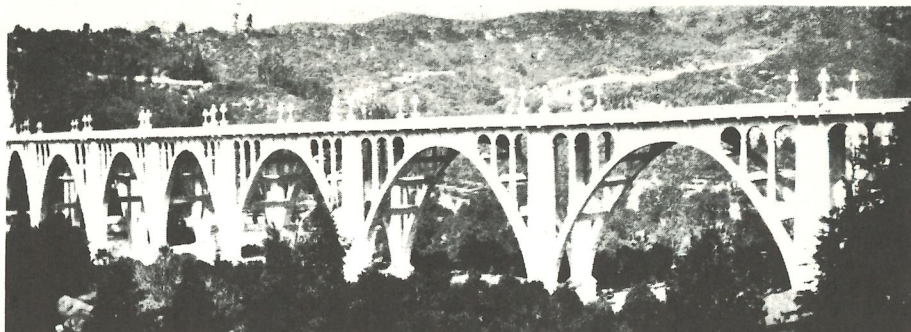


West Pasadena
Residents' Association
Est. 1962



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No. 12

WEST PASADENA RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION

June 1983

NEWSLETTER

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the residents of the West Pasadena and San Rafael areas about issues of possible concern. It is the hope of W.P.R.A. to publish this newsletter four times a year.

We are grateful to Annette Serrurier and Claire Bogaard who are "retiring" as editors. I enjoyed reading their newsletters and I'm sure many of you will join me in thanking them.

This is my first issue as editor, and I'd like to continue the newsletter in the same tradition. I welcome any news articles, suggestions, comments, and help.

WPRA Meetings are held monthly at various homes. Residents are always welcome. Please call Diane Philipbosian, WPRA Secretary, for the date, time, and place (441-3589).

Virginia Kimball
(258-3524)

REPORT FROM JIM GAMB, PRESIDENT OF WEST PASADENA RESIDENT'S ASSOCIATION

Orange Grove/Colorado Special District

The Orange Grove/Colorado Boulevard area represents one of the focal points of our community and our neighborhood. However, there is now increasing development interest in this area because of its strategic location at the intersection of three major freeways and the quality of its environment created by the presence of the Norton Simon Museum, Ambassador College to the south, the open spaces at the intersection and the desirable residential development along Orange Grove Boulevard.

Because the area is not included in the Urban Design Plan and because of its importance in conveying an image of our community, the Pasadena Planning Department has proposed the Colorado-Orange Grove Special District. Approval of the district would establish design controls including, but not restricted to height limits, building setbacks, building coverage, landscaping, sign controls and building materials.

At a hearing before the Planning Commission in April, your Association strongly supported establishment of the special district, however resolution was postponed for two months. A decision on the special district will probably be made at the Planning Commission's next meeting on June 8th at 5:30 P.M.

If you concur in the view of your Association that design controls are crucial to maintaining the special quality of this area, you should express your opinion by letter to the Planning Commission or by appearance at the public hearing on June 8th. In the meantime, questions should be addressed to Mr. Terry Tornek, Director of Planning at 577-4228

We applaud the foresight and the initiative of City Staff in advancing this proposal.

Motocross at the Rose Bowl

On May 23rd, the City Board by a 4-3 vote provided for a temporary suspension of the section of the Arroyo Seco Ordinance prohibiting motorized racing thereby permitting the scheduling of this event on August 6th.

The WPRA has consistently supported a strong Arroyo Seco Ordinance and steadfastly opposed this type of Rose Bowl use—particularly when it requires the convenient suspension of important city legislation—and we strongly agree with the stand Director Bill Bogaard has taken in opposition to this action.

However, since a majority of the City Board has determined that the event should proceed, it is now incumbent on all who are opposed to participate

in a responsible and objective assessment of the outcome, i.e. will the financial benefit to the city outweigh the adverse impacts and the precedent established by temporarily suspending the application of the Arroyo Seco Ordinance?

New Editor for the WPRA Newsletter

We are especially fortunate that Virginia Kimball has agreed to serve as editor of this newsletter. As the author of a recently published book on earthquake safety, Virginia has valuable experience in both writing and editing which will contribute much to the continuation of a vital part of our Association. Thank you for volunteering, Virginia.

And, once again, a very special thank you to Claire Bogaard and Annette Serrurier for creating, writing and editing so many past issues.

Election to Advisory Board

We also want to thank Tom Parrington for his years of participation as a director and officer of the WPRA. Because we value his counsel, Tom was elected to the Advisory Board at the last meeting of the Board of Directors.

Jim Gamb
President

REPORT FROM VICE MAYOR WILLIAM J. BOGAARD

In Pasadena today, the automobile presents one of the major challenges to our City's future. Citizens around the community point to increasing speed and volume of traffic as Pasadena's worst problem. Traffic can be termed the Achilles heel of Pasadena.

Although there are other problems in the community, Pasadenans are urgently requesting help from the City in traffic control.

The City Board which is aware of the many traffic problems realizes that if the City is going to retain its special residential character and strong business base, creative approaches for traffic control are essential. Numerous studies have been completed and are being applied.

But our experience indicates that implementation of traffic control faces stiff opposition. Opposition comes from traffic engineers, whose training supports moving large numbers of vehicles at high speed, and from some long-time residents, who resist any alteration in existing circulation patterns.

These diverse views have recently prompted some interesting debates.

Background

Although traffic problems have long been evident, a high level of concern was kindled in 1980 as the Plaza Pasadena began operations and the now deactivated Pasadena Redevelopment Agency announced a major new program of high rise construction. Increased traffic forced residents to recognize the direct relationship between major downtown projects, such as the Plaza Pasadena, and increased residential traffic. The Oak Knoll and Madison Heights neighborhoods are particularly impacted by downtown retail facilities.

In addition to the traffic volume related to downtown development, traffic in District 6 has increased in recent years from more frequent use of the Rose Bowl. In my view, it is necessary when approving Rose Bowl activities to consider the traffic impact on Pasadena's westside neighborhoods. This view has not in every case had the majority support of the City Board.

Increased traffic can be expected from major development plans that are being formulated for Colorado Boulevard between Orange Grove and the Route 7 Freeway. Even the freeway, the completion of which is expected to reduce some traffic problems, will concentrate major traffic loads on California Boulevard unless the Board reconfigures the on and off ramps to be constructed in connection with Route 7 in west Pasadena.

Since 1980, the City has initiated several programs to respond to these concerns about traffic.

Bellefontaine Speed Humps

The City Board has unanimously extended for two months a speed reduction trial using speed humps on Bellefontaine Street. The trial had been started in late 1982 in response to a majority petition from residents regarding auto speeding on their street. Late this summer, the staff will submit to the City Board a complete evaluation of the trial.

To date, two humps with a four inch height have produced a significant reduction in traffic speed. Citizen reaction has been mixed due in part to increased noise of braking and accelerating. It is important to note that there have been no accidents reported from the humps and there has been a reduction of traffic volume on the street.

During the extension, the existing humps will be reduced to three inches in height and a third hump will be installed. These changes were recommended by the City traffic engineer and will provide valuable additional data for evaluating the effects of speed humps.

Neighborhood Traffic Plan

Preparations are continuing for a trial program

designed to reduce the flow of traffic through the Oak Knoll and Madison Heights neighborhoods between (1) Lake Avenue and other points east of Lake and (2) the Pasadena Freeway at Glenarm. Unless something is done, thousands of motorists will continue to burden the residential areas by continued use of the "Glenarm Connection."

Present planning calls for the 90 day trial to begin in early 1984. When completed, the City will complete environmental and other traffic studies designed to measure the benefits of the traffic control techniques being tested.

Other Improvements

Already underway are various improvements on California Boulevard, which are designed to facilitate traffic flow and reduce accidents. In addition, Fair Oaks Avenue, south of California Boulevard, will be undergoing reconstruction this summer.

In the downtown area, various efforts are being made to mitigate traffic. So far, the results have been minimal, but it is critical to continue to search for effective ways to avoid massive traffic congestion in downtown intersections.

Conclusion

The traffic experiments and the other planning studies that are now underway will provide some new approaches to traffic control. Success, however, will be achieved only if citizens support the efforts and if the City Board is prepared to make hard decisions in the face of spirited opposition.

If traffic solutions are not achieved, I believe that the special quality of living in Pasadena will not be retained and public support for continued downtown development will soon disappear.



OLD COLORADO STREET BRIDGE PARTY

Mr. William Cathey has announced that Pasadena Heritage will once again host the Old Colorado Street Bridge Party on the evening of July 16, 1983, between the hours of seven and midnight. The historic bridge will be closed to traffic for an evening of music, dancing, entertainment, refreshments and antique cars.

Invitations will be mailed in about two weeks. For additional information or to request invitations, neighbors are invited to call Pasadena Heritage at 793-0617.

MORE NEWS ON THE COLORADO BRIDGE

There's no doubt that the old Colorado Street Bridge over the Arroyo is in need of repair, but just how bad is its condition? We'll be finding out soon. You probably noticed that the bridge was closed during the month of April while it was being thoroughly evaluated. DeLeuw Cather and Company inspected the deck of the bridge and took core samples for testing. Their study is expected to take nine months.

SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT ALLENDALE PARK

Pasadena's Community and Recreation Services Department is organizing activities for all ages this summer at Allendale. From June 20 through August 19, a recreation program including softball, crafts, ping pong, board games, and tournaments will be held Monday through Thursday, from 3-7 P.M. Allendale Library will offer movies, story times, and puppet shows. Slim and Trim and gym-o-size will be held at Allendale School Cafeteria. For more information, call 577-4643.

UPDATE FROM THE VISTA DEL ARROYO

Work is continuing on the Vista del Arroyo Tower which is located on South Grand Avenue near the old Colorado Street Bridge. The Tower structure will be used to house the United States Court of Appeals. The General Services Administration (GSA) which owns the entire historic Vista del Arroyo site anticipates that the work on the tower will be completed early in 1984.

At this time, representatives from the State Office of Historic Preservation, the Court of Appeals and the General Services Administration are finalizing the plans for the courtrooms within the tower. Recent plans for the courtrooms have been submitted which would call for a restoration which is in keeping with the old section of the hotel designed by Pasadena architect Sylvanus Marston. The GSA has indicated that it does plan to rebuild the old section of the historic wing of the hotel which was destroyed by fire last fall. The new structure will be a replica of the old building as

designed by Mr. Marston in the early 20's.

The General Services Administration has been in contact with the City of Pasadena about the disposition of the bungalows. The remaining seventeen bungalows are scattered across the Vista site and were designed by Pasadena architects Myron Hunt and Sylvanus Marston and others. They have been vacant for over twenty years but are still structurally sound although now in need of major rehabilitation work, such as new plumbing, electric, roofing, etc. It has been the hope of many neighbors to the site that the bungalows would be rehabilitated and used once again for residential living. The General Services Administration expects that the bungalows will eventually be available to a developer for restoration purposes. The City is working in cooperation with GSA to assure that the development will be in keeping with current zoning and have a positive impact on the nearby neighborhoods.

HAS YOUR CURB BEEN PAINTED?

From May through November, house numbers will be painted (or repainted) on curbs in all residential areas of Pasadena. The city has contracted for this service, and there is no direct charge to property owners or residents.

1984 AREA CODE UPDATE

When Pacific Telephone splits the 213 area code next January, there will be two area codes in the City of Pasadena. Most of the city will have a new area code (818), but a small number of residents and businesses in the old Clinton exchange (prefixes 254 through 259) along the western fringe of Pasadena will remain in the 213 area code. That area, generally west of Avenue 64, is outside Pasadena's 1923 boundary, which has been used by the phone company for years. Those people are served by the Highland Park office of the phone company and have Los Angeles telephone numbers.

With the coming 213/818 area code split, prefixes 254 through 259 in Pasadena were polled about changing their numbers to join the rest of Pasadena in area code 818, or keeping their present numbers and remaining in the 213 area code. Pacific Telephone requires that the entire area be in one area code or the other, so it wasn't an individual choice. The results of the poll showed that seventy percent favored keeping their numbers and remaining in the 213 area code.

PASADENA IN THE PAST MY MEMORY OF THE ARROYO SECO FROM MY CHILDHOOD ON

My father, Henry Biedebach and my mother, Amelia Biedebach, came to California from Iowa in 1881. First they settled at the Craig Ranch in East Pasadena and there my brother Fred was born. After leaving the Craig Ranch my folks lived on North Fair Oaks Avenue for a time. Then, father bought a house on South Oakland Avenue, where some more of my brothers and sisters were born. Later, approximately 1897, father bought 10 acres in the Arroyo Seco. He moved a house from Linda Vista Avenue down the hillside and over the Arroyo, across the stream bed to a location where the Brookside Golf Course Restaurant is now located. The eucalyptus trees around the club house were planted by my mother. The ranch property consisted of a large barn, a slaughterhouse where beef and hogs were butchered. We supplied butcher shops in Pasadena. A blacksmith shop was on the property. Several other small buildings were also on the property. Some of which were used for sleeping quarters for some of the older members of the family. The family had grown to nine by the time I was born, December 7, 1899. A younger brother was also born at the ranch, making it a family of eleven children by this time.

How did you get water for your home use?

I recall a stream or river of water ran through the ranch a short distance from the barn, in the winter dumping heavy rain. Great boulders and trees would come down the river. At no time, until approximately 1913, did the river overflow and wash out our land. But approximately 1913, the water overflowed and took out about three or four acres of top soil. The sand and gravel was sold to developers of the streets and homes in Pasadena—wagon after wagon loaded the sand and gravel for delivery to Pasadena. Later two rock crushers located down there and the horse-drawn wagons were supplied with whatever material they wanted.

The river was nice clear water after heavy rains and that was our only source of water for the live stock and chickens, as well as home use, at that time. Later the City ran a pipe from the upper Arroyo to a reservoir in Pasadena, which cut our flow, so that we had to haul water from Orange Grove in barrels to supply our needs. After some time my brothers piped water down over the hill to our ranch.

Did you have electricity or natural gas in your home?

We did not have electricity or gas at any time.

We used kerosene for lamps and kerosene stoves, and wood stove for heating and cooking. We did not have a washing machine for laundry. We heated water in tubs over a pit fire in the yard, using scrub boards.

What schools did you attend?

I went to the first grade at Lincoln School for one half year, then the Roosevelt School was built and I went there until fourth grade. Then the Cleveland School was built and I went there. Later I went to Muir.

Tell about the wild life in the Arroyo when you were growing up.

On the ranch I recall we had horses, cows, a bull, sheep, goats, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, geese, ducks, pigeon, and many other animals and birds. We also had numerous wild life; coyotes, bob cats, skunks, weasel, racoons, possum, and many other animals. Also quail, dove, all manner of small birds and some large hawks, many rabbit as cotton tails, brush rabbit, Jack rabbit.

There was only one dirt road from Orange Grove Avenue to our place. It ended at our ranch and there were no roads leading through our place.

Approximately 1922 the Devils Gate Dam was built. They had a camp for the workers and a corral for mules. Only mule teams were used, they had no trucks or other mechanical equipment. I sold some meat to the camp at that time.

Between 1922 and 1923 our property in the Arroyo was sold to the City of Pasadena for the Rose Bowl and Golf Course. The Rose Bowl was built with mule team wagons and scrapers. No tractors or other trucks were used.

You said you had grandparents that came to Pasadena in the early 1880's. Where did they live?

My grandfather came to California and bought a ranch in East Pasadena—some 62 Acres. It was planted to vineyards. Most of which were wine grapes which were sold to the winery, and many other table grapes, as well as fruit trees. My grandmother canned many fruits and vegetables which they raised on the ranch. The ranch was later sold and part of it was purchased by the City of Pasadena. Part of this property is used as a parking area for all the Rose Parade Floats after New Year's parades, part of it is used for a park as well as other purposes.

Transcribed from an oral history of Mark Biedebach, Uncle of Esther Ricardo. - courtesy of Esther Ricardo and the Pasadena Historical Society