



The Glendale Historical Society

NEWSLETTER VOL. 3, NO. 1, 1982

TROPICO: THEN AND NOW

Established on the Santa Eulalia Ranch land of pioneer settler W. C. B. Richardson, the short-lived town of Tropico became incorporated in 1911 and was annexed by Glendale in 1918. The Santa Eulalia Ranch, which Mr. Richardson had purchased in 1868, encompassed the area south of what is now Chevy Chase Drive and extended from the Los Angeles River on the southwest to the hills of Forest Lawn on the east.

Before its development as a town the Santa Eulalia Ranch had been used first as grazing land for cattle and sheep and then as prime strawberry acreage under cultivation by Japanese farmers. Although Mr. Richardson envisioned a residential community and donated land for the Presbyterian Church, Cerritos Street School, the Southern Pacific Railroad Station, and a pottery factory, it was only after Tropico was annexed to Glendale that housing tracts were successfully established there by his son and grandson.

The area's evolution from a dusty ranch around the time of the partition of the Verdugo family's Rancho San Rafael in 1871, to a bouyant suburb of the ragtime era, took only half a century. The area abounds in evidence of the transition.

Mr. Richardson's 1873 farmhouse still stands, a striking contrast to the Verdugo Adobe built in approximately the same year. It was "the beginning of the end" of rural, Mexican-style living; the area was definitely becoming American. Far-away events such as the Civil War and the San Francisco earthquake began to touch the lives of the residents, as can be seen in the Disabled American Veterans' Hall built in 1891-92 near where the First Presbyterian Church of Tropico stood. By the time Tropico was annexed to Glendale, citizens were already nostalgic about their simpler, more "romantic" past. They built homes like the Heide home, with its Craftsman interior featuring exposed wood beams, imaginative tile and stained glass work, and rugged fireplace. They tried to recapture their Spanish heritage in elegant Mediterranean style stucco residences. They boarded the train at the spunky "Spanish-colonial" station which was built in 1923 to replace the 1883 depot. And one inspired personage, Hubert Eaton, developed idyllic Forest Lawn Memorial Park from what was known as Tropico Cemetery.

(Detail of the Glendale Amtrak station. Photo by C. Dougherty.)

On Sunday, April 25 between 12:00 noon and 3:00 pm every 15 minutes a shuttle bus will leave the Amtrak station at Cerritos west of San Fernando Road for a two-hour guided trip through Tropic. Besides the station itself, the tour will include the Richardson farmhouse, the Heide home, a turreted Mediterranean home, and the Disabled American Veterans' Hall. There will be a photographic exhibit at the train depot, and a display of war memorabilia at the Disabled American Veterans' Hall. The bus route covers many additional points of interest, both historic and architectural, in the Tropic area.

Tickets are \$5.00 in advance or \$6.00 the day of the tour. Please mail reservation checks to The Glendale Historical Society, P.O. Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202. No tickets will be mailed; boarding passes will be issued and distributed at the Amtrak station on the day of the tour between the hours of noon and 3:00 pm. All aboard!

Suzanne McKay

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SOCIETY RECOMMENDATIONS WILL AID ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

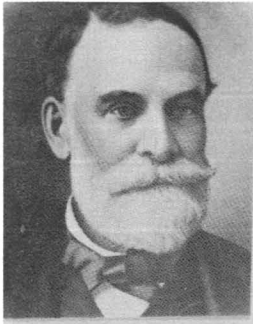
On February 23 the Glendale Redevelopment Agency voted to hire Donald Cotton Associates of Pasadena to prepare an Environmental Impact Report within 45 days addressing the impacts, mitigation measures and alternative projects relating to four proposed projects in the redevelopment area. The Agency also directed Donald Cotton Associates to consult with The Glendale Historical Society on buildings of historic and architectural importance which might be affected. At a meeting with consultant Frank Wein, the Society emphasized the historic and architectural values of the Jensen Building, which houses the Egyptian Village Cafe, the Masonic Temple, and the Alex Theatre. Frank Wein, of Donald Cotton Associates; Curtis Howell, of the Redevelopment Agency; John Bingham, from the City Manager's staff; and Bob Jillson and Raylene West of The Glendale Historical Society toured the Jensen and Masonic buildings. They discussed the structures with John Alpeza, owner of the Jensen Building, his architect Glen Hogawa, and Mike McIver, project manager for the Masonic Building.

Recommendations concerning these buildings, as addressed in a supplemental and comprehensive Environmental Impact Report, will appear in future newsletters.

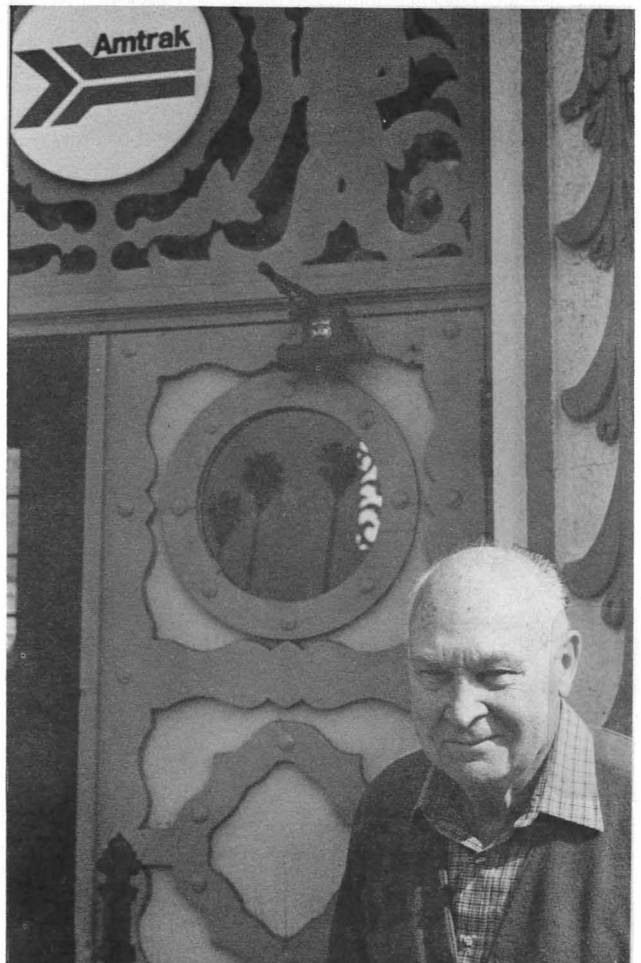
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TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 30, 1981 TO FEBRUARY 28, 1982

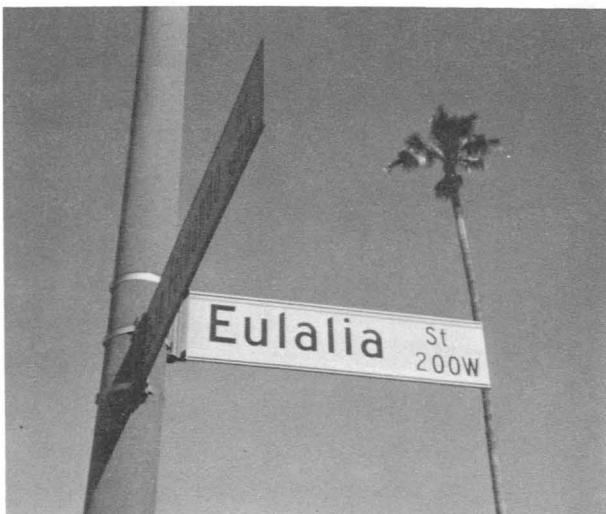
Historical Society activities this winter provided the following major income, according to treasurer Dick Montgomery: membership dues, \$485.00; donations, \$375.00; historical cookbook sales, \$115.00; and yard sales, \$42.05. Major expenses for the period were general expenses, \$214.60; Doctors' House supplies, \$862.43; newsletter and photographs, \$322.28; and carpenter labor on the Doctors' House, \$3005.76. Including the previous balance on hand and a \$3,500.00 transfer from our money market fund, the balance as of February 28, 1982 was \$2,098.34.



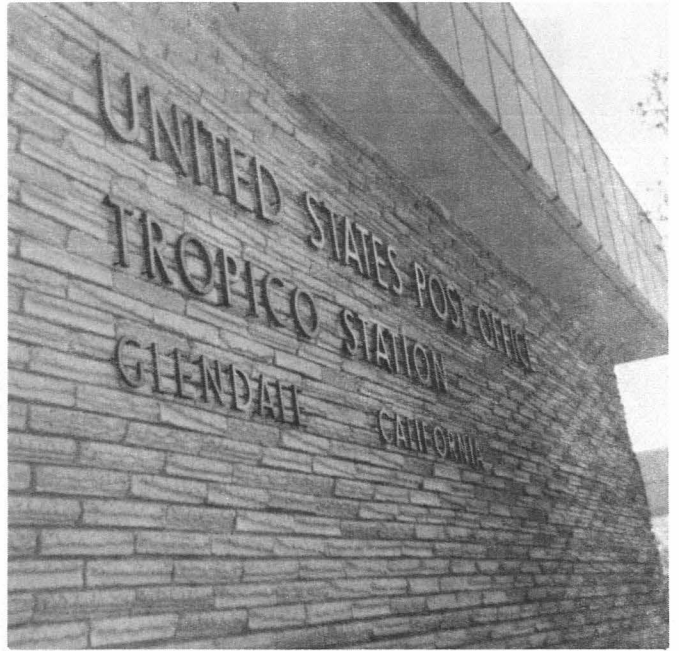
W. C. B. Richardson and his farm house, built in 1873. (Photo courtesy City of Glendale, Planning Division.)



John H. Richardson, grandson of W. C. B. Richardson, at the Amtrak depot in Glendale which is located on the site of the original Tropic station built a century ago. (Photo by C. Dougherty.)



Santa Eulalia Ranch survives in a present-day Glendale street name. (Photo by S. McKay.)



The Tropico Post Office Branch commemorates an earlier era. (Photo by S. McKay.)



Amtrak passengers arriving in Glendale are greeted by the Spanish-Colonial Revival station entry with its lively baroque ornamentation. (Photo by C. Dougherty.)



Used in succession by the Independent Order of Good Templars, the N. P. Banks Post 170, Grand Army of the Republic, and today the Disabled American Veterans, this simple frame structure has stood for almost a century. (Photo by Dan Watson, Glendale News-Press.)



Nestled on a hillside in the Tropico area, this Mediterranean-style home features octagonal rooms and a three-story turret. (Photo courtesy Raylene West.)



The tiles and stonework of the Henry Heide home reflect the Craftsman style popular when Tropico was an incorporated city. (Photo by S. McKay.)

For their generous assistance in compiling this newsletter, the editors thank Mrs. H. E. Heide, Chris Trinkley, Ellen Perry, Raylene West, Carole Dougherty, and Chuck Walton.

TAX INCENTIVES FOR PRESERVATION

With encouragement from The Glendale Historical Society, the Glendale Chamber of Commerce sent builder and investor Tim Nichols to the Preservation Tax Incentive Conference held at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles on February 19 and 20. At the Housing and Zoning Committee meeting of the Chamber Mr. Nichols gave an enthusiastic account of the conference, which was sponsored by The National Trust for Historic Preservation, The National Park Service, and The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers.

Tax credits provide attractive incentives for the preservation of historic commercial buildings, reported Mr. Nichols. The largest credits will be available for commercial buildings 50 or more years old on local or national historic registers. To qualify, the taxpayer's restoration or rehabilitation costs must be high in comparison to the purchase price. Unfortunately, with escalating property values in Glendale, restoration or rehabilitation may still prove to be a costly venture for some recently purchased buildings.

In an effort to obtain still more information on the tax credit incentives, the Chamber of Commerce invited Claire Bogaard and Stephanie Reeser of Pasadena Heritage to speak and answer questions at its Housing and Zoning Committee meeting on March 24. The Chamber may eventually issue a publication describing the incentives.

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VOLUNTEERS HONORED

Joining the ranks of the Cut Nail Club are Bob Jillson, Frances Grigsby, Suzanne McKay, Shannon Pedlow, Sid Gordon, and Sue Lazara. Dick Montgomery, Marie Luft, Glenn Luft, and Carole Dougherty received their third nails. Each nail, found in The Doctors' House and mounted on a redwood plaque, represents one hundred hours contributed to Glendale Historical Society projects. Many thanks to these members. None of our endeavors could succeed without the dedication of the people who so willingly contribute their time and talents. Frances Grigsby (246-3885) compiles the records of hours worked.

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MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to new members Harriet H. Thomas, Don Lawton, Winifred Sehm, John and Gail Dwyer, The California Historical Society and The Women's Athletic Club of Glendale.

Thanks to all renewing members for your continuing support. Your renewal month appears in the upper right-hand corner of your mailing label. Annual dues should be mailed to The Glendale Historical Society, P.O. Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202.

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NAME BADGES

Personalized name badges, for use at tours and other events, are now available. Each badge is made of heavy plastic and includes our logo, organization name, and member's name. Priced at \$2.75 each, the badges may be ordered through Helen Pedlow, 242-7066.

THE GLENDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Calendar of Events for Spring and Early Summer, 1982

- APRIL 7
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. John Richardson, grandson of pioneer W. C. B. Richardson, will give a presentation of slides of "Tropico: Then and Now."
- APRIL 25
Sunday "All Aboard for Tropico" tour including the pioneer Richardson home, the Heide home with its Craftsman interior, a marvelous Mediterranean style home, the Disabled American Veterans' Hall, and the fanciful Glendale Amtrak depot. Tours are continuous starting at the train station between 12 noon and 3 pm.
- MAY 5
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. Jack Wollard will discuss "The Wild Flowers and Stonework of Sunland-Tujunga."
- MAY 15, 16
Saturday,
Sunday Garage sale at 418 Spencer Street, Glendale. To make donations, contact Audrey Hales (243-6320).
- JUNE 2
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. The Forest Lawn Lecture Bureau will present "The Miracle of Stained Glass."
- JUNE 13
Sunday "Stone Castles of the Crescenta Valley" tour, sponsored in cooperation with the Los Angeles Conservancy. Details will be announced.
- SEPTEMBER 19 Dedication of The Doctors' House, 2 pm in Brand Park.
Sunday

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General meetings are held monthly (except December, July and August) at 7:30 pm, on the first Wednesday of the month, in the Carillon Room, Glendale Federal Savings, 401 North Brand Boulevard. Telephone: 242-7447

The Glendale Historical Society
P. O. Box 4173
Glendale, California 91202

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