



COUNTY COURIER

Official Publication of the Orange County Historical Society

www.orangecountyhistory.org

This notice appeared in the *Courier* last May.

ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES BY PHIL BRIGANDI

PHIL BRIGANDI is now the Orange County Archivist!



A Courthouse postcard from Don Dobmeier's collection

This is a boon for everyone interested in the history of Orange County. The County Archives once again [not since 1995] will be open to the public with regular hours but more importantly the “keeper” is a young man who not only loves history but knows the history of Orange County. As native of the city of Orange, local historian and author, he has written many books and articles.

Phil Brigandi is no stranger to the Society, not only a member but an engaging speaker whom we have been privileged to hear numerous times on various subjects. The latest was about his book on the city of Orange, *Orange The City 'Round*

The Archives are in The Old Orange County Courthouse
Room 101

Hours are: 9 a.m. to noon 1 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.
Information (714) 834-2536

the Plaza in May of 2000. In recent years, Phil had been living in Hemet, working for the Ramona Pageant, and running the San Jacinto Museum.

What's in the Archives?

We partly answered the question with a list of the records and documents in the archives in the September *Courier* but here is the opportunity to hear from Phil. He will tell us what is being saved, what is available and how can we see it and of course, it

wouldn't be Phil if also we didn't hear the history of the Archives.

Timeline:

- Established 1983;
- Moved to Old Courthouse 1992;
- Lost funding after OC bankruptcy 1995;
- Reactivated April, 2003.

We meet at 7:30 p.m. at Bower's Kidseum, northwest corner of Main and 18th Street, Santa Ana. Public is invited and parking is free. Entrance is at the side and back of building.

DONATIONS *continued*

Paper written for Orange County Historical Society, July 1, 1943

"Personal Recollections of Santa Ana 40 Years Ago."

By Mrs. C. W. Burns

When my husband, C. W. Burns and I arrived in Santa Ana, June 28, 1889, we found a number of Ohio friends from Clark and Green Counties, here to welcome us, among them being the E. S. Rouse, Frank McLain, C.S. Forgy, David Anderson, Will Anderson, Cheney, Otstot, Frank Bemus families, W.S. Taylor, and Elmer Wallace from Clark County, and William Smart, D.W. Lewis, C.C. Collins and Torrance families from Green County; D.M. Burns and wife, father and mother of my husband and Elmer Burns, were also here.

After a tiresome journey of a week, we arrived at the old Southern Pacific Depot, on Depot Street, now known as Fruit Street. We had some interesting experiences en route, and as very few fellow passengers knew more about the trip than we, at times we could scarcely believe what our eyes beheld.

One thing that impressed me, were the vast plains and Kansas winds, the wide stretch of desert and the mountains. Somewhere on the plains, we saw large herds of buffalo and tho [though] I have crossed the same territory many times, I have not had that privilege again. The heat of the desert was intense and as the locomotives were fueled by something beside oil, one night on the desert, the car windows were closed to prevent sparks flying in but in spite of this precaution, one corner of our car caught fire and was extinguished, with some difficulty. Our train, not arriving at Barstow on time to make proper connections, we were compelled to stay all night there. The little hotel being full, there was no available



Mr. and Mrs. Colgan W. Burns, (Jessie Harrison) in front of their home , 451 W. 6th St. , corner of Riverine Avenue, Santa Ana

space save one small room in the back of the saloon, with a thin partition between the carousing men and this room. As there was only one bed, a Chicago saloon keeper's wife and her baby and my baby and I occupied it, while Mr. Burns lay on the floor, so there was little sleep for any of us. We had thought of staying at the station, but after seeing pigs running through and a large tarantula killed on the floor, considered the saloon safer. The heat was intense and altogether, it seemed to me, a young Ohio girl, that we were not far from the infernal regions. But when we reached the fertile valleys, with lovely palms, orchards, vineyards, and glorious flower gardens of Southern California we forgot all the discomforts and it seemed as if we had reached Beulah Land, itself. Grapes, apricots, figs, peaches, berries, and oranges were in abundance and were free for the asking, for in those days, every newcomer was given a hearty welcome. The roses, magnolias, (yes, the geraniums) and other flowers were never so beautiful. There were a very few hard shelled English walnuts at that time,

and the only citrus fruits were navel and Mediterranean Sweet oranges, lemons, and limes. The shipping of citrus fruits was not conducted as it is at this present time.

Often the growers would not receive anything for their fruit, but had to pay for the shipping, also. Apricots and peaches were in abundance, and were dried on trays, after sulphuring, but brought small returns for the labor expended. At that time, the local business situation was depressing—the greater part of the grapes were destroyed by a disease [Pierce's Disease was first identified in the Anaheim area of Southern California in 1892. The causal agent for Pierce's Disease is a glassy winged sharpshooter leafhopper. This leafhopper drills into the main rootstock of the vine and penetrates the nutrient canals of the xylem. While sucking out the plant's fluid it deposits bacteria into the vine causing Pierce's Disease.] and many beautiful vineyards had to be uprooted. Real estate prices had dropped to the bottom in a short time, and were felt by everyone, but through it all, there was a spirit of optimism and cooperation shown among the people that I have never seen since.

The climate charmed us, but we often had "unusual" weather, as we do now. My first visit to Laguna Beach was in July. Elmer Burns, my



Arch Beach, Laguna Postcard

brother-in-law, took some other tenderfeet and us, driving in a two horse surrey. The weather looked threatening, and I remarked, "It looks like rain, today". "Oh, no," they replied, "that is one thing we never have to contend with, here in summer," but in the afternoon, as we were walking to Arch Beach, where there was no shelter, the whole party was drenched, and we were compelled to return to a cottage in Laguna; build a wood fire and dry our clothes, before returning to Santa Ana. The heavy rain that day flattened the corn in the fields. The north winds (Santa Anas) furnished the worst weather conditions we had to contend with, as the county was full of dust and the lack of trees, allowed the dust to come in clouds, at times. I asked Mother Burns when the rainy season would begin; she laughed and said, "There is no rainy season; it only rains nights and Sundays", but the winter of '89 was certainly a wet one. The mud was so bad that a large, strong, horse we had, when hitched to a light surrey, would stop a number of times to rest, on the road between our home on Grand Avenue, near 17th Street and Fourth and Main. The country was full of gophers, which burrowed in the fields and roads, causing chuck holes, which, when filled with dust, followed by drenching rains, made traveling interesting. In and around Santa Ana, the water was furnished by windmills, but in parts of the county, artesian wells were a boon to the ranchers. Many of those possessing wind mills, used the tank house below, for coolers or "frigid air", as ice was almost an unknown quantity.

The church people were very friendly and we found a happy home among them, but I was homesick for our large, beautiful, city church, that I had left, for here we had to worship in Neill's Hall, which still stands on East Fourth Street. Lively dances were held there each Saturday night, and

come Sunday mornings, we helped clean up the peanut shells from the night before. Mr. Quick was our choir leader and we had a fine organist, Miss Iola Williams, and a double quartette, [quartet] of which Mr. and Mrs. Quick, Elmer Burns and myself were members. One Saturday evening after rehearsal, it was raining and I stayed all night with our good friends, Jo and Martha Quick. The next morning, they said, "There will be no church today," and they explained that people did not come in the rain, to church, and they were right. "Unusual weather", even in those days.

The prayer meetings were held in our church at Second and Main, which was too small to hold Sunday congregations. I have no doubt that the fervent prayers ascending from those godly people, many of whom have left us, have helped this lovely city and vicinity to follow high ideals they had, which makes it the most desirable place to live in that I know and I believe you all agree with me.

I almost forgot to mention our worthy chairman, Dr. Ball, [Charles D. Ball, President of the Orange County Historical Society from 1919 to 1934.] who was one of our first friends in the church and shall I tell it? He wasn't married then, but made his home with the minister. He did not long remain single, however. We knew all the old times but cannot take time to mention the pleasant memories we have of them. There are many changes, but I can mention only a few.

The property where our First M.E. Church now stands, [Sixth and Spurgeon Streets] and north and east of it, was a ranch, owned by J. C. Thomas, with a large house and barn,



Santa Ana Steam Laundry's first building in 1892 on West Fourth Street, corner of Shelton St.

OCHS Photo from Satchell Collection

trees and handsome peacocks roving over it. Spurgeon Hall, where the Spurgeon building now stands, was our entertainment hall and all important concerts, mass meetings, et cetera, were held there.

[from Diann Marsh's book on Santa Ana, "Sycamore Hall, the first entertainment center in Santa Ana began to present musical and theatrical events in 1881. In 1882, when the impressive two-story brick Spurgeon Building was built on the southwest corner of Fourth and Sycamore Streets, the second floor held a theater which could seat 600. Some of the best traveling shows in the county played there."]

The first class graduated from our High School, held their commencement there and I think there were about nine or ten graduates, perhaps a few more.

I am not sure if Madam Modjeska appeared there or not, but later she did at the old French Opera house, corner Sixth and Bush. Wonderful flower shows were held in Spurgeon Hall and were enjoyed by throngs of people. Mrs. James Rice, one of Southern California's sweetest singers and a beautiful woman, was often heard in the old Hall. A few years after we came here, our choir and the First Presbyterian, both under the directorship of Prof. Ludwig

Thomas, gave several Old Folks' Concerts, there, and we also assisted by the Tustin people. Mrs. James Rice and Miss Stella Preble (now Mrs. Nau) also assisted.

The Fire Hall was near the Spurgeon Building. Where the Courthouse and Hall of Records now stand, was a campground and public hitching place and we tied our horses in the shade of the pepper trees. Sometimes when the weather was rainy, we parked our horses and vehicles in Smithwick's livery stable, corner of Sycamore and Fifth Streets. Our first laundry, [Santa Ana Steam Laundry] owned by my husband, Ed Gallup and Elmer Burns, was on West Fourth Street, corner of Shelton. They had artesian water, and had to haul away all the refuse water, which was used for fertilizing garden plots and watering streets in the west of town. Later, the laundry was moved to the corner of Fifth and Broadway. My husband was instrumental in purchasing the old brick Bassonett livery stable, that was on this site and they remodeled it, for a laundry. The Broadway theatre stands there now. I might tell of China town but lack of time forbids.

I must speak about the saloons and wineries. There were about six saloons in Santa Ana and the usual



Santa Ana Steam Laundry in 1900s at Fifth and Broadway. "My husband was instrumental in purchasing the old brick Bassonett livery stable, that was on this site and they remodeled it, for a laundry. The Broadway theatre stands there now". OCHS Photo from Satchell Collection

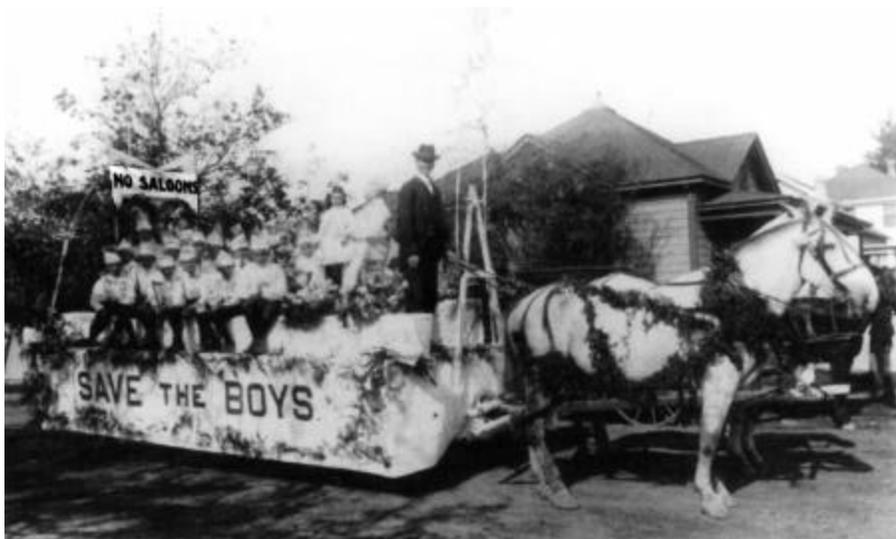
attendant evils. There was one block on Fourth Street between Broadway and Sycamore, that the women avoided, on account of the drunks. The wineries, too, in Santa Ana, and over the county, were a serious menace. During those days, Francisco Torres, a laborer on Madam Modjeska's ranch, murdered the overseer, Mr. McElvy, [McKelvey] because McElvy had kept two dollars poll tax from Torres' wages. On August 20, 1892, a mob lynched Torres on a telegraph pole at the corner where Rankins store now stands. [northeast corner of Fourth

and Sycamore.] The Mexicans of the county were badly excited and drink was flowing at a lively rate. Later, our saloons were voted out and I was privileged to be the one to start the Doxology on Fourth Street, in the parade. One of the saloon keepers fittingly hung crepe on his saloon door.

I have rambled along, writing only from memory. If I have made any incorrect statements, I hope you will pardon them, for forty years is a long time to remember. I wish I were a poet, so that I could describe my love and admiration for this dear Orange County and its wonderful people, especially the old timers.

In Samuel Armor's *The History of Orange County, 1911*, Linn Shaw writes:

"One of the notable achievements during the last ten years of the city's history was the abolition of saloons, which was accomplished at the regular election in April, 1903, the proposition being submitted directly to the people and carried by nearly two-thirds majority. For a number of years preceding this crisis the anti-saloon forces had been agitating prohibition, and the action of the city trustees in granting an extra saloon license in 1902, increasing the number from six to seven, brought the issue to a head. All saloon licenses expired June 30, 1903, and Santa Ana has remained "dry" ever since.



The W.C.T.U. Float with its message, "No Saloons." Women's Christian Temperance Union established in Santa Ana 1883.

OCHS Calendar

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- Board Meeting
- **Thursday, Dec. 4, 2003 at 7:00 PM**
Board meetings are open to the membership
- at the Kidseum

December Meeting

- **Thursday, Dec. 11, 2003**
- Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- **At the Kidseum**
- **PROGRAM**
- **Orange County Archives**
- **Phil Brigandi, Speaker**



Where will you find books on local history? Your best source is your Orange County Historical Society.

Books listed below in **BOLD** are pictured and described on our website: www.orangecountyhistory.org

Don't see the book you are looking for? **ASK US**. If we don't have it we will help you find it.

WEBSITE ADDITIONS:

A Timeline of Orange County History from *The Golden Promise* by Pamela Hallan-Gibson.

A list of current home and walking tours in areas of Orange and Los Angeles Counties.

PLACE A DOLLAR AMT. OPPOSITE EACH ITEM YOU WISH TO ORDER		
Bawdy Balboa by Judge Robert Gardner	\$25.00	
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Orange County Through Four Centuries By Dr. Leo J. Friis	\$15.95	
The Orange Blossom 50 Years of Growth in Orange County	\$40.00	
ORANGE COUNTY The Golden Promise by Pamela Hallan-Gibson 2002 edition	\$37.00	

Proceedings of the Conference of Orange County History	1988	\$11.00	
	1989	\$11.00	

All prices include sales tax

MERCHANDISE TOTAL _____

Postage and Handling (\$3.00 first item, \$1 each additional)

Orange Blossoms is **\$5 per book**, \$1 each additional

Orange County The Golden Promise is **\$5 per book**, \$1 each additional

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Make checks payable to OCHS

MAIL TO: John Sorenson, 14932 Gainford Circle, Irvine CA 92604

Call him (949) 559-5668 and he will bring your book/s to the next meeting.

