



COUNTY COURIER

Official Publication of the Orange County Historical Society

www.orangecountyhistory.org

SAVING BREA'S HISTORY

Our April 13, 2004, program comes from The Brea Historical Society. We meet at 7:30 p.m. at Bower's Kidseum, northwest corner of Main and 18th Streets, Santa Ana. The public is invited.

Speaker # 1

Lifelong Brea/Olinda resident Jack Smith will share information about the new Brea Museum, its status and its collection, as well as the just coming to life Oil Heritage Museum near Carbon Canyon Regional Park. Jack lived the first 15 years of his life from 1945 to 1960 in the Jack Armstrong house in old Olinda. A building inspector for the City of Brea, Jack is a member of the Brea Historical Society and is currently working with the State of California and the City of Brea on the evolving Olinda historical site.

Speaker # 2

Well known Fullerton artist Jo Anne Cowans, whose work often depicts oil field sites in California, will share some of her inspirational techniques and paintings with us. Jo Anne fortunately captured the last days of the Unocal oil field on the west side of the Brea Valley just before it was turned into a housing tract in 2001. A 2003 photograph session near Oil Well Number One in Carbon Canyon captured some memories of Olinda when it was in its prime. Jo Anne has recently been featured in the Wall



PHOTO FROM OCHS ARCHIVES

FORMER POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING WILL NOW HOUSE THE
BREA MUSEUM AND HERITAGE CENTER
NORTHWEST CORNER OF ELM ST. AND BREA BLVD. IN CITY HALL PARK

The old city hall and police department building were donated by the city to the Brea Foundation after completing the city's new Civic/Cultural Center in 1981. The foundation was created in 1982 to support the expanding cultural, recreational and human services needs in the community. These responsibilities include the management of certain assigned properties in cooperation with the city.

Street Journal and has been contacted by Huell Howser as a possible subject for one of his programs

QUIZ ON BREA HISTORY

Here is a series of questions to test your knowledge of Brea history and pique your further interest.

1. The City of Brea was a part of what rancho and who was granted this rancho?
2. What became of this rancho after the 1850s and who was the second

owner?

3. Who leased this land in the Brea area in 1870 from the second owner and for what purpose?
4. What was the Spanish name for asphaltum?
5. Where was Olinda and why did people settle there?
6. Where was the place called Randolph?
7. What happened to Randolph?

Answers on page 2 are from *Brea: the City of Oil, Oranges and Opportunity* by Esther Cramer

- 1) "In 1837, the land that is now Brea was granted to Juan Pacifico Ontiveros. Rancho San Juan Cajon de Santa Ana extended from Puente Hills to the Santa Ana River and included the present cities of Brea, Placentia, Fullerton and Anaheim."
- 2) "In 1857 Ontiveros sold 1,165 acres to German colonists, (City of Anaheim) in 1863 deeded family members 3,900 acres at the southwestern corner of the rancho where the City of Placentia is now and the remaining 30,672 acres, which included land that is part of the City of Brea, were sold by Ontiveros to Abel Sterns."
- 3) "Sterns leased the hills and valleys around Brea to Basque sheep men, beginning in 1870."

This land at the time was mortgaged and held in a trust that was advertising the land for sale as vacant land.

- 4) "This is the sticky black tar that oozed from the ground and mixed with soil, dried and became asphaltum, the Spanish called it, *brea*."
- 5) "Although there were a few temporary structures slapped up in early 1880s to serve the oil camp Petrolia (near the junction of Brea and Tonner Canyons) and at the active settlement of the Puente Oil Company (on top of the Puente Hills), the first real village in the Brea area was Olinda. Like Petrolia and Puente wells to the northeast, Olinda rose as an oil camp."



POSTCARD FROM TOM PULLEY COLLECTION

CORNER BUILDING AT ASH STREET AND POMONA AVENUE (BREA BLVD.) IS LA HABRA VALLEY BANK BUILDING BUILT IN 1912 WHICH BECAME THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF BREA IN 1921 UNTIL 1934 WHEN IT CLOSED. THIS PHOTO WAS TAKEN AFTER 1921 AS THE SIGNAGE READS FIRST NATIONAL BANK. THIS IS WHERE THE ELECTION FOR CITYHOOD IN 1917 TOOK PLACE, IN THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY ALBERT LAUNER, BACK ROOMS IN THE BANK BUILDING. MANY PEOPLE REMEMBER THIS CORNER BUILDING AS THE BUSINESS, THAT FRAME PLACE. BUSINESSES ALONG THIS SECTION OF BREA BLVD. BETWEEN BIRCH AND ASH STREETS WERE TORN DOWN BETWEEN 1887 AND 1992.

BELOW IS THE SAME CORNER AS IT LOOKS TODAY.

PHOTO FROM OCHS ARCHIVES



- 6) "Early in 1903, W.J. Hole purchased 200 acres of relative flat land just south of the mouth of Brea Canyon for a townsite. Besides Holes, this company included Henry Huntington, Epes Randolph and A. M. Chaffey.

Randolph was the name chosen for this planned settlement.

- 7) "There was much speculation about why Randolph did not develop as planned. But, as with the experience of nearby Carlton, a major factor was the failure of the

arrival of the promised water. Brea Canyon Creek provided the only surface water in the area and this sparse supply was being used by the oil companies. This was not adequate, however, for the steam-operated wells, and other measures were taken to bring water to nearby Olinda and some of the early ranchers had their own deep water wells, there was not enough water to pipe to Randolph.”

Later there was success in bringing water and rail lines to this area and on January 19, 1911, “a new townsite map was recorded in Orange County. This map changed the name of Randolph to Brea, the name for this area known from the earliest mission days.”

“Although Randolph did not develop into a town as anticipated, there was much growth in the oil communities of Olinda and Brea Canyon and in the farming area nearby. In a special New Year’s Edition in 1904, the *Fullerton News* reported that there was a population of 250 people at the Santa Fe Wells, and the population of the oil settlements approached 800. Natural gas was provided free-of-charge, and electricity had been brought to the villages. Telephones, mercantile supplies, and rural mail delivery were serviced from Fullerton. In fact, so commercially connected were Olinda and Brea Canyon oil field to the Fullerton area, they were usually referred to as the Fullerton Oil Fields.”

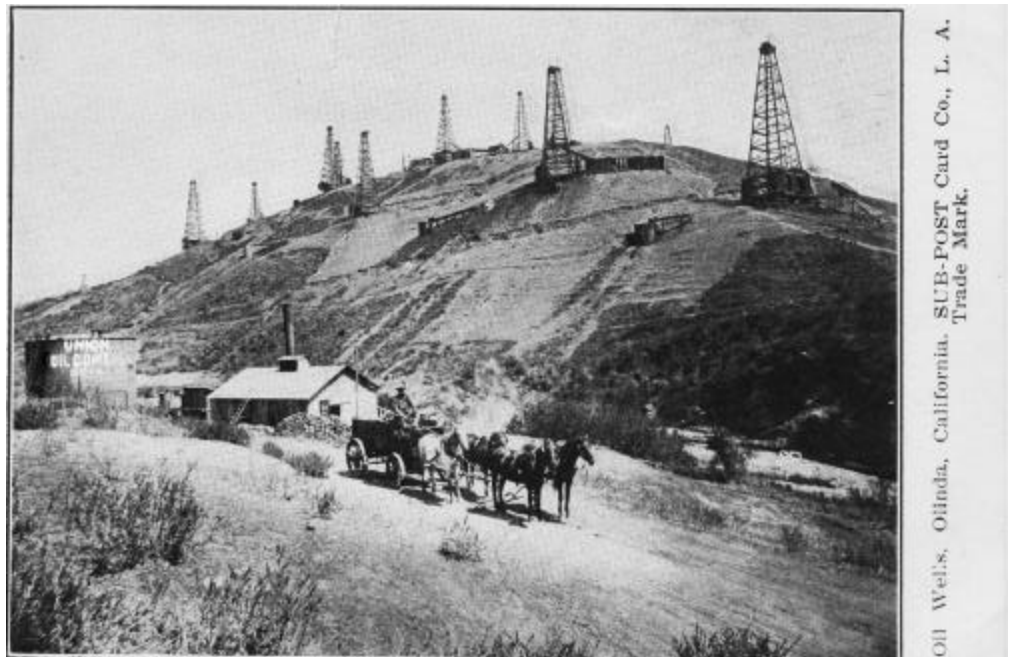
This is a very small sampling of the history of the City of Brea and surrounding areas. Come to the meeting on April 8 to hear more. Recommended reading: Esther Cramer’s book *Brea: the City of Oil, Oranges and Opportunity*..



GENERAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION BIRCH HILL

BOTH POSTCARDS FROM TOM PULLEY COLLECTION

BIRCH HILL WAS NAMED FOR A. OTIS BIRCH WHO BOUGHT CONTROLLING INTEREST IN THE MENGES OIL COMPANY, AND THEN CHANGED THE COMPANY’S NAME TO THE BIRCH OIL COMPANY.



Oil Wells, Olinda, California. SUB-POST Card Co., L. A. Trade Mark.

UNION OIL COMPANY, OLINDA, CALIFORNIA

UNION OIL BUILT LARGE OIL STORAGE TANKS CLOSE TO SUCCESSFUL OIL WELLS. SMALLER TANK IS SHOWN IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH.

NEW MEMBERS NEEDED

As your treasurer, I wish to announce a successful FY 2003. Without the dues increase things would not have been as rosy. However, for long term health we need more members! Our other major sources of income: donations, book sales and interest are not keeping pace with rising costs.

For all you budding economists out there: "Have interest rates fallen in the last 5 years"? "Have gasoline prices increased in the last 5 years"?

WE NEED NEW MEMBERS.

To encourage new memberships, we are offering a copy of our Countiana Vol. 2 or Vol 3. to both the new member and his/her sponsor. Both the new member and the sponsor will receive either publication at our general meeting. Rules are simple:

1. Sponsorship is in effect until June 2005.
2. On your membership application indicate sponsored by "XXX"
3. Sponsor/new member can select publications for either at the general meeting.
4. Except in extreme cases, publications will not be mailed.

Membership is the life of any organization. Our finances are in good shape and we want to keep them that way. This is our way of addressing a cold before it becomes pneumonia! Do your part for the vitality of our OCHS.

John Sorenson, Treasurer



FOUNTAIN VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
1913 AT BUSHARD AND TALBERT

The following are the Table of Contents for both volumes being offered:

Orange Countiana VOLUME II
Published by the Society in 1980

How Orange Was Our Valley, by Peg E. Bowen

Dana Point: Historic Embarcadero, by Doris Walker

Orange County's Oldest Winter Vacationers, by Doris Walker

Musical Memories of 1920s, by Garland Coltrane

The Rooster Brand, by Ed Salter

Villa Park Orchards Association, by Harold Brewer

The West Was Still Wild, by Don Meadows

Banking in Orange County: Early Years, by Lynne Pierson Doti

Two Successful Orange County Women, by Viola Beilin and Louise Booth

George Brandriff: Portrait of a Painter, by Elaine Smith Baker

Fire in the Hills, by Rush Bumgardner
Pete, by Ed Salter

The Roadrunner, by Peg Bowen

Placentia Pioneers: Wrights, Gilmans, and Keys, by George G. Key
What Happened to Corporal Emax? by Peg Bowen

Orange Park Acres: Cactus to Citrus to Urban Community, by Beverly Waid
Poems by Peg E. Bowen

Orange County on the Move (poem)
by Louise Booth

Orange Countiana
VOLUME III
Published by the Society in 1982

Anaheim's Central School,
by Diann Marsh

I Remember Anaheim by
Marie Clark Walker California

Quail (poem), by Peg E. Bowen

An Introduction to Orange County's Colorful

Geologic History, by Carol J. Stadum
Natural History Foundation of Orange County

California Earthquakes, by E. Harold Lang

Smudging in the 1930s, by Edgar E. Pankey

Orange Tree (poem), by Peg E. Bowen

How Chills Grew in Orange County,
by Rush Bumgardner.

Santiago Creek (poem), by Peg E. Bowen

Old Carnegie Years in Santa Ana, by
Francelia. S. Goddard

Lacing Rosemary's Corset, by Peg E. Bowen

La Vida Hot Springs (poem), by Peg E. Bowen

A Silver Anniversary of Fountain Valley Eighty Years in Orange County, by Nellie Sylva Wardlow DuRall
Fountain Valley-A Quarter of a Century, by Jim Dick

William and Franklina Gray Bartlett
Pioneering Community Leaders, by Allen Goddard

A.E.Y. and J.C.Y. (Mother and Father of Mildred Yorba),
by Mildred Yorba McArthur Serrano

The Haven Seed Company of Santa Ana, by Anne Harder

Jacob Ross and Family-Early Settlers of Santa Ana
by Elsa Edwards

OCHS Calendar

2003-2004 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
949/643-0602Greg Rankin

Vice presidents
714/838-5149Richard Vining
714/538-2642 J.J. Friis
JJandHJFriis@aol.com

Secretary
..... VACANT

Treasurer / Sales
949/559-5668John Sorenson
grncv8@aol.com

Activities
714/529-5160Jane Norgren

Preservation
714/558-1067..... Phil Chinn

Corresponding/membership
714/533-3199Judy Moore
jbmo38ore@netzero.net

Curator
714/738-7738 . . .Tracy Smith-Falk

Historian
714/526-4761Kenneth Leavens
HistoryOC@aol.com

Marketing
714/993-7009..... Diane Taylor
vimariner@aol.com

Membership
714/530-1448.....Don Dobmeier

Newsletter Editor
714/525-4879Betsy Vigus
vvigus@pacbell.net

- Board Meeting
- Thursday April 1, 2004 at 7:00 PM at the Kidseum

March Meeting

- Thursday, April 8, 2004
- Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- At the Kidseum, Santa Ana
- **Saving Brea History**
- by Jack Smith
- by Jo Anne Cowans

- ▶ May 13, Meeting
- ▶ Preservation



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	
Cañada de la Brea by Virginia Carpenter	\$10.00	
Centennial Bibliography of Orange County	\$70.00	
House of Bernardo Yorba by Don Meadow	\$4.00	
José Antonio Yorba by Arnold Dominguez	\$4.00	
The Portolá Expedition 1769	\$3.00	
Orange Countiana II	\$12.00	
Orange Countiana III	\$12.00	
Orange Countiana IV Architecture: soft cover	\$32.00	
A Window on the Past hard cover	\$40.00	
Orange Countiana V Early Businesses soft cover	\$22.00	
In Orange County hard cover	\$30.00	
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

TOTAL DUE _____

PHONE _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

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.

