

# Torrance Historian

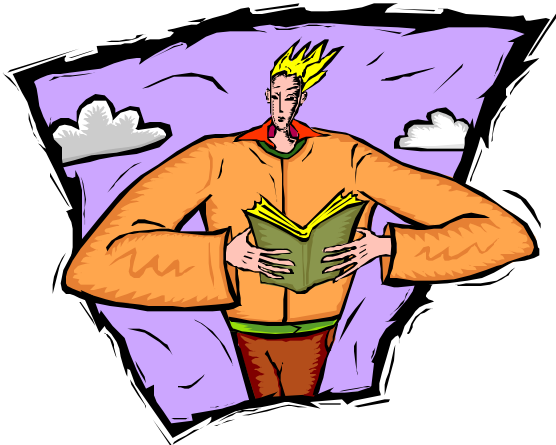
Published for members, this newsletter is dedicated to the support & preservation of Torrance History — *share the history with your family & friends!* **December 2002**  
Debbie Hays, Editor

## History of Torrance Schools Presentation & Book Signing

The Torrance Historical Society's first presentation of the New Year will be on the History of the Torrance Schools. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Tom Rische, a former South High School teacher, who has written a book entitled *The History of Torrance Schools — 1890-2000*.

The book summarizes the history of the Torrance Unified School District. Dr. Rische has been involved with Torrance Schools for nearly 50 years — as a newspaper reporter and editor, school information coordinator, and teacher, and has traced a number of interesting stories about the development of local schools.

You're invited to join us on Sunday, February 2nd, at 1:30 PM in the Museum (1345 Post Avenue), for this free presentation. No reservations are required. Dr. Rische will also be signing his book which can be yours with a \$12.50 donation. Coffee and fresh-baked cookies will be served.



## Holiday Wishes . . .

*Here's wishing you a joyous holiday season, and a wonderful New Year!*

— From the Board of Directors,  
Staff and Carl Kaemerle, President  
Torrance Historical Society

We'd also like to give you a sneak preview of what you have to look forward to in the New Year with the Torrance Historical Society:

- Presentation on the *History of Torrance Schools* by Tom Riche, and book signing — Sunday, February 2nd
- Membership Renewal Drawing for dinner for two at Cafe Luna — February 14th
- Antique jewelry presentation — Spring
- Tour of local farm — Spring
- Guided tour of Gene Autry Museum — Summer
- Free Walking tour of Historic Downtown Torrance - 4th Sunday, May - October

For additional information, please call the Museum at  
(310) 328-5392



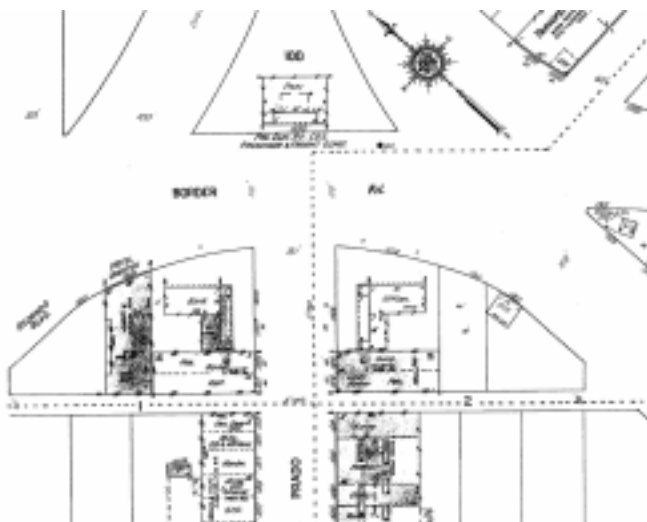
## What Did Your Torrance Look Like in 1922?

Remember a time when pool halls, markets, the library, City Hall, and *Milly's Dry Goods & Notions* were all located on just four blocks of El Prado? Well, neither do I, that was back in 1922. But . . . with the use of Sanborn Maps, you can see how Torrance changed in the years 1916, 1922, 1929 and 1932.

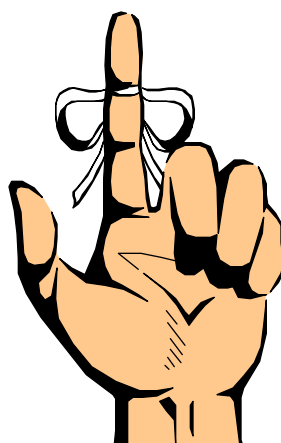
The Sanborn Company made maps of urban communities to assess fire risk. These maps were very detailed and included footprints of homes, lot sizes and addresses, types of businesses, building materials used and other information. Covering a span of nearly 20 years, the Sanborn Maps are the perfect tool to show how Torrance grew. If your house is old enough, and in "urban Torrance," you can see how your neighborhood changed during these years.

The Sanborn maps are now available on-line by the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL). You will need a LAPL library card to access the maps. Any branch of the LAPL will be happy to issue you a card, the closest branch is in Harbor City located at 1555 Sepulveda Blvd. Once you have your card, go to [www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org) and click on "Databases." Then click on "History, Geography and Genealogy" and scroll down to "Sanborn Maps." Just select the city and year at which you want to look.

**Note:** A special thanks goes to Michael George for contributing this interesting article!



El Prado & Border, November 1922



## It's Time to Renew & Win

It's time to renew your membership in the Torrance Historical Society. All memberships are renewable annually by February, except Lifetime memberships. If you renew your membership by Friday, February 14th, you will automatically be entered

into a drawing to win dinner for two at Cafe Luna, a delicious local Italian restaurant. The winner will be notified the day of the drawing and then announced in the next newsletter.

As a member of the Torrance Historical Society, you will continue to enjoy:

- Invitations to special "Members Only" events
- Research privileges in the Museum's historic archives
- The opportunity to become a Torrance Historian
- The opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors
- A subscription to the *Torrance Historian* Newsletter
- Docent Training

The cost to renew your membership or to join for the first time is:

- Adult \$15
- Youth (-18) \$10
- Businesses \$40
- Family \$20
- Senior (65+) \$10
- Organizations \$40
- Life \$250

A membership in the Torrance Historical Society contributes to the success of the Museum in presenting exhibits, programs and services of the highest quality. It is the goal of the Torrance Historical Society to make history accessible to every resident, to encourage each of us to learn about our past, and to help realize our future. *Thank you in advance for your continued membership support!* ☺

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# 2002 Fall Tour of Historic Homes

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## Thank You to Our Sponsors & Supporters

A special *thank you* goes out to the following homeowners, businesses and individuals who supported the Torrance Historical Society & Museum in hosting the bi-annual Fall Tour of Historic Homes. The financial success of the Home Tour is vital to the Society's existence. The sponsorships, combined with the \$15 donation of each Home Tour attendee, is what helps maintain the Society's ever-growing collection of photos, documents, books, artifacts and other material relevant to the City's past.

### Home Sponsors

Gussie & Tony Kriss  
Janet & Charles Payne  
Janice Plank, Broker Associate  
Prudential California Realty  
Sue Herbers,  
Torrance City Clerk  
Lucille McComas  
Torrance Woman's Club

### Home Owners

Leslie & Brett Fletcher  
Keri & Fred Gilbert  
Vicki & Gene Higginbotham  
Daneen & Michael Larecy  
Cherie & Steve Maier  
Mimi & Dennis O'Keefe

*Without them, there would be no tour!*

### Refreshment Stop

Torrance Woman's Club  
Cookies courtesy of Torrance Bakery

### Antique Car Owner Sponsor

Eat at Rudy's

### 2002 Home Tour Committee

Janice Plank & Janet Payne — Chairpersons  
Debbie Hays — Publicity & gifts  
Kristina Kaur — Poster & tour booklet design  
Dick Valot — Antique Cars, South Bay Touring A's

### Committee Members

Carl Kaemerle, President  
Peggy Basil • Tom Hazel • Lucille  
McCommas • Grace Elgin • Sue Herbers  
Mary O'Campo • Michael George • Gussie  
Kriss • Tony Kriss • Jamie Ruth Watson

*Thanks also to our many unnamed volunteers,  
family and friends, and our great City of Torrance!*

### Docents

Deborah Allison • Kirklyn Barto • Peggy Basile •  
Bonnie Beckerson • Karen Benson • Brooke Borg •  
Kevin Borg • Ruth Brugger • Judy Burrow • Diane  
Caseltine • Lola Cole • Linda Cook • Pat Cookus •  
Jane Desmond • Paula Fisher • Deborah Fox •  
Vicki Garcia • Ken Gaugh • Flave George • Lisa  
George • Michael George • Angela Gutknecht •  
Suzanne Green • Dee Hardison • Gene Hasson •  
Debbie Hays • Todd Hays • Tom Hazell • Bernadette  
Hilsop • Michelle Jones • Carl Kaemerle • Delores  
Kaemerle • Kristina Kaur • Gussie Kriss • Tony  
Kriss • Pat Kromka • Beth Largent • Linda Lescoe •  
Kathleen McCarthy • Lucille McCommas • Millie  
McFadden • JoAnn McGaughey • Frankie Manker •  
Mike Mauno • Anita Moisen • Jill Maroni • Helen  
Nowatka • Paul Nowatka • Mary O'Campo •  
Maureen O'Donnell • Beth O'Gorman • Norma Orr •  
Janet Payne • Nancie Pierce • Janice Plank •  
Sharon Polling • Rose Reese • Maria Reynolds •  
Tom Rische • Angela Rivera • Jerry Ronan • Nancy  
Shannon-Sinclair • Pam Sheerin • Ann Smisik •  
Steve (Millie's) • Diana Sutherland • Jamie Ruth  
Watson • Judy Webber • Susain Wilcox • Eileen  
Wittenberg • Hope Witokowsky • Arnold Woo

## And . . . the Winner is . . .



When you were in the Museum purchasing your Home Tour Ticket, you may have also purchased a raffle ticket (or two) for a chance to win the garden basket. The basket was filled with garden accessories, and at the center was a galvanized watering can and matching gardening gloves hand painted by local artisan, Jeanette Donaher.

There were many who hoped their name would be drawn at the close of the Home Tour that Sunday, but we could only have one lucky winner. And . . . the winner is . . . Georgia Thompson of Torrance! Georgia was thrilled to win, and rushed right down to the Museum after she was called to pick up her garden basket. Congratulations Georgia, there are many who are green with envy at your win! ☺

## Welcome New Members

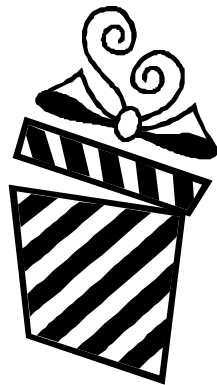
Welcome to the new members who joined the Torrance Historical Society during the Home Tour :

Helen Ball  
Jane Desmond  
Louann F. Evans  
Steve Felix  
Deborah Fox  
Herm & Mary Herzbrun  
Mark & Aleta Matthews  
Dianne R. Pales  
Donalee B. Price

Welcome all! ☺

## The Perfect Gift

Wondering what to buy that special someone in your life who has everything?  
How 'bout a membership to the Torrance Historical Society? ☺



## Ride a Carousel Horse

For 49 years now, Torrance has participated in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. The theme of this year's Parade is — *Children's Dreams, Wishes and Imagination*. The City of Torrance entry is entitled "Catching the Brass Ring," and features a colorful carousel horse on a 35' long float. You may "ride" with the carousel horse down Colorado Blvd. in the 114th Tournament of Roses Parade by donating a rose vial which will be placed on this float January 1st. If you'd like additional information regarding purchasing a rose vial, or if you'd like to help decorate the float, call Torrance Parks & Recreation Dept. at (310) 618-2930. ☺

## Get 'em While They're Hot!

Do you have your copy of *Historic Torrance*? This book is a pictorial history of Torrance. It explains the exciting story of the West's first planned industrial city and the colorful men and women who turned dusty grazing land into one of Los Angeles County's most vital industrial, commercial and residential centers. Stop by the museum and pick up your copy today! ☺

## Want to have Fun?!

Wondering what to do with your extra time? The Museum needs volunteers to docent on Sundays from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, set up displays and more. Docenting at the Museum is a great opportunity to learn about the City's colorful history and people, firsthand. All of 2003 is open, so far. Contact Gussie Kriss at (310) 323-7959 and learn how you can participate in the fun! ☺

## Walking Tours a Success

The docent-led walking tours of Downtown Torrance hosted by the Torrance Historical society May - October, were a BIG success. Over 250 people joined us for the tours during those six months. They walked Downtown streets, learned bits of history and trivia and saw local landmarks. ☺



## Thanks for Giving Party

As a way of saying *thank you* to all of the Home Owners who so graciously opened their home to the 500+ home tour attendees this year, the docents, the home tour sponsors, antique car owners and everyone who keeps the Museum going all year long, the Historical Society hosted a *Thanks for Giving* party in November. There were over 70 people in attendance! Those also honored at the party included:

- Lucille McCommas & Maxine Reynolds — weekday Museum docents
- Art Callan — “Senior Scene,” Citicable TV Reporter

The Museum was abuzz with chatter about the Home Tour — the restoration process, the kind of paint used, decorating style, etc. A special “thank you” to Delores Kaemerle for her generous donation to this party — *the cake was great!*



## Holiday Hours

The Museum will be closed beginning Friday, December 20th, and will reopen Sunday, January 12th. The Torrance Historical Society wishes you and your family a warm and wonderful holiday season — we look forward to seeing you at the Museum in the New Year! ☺



## Museum Hours

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

Tuesday - Thursday & Sunday  
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

*Special hours can be arranged for private tours or research. Please contact the Museum directly at (310) 328-5392. ☺*

## Torrance Historical Society & Museum

1345 Post Avenue  
Torrance, CA 90501  
(310) 328-5392

***Return Services Requested***

## Inside

- ◆ History of Torrance Schools & Book Signing
- ◆ Sanborn Maps
- ◆ Membership Renewal
- ◆ Home Tour
- ◆ Torrance Rose Float

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