

Carlsbad Time Lines

Q2 2022

Carlsbad, California, Historical Society

President's Letter

History can be found all around us in conversations with others; on Facebook postings, in the newspaper, in photos, in professional and government publications and through physical artifacts. Our organization's purpose and goal is to help preserve and promote Carlsbad history through preservation and education.

Each time we are exposed to one of these items, or we share this knowledge with others, it fills in the greater picture, and gives us and others a better understanding of our local history. Often it is thought that history has to be something that happened a very long time ago, and we dismiss our own contributions to the narrative.

Recently while reading through some posts on a Facebook group " Growing Up in Carlsbad", I was happily surprised to see 2 historical memories of interest that really add to our understanding of Carlsbad, especially during the days of incorporation and early city service and growth. Ginny Unanue (nee Krepps) wrote of her childhood growing up near the beach, and Pat Kelly (no relation to the Kelly Family descendants of Matthew Kelly of Los Kiotes) wrote of his school and work days . I think you'll find them of interest if you haven't already read them for yourself online.

Our archives have been busy during these past 10 years adding material of interest for future generations, some of which includes photos, and statistical information during the pandemic, as well as personal stories.

Sharing our history is something we try to accommodate through guest talks, responses to researchers and private inquiries about people, places and events.

Recently the Von's grocery on Tamarack had a remodel project that requested historic images as part of their décor. Take a look around their produce section to see a glimpse at our past.

A British television station has requested images and information of early Carlsbad to be included on their 4th season show of "World's Most Scenic Railway Journeys", narrated by Bill Nighy.

We've finished a new display on our First Responders: Fire and Police.

We so hope you'll visit the Magee House Museum to see it as well as other changes we've made since we reopened. We're open every Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 3 pm. Or if you plan ahead with a larger group, we can try to accommodate a mid-week tour for larger groups.

Cheers, Sue

Carlsbad Historical Photographs at Vons Store





Historical pictures at Vons on Tamarack

Growing Up in My Hometown by Ginny Krepps Unanue

If you have seen the stage or screen version of *Our Town*, then you have a very good idea of what it was like to grow up in my hometown, Carlsbad. My family moved there in 1945, when I was 4 years old. I don't necessarily mean the style of clothing, or occupations, but the style of life and the locale, and the people and their personalities. It was a mainly agricultural area, with groves of oranges and avocados, and fields of Bird of Paradise flowers.

There were 3 churches, 1 bank, 1 grocery store, and 1 small school that had one of each grade (or once in a while 2 each) from Kindergarten through Junior High School (8th grade). For High School we had to travel to the next town, Oceanside, until 1957, when Carlsbad got its own high school. We walked the mile to grammar school, and the almost 2 miles to Carlsbad High, both ways.

My father, Harry Krepps, was the one and only mailman in town, and therefore knew and was known by literally everyone in town. This was a "rural route", before Carlsbad became part of the USPS, which he then became a part of. While he still was a rural route mailman, people often purchased their stamps from him by leaving money in the mailbox, which he took in exchange for the stamps which he dutifully affixed to their outgoing mail, as needed, or left the book of stamp, and their change in the box. He also put

stamps on letters for them even when they'd not left money for them. Often there would be a little gift of avocados, or baked goods, etc., left for him. This was especially true at Christmas, along with more formal gifts, or offerings of money left in Christmas cards. These gifts of love and appreciation came in very handy, because it wasn't easy to feed and clothe 5 children on a mailman's salary. He eventually became the USPS Postmaster in Carlsbad.

I particularly remember our (my brothers and friends) excursions to town each Saturday morning, to rapturously spend our allowance--a whole dime for me, because I was the oldest! My poor brothers had to make do with their less munificent sum of a nickel apiece. Eventually, we progressed to a quarter each!

The sun was blazing in that summer blue sky, shining on us with our usually bare feet. How delicious it was to squiggle our toes in the silky-soft dust on that gorgeous dirt road (Washington St. then). The mile plus distance passed rapidly, as we chattered along to each other. We'd often stop to toss a rock at a nearby stump, or "hide" from the passing train behind one of the ancient, dusty, but magnificent towering fir trees that lined the road. Mr. Ledgerwood graded that road once a year, to keep it fairly smooth.

Downtown were the large Feed and Grain Warehouse/Store, next to the railroad off Elm Street. Arnie Stinger's Paint and Pet /food Store, was there, with Mrs. Hagen's 5 & 10 cent Variety Store, and Bill and Lois Fry's Television and Appliance store, Joe Kaelin's Smoke Shop, and the Bauer Lumber Company.

Old grandfathers would be sunning on the benches scattered here and there in front of the stores. They'd smile as we skipped by, and then nod in our direction and lean over to make some comment or other to their neighbors.

"Good morning, Mrs. Hagen. Do you have that bubble goop yet?"

"Good morning, Ginny. I'm sorry, I just sold the last of it to Betty Hargett and her brothers. I should have more by next week."

My brothers' faces fell at this pronouncement, but they immediately brightened as they spied the paddles with long rubber bands fastened to little rubber balls on the next counter. We examined these carefully, and then moved on to check out the cap pistol rolls of caps. We needed a fresh supply. Slowly, we circled around the aisle of the store lingering over each display. "See you, Mrs. Hagen. We want to go see if Mr. Kaelin has the new Superboy comic yet."

Although Joe Kaelin had the smoke shop, he also sold magazines, comic books, and bubblegum. The shop was tiny and dark, and partitioned in the middle of the store by a solid not see-through book/magazine rack. Family magazines and comics were sold on the "entry side", and the "men's magazines" and tobacco products were on the other side---not for our eyes, and Joe watched carefully to see that we stayed on "our side".

My brothers and I spent what seemed like hours, blissfully perusing one comic book after another, trying to decide. I pretended to be only interested in the more mature Superman, Superboy, and Supergirl comics, but we all knew that I'd read their Donald Ducks, or Mickey Mouses, once we were back home. Joe was also a neighbor of ours, and always had a gift of candy when we stopped by to visit on Halloween--lemon drops that I can still taste all these years later!

If my best friend, Linda Fry, was with me, we'd always insist that my brothers stay a circumspect, and mandatory, twenty feet away from us, so that if we ran into any of our friends, it would be quite clear that we were not associated with those silly juveniles trailing behind us!

These excursions were great adventures. I wonder if I realized then how much they meant to me. I can never quite recapture ever again, those experiences, except by memory.

We lived a half mile from the ocean on Tamarack, and a mile from the lagoon in the other direction. Salt smell, seagulls, sunshine and sea (and sunburn) were therefore a big part of our lives, along with seaweed, seashells, and rocks, which we were constantly dragging home, and then abandoning throughout our

house and yard. Long, lazy summer days at Tamarack Beach were part of our lives. What a happy, healthy way to grow up!

An age of innocence, and wonder, was growing up in my hometown of Carlsbad-- a bygone era. that time and place that were so wondrous and magical, no longer exist. I thought, as children do, that it would last forever. How poignantly sad that it did not. My hometown is gone now, transformed by inevitable change, as are all things. I shall always treasure it, in my memory, and my heart!

After 101 was rerouted



The nice photograph above shows the corner of Carlsbad Blvd. (PCH 101) and Ocean Avenue. There used to be a gas station at that corner. Notice that Ocean Ave. used to go through. Before 101 was rerouted, it connected to Elm Street and then to Ocean. The 1930s picture below shows this.



New Display at Magee House

We have opened a new display in one of the old pantry closets of the original kitchen. It contains information and objects from the police and fire departments, and Civil Defense (nuclear war).



Pat Kelly on Growing Up in Carlsbad

This story doesn't go too far back (1990-ish). It was, however, a turning point for our town. The Paul Ecke family owned most of the ag. land between Car Country and the airport. Ag had pretty much moved south (water and labor costs). The Ecke's and the City began planning what would become of that land.

I worked as a manager (Bldg Dept) under a mentor - Marty Orenyak. He was very dialed in to what Mayor Lewis and the City Council wanted and especially what they didn't want. (No Hooters!!!) He asked me to attend a meeting in his office one afternoon....sure thing boss...

Turned out to be a meeting w/ 3 very shiny (and expensive) suits representing Walmart. They had their corporate eye on the site where Legoland now sits. Legoland was not yet on the radar however. It was a very slick and impressive presentation. These

guys weren't from Arkansas. Walmart wanted the City to fast track their project (of course) and more importantly deem the site a "redevelopment area" so they could get a cut of the property tax increase the City would get - then allowable under the state redev laws to spur redev....etc. They clearly believed they had done some prelim "softening" of the mayor and council. What they didn't know was that Buddy and the Council were not softened; in fact, they had already given Marty O. his task....

Marty liked to twist paper clips into tiny balloon animals when he was bored in meetings and he was twisting furiously. Then he began pacing around his office. I knew this meeting was over...way over.

So he finally asked, "What's a Walmart?"

"...Oh we're the worlds biggest retailers....etc"

"I mean is it like a K-Mart?"

"Oh...no no no...we're much different than K-Mart..."

"So it's like a Nordstrom's then..?"

"No we don't compare ourselves to Nordy's"

And here came Marty's inevitable flying hatchet"

....This meeting's over; you guys belong in Oceanside...."

Shock and awe - and a scramble for the exits...

That's how O'side ended up w/ three Walmarts....and that area was carefully planned and well executed.

God Bless Buddy, and the Council (at that time). Rest easy Marty Orenyak (Karen Orenyak).

Carlsbad Historical Society
P.O. Box 252 Carlsbad CA 92018-0252
(760) 434-9189

cbadhistory@gmail.com

Shiple-Magee House
258 Beech Avenue Carlsbad CA 92008
Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 11 to 3 pm
Private Tours with Tea are given Monday through
Thursday BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
www.carlsbadhistoricalsociety.com