

Torrance Historian

Published for members, this newsletter is dedicated to the support & preservation of Torrance History – share the history with your family & friends!

September 2000
Kristina Kaur, Editor

Historical Highlights

by Peggy Basile, President

September is here - quite suddenly, it seems. This month sees a flurry of activity throughout THS, as we begin final preparations for our semi-annual Historic Home Tour October 7-8. This year I believe will be the most exciting ever, with a few new homes never before on the tour as well as favorites from years past - an outstanding list! If you'd like an intimate look at one of these houses, I encourage you to volunteer a little of your time as a docent. A three hour stint will give you a behind-the-scenes, up-close-and-personal vantage point not otherwise available. Plus, you have the opportunity to meet a lot of people who are as excited about the homes as you are! If you think you might want to help out, please call Janet Payne at 328-7549 or myself at 533-1838.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our newest Board Member, Diane Caseltine, who has agreed to fill the previously vacant position of Historian. Diane, whose responsibilities will include chronicling all official THS activities (yes, such as the Home Tour), brings a lot of enthusiasm to this position and we all look forward to her contributions.

Finally, we at the Historical Society sadly note the passing of former Mayor Katy Geissert on July 21st. "Mother Mayor" contributed so much
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photo

Katy Geissert, You Will Be Missed

In addition to her achievements and milestones within Torrance's political arena, Katy Geissert was a supporter and long-time member of the Torrance Historical Society. She was often at the teas, programs and events held by the Society, and during her terms as mayor, set the precedent for installing the Board of Directors. The first woman councilmember and first woman mayor was also a docent for the Historical Homes Tours. She was honored by the Historical Society in 1984 as a *Woman in History*. But the history was just beginning. She then became the Founding President of the Torrance Cultural Arts Center Foundation in 1995. Torrance's Civic Center Library was renamed the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library in the same year. Her many accomplishments in politics as well as in the
con't pg. 2 "Katy Geissert"

New Wash Day Exhibit

Do you remember the mornings when Mom would carry the basket of wet clothes to the back yard? She always knew how many clothespins each piece of clothing needed, and which clothespins were old. If you had multiple lines as a kid, boy was it fun to hide between the layers of sheets and towels. Today you can buy Downy's sunlight fresh, but there's nothing close to fresh, clean clothes off the line.

So, for those of you who had or still have "solar dryers" come to the museum this month for our new Wash Day Exhibit. A new exhibit will be opening September 15th featuring antique clothing and linens from the museum and private collections. Reminisce as you look at the "laundry" hanging on clotheslines with wooden clothespins, washboards and tubs.



Win a Garden Basket

A Garden Basket will be on display in the Museum - where the Home Tour begins. You'll be invited to purchase a opportunity ticket (or two) in order to win this delightful basket. It will be brimming over with garden trinkets, such as a gardening book, gloves, shiny garden tools, and a hand-painted watering can by local artisan Jeanette Donaher. All proceeds benefit the Museum.



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to the growth - and history - of Torrance; and her legacy will be seen in the continued vigor and vitality of our city. I am very proud that the Torrance Historical Society will be a strong participant in fulfilling that legacy.

Peggy Basile, THS President

Greet People! Volunteer with a Friend! No Experience Necessary!

Docents-we need you!

Docents play one of the most important roles in the life of the Museum. They are there to greet you with a friendly "Hello!" answer your questions, and guide you through the Museum.

Docents have a leading role in the Historic Home Tour. No experience is necessary - just a willingness to greet people and make them feel welcome.

Benefits of docenting on the home tour include:

- A sense of contributing to the success of the Museum's biggest fund-raiser \$\$\$
- Being part of an exciting event
- Docent Ticket as a good will gesture to those who volunteer
- Greeting long-time acquaintances and meeting new friends

Team up with a family member! Shifts are 10:45-1:30 and 1:15-4:00 October 7th & 8th. Call Grace at the Museum 328-5392 by September 26th to be a part of the success of the homes tour.

-Katy Geissert con't from pg. 1-

community as a volunteer have not gone unnoticed. The Torrance Historical Society has kept clippings and photos of her in its files for many years. The 1994 illustration of Katy Geissert from Torrance Magazine is on permanent display in the museum, along with many photos of her in her official capacity as councilwoman and mayor. Although she's gone from our day to day lives, the contributions she's made to Torrance, the community and the Historical Society will always be remembered.



Torrance Historical Society's

2000 Fall Tour of Historic Homes

in Downtown Torrance

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY OCTOBER 7 & 8
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Home, Sweet Home

BE A PART OF HISTORY

STROLL TREE LINED STREETS

TOUR INTERIORS OF LOCAL HISTORIC HOMES

VIEW ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILES

ENJOY COMPLIMENTARY REFRESHMENTS

GREET LONG-TIME ACQUAINTANCES AND MEET NEW FRIENDS

ADMIRE HEIRLOOM SILVER IN HOMES AND MUSEUM

TICKETS \$15.00 DONATION

ADVANCE PURCHASE NOT NECESSARY

TOUR BEGINS AT MUSEUM

MUSEUM OPENS AT 10:30 A.M.

BOTH DAYS OF TOUR

TORRANCE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

1345 POST AVENUE, TORRANCE CA 90501

MUSEUM HOURS: 1:00 – 4:00 P.M.

TUES, WED, THURS & SUN

Proceeds from this fundraiser support the Torrance Historical Society Museum and its programs.

Also on Saturday, October 8th...
Torrance Woman's Club Rummage Sale • 1422 Engracia Avenue • 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

2000 Fall Tour of Historic Homes



Attention Pack Rats!!

It's time to put your **SILVER** on display! Is there a special trinket or plate with a story just begging to be told??? Is there a lonely candelstick on your mantel, or vanity set all boxed up that could use a good polish? The Torrance Historical Society & Museum will be displaying silver pieces -and their stories on October 7th & 8th in locked display cases. Here are some brainstorming ideas:

- Silver Wedding Gifts
- Silver Pieces from Family Members
- Silver Baby Spoons / Shoes
- Silver Watches / Jewelry
- Silverware / Plates
- Silver Coins

Every person keeps a trinket because it has meaning in their life. Bring your pieces out of hiding, to shine in the glory. Audiences in the past have loved to see the collections of china (1996) and quilts (1998). There's plenty of room in the display cases for your special silver piece. Call Janet today at 328-7549.

Keeping Silver Tarnish Free

Perhaps it's a wedding gift of a silver serving platter, a treasured tea set or antique silverware that you have tucked away in your sideboard or hutch - but somewhere, surely, you have silver.

Here are a few tips on how to keep your silver shiney from the Reader's Digest book, "How to do Just About Anything" :

"The best way to clean silver and silver plate is by hand rubbing it with commercial polish or a paste of baking soda and water. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands. Wash and dry dusty pieces beforehand. Apply the polish with a soft, dry cloth, rubbing lengthwise, not crosswise or in circles. Use a small, soft brush to clean crevices. Coat a string with paste and rub it between tarnished fork tines. Wash the silver, rinse it, and buff with a soft cloth or chamois.

Two other polishing methods, dip polishes and the electrolytic process, are easier, but can dull or whiten the silver. They are not recommended.

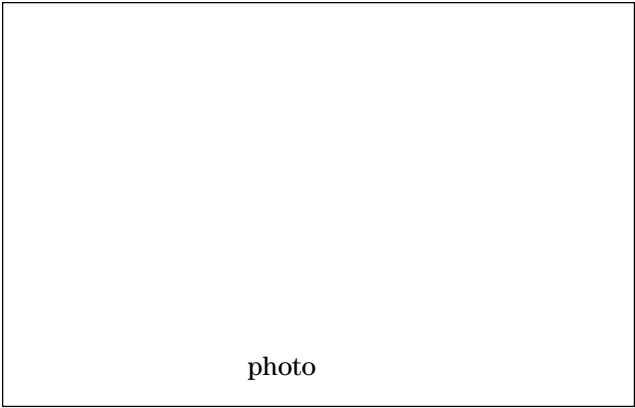
To retard tarnishing, store silver in a specially lined chest or drawer, or wrap it in tarnishing-inhibiting fabric. Do not use plastic wrap; it can cause hard-to-remove spots. Also rubber bands can stain silver, even through layers of wrapping."

Torrance Memorial Medical Center Celebrates 75 Years

Gala celebration to be held Saturday, October 7th. Enjoy an evening of celebration including, dancing and musical entertainment with hits from Phantom of the Opera. Reception and dinner to be held at the Torrance Marriott, black tie preferred, tickets \$125. For more information contact Anne Laity in Volunteer Services at (310) 325-9110 x2353.

MOCA Exhibit Ending Soon!

The Museum of Contemporary Art has on exhibit the most influential architectural works in the 20th century. The exhibit is called "At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture." Tickets are \$6 adults, \$4 students/seniors. It is a once-in-a-lifetime exhibit and you'll be glad you made the trip to LA. Ends September 24th. For further information call (213) 626-6222.



photo

Beggs Residence Property of the Month, June 2000

The Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission presented the Beggs Residence with the Property of the Month for June, 2000. This property was sponsored by the Torrance Historical Society, and is located at 1522 Amapola. Congratulations Vincent and Denise!



Annual Meeting A Success!

The afternoon began with a wonderful gourmet feast prepared by Chef Michael Shafer of the Depot. Historical Society members and friends turned out in record numbers for this event. Then, California Assemblyman George Nakano presented the outgoing Board with Certificates of Recognition for their service to the Historical Society and the community. Mayor Dee Hardison swore in THS President Peggy Basile and the new Board. A modern computer-generated presentation (with assistance from Debbie and Todd Hays) on architect Irving Gill was given by Kristina Kaur. Kristina, who studies architecture at USC, has researched Gill's work in Southern California. Since Gill designed the Depot, it was the logical venue for this year's Annual Meeting. A special thanks is in order to the committee of Janice Plank, Sue Herbers, Debbie Hays and Janet Payne for organizing the event. All those in attendance received a special Red Car coaster hand made by Richard Meyer.

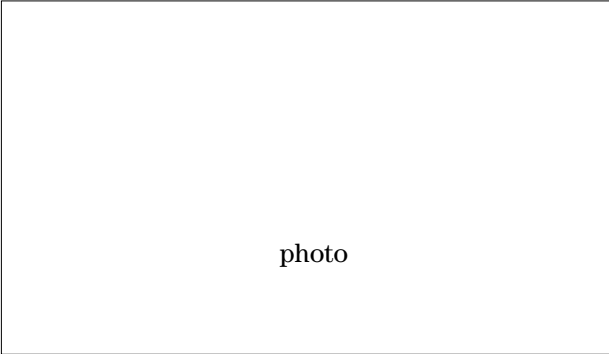
Welcome New Life Member!

Torrance Moose Lodge



Free Walking Tour of Downtown Landmarks

Come to the museum on the 4th Sunday of each month to learn more about your city. The next tours are scheduled for Sunday, September 24th, and Sunday October 22nd. The tours will be departing from the Historical Society at 1:30 p.m. Wear your walking shoes, and bring the kids and grandkids – it's a lot of fun and educational, too.



photo

Janet Payne named Distinguished Citizen of the Year

The Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce awarded our very own Janet Payne as the Distinguished Citizen of the Year for 2000. Her spirit of volunteerism extends from the Torrance Historical Society to the Torrance Parks & Recreation Commission, Volunteer Center and Torrance Woman's Club. Her longest and most dedicated run has been in the Torrance Historical Society. Congratulations Janet!

Your 2000-2001 THS Board

Peggy Basile	President
Janice Plank	1st Vice President
Debbie Hays	2nd Vice President
Janet Payne	3rd Vice President
Kristina Kaur	4th Vice President
Carl Kaemerle	Secretary
Jim Stadler	Treasurer
Diane Caseltine*	Historian
Gene Hassan	Special Events
Tony Kriss	Financial Secretary
Gussie Kriss	Museum Volunteers
Judi Gerber	Parliamentarian
Sue Herbers	Member at Large

President's Advisory Council

Arnold Woo - Legal Matters
Maureen O' Donnell - Government Affairs
Richard Meyer - Red Car / Transmachine

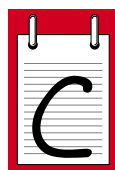
*To be appointed

Torrance Historical Society & Museum
1345 Post Avenue
Torrance, CA 90501
(310) 328-5392

Return Service Requested

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Calendar

September

24 Walking Tour - Downtown Torrance

October

7 & 8 2000 Historic Homes Tour

22 Walking Tour - Downtown Torrance

Docents

Share your memories and the history of Torrance with visitors. Free docent training.

Grace Elgin, Museum Co-ordinator
(310) 328-5392

Museum Hours

The Torrance Historical Society & Museum is open free to the public:

Tuesday - Thursday & Sunday
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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