



COUNTY COURIER

Official Publication of the Orange County

www.orangecountyhistory.org

GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR AND HOW THEY CAME TO ORANGE COUNTY

Historian, actor and author, Dennis Leslie, will be our speaker on Veterans Day, November 11, 2004. This general meeting of OCHS, 7:30 p.m. will be at Bower's Kidseum in Santa Ana, northwest corner of 18th and Main Streets. The public is invited.

German prisoners of war from WWII and how they came to Orange County will be history buff Leslie's main topic. He has a personal interest. As a teenager he worked for the Pullman Company and traveled on trains with the prisoners, still in their uniforms, from Chicago to Southern California.

Local growers were desperate for farm laborers because so many had left for the military or defense work. With the absence of a workforce, oranges and other crops would have rotted in the fields if groups like Citrus Growers, Inc. had not been creative in finding other sources of labor.

Bill Lobdell in his article for the *LA Times* states, "The German POWS in California represented 10% of the wartime workforce that included 75,000 Mexican guest workers,



Dennis Leslie at Garden Grove Boulevard. The camp was located south of Garden Grove Blvd., east of Harbor and across the street from the present Garden Grove Medical Center and Hospital.

photo from Karen Tapia-Anderson *Los Angeles Times*

1,600 Jamaicans and an undetermined number of Chinese students, Filipinos and Navajo, according to an official with Citrus Growers, Inc. The worker shortage got so bad the Orange County farmers bused in housewives from the Pasadena area to help with the harvest."

"During the second world war, large numbers of Axis soldiers were captured by the Allies. The first combatants captured by the American Army belonged to Rommel's Afrika

Korps; captured in Tunisia in May 1943. These prisoners were brought across the Atlantic and interred in camps throughout the United States. By June 1945, over 425,000 Axis prisoners of war (ca. 371,000 Germans, 50,000 Italians and 4000 Japanese) were housed in over 650 POW camps across the United States.", according to Dr. M. Waters, Department of Anthropology at Texas A & M.

There is general information on the POW program in the United States,

most notably that of historian Arnold Krammer but there is little about the individual camps. These camps have disappeared or are disappearing along with an entire generation of people who experienced these POW camps firsthand.

Oral history programs such as the one at Cal State Fullerton have contributed greatly to the information we have on individual camps, the prisoners, their activities and what became of them after the war. Men like Dennis Leslie who have developed programs are creating interest in the subject and adding to the body of knowledge on local history of German POWs.

However, this is but one subject on which he has developed material. Dennis Leslie, a member of the Douglas MacArthur Foundation and Museum, in Norfolk Virginia has been portraying the General in films, parades and fund raisers for the past twenty years. He has portrayed MacArthur at:

- The Queen Mary, in Long Beach, CA at their tribute to the ending of W.W.II in the Pacific.
- The Pearl Harbor Survivors Group and rode with them in the Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade.
- Parades, which include: Korean Day in Los Angeles Korean town, Garden Grove, Orange and Irvine.
- World War II Reenactments at Fort MacArthur and Irvine Regional Park
- On the S.S. Lane Victory, a retired

GERMAN PRISONERS ARRIVE SOON

Within the next week or ten days approximately 600 German war prisoners will arrive in Orange County to assist in citrus harvest. security measures have been completed in that time and the prisoners will be ready to occupy the large camp located near Garden Grove. Army officials have notified

George Graham of Citrus Growers, Inc.

The Santa Ana school system's adult education department will train the war prisoners in their work. Under the adult education program the state will reimburse the Santa Ana school system for any money spent in the training program. The war prisoners will be taught how to pick and handle citrus fruit.



Dennis Leslie as General Douglas MacArthur

W.W. II Merchant Marine ship that delivered fuel, munitions and supplies for the invasion of Inchon in Korea. It is a floating museum, with tours, shows and a simulated air attack by vintage W W II -era airplanes with daily cruises between San Pedro and Catalina Island.

He has lectured on board the Princess Cruise Line ships on the MacArthur family. Other speaking subjects . . . The Queen Mary and the Titanic both

taped for National Public Radio.

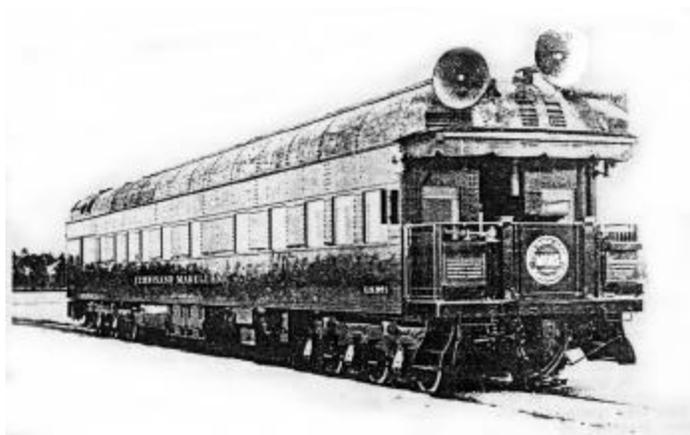
Dennis Leslie was the chauffeur to the last captain of the Queen Mary, John Treasure Jones, while he was in this country as public relations officer on the Q.M. for the city of Long Beach.

Leslie produced a weekly interview program for National Public Radio from aboard the Q.M.. Guests included Captain Jones and passengers that were on the last voyage as well as Hollywood Stars

that sailed during the ships heyday. Steve Allen was host on one program interviewing British war brides after W.W. II.

Leslie worked for the Pullman Company in the department that kept the records for the Presidential Pullman, the Ferdinand Magellan. His office was located in Chicago's Union Station at the hub of troop train movement during WWII.

The Ferdinand Magellan was the only train ever custom built for the exclusive use of the President of the United States. Perhaps this will be a topic for another program.



The Ferdinand Magellan is owned and displayed in Fort Lauderdale, Florida by the Gold Coast Railroad, a nonprofit organization of volunteer railroad enthusiasts.

The Ferdinand Magellan is the only passenger railcar ever designated a "National Historic Landmark" by the United States government. This honor was bestowed on the Ferdinand Magellan by the United States, Department of the Interior, National Parks Service in February, 1985.

HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY

Official recognition of the end of the first modern global conflict, World War I, was made in a concurrent resolution (44 Stat. 1982) enacted by Congress on June 4, 1926, with these words:

WHEREAS the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

WHEREAS it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

WHEREAS the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved

by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the

officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, and the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday - - **a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day."**

Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World



War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in lieu thereof the word "Veterans."

With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated:

"In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to insure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays - Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates. The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971.

It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed

Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978.

This action supported the express will of the overwhelming majority of the State legislatures, all major service organizations and the American people.

The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: a celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens

Bringing the magic of music,
the inspiration of art, the lessons of history, and the
beauty of gardens and ocean To our community

We don't often devote space in the newsletter to recap program or field trips. The Casa Romantica program and tour were so very interesting and impressive they deserve some additional recognition.

This account of the tour is to encourage those who could not attend on the 16th to visit the house some Saturday in the future.

Sandwiched between high rise apartments, the house sits back off Ave. Granada, a typical narrow winding street. Drive by fast and you could miss the property. This will change as the landscaping designed by Isabel Greene (descendant of Pasadena's Greene and Greene) is completed in front of the house.

The famous keyhole entrance is much smaller than I had pictured but then I learned Ole Hanson was only 5' 7". The contrast of the entrance to the interior makes it appear all the larger. The house beautifully restored, is

large and spacious with incredible views of the ocean. The house has a great feeling, a mix of museum walls with interesting photographs and information uncluttered with furniture yet retaining the feeling of a home. Like a beautiful house just waiting for the new owners to move in. Those new owners are the community and any who visit and use the house.

The Mission of Casa Romantica Cultural Center and Gardens is to use this stunning setting as a focal point to explore, understand and experience the diversity of life in Southern California.

OCHS Calendar

2004-2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
949/643-0602Greg Rankin

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

Secretary
714 469-9463..... Carolyn Schoff
ceschoff@aol.com

Treasurer / Sales
949/559-5668John Sorenson
gncv8@peoplepc.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. . . Ken Leavens... on leave

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 Nov. 4, 2004 at **6:30 PM**
at Kidseum
Nov. Meeting
- Thursday, Nov.11, 2004
- Opening at 7:00 p.m.
- **Bower's Kidseum**
- **18th and Main Sts., Santa Ana**
- **7:30 p.m. Program:**

**German Prisoners of War and
How They Came to
Orange County
by Dennis Leslie**

- **December 9, Meeting**
John M.W. Moorlach
Treasure-Tax Collector
County of Orange
**10th Anniversary of
Bankruptcy**



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.

PLACE A DOLLAR AMT. OPPOSITE EACH ITEM YOU WISH TO ORDER			
Bawdy Balboa by Judge Robert Gardner	\$25.00		Proceedings of the Conference of Orange County History 1988 \$11.00
Cañada de la Brea by Virginia Carpenter	\$10.00		1989 \$11.00
Centennial Bibliography of Orange County	\$70.00		Fruit Box Labels An Illustrated Guide to Citrus Labels by Gordon McClelland & Jay Last \$35.00
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 A Window on the Past hard cover	\$32.00 \$40.00		
Orange Countiana V Early Businesses soft In Orange County hard cover SOLD OUT	\$22.00 \$00.00		
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		

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 _____

QTY.STATEZIP _____

Make checks payable to OCHS

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

