and Rick Herchek took the donated PC and the PC we were using into his shop and donated parts and time, combined usable parts from both computers and built us a very smart and sassy little number.

Thanks, you guys, for the new jet! We're zoomin' now!!

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"The Easterly 90 feet of said lot..."

continued from page 1

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This proposal is the first page in the new chapter for the Old American Legion Hall, the perfect venue for "Preserving the Past for the Future".

Spring Fling Fun!

The Brea Historical Society wishes to thank Jon Lyng and his staff at the Brea Bistro for the wonderful job they did to see that our Spring Fling was a success. Without their warm smiles and professionalism, our function would not have been as great a treat as it was for everyone attending.

We also wish to thank Jack Smith and the Moodys for the classic car display, Don Schweitzer for handling the emcee microphone, everyone who donated items for the opportunity drawings and, of course, Randy Jones. His wit, humor and wonderful stories of his major league baseball career made our Spring Fling a grand slam homerun!

Look for a full re-cap of the Spring Fling in the June issue of Historical Happenings.

Brea Historical Society

Jim Schweitzer, President

(714) 529-0635

Brian Saul, Vice President

(562) 698-5339

P.J. Mansur, Secretary/Treasurer

(714) 528-4240

Edna Makins, Board Member

(714) 529-1755

Jim Crow, Board Member

(714) 529-3295

Marie Domenico, Board Member

(714) 529-6641

Lloyd Dudding, Board Member

(714) 256-4324

June Board Meeting:

Monday, June 4, 2001, 7:00pm
at the Brea History Museum, 652 S.

Brea Blvd.

Office Location:

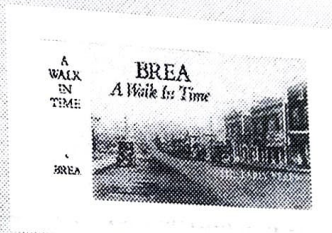
652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea Heights
Shopping Center) (714) 256-2283

On Sale Now at the Brea History Museum

When you make your next visit to the Brea History Museum, be sure and purchase your copy of the book, *Brea: Celebrating 75 Years*. Written by Teresa Hampson, the book is 246 pages of photographs and recounts of Brea from its early days as a major oil-production and agricultural center to the early 1990's.

Brea: A Walk in Time is an entertaining 2 hour video, hosted by Brea Historical Society Vice President, Brian Saul. Join Brian as he takes you on a tour of Brea's historical landmarks and visits areas of the city that you didn't know were there.

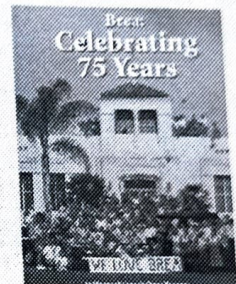
All proceeds from sales of the book and video go to assist the Society's preservation efforts in Brea.



Brea: A Walk in Time. A 2 hour
video of the early years of Brea.

Hosted by Brian Saul

\$14.95, incl. tax.



*Brea: Celebrating 75
Years*. By Teresa
Hampson.

\$28.00, incl. tax.

Volunteers! We Need You!

This is *your* Historical Society and we always need volunteers on Saturdays between the hours of 11a.m. and 2p.m. to help set up new exhibits, catalog items and research Brea history. If you have the time, even an hour, join us at the Brea History Museum, 652 S. Brea Blvd., Brea, CA 92821 or leave a message for Brian at 714-256-2283. Not a member? Join now and help us preserve the history of Brea.

Membership Application



Individual	\$ 15.00
Family	\$ 25.00
Sponsor	\$ 50.00
Patron	\$100.00
Business Patron	\$250.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Comments: _____

Masonic History in Brea

continued from page 3

modern kitchen, recreation hall and two sets of restrooms. The building will have no indebtedness when completed".

Over the years, Citrol Lodge laid cornerstones for many landmarks in Brea, including Fanning and Country Hills Elementary Schools and the Brea Civic Center. On December 2, 1989, they laid the cornerstone for the "new" Brea-Olinda High School on Wildcat Way.

In the 70's, 80's and 90's, membership in North Orange County Masonic Lodges began to decline. Faced with fewer and fewer members available for serving the principal offices in both Citrol and Fullerton Lodge, they consolidated as Gateway Lodge No. 339 on December 1, 1996, now meeting in the Brea Masonic Hall.

Gateway Lodge No. 339 is among numerous Masonic organizations in the United States that contribute to various charities at the rate of some \$3 million per day. These charities include Scottish Rite and Shriner's hospitals for disabled and handicapped children, Masonic Alms for

the Elderly, children's homes, retirement and care facilities, eye clinics and language disorder centers. Their services are free of charge to those they serve, made possible through endowments compiled through the years by Masonic members and organizations.

On June 6, 2001, Master Victor Asfour of Gateway Lodge will present awards to deserving Brea Junior High School students during their U.S. Constitution Observance. And on June 12, the Lodge will present scholarships to three exceptional Brea-Olinda High School students for academic excellence and community service.

Membership in the Masonic Lodges of America now exceeds 4 million. Masonry is by far the oldest and largest brotherhood in the world, and has compiled a vast, rich history in Brea and throughout the world.

Many Brea pioneers were members of the Citrol Lodge, and their adherence to the principal Masonic tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth has helped make Brea the thriving community we know today.

The Brea Historical Society thanks Past Fullerton Master, Jack E. Dotson for his time, assistance and contribution of materials to the Brea History Museum in researching this article.

Where Are YOU???

Friends! Romans! Members of the Brea Historical Society!!! WHERE ARE YOU??

We've got two **AWESOME** new exhibits at the Brea History Museum and you haven't been here yet to experience them!

I'm not even going to tell you what they are...you have to come down and find out. BUT!! I will give you THREE hints: they're about Oil History, Charles C. Kinsler and BASEBALL...so, what are you waiting for? Is today Thursday between 11a.m. and 1p.m. or Saturday between 11a.m. and 2p.m.? If it is, then drop this newsletter and **GET DOWN HERE NOW!** We're **OPEN!!!**

Special Thanks

to our

**Business Patron
Pacific Western
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275 N. Brea Blvd



Brea Historical Society

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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month
Mailing Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month

VOL. XVIII, No. 5
May, 2001

“The Easterly 90 feet of said lot...”

by
Kathy Canon

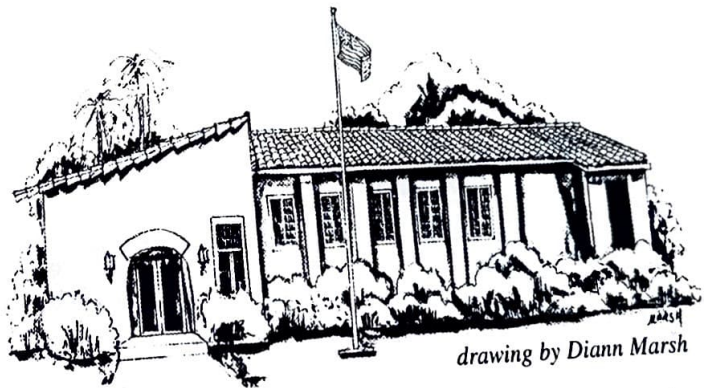
Lot 13 in Block A Tract #154 was once just a block drawn on a map dividing properties in the City of Brea, but today it is known as Old City Hall Park. On April 11, 1928, the titleholders to this tract of land, Brea Post #181 American Legion, represented by H.C. Yarbrough, Ted Craig and R.H. Stegemen, entered into an agreement with the city to “sell said property to the City of Brea, for the sum of \$4000 upon the following conditions”.

Among the conditions agreed to were the “absolute and unconditional right” of Brea Post #181, American Legion “to use the Easterly 90 feet of said lot for Legion purposes”. This included the right to “have a new building erected on the Easterly 90 feet of said lot” (to replace the original wooden structure built in 1920) and that the building would be erected “within a reasonable amount of time”.

On February 4, 1930, Brea Post #181 accepted the report of their building committee and contracted with Fullerton builder, P.N. Schmoker to build the Spanish-style structure presently located at the corner of Elm St. and Brea Blvd.

In 1934, the Legion Post transferred ownership of the building to the City of Brea with the provision that it could be reclaimed at any time during the next 10 years by paying the city one dollar. Brea Post #181 continued to occupy the building for many years in conjunction with the City Police Department.

In 1984, the former American Legion Hall was placed



The “Easterly 90 feet of said lot...” now known as the Old American Legion Building.

on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Dept of the Interior.

Now, in 2001, the “Easterly 90 feet of said lot” begins a new chapter in its history. The proposal recently put before the City Council by Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center Chairman, Don Schweitzer, is the first step towards a new future for this historic building.

This proposal would give a much needed renovation to a fine, old building and create the perfect environment to house the photographs, artifacts and memorabilia entrusted to the Brea Historical Society. The Brea Historical Museum and Heritage Center would provide children and adults in Brea, as well as surrounding communities, with research facilities, interactive historical displays, meeting and conference facilities and an educational center to connect our schools to our rich history.

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Colonial Revival Home at 400 S. Madrona

drawing by Diann Marsh

Caring About History is Important

by
Brian Saul

A visitor today driving along Brea Blvd. through the new downtown would have a hard time guessing that our city is 84 years old. Everything is all new and shiny and very little, if anything, of the old Brea remains. A few blocks east though, everything is different, at least for the present. Here is where our past can be seen. Here is where the old homes tell the story of what Brea once was, but for how much longer?

Over the last 15 years, scores of houses have been tom down. Even whole neighborhoods have disappeared to make way for redevelopment. And why did they have to go? The answer is simple. The neighborhoods got run down, most people didn't care any longer and the area became ripe for change.

Now the question is, why didn't people care? That question is also easy to answer. Many just didn't appreciate what they had. To most Breans, this area had simply become “that old neighborhood.”

Every time I go to the Fullerton Library, I pass through some very special areas of that city. Street after street in the downtown area is lined by simple, older homes built about the same time as many of those here in Brea. There are literally thousands of them, and what's great about these neighborhoods is that they have become places where people want to live, not where they have to live. Houses are well-cared for, the neighborhoods are clean and the owners seem to be proud of their areas.

Coming back to Brea, we too have sections in the downtown area where older homes are well cared for

and where there is pride of ownership. Unfortunately, there aren't many of these places left. Beautiful old craftsman bungalows, provincial revival and Mediterranean-style homes on the 100 and 200 blocks of Flower, Redwood, Poplar and Laurel Avenues became run-down over the years and were replaced by apartment houses and condo complexes.

There is one area of the city, though, that is still almost totally intact and looks in many ways like it did when the houses lining its streets were built 80 years ago. I'm speaking of the neighborhood surrounding old City Hall Park.

In the early years of Brea's history, this land belonged to the Union Oil Co. Then on June 8, 1921, it was announced that Union would sub-divide part of this land into 62 lots and build homes for its employees. These homes would be along what is now the 400 block of Walnut (west side), the 400 block of Madrona (both sides) and the east side of Sievers.

Described at the time in the local “Brea Star” newspaper as “one of Brea's best locations for a beautiful residential district,” this new tract, continued the “Star”, “shows the faith the Union Oil Co. has in the future of the city. It encourages others to make definite plans for the large city that is bound to develop here in the future.”

Construction began soon after the announcement was made in the paper. Besides the popular craftsman bunga-

continued on page 6

Masonic Gateway Lodge No. 339 - A Rich History in Brea

by

Kathy Canon and Jack E. Dotson

The history of Masonry goes back hundreds of years. No one is sure just when and how it was formed, but a widely held belief among Masonic scholars is that it developed in Europe during the Middle Ages from stonemason's guilds that built the churches, cathedrals, castles and battlements that were part of everyday life.

The oldest document making reference to Masons is the Regius Poem, printed in 1390. This document is believed to have been a copy of an even earlier work.

Documented history shows that in 1717, four Masonic Lodges formed the Grand Lodge of England in London. Masonic Lodges quickly formed throughout Europe and across the Atlantic in Colonial America.

Because of their desire to restore the dignity of man, Freemasons promote liberty of the individual, the right of people to worship as they choose, the formation of democratic governments and the importance of education to empower individuals economically, intellectually and as citizens.

Many of our America's founding fathers were Masons, including Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere and John Hancock. George Washington was the Master of his Lodge even as he served as President (the only to have done so) and was sworn into office on a Masonic Bible. That Bible has been used in almost every presidential inauguration since and is now brought out from the Grand Lodge in New York only for that purpose.

The symbols on today's dollar bill related to Masonry. The all-seeing eye is Masonic symbology and the pyramid denotes America as a spiritual nation with additional work to do - this is why the capstone is not connected to the base of the pyramid, symbolizing the unfinished work.

Freemasonry grew rapidly throughout the United States during the 1800's and 1900's. Since government did not provide social entitlements during the earlier years, the Masonic tradition of founding orphanages and homes for the aged and infirm, along with support for free public education, became a touchstone for society.

On April 3, 1926 five Master Masons met in the Brown

building in Brea to discuss the forming of a new Masonic Lodge. The group included Lester L. Lemmon and Charles C. Kinsler (serving as chairman and secretary respectively), J.H. Robinson, Albert Boyd and R. E. Critchlow. They continued meeting with other Masons in the area, and their ranks grew rapidly.

As more Masons joined the group, it soon took on the name of Brea Masonic Club. That club assisted Deputy Grand Master Will H. Fischer during the Cornerstone and Dedication Ceremony of the "old" Brea-Olinda High School on October 2, 1926.

The club continued adding members, meeting at various locations throughout the city. On November 8, 1926, the club decided to lease part of the Sewell Building on Pomona Avenue (now Brea Blvd.) - a lease was signed on December 1, 1926 and their leasehold converted into a Lodge Room in which they subsequently met for some twenty-six years.

The Brea Masonic Club evolved into Citrol Masonic Lodge (for citrus and oil), so named to avoid confusion with LaBrea Lodge then in existence near Los Angeles.

Dispensation for Citrol Lodge was granted early in 1926, and was instituted by Henry MacMaster, Inspector of the 97th Masonic District, on March 4, 1927. Citrol Lodge grew to more than 200 members and sponsored affiliated organizations such as Eastern Star, DeMolay, Job's Daughters and Rainbow for Girls.

Groundbreaking for the Citrol Masonic Hall at Imperial Hwy and Sycamore took place in April, 1952, and on March 6, 1954, Frank Harwell, Jr. became the first Grand Master of California Masons to officially visit Citrol Lodge when officiated during the Cornerstone and Dedication Ceremony.

With a cash outlay of "about \$4,000" and "all other work and material donated", the "Brea Star" newspaper reported on March 3, 1954 that "The temple will house a large lodge hall with a mezzanine, a dining room with a

continued on page 8



Caring About History is Important

continued from page 2

low homes with their low-pitched roofs, wide porches and horizontal windows grouped in threes, there were also Mediterranean-style homes covered by red tile roofs. Interspersed amongst them were three or four beautiful colonial revival homes.

Especially interesting today is the 400 block of Madrona. Just as in Fullerton, the houses here are well-cared for, and there is neighborhood pride in keeping the street a special place to live. I've always said that if I could move to any place in the city, this is where it would be.

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continued from page 1

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Historical Happenings

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Brea Historical Society

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VOL. XVIII, No. 6
June, 2001

A Visit with Walt Bergman

by Brian Saul

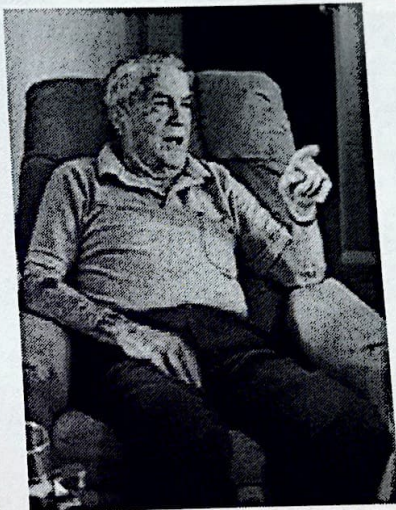
The Brea Historical Society made a quick trip to Las Vegas last month, but not for the reasons you might think. Instead, it was all in the name of learning about and recording our history when newsletter editor Kathy Canon and I interviewed one of Brea's favorite people, former resident, 95 year-old Walt Bergman.

Armed with a tape recorder and two 90-minute tapes, we met Walt at the home of his daughter Darlene with whom he's been living since the mid-90's.

If you've ever talked to Walt, you know just what a remarkable memory he has, and since he came to Brea in 1916, there are a lot of wonderful experiences and stories to record.

Once we pushed the record button, the three hours went by quickly. Unfortunately, because of space I can't tell you everything he said, but I am going to give you some of the highlights.

1. Twenty year-old Walt had the concession stand selling "soda pop" at the big Brea Airport Air Show in April, 1926. On the second day of the meet, the tiny Humming Bird airplane crashed and Walt was one of the first persons to reach the wreck. He described the scene by saying the plane had "plunged into the dirt" and the young pilot was crushed from his mid-section down. Two to three days later, Walt attended his funeral in Long Beach.



Walt Bergman, at his Las Vegas, NV home, sharing memories of his life in Brea with Brian Saul and Kathy Canon. May, 2001.

Will Churchill, who built the wood portion of the Humming Bird (wings, tail and fuselage), also built Walt and Evelyn's 1929 Provincial Revival home at 311 S. Orange Ave.

2. Of interest also is that a little after 9a.m. on April 8, 1926, Walt remembers standing, facing west, at the counter at the family's Bergman Garage at the corner of Birch and Brea Blvd. (later the home of Pawlack Tile). All of a sudden, he saw a "whole wall" of flame shooting into the air. (This occurred when lightning struck tanks at the Union Oil Tank Farm). The fire, he said, lasted a week and it was true, he added, that because of the flames you could read a newspaper on Brea Blvd. in the middle of the night. Among other

duties that week, he helped to direct traffic caused by people coming from all over Southern California to see the "spectacle" of smoke and flames. Even at 2a.m., Brea was full of sightseers.

3. At one time, the city's telephone exchange building was located behind the Bergman Garage. Walt opened the garage at 5a.m. and left at 10p.m. most days. He recalls there being only one telephone operator working a shift at a time and they would change shifts throughout. As he remembers, one operator opened the door to the phone exchange and stepped out for some reason,

continued on page 8

A Message From The President



Jim Schweitzer hitching a ride with Jack Smith at May's Spring Fling.

Far and away, the biggest, and most important goal of this year is to secure and hopefully move into a permanent home as soon as is reasonably possible.

A substantial amount of work has already been done. Some very large sponsors (such as **Unocal** and **Pacific Western National Bank**) have been approached and voiced a very real and sincere interest in helping to fund this project, and negotiations with the City of Brea and the City Council have officially been entered into.

As you may already know, the building that has been selected by the Society's Board of Directors and the Brea Museum and Heritage Center Committee is the old American Legion Building located at the southeast end of City Hall Park and the northwest corner of Brea Blvd. and Elm St. It is widely felt that this location makes perfect sense in as much as the building has been vacant for several years now, is one of a very few historic buildings left in town and would make City Hall Park truly a historic and cultural block!

At the May 15th City Council Study Session, an official proposal was presented to the council and, overall, all five members were quite supportive and positive! However, several voiced a concern and desire to see very definite and tangible financial support in place before the City makes a commitment. Understandably, the council

wants to see if the funds will be in place to either fund this project initially and/or long term, well into the future. It was also expressed that it would be helpful if the council could get a better feel for the support of the community and residents for this project of the Society moving its museum and offices permanently into this particular building. Councilwoman Perry expressed the thought that it would be a positive benefit if Brea's residents would express their opinions, pro and con.

Therefore, I respectfully ask the membership to contact one, or all, of the council members and let them know your thoughts, feelings, and hopefully, solid support! **Mayor Roy Moore, Tim Harvey, Bev Perry, Marty Simonoff and Steve Vargas** can be reached at:

**One Civic Center Circle
Brea, CA 92821
(714) 671-4488
(714) 990-7718
(714) 990-2258 (fax)**

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, City Manager **Tim O'Donnell** can be reached at **(714) 990-7717**.

If it is too difficult for you to express your support directly to the City Council, we have included a petition/survey in this issue of Historical Happenings. Please feel free to complete the petition and send it to us. We will be more than happy to forward it to the City Council on your behalf.

I ask that as many people as possible step forward and let these city officials know of your support!

At this early point, negotiations are still evolving and taking shape. It is not yet clear how the Society and Museum and Heritage Center (which is being headed up by my brother, Don) will interface and just how the City will be involved and what financial support they will provide. Nevertheless, the ball has started rolling and discussions and a constructive dialogue is underway.

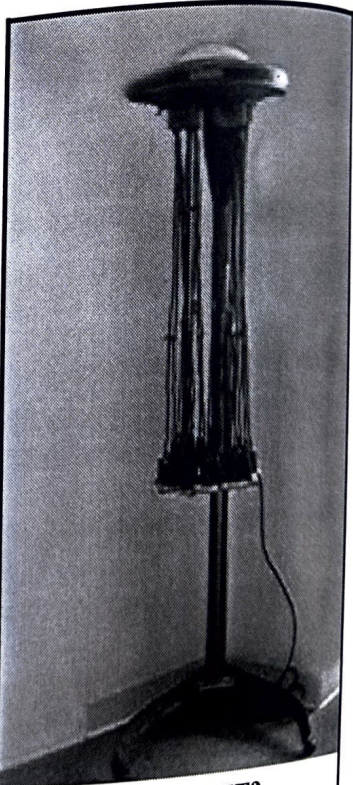
Secondly, Brian Saul and I are working on having a display incorporated into the plans for the new Fire Station #2 that would spotlight enlarged, mounted photographs of the 1924 baseball exhibition game between Babe Ruth and Olinda's Walter Johnson, as well as safely displaying the baseball that Ted Craig had autographed by both of those legendary Hall of Famers! Joel Shennum, of the Brea Fire Department and Linda Huffnagle, Senior Park Ranger at Craig Regional Park, have both been very encourag-

ing and positive in early discussions. At this point, it looks quite promising. It is also possible that the baseball would be put on display at the future Brea Heritage Museum in the American Legion Building. This option is also being explored.

For those that may not be aware, the players in that game changed into and out of their uniforms just across the street in the building that is now Ron & Wayne's Automotive Repair and the field was located just a few hundred yards to the north, up near the northwest corner of Brea Blvd. and Lambert Rd. Given the close proximity to where the changing rooms and field were, the opportunity to have a beautiful, brand new display included into the plans of a new state-of-the-art facility, it is felt that the idea makes very good sense!

Lastly, the Portola Monument, located on Brea Blvd. as one drives north out of Brea, is falling into neglect and is in need of a face lift. Determining who has jurisdiction and then working through the

continued on page 8



WHAT IS IT?

Something from outer-space?
Maybe a medieval torture device?
Do YOU know what this is? Wanna
find out? Come down to the Brea
History Museum and we'll tell you!

The Other Name on the Baseball

by
Kathy Canon

Most Breans are aware, and very proud, of the fact that on October 31, 1924, New York Yankee slugger Babe Ruth and hometown pitching sensation Walter "The Train" Johnson played in an exhibition game near what is now the corner of Lambert Rd. and Brea Blvd. Both of these legends, along with Christy Mathewson and Ty Cobb, were the first players to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

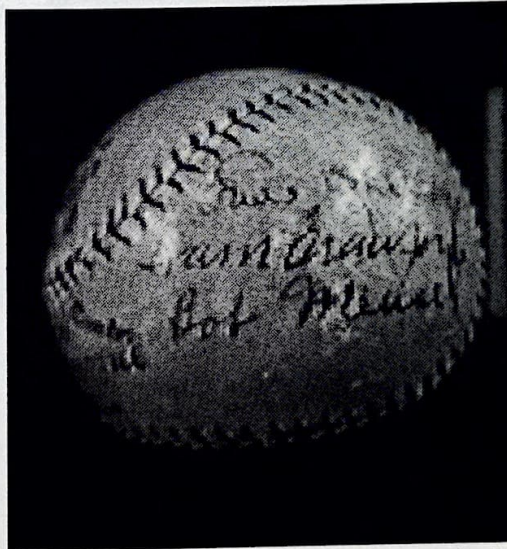
After the exhibition game, Ruth and Johnson signed a baseball for Ted Craig that is currently in the care of Park Rangers at Craig Regional Park. Another player present at that game was New York outfielder, "Long Bob" Meusel. And just as his career was eclipsed by such luminaries as Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, this other member of the legendary "Murderers Row" signed the baseball that day. His is one of the other names on the baseball.

Even advertisements for the game printed in the Brea Progress newspaper relegated Meusel to second billing, listing his name in smaller type, under Johnson and Ruth. A handbill from the actual game doesn't mention him at all.

Although his name is seldom brought up when Breans and baseball historians recall that fall day in 1924, the statistics he accumulated in his 11-year major league career give us a better glimpse as to why he was included on that barnstorming tour in the first place.

At 6'3", the muscular Meusel was

a feared outfielder and considered a solid, all-around player, power-hitting .313 or better in seven of his first eight major league seasons. Hitting behind Babe Ruth in the order, Meusel became the first Yankee right-hander to win a batting title in 1925 with 33 home runs. That same year, he was also the American League RBI champion, with 138. His accurate and



One of the other names on the baseball, "Long Bob" Meusel was part of the famed NY Yankees "Murderers Row".

powerful throwing arm earned the outfielder his other nickname; "The Rifle", and on September 5, 1921, Meusel tied a major league record with four outfield assists in a single game.

In 1924, Meusel had a career high of 26 stolen bases and was two hits shy of his career high of 190, with 188. From 1920 through 1930, his on-base percentage career high was .393. Appearing in six World Series, "Long Bob" stole home twice and in

a regular season game played on May 16, 1927, he stole second, third and home.

Bob Meusel and Babe Ruth are the only Yankee players to hit for the cycle three times. Career-wise, Meusel ranks among the all-time Yankee leaders in doubles (338), triples (87), RBI's (1,005) and batting average (.311).

With statistical superiority to many players in the Hall of Fame, Bob Meusel was considered "grim and unpopular" by fans and Yankee Manager Miller Huggins felt he played with an "indifferent attitude" and "could have done better".

Looking back at some of Meusel's exploits during his career, it's still difficult to understand why he is an almost forgotten character in baseball lore.

On October 16, 1921, with baseball pals Babe Ruth and Bill Piercy, he embarked on a barnstorming tour of Buffalo, NY, contrary to Baseball Commissioner Landis' ban against the World Series participants playing in post-season exhibitions. Five days after the tour began, they cut it short in Scranton, PA, but Babe Ruth challenged Landis to act against them....which he did - fining the players their World Series shares, \$3,362.26 each, and suspending the players until May 20th the following season.

On June 13, 1924, with New York leading 10 - 6 in the ninth inning, Tigers pitcher Bert Cole hit Meusel in the back with a pitch. Meusel threw

continued on page 7

Spring Fling Recap

The Brea Historical Society Spring Fling, held May 3, 2001 at the Brea Bistro, was more than just a fling...it was an event! Delicious hors d'oeuvres and a yummy buffet were just the start of the evening's treats. Mike Harline entertained on the guitar before dinner, and after, Don Schweitzer took the microphone, in-



Don Schweitzer (with Randy Jones in the foreground), emceeding the festivities at the Spring Fling.

roducing many guests, including LaVeta Daetweiler, who founded the Brea Historical Society with Frank Schweitzer in 1971. Mayor Roy Moore presented LaVeta with a proclamation from the City, recognizing her efforts at historical preservation. Don Schweitzer presented her with a dozen roses.

Then Don introduced the guest of honor, Cy Young Award winner and Brea hometown hero, Randy Jones. Randy delighted the more than 90 guests with stories of his baseball



That dynamo Marie Domenico, with husband Ernie, finally taking a break after tirelessly helping organize our fundraiser.

career, from his start here in Brea, to standing on the mound, ready to pitch in his first All Star Game. Randy graciously answered questions from the audience as he recalled memories of Claude Osteen, Leonard MacKain



Newsletter editor (and baseball fan), Kathy Canon with Randy Jones during a tour of the Brea History Museum.

and Pete Rose.

At the end of the evening, Randy and his wife and parents (who reside in Brea) took a tour of the Brea History Museum with President Jim Schweitzer, Vice President Brian Saul and newsletter editor Kathy Canon. Randy promised to donate his BOHS Varsity jacket to the museum for display, and it was sent to us within a week!

There are so many "thanks" to so



Cy Young Award winner and Brea pitching sensation Randy Jones' BOHS Varsity jacket. Now on display at the Brea History Museum.

many people for helping make our fundraising event such an enormous success. We wish to thank all parties who donated items for the opportunity drawings, Jon Lyng and his staff at the Brea Bistro for their great food and warm hospitality, Jim Crow for all that running around he did, and especially Marie Domenico and Edna Makins, co-chairs of the Spring Fling Committee, for their hard work. Well done all!

Remembering Toad Kinsler

Toad Kinsler died on May 20, 2001. Brian Saul spoke at his memorial service on May 25, 2001.

"A little over two months ago, I spoke at the city dedication of the home of a very special man, and today I'm speaking about another very special person. It just happens that the two are father and son and they're both people I cared a lot about - Toad, who I knew as a good friend and his dad, who I wish I had known.

Some people think of me as a person who knows a lot about Brea history, and because it's something I love, I thought today I really wanted to tell you about Toad's life, especially the early part of it because many of you out there already know about his adult years.

About eleven years ago, when I first got to know him and began my obsession to know more and more about his remarkable parents, I was going through some old newspapers from 1920 and came across an article about the death of Olivia Winchel, the wife of oilworker Harry Winchel. For some reason, I read it and then realized that Olivia, who had died leaving six children, the youngest only two-days old, was Toad's birth mother and he was that two-day old baby.

I also learned that after her death, Harry, Toad's dad, was so distraught and overwhelmed by having to care for six young children that he asked neighbors if they could care for little Ralph Leland Winchel, Toad's original name. First Ralph went to the Senn Family and Mr. Senn was the cesspool digger in town. Next he stayed with the Kewish Family, and Mr. Kewish worked at the Brea Boiler Works on Brea Blvd. Then, there were other neighbors, the last which were the Kinslers, Charles and Lena, who kept him until he was six months old and loved him so much that they asked if they could adopt him. Since Harry had five other children to care for, he reluctantly agreed.

You know what's nice is that Toad said there was never any secret who his birth family was, and he was close to them his whole life. So, really, he had two loving families.

This week, I was re-reading an oral history that was done with Toad back in 1985 and one of the things that really stands out is the love and pride he had for his adoptive parents and sisters, Thelma, Mildred and Arlene.

I think, so you don't get confused who I'm talking about whenever I refer to his Mom and Dad, from now

on I'll be talking about the Kinslers, okay?

Anyway, I read that one of the earliest and clearest of Toad's memories happened when he was three or four years old. That's when his dad Charles took him to work with him one evening in the oilfields. After he showed his son around, he layed him down to bed in what was called the "belt house", which, if I have this straight, was a tin building in which there was a thirty-foot belt attached to a gas engine. With a lot of slapping and banging around, the belt helped the drilling of the well. There was all this loud noise, Toad said, especially for a 3 or 4 years old, but he slept through the night.

He also remembered how lucky he was that because his dad was Brea's fire chief, he got to ride on the Seagraves Fire Truck, the one now parked outside, when it was actually new! This experience led to his remaining for forty-seven years as a Brea Volunteer Fireman.

On Halloween Day, 1924, he attended Brea's famous Babe Ruth-Walter Johnson exhibition game and remembered the boy across the street from his house getting hit by a Babe Ruth foul ball and Ruth coming over and giving him a quarter as a way of saying he was sorry.

In the early 1930's, his dad, who to put it mildly was very active in the city, was having a lot of heart problems. So, Toad had to often help him by carrying his books and files up to the second floor meeting room of the old Craig Building.

continued on page 7



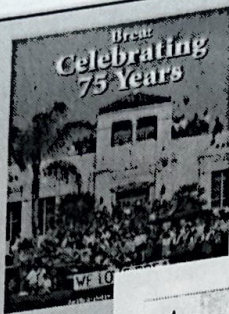
Toad Kinsler being interviewed for Video Brea Line by Scott Pettinger at the dedication of his family's home as a city historic landmark, March 15, 2001.

On Sale Now at the Brea History Museum

When you make your next visit to the Brea History Museum, be sure and purchase your copy of the book, **Brea: Celebrating 75 Years**. Written by Teresa Hampson, the book is 246 pages of photographs and recounts of Brea from its early days as a major oil-production and agricultural center to the early 1990's.

Brea: A Walk in Time is an entertaining 2 hour video, hosted by Brea Historical Society Vice President, Brian Saul. Join Brian as he takes you on a tour of Brea's historical landmarks and visits areas of the city that you didn't know were there.

All proceeds from sales of the book and video go to assist the Society's preservation efforts in Brea.

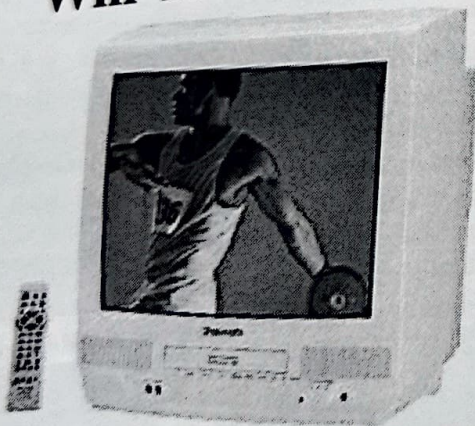


Brea: Celebrating 75 Years. By Teresa Hampson.
\$28.00, incl. tax.



Brea: A Walk in Time. A 2 hour video of the early years of Brea.
Hosted by Brian Saul
\$14.95, incl. tax.

Will You Help Us?



Panasonic 20" 2 Head TV/VCR Combination

The Brea Historical Society is asking for donations to help us purchase a refurbished Panasonic TV/VCR Combination. Once we reach our goal of \$250.00 and make the purchase, the television will be kept at the Brea History Museum to allow researchers and visitors to view the MANY videotapes we have about Brea's history. We have tapes of "Video Brea Line" and, of course, "Brea: A Walk in Time" that we would be available to everyone. Currently, though, they sit on shelves gathering dust. If you can help, please send your tax-deductible donation to: The Brea Historical Society, PO Box 9764, Brea, CA 92822. Be sure and mark on your check: **TV/VCR donation. THANK YOU!**

Big Doin's at the Museum!

If you haven't been down to the Brea History Museum lately, you aren't aware of the changes taking place. Along with our efforts to acquire the old American Legion Hall as a new home, we've been acquiring wonderful memorabilia that is currently being cataloged and will soon be on display.

Among the items recently acquired are a set of HO size building models. Remember Sam's Place, Oilfields National Bank or the Sewell Building? They're no longer lost to past and will soon be part of a brand new display depicting the history of Brea Blvd. These models are on indefinite loan from the City of Brea, and we appreciate the assistance of David Crabtree in helping us complete this project.

Other exciting memorabilia that have recently been donated come from Catherine Seiler. Catherine has given the Brea History Museum a huge collection of hats, WWI memorabilia, clothing and jewelry from the early-to-mid 1900's...it's impossible to list everything in this small space. Thank you, Catherine...thank you!

We are currently planning an Open House/Reception for our membership and the general public once our new exhibits are in place. You won't want to miss this, so look for your invitation to this event soon!

Toad Kinsler

cont'd from page 4

Charles also didn't have enough strength to drive for himself so Toad, who had learned to drive out on the old G & L Oil Lease east of town when he was 10-years-old, was doing most of the driving for his dad when he was thirteen. He said he went so many places that you could drop him off anywhere in Southern California and he knew where he was.

Before I go any further, how many of you know how Leland (it seems so strange for me to call him that) got his nickname? Well, he had an older cousin, Perry Thayer, who was known for nicknaming people all over town. One day, according to Toad, when he was about four-years-old, he was leaning over playing marbles in the front yard of the house on Orange St. when Perry looked out the window and said, "He looks like a little toad squatted down out there." The name stuck. Toad said he thinks he had teachers who didn't even know what his real name was. Of course, most of you probably know his older brother was nicknamed "Frog", right?

As a teenager, Toad, through his father who had died in 1934, developed a real love of baseball and later softball. Through the years he played in all sorts of softball leagues in Brea, Fullerton and Placentia. In fact, he was 45 or 46 when he finally put his bat down for the last time.

In 1940, he got a job with Interstate Aircraft and Engineering Co. in El Segundo, and then four years later, in 1944, went into the Navy as a Mortar Machinist's Mate. In 1945, he married Marge in Fullerton, and later on, as you know, had two sons: Chuck, who lives in Brea and Steve who lives in Seattle. After discharge, Toad returned to his job in El Segundo for a short time before hiring on to Standard Oil Co. where he worked for thirty-five years until his retirement.

And how did he spend his retirement? Well, he and Marge bought some empty land up in Stevensville, MT on which Toad planned out where the well was going to be dug and where the mobilehome was going to be placed. For 17 years, they left Brea in the spring for Montana and then returned in the fall just in time to miss the big snows.

Well, that pretty much brings me up to when I first met Marge and Toad back I think in 1990. Gee, what a treat it was for me to actually meet and talk to the son of Charles and Lena Kinsler. I also was lucky enough to

meet Mildred and Thelma Kinsler. From all I learned about their parents, I just knew that their 1912 home on Orange St. needed to be saved from the redevelopment that was wiping out old Brea during the 90's.

So for eleven years, Toad and I worked together to preserve the home as a tribute to his parents who had done so much for this city. Eleven years, and finally on March 15 of this year it happened. One of the things I'll always remember is how happy Toad was on that day at the dedication ceremony. I'm so grateful he lived to see it happen because I know how proud he was of his parents and how much it meant to him to see them honored.

He was a great guy and a good friend of mine, and he had a real love for this city.

In a 1920 article in the Brea Star newspaper talking about his birth it said "THE BABY BOY IS A REAL PRECIOUS BIT OF HUMANITY." He still was at 81."

The Other Name on the Baseball

cont'd from page 3

his bat at Cole and charged the pitchers mound, setting off a 30-minute near-riot at the Detroit Stadium that included both players benches, fans, ushers and the police. Umpire Billy Evans, unable to clear the field to complete the game, forfeited it to New York. Cole and Meusel were both suspended for 10 days. Meusel was fined \$100, Cole and Ruth were fined \$50 each.

Playing for Cincinnati, Meusel's final season in the major leagues, on September 12, 1930 during a game against the Brooklyn Dodgers, Brooklyn catcher Al Lopez drove a ball over the head of left-fielder Meusel. The ball bounced over the wall and into the bleachers at Ebbets Field. Ruled a homerun, this is the last recorded bounce homerun in National League history, as the rules changed the following season to rule bounced HR's as doubles.

"Long Bob" Meusel, born in San Jose, CA on July 19, 1896, died of natural causes in California on November 28, 1977 and is buried at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier. Not much is known of his life after the end of his baseball career. We do know, however, that there was a reason he was on the barnstorming tour that brought him to Brea back in 1924. There was a reason he was asked to sign the baseball with Babe Ruth and Walter Johnson. There is a reason his name is one of the other signatures on the baseball.

Walt Bergman
cont'd from page 1

leaving the door to slam shut and locked behind her. The phone was ringing, the door was locked and the operator was stuck outside! And for those few moments, there was no telephone service in Brea. Walt came to the rescue, however, by dragging a stool to the back of the telephone building, climbing up and loosing the screen to crawl through the bathroom window and came up to unlock and open the door. According the Walt, this happened a number of times.

4. Not related to Brea, but still fascinating to me is during the 1930's when Walt was working for Goodyear Rubber, he went aboard and took a tour of the Zeppelin Hindenburg when it visited Los Angeles. He described his walk through the passenger quarters and up into the main body of the ship itself. What an experience!

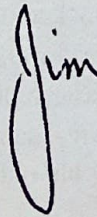
So, those are just some of the memories he shared with us. Kathy and I left Las Vegas, not with money, but with a wealth of new knowledge.

Thanks Walt, for a terrific day. You're a great guy and we really miss you here in Brea.

Presidents Message
cont'd from page 2

proper channels, it is my desire to spruce up the monument and immediate surrounding area and make that historic marker a bit more attractive, as well as noticeable...I will actively pursue this project in the next few weeks.

Again, in closing, I encourage anyone who has any sort of feedback, suggestions, ideas or criticisms to phone or write me. I would be very interested in hearing or reading what you have to say!



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Brian Saul, Vice President

(562) 698-5339

P.J. Mansur, Secretary/Treasurer

(714) 528-4240

Edna Makins, Board Member

(714) 529-1755

Jim Crow, Board Member

(714) 529-3295

Marie Domenico, Board Member

(714) 529-6641

Lloyd Dudding, Board Member

(714) 256-4324

July Board Meeting:

Monday, July 2, 2001, 7:00pm

at the Brea History Museum,

652 S. Brea Blvd.

Office Location:

652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea

Heights Shopping Center)

(714) 256-2283

VOLUNTEERS!

You don't have anything to do this Saturday that can't wait! *We need your help* at the Brea History Museum, every Saturday between the hours of 11am and 2pm. If you have the time...even an hour...your assistance will help preserve the history of Brea! C'mon...you know you wanna.



Brea Historical Society

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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month
Mailing Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month

VOL. XVIII, No. 7
July, 2001

Presidents Message

The Brea Historical Society and Museum enjoys a complete collection of Brea-Olinda High School annuals ("The Gusher"), largely due to the concern and generosity of long time Brea resident and Brea-Olinda administrator, *Virginia (Classen) Day*. With the exceptions of 1943 and 1944, when no annuals were published due to various shortages brought on by World War II, the society has at least one copy of every annual dating back to the very first issued of 1928.

In 1955, Virginia began collecting a copy each year and in February of 1982 donated them all to the Brea Public Library. Shortly thereafter, Sharon Dean happened to express the thought to Virginia that the society would very much like to have such a collection and that, in fact, the museum would offer a safer and more secure home to preserve and protect the yearbooks. As a result, the complete collection was soon moved over to the museum. Since that time, so that the set is always complete and up-to-date, Virginia purchases and donates a new copy each year.

The Brea Historical Society takes this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude to Virginia Day. Many thanks, Virginia!



Left to right: Brea Mayor Roy Moore, Brea Historical Society Board Member Marie Domenico, President Jim Schweitzer, Vice President Brian Saul and Brea Museum and Heritage Center Chairman Don Schweitzer look over floor plans of the American Legion building during a recent inspection tour of the facility.

On a different subject, please continue to send in your "blue" American Legion building support/petitions (you'll find another in this issue of Historical Happenings) and/or contact your City Council members regarding our proposed move into that historic location. We need your support, so please take a quick moment to phone the city or fill out the enclosed petition/survey. Please allow me to thank you in advance for your support and encouragement.

Jim

Thank You to Our Membership

Individual Members

Alexander, Franklin
 Armstrong-Post, Ella
 Beach, Shirley
 Bergman, Elsie
 Bergman, Walter F
 Blackmore, Glenn C
 Blystone, Rita
 Bouse, Doyle
 Bowland, Billie J
 Browning, Marjorie
 Byers, Imogene A
 Canavan, Dennis
 Canon, Kathy
 Carpenter, Geraldine C
 City of Brea
 Collins, Joyce L
 Corollo, Evelyn
 Cramer, Esther R
 Dedic, Eleanor J
 DeRusha, Nannette N
 Drake, Edwina J
 Dudding, Lloyd
 Fox, Roberta
 French, Vonnice
 Givans, Dean
 Goff, Gary D
 Gwartney, Carol
 Hango, John D
 Holton, Dora M
 Hosler, Shirley A
 Jaslin, Michael
 Lorea, Kathleen B
 Lundgren, Betty
 Lynch, Margaret A
 Makins, Edna
 Makins, Doug
 Makins, Earl
 Makins, Perry
 Mayberry, Steven
 McAnally, Marcia
 McConnell, Hugh
 McKnight, Mickey
 Millen, Betty W

Moore, Roy
 Neal, Ruby
 Neverka, Randy W
 O'Brien, Jane
 Olmstead, Karl A
 Oxandabourne, Audrey
 Popyk, Deana
 Ralph, Kathleen
 Reese, Frances
 Remmich, Lila Tremayne
 Sauer, Wilma
 Saul, Brian
 Schweitzer, Jim
 Seiler, Catherine F
 Slauter, Rosella L
 Smith, Frieda S
 Spangler, Kathleen
 Strickland, N C
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 Vitkus, Karen
 Wadleigh, Rose M
 Wagoner, Howard
 Whisnant, Maxine
 Wolfert, Carol M
 Worden, Lois

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 MacKain, Leonard & Helen
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 Manuel, Darwin & Betty
 Millar, Victor
 Moore, Elwood Paul
 Myhre, Leland & Jacquelyn
 Packham, Wilameena & Merle
 Parker, Glenn
 Paxton, Leonard & Barbara
 Perry, Bev & Gil Realon
 Piantoni, Leo & Wilda
 Richardson, Jim & Pam
 Rider, Jack & Shalois
 Roop, Greg & Karin
 Rose Hills Memorial Park

Survey

Potential Brea Museum and Heritage Center

The Brea Historical Society recently presented the Brea City Council with a proposal to rehabilitate and seismic retrofit the "Old American Legion Building" at City Hall Park (sometimes known as the "Old Police Building") for use as a historical museum and heritage center. The City of Brea, which owns the building, is currently evaluating the proposal.

As a member of the Brea Historical Society and/or an interested citizen, your opinion is very important to us and the city. We have been asked to formulate an accurate survey of the level of commitment from our membership for the creation and operation of such a facility. Please take a few moments to complete the following questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible. *Brea Historical Society, PO Box 9764, Brea, CA 92822-9764*. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call *Don Schweitzer* at (714) 529-6446.

1. I _____ support; I _____ oppose the proposed museum at City Hall Park for the following reason(s):

2. Would you be willing to volunteer your time to staff the museum or to assist with its management?
_____ If yes, how many hours per week would you be willing to assist? _____

3. For the purpose of this survey, would you be willing to contribute financially toward the museum?
_____ If yes, how much would you be willing to pledge? \$ _____ (one time) or
\$ _____ (annually). Please remember, this is not binding.

4. Are you willing to assist with museum fundraising events? _____

5. In what other ways are you willing to assist with the museum? _____

6. Other comments or suggestions: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____
_____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

_____ I am currently a member of the Brea Historical Society

_____ I am currently a non-member of the Brea Historical Society

_____ I am interested in becoming a member of the Brea Historical Society
(see membership application on reverse of this survey)

Become a Member of the Brea Historical Society

Do you know how easy it is to become a member of the Brea Historical Society? If you already are a member, you know how simple it is. If you're not yet a member, it's simple to do. Just fill out the membership application below, return it to the BREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PO BOX 9764, BREA, CA 92822-9764 or drop it off at our office, located at: 652 S. BREA BLVD., BREA, CA. (at the Brea Heights Shopping Center). Your tax-deductible membership will be processed immediately and you will start receiving the next edition of our newsletter "Historical Happenings" the following month. More importantly, YOU will become part of the growing membership of people who love Brea, love its history and want to be part of its preservation. Be sure and join today! Remembering our Past will preserve it for our Future.

Membership Application

Yes!! I want to become a member of the Brea Historical Society! My tax-deductible membership dues are enclosed.



Individual Membership	\$ 15.00
Family Membership	\$ 25.00
Sponsor	\$ 50.00
Patron	\$100.00
Corporate Sponsor	\$250.00

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone #: _____

Email address: _____

Comments: _____

Mail to:
The Brea Historical Society
PO Box 9764
Brea, CA 92822-9764

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Schweitzer Architects
Scribner, Richard & Jan
Shanks, Nelda & Bob
Simmons, Darrell & Doris
Simonoff, Martin & Karen
Smith, Jack & Audrey
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Museum Volunteer Hours

Jan. 1 thru July 14, 2001

<i>Kathy Canon</i>	160.5 hrs
<i>Jim Crow</i>	28.5 hrs
<i>Lloyd Dudding</i>	7.0 hrs
<i>Vonnie French</i>	47.5 hrs
<i>Jennie Lee</i>	12.0 hrs
<i>Kay Lorea</i>	50.0 hrs
<i>Edna Makins</i>	27.5 hrs
<i>PJ Mansur</i>	25.0 hrs
<i>Wade Mansur</i>	34.0 hrs
<i>Brian Saul</i>	175.0 hrs
<i>Jim Schweitzer</i>	30.5 hrs

**On Sale Now at the
Brea History Museum**

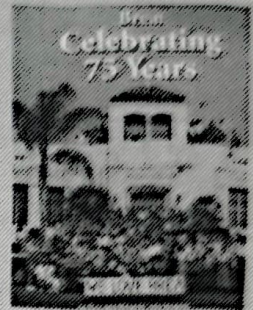
When you make your next visit to the Brea History Museum, be sure and purchase your copy of the book, *Brea: Celebrating 75 Years*. Written by Teresa Hampson, the book is 246 pages of photographs and recounts Brea from its early days as a major oil-production and agricultural center to the early 1990's.

Brea: A Walk in Time is an entertaining 2 hour video, hosted by Brea Historical Society Vice President, Brian Saul. Join Brian as he takes you on a tour of Brea's historical landmarks and visits areas of the city that you didn't know were there.

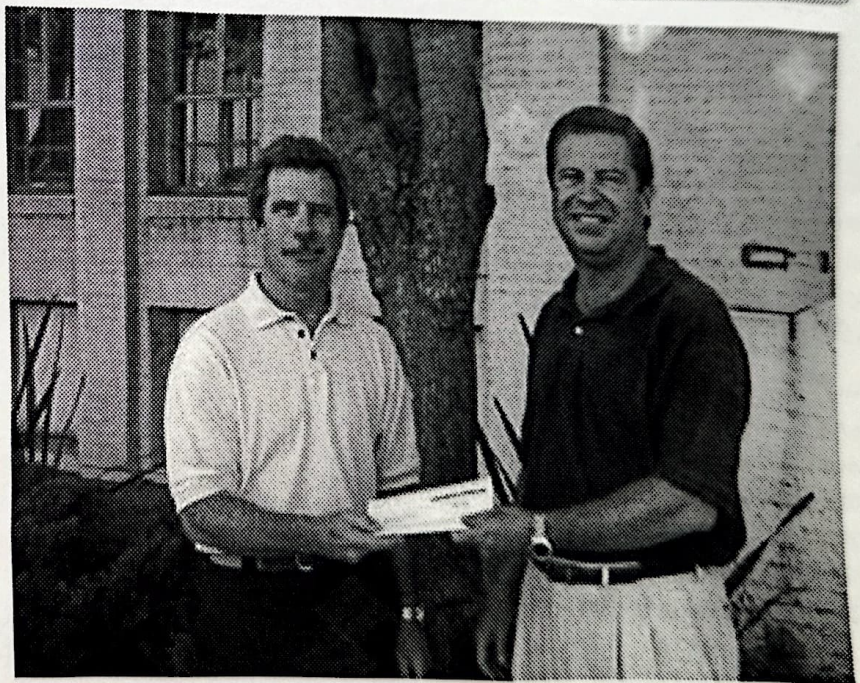
All proceeds from sales of the book and video go to assist the Society's preservation efforts in Brea.



Brea: A Walk in Time.
A 2 hour video of the early years of Brea. Hosted by Brian Saul
\$14.95, incl. tax.



Brea: Celebrating 75 Years.
By Teresa Hampson.
\$28.00, incl. tax.



Helping turn a Dream into a Reality

David Leach, right, of Nuevo Energy presents Brea Museum and Heritage Center Chairman Don Schweitzer with a \$1,000 donation to aid in the effort to relocate the Brea Historical Society to a permanent home at the American Legion building.

Brea Historical Society

Jim Schweitzer, President
(714) 529-0635

Brian Saul, Vice President
(562) 698-5339

P.J. Mansur, Secretary/Treasurer
(714) 528-4240

Jim Crow, Board Member
(714) 529-3295

Marie Domenico, Board Member
(714) 529-6641

Lloyd Dudding, Board Member
(714) 256-4324

Edna Makins, Board Member
(714) 529-1755

August Board Meeting:

Monday, August 6, 2001, 7:00pm
at the Brea History Museum,
652 S. Brea Blvd.

Museum/Office Location:

652 S. Brea Blvd (at the Brea
Heights Shopping Center)
(714) 256-2283

Museum Hours:

Thursdays: 11am until 1pm
Saturdays: 11am until 2pm
Or call to arrange a special tour!

The Quest for Aviation History

The Brea Historical Society needs your assistance. And it's a simple matter, really. We are looking for photographs and memorabilia from the aviation era that existed here in Brea in the 1920's and early 30's. Our current archive of photographs of the old Brea Airport, the Landing Strip, the Brea Flying Club and all things aviation in Brea is extremely limited. This was a very important time in Brea's history and in the history of aviation and we know there are pictures and memories out there! So, please, take a few minutes to look around in your old pictures or, if you know someone who was involved in the aviation industry in Brea, let them know that we are on a quest to increase our knowledge of this exciting time in history in order to share it with our members and the public. And please remember, if you do not want to part with your photographs, we will copy them for our archives and return the originals to you. If you can help us in our quest, please contact or leave a message for Brian Saul or Kathy Canon at 714-256-2283.

Special Thanks to our Corporate Sponsors

**Pacific Western
National Bank**
located at
275 N. Brea Blvd

**Taps Fish House
& Brewery**
located at
101 E. Imperial Hwy

Many, Many Thanks!

Oh, boy! *Vannoy Maestresjuan!*
You are one of our ***FAVORITE***
people! A billion "thanks" for your generous donation of a TV/VCR combination to the History Museum. Now, the videotapes we have are available during museum hours for everyone to view!

And *Lila Treymayne Remmich!*
Thank you for your generous donation of photographs and memorabilia from Shaffer Tool Works!



Brea Historical Society
P.O. Box 9764
Brea, CA 92822-9764

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Brea, California

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Historical Happenings

A publication of
the
Brea Historical Society

Copy Deadline: 1st Friday of the month
Mailing Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month

VOL. XVIII, No. 7
July, 2001

Presidents Message

The Brea Historical Society and Museum enjoys a complete collection of Brea-Olinda High School annuals ("The Gusher"), largely due to the concern and generosity of long time Brea resident and Brea-Olinda administrator, *Virginia (Classen) Day*. With the exceptions of 1943 and 1944, when no annuals were published due to various shortages brought on by World War II, the society has at least one copy of every annual dating back to the very first issued of 1928.

In 1955, Virginia began collecting a copy each year and in February of 1982 donated them all to the Brea Public Library. Shortly thereafter, Sharon Dean happened to express the thought to Virginia that the society would very much like to have such a collection and that, in fact, the museum would offer a safer and more secure home to preserve and protect the yearbooks. As a result, the complete collection was soon moved over to the museum. Since that time, so that the set is always complete and up-to-date, Virginia purchases and donates a new copy each year.

The Brea Historical Society takes this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude to Virginia Day. Many thanks, Virginia!



Left to right: Brea Mayor Roy Moore, Brea Historical Society Board Member Marie Domenico, President Jim Schweitzer, Vice President Brian Saul and Brea Museum and Heritage Center Chairman Don Schweitzer look over floor plans of the American Legion building during a recent inspection tour of the facility.

On a different subject, please continue to send in your "blue" American Legion building support/petitions (you'll find another in this issue of Historical Happenings) and/or contact your City Council members regarding our proposed move into that historic location. We need your support, so please take a quick moment to phone the city or fill out the enclosed petition/survey. Please allow me to thank you in advance for your support and encouragement.

Jim

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