



COUNTY COURIER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

www.orangecountyhistory.org

“The City of Youth and Ambition Turns 50”

“*The city of youth and ambition*” is the city motto of Garden Grove which celebrates its 50th anniversary of incorporation this year, 2006. Please join us on Thursday, October 12, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. when a panel of Garden Grove residents and historical society members recall their city’s history and how they celebrated this special anniversary. Orange County Historical Society member and Garden Grove resident Don Dobmeier will moderate the panel. Remember this is the first meeting we will hold at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Orange while the Kidseum in Santa Ana is closed. The church address is 2400 N. Canal Street, Orange, CA. (see page 2 for map) and we will be meeting in Armstrong Hall.

The community later to become Garden Grove was founded in 1874 by Dr. Alonzo Cook on cattle grazing lands once known as *Rancho Las Bolsas* owned by Spanish soldier Manuel Nieto and his heirs. After California joined the Union in 1850 many of the large ranchos could not remain solvent and large parcels of land broke up into smaller pieces. Boston-born merchant Abel Stearns purchased some of the Nieto holdings and continued to graze cattle and sheep on the land. The 1860s proved challenging for Stearns and other ranchers as natural disasters wreaked havoc upon their herds. In 1861-62 floods ravaged the area then the rains stopped decimating the cattle and the fortunes of many. Stearns’ property was placed into a trust which sold it off to new settlers to the area.

Recounted in Leroy Doig’s book *The Village of Garden Grove*, a Mr. William Mitchell purchased land



LOCATED ON GARDEN GROVE BOULEVARD AND VERANO STREET IN 1934
COURTESY OF GARDEN GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

from the trust in the late 1860s, and in 1872. 80 acres on Cannery (now Magnolia) and Garden Grove Blvd. was deeded to him. He paid \$14.00 per acre! Several other families lived in the area before Alonzo Cook arrived late in 1874. According to Doig, Cook purchased land at the northwest corner of Euclid and Garden Grove Blvd. and by the end of 1875 there were up to 50 homes in the area and close to 200 inhabitants. Cook was involved in founding the school, church, post office, and civic center. During the 1880s more cities were founded on old rancho lands and Orange County was formed out of Los Angeles County in 1889. These new communities, including Garden Grove, slowly grew over the years raising a variety of crops, coping with World War I and the effects of the Depression but it was World War II and its aftermath that really ushered in tremendous change.

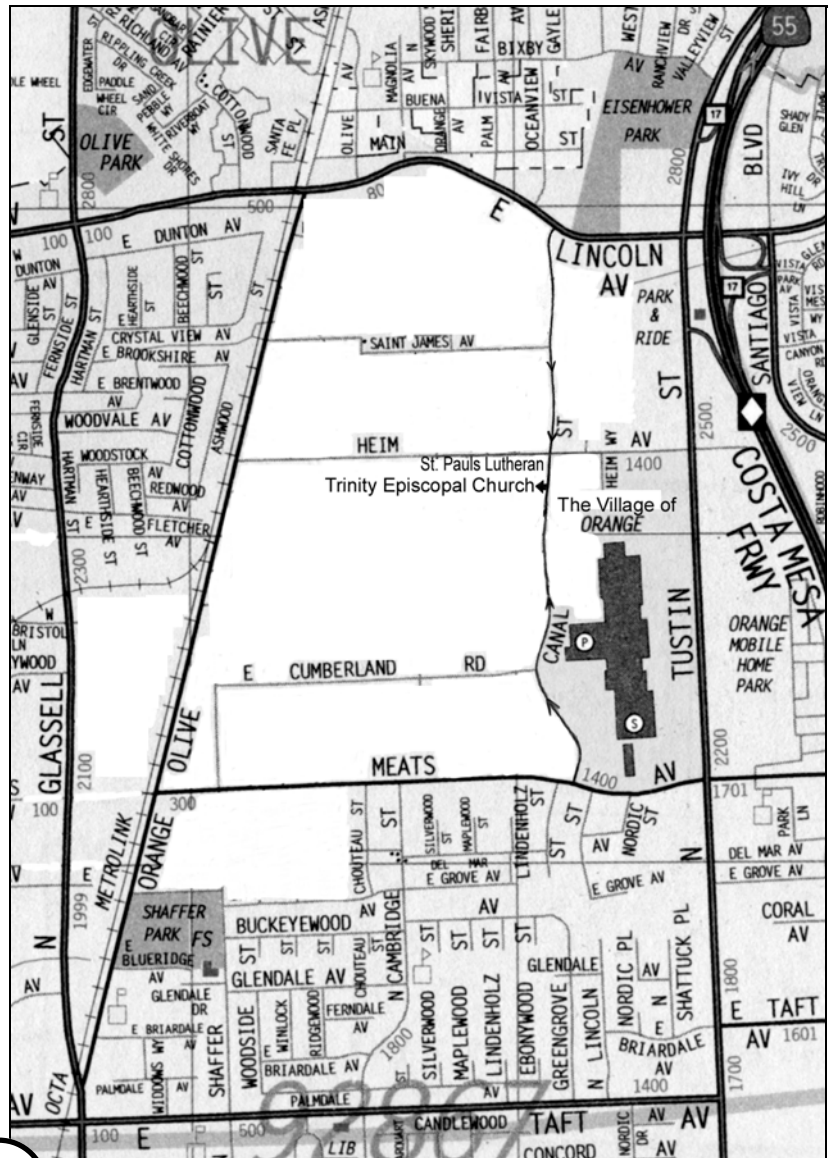
The largest growth period for Garden Grove came once the soldiers of World War II returned to the States. Many had been based in California for training and wanted to relocate permanently to the state. Many

came to Garden Grove in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Available land and low prices made it easy to build a home and Garden Grove changed from a rural community to a modern city. The need for local governance was apparent and the city incorporated on June 18, 1956. By the 1960 census, the population was near 44,000 and today Garden Grove is home to over 170,000 residents making it the 5th largest city in Orange County and covering 17.8 square miles. What growth and change!

This year Garden Grove and its residents have been busy enjoying this important birthday. The kick-off celebration of 50 years of cityhood took place in January, and then a film festival was held at the Gem Theatre featuring films from 1956. Many of you may recall the films "Forbidden Planet", "Somebody Up There Likes Me", "Lust for Life" with Kirk Douglas. And who doesn't remember "High Society" starring Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, and Grace Kelly? At the annual Strawberry Festival a birthday float was featured in the parade and in May a permanent marker was dedicated at the southeast corner of Stanford Ave. and Euclid in honor of city founder, Alonzo Cook. For more information on the city of Garden Grove, please check their website at : <http://www.ci.garden-grove.ca.us> and call the Garden Grove Historical Society at 714-530-8871 to visit their wonderful facility.

We look forward to you joining us on October 12 as we hear more from our moderator and panelists on Garden Grove's history and birthday bash! Bring your favorite memories and stories of Garden Grove with you (I know I will as a product of the Garden Grove Unified School District and super fan of the historic Stanley House!). See you at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Church in Orange at 2400 N. Canal Street.!

**OCHS
WILL BE MEETING AT
TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ORANGE**
2400 N Canal Street, Orange (South of Lincoln Ave.
one block west of Tustin Ave. in Armstrong Hall. The
hall is at the back of the property with parking to
the side. Look for a OCHS member at the street to
direct you.



Renewals mailed after July 10, 2006 will be processed after

October 13th, 2006 as
Judy Moore, Membership Chairperson will be
away during that time. Thank you for your
understanding.

PAGE 769 Thomas Bros. Guide

Streets around the church have been erased
from the map to make clearer reading.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OCHS Members,

I thank you for being a part of our organization, with a common interest in preserving and sharing the history of Orange County. As the population of the county hovers around three million, with growth continuing, it is too easy to lose a sense of the past and of those who pioneered the growth and development of where we live, work, and play.

Our organization is strong and vibrant. I hope you will agree that we have an outstanding newsletter and an impressive array of presentations throughout the year. These events are augmented by occasional outings to places of local interest. Also, the recent publication of our postcard book has been extremely well received, and has gone into a second printing. We have been approached about producing volume two because of the interest and popularity of volume one.

Our dues have been kept manageable, but they provide for the monthly expenses of rent, storage, and the publication and mailing of the newsletter. We are financially solvent and are able to cover all expenses.

Where are we going? Any organization needs to look to the future and have in mind a plan for not only survival, but growth. We are looking for a new location to house our offices, as we have out grown our space at the Howe Waffle house. We are looking for a location with 600 -1000 square feet of space with convenient parking, and we would like to stay in Santa Ana because of its central location and proximity to our meeting site. If you have any leads on such a location, please feel free to share your ideas with us.

Although we will be changing our meeting site for a few months, it is only because of modernization taking place at the Kidseum. We plan to be "back home" in January.

Thus, many good things are happening. However, we are continually searching for new members of all ages and interests. If you know of someone to whom we might send a free sample of our newsletter or to whom we might offer membership, please let us know. If you would like to invite a friend to a meeting, please do so. Often a visit or two is enough to "hook" a new member.

The Orange County Historical Society has been in existence for many years, and will be here long into the future. Let's continue to work together to make it a truly exciting, vibrant organization. We welcome your ideas. Thank you!

Greg Rankin

Who Was Hyman Tischler?

by Ken Leavens

Laguna Canyon has a rich and varied history. It provided a dividing line for the shared Laguna Lakes water rights of the Rancho *San Joaquin* granted to Andre Sepulveda on April 15, 1837, (later becoming part of the Irvine Ranch in 1864) and the Rancho *Niguel*, which was granted to Juan Avila on June 21, 1842. (Rancho *Niguel* was purchased by Lewis F. Moulton in the 1890's and was thereafter known as the Moulton Ranch.)

The canyon was used for cattle and sheep grazing during the last half of the 19th century and many interesting individuals have inhabited it since then. Some came to ranch, farm or keep bees. Others, such as photographer William Mortensen, were attracted by its natural beauty. However, it was the area's early ranching activities that drew a man to the canyon who unknowingly created a historic place name for a county that did not yet exist.

Hyman Tischler seems to have arrived in Los Angeles around 1853. Born in Prussia in 1831, he and Louis Schlesinger became part of a firm known as B. Marks and Company. This firm, owned by Baruch Marks, dealt in general merchandise. However, "general merchandise" seemed to mean, at least to Tischler and Schlesinger, anything that could be bought or sold legally. By 1858, Tischler and Schlesinger, who were now business partners, were heading a group of grain buyers and storing the grain in a building built by John Temple. There was so much of it in fact, that its weight broke through the floor.

On June 26th 1860, a census enumerator knocked on Hyman Tischler's door. Tischler gave his age as 29, listed his occupation as a merchant and said his estate was worth four thousand dollars. That would be well over sixty four thousand dollars today. Not bad for a young man who had arrived in the wild and woolly environs of Southern California only seven years earlier.

It was during the following month of July that Hyman Tischler made his memorable visit south to what would become Orange County. His trip to Laguna Canyon was



TISCHLER ROCK

Photo Courtesy of Tom Maloney
Supervising Ranger, Mason Regional Park

probably prompted by his desire to purchase wool, or sheep. It is also probable that he stayed in an adobe house that once stood near the rock that bears his name. According to Don Meadows, "Sheepmen, running animals on the surrounding hills, made the house their headquarters." Tischler could not help but to have noticed the nearby boulder upon which many names had been carved. Perhaps it shows a gift for self promotion that his inscription, H. Tischler, July 1860, is carved larger than the others. Unknown to him, his name would eventually reside in alphabetical order, along with other names and places of historical interest in a county yet to be born.

During the drought of the 1860's, Don Ricardo Vejar, owner of the Rancho *San Jose Abajo* located in the Pomona Valley, began trading with Tischler and Schlesinger. He was forced to borrow money from them and when the note came due in early 1863, Vejar could not pay. Tischler and Schlesinger foreclosed on the mortgage, thus acquiring Vejar's 12,000 acres. On April 27 of that year, Tischler's partner was killed, along with many others, in the explosion of the steam ship *Ada Hancock* in the port of San Pedro. Tischler then bought Schlesinger's interest in the ranch and became its manager. He made frequent trips from Los Angeles to oversee its operation.

It was on one of these visits in January of 1864, that Tischler discovered he was not a welcome *ranchero* in what is now the Pomona Valley. He had asked his friend Edward Newman, to accompany him on this particular trip. On their way back from the *ranch* they were ambushed. Newman was shot and killed. Tischler realizing that he was probably the target of the ambush because of the foreclosure on Vejar's property, never traveled there again.

Tischler's dreams of becoming a cattle baron dashed, he hired Louis Phillips, who was a trader of livestock in Los Angeles, to operate the ranch for him. He paid Phillips \$100.00 a month and gave him half of any increase in livestock that was produced under his management. The following year, Tischler sold the ranch to Phillips for thirty thousand dollars on credit. That winter, Phillips drove the *ranch*'s large stock of cattle to Utah where he realized a considerable profit enabling him to pay for the property. (Notes, a, b and c)

This sale seems to have provided the final curtain for Hyman Tischler's adventures in Southern California.. After the attempt on his life, I suspect he was more than ready to return to Germany with his fortune. He probably had enough of the wild west.. Whatever the reason for his departure, his name remains inscribed on a rock near Laguna Canyon and El Toro Roads, protected by a cover erected by Eagle Scouts in an area that is now part of the Aliso and Wood Canyon Wilderness Park.

Notes:

- a) Louis Phillips became the first Anglo to reside in the Pomona Valley. His land and cattle business made him a very wealthy man.
- b) The City of Pomona is situated on land bought by Phillips from Tischler, as is the master planned community of Phillips Ranch (also a part of the City of Pomona), Diamond Bar and the Kellogg Ranch.
- c) Phillips received a quitclaim deed signed by Tischler on April 6, 1866.

Sources:

The First One Hundred Years in Laguna Beach, Merle and Mabel Ramsey, 1976
My Sixty Years In California, Harris Newmark, 1915
My Seventy Years In California, Jackson Graves, 1927
Historic Place Names in Orange County, Don Meadows, 1966 pg.2

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OCHS Calendar

- Board Meeting open to members
- Thursday, Oct.. 5, 2006 at 7:00 PM
at the home of JJ and Harriet Friis

October Meeting

- **Thursday, Oct. 12, 2006**
- Trinity Episcopal Church of Orange,
- 2400 N. Canal St., Orange
- **7:30 Program**
"The City of Youth and Ambition turns 50"
By Don Dobmeier and panel

- **November Program**
- Japanese Americans of Orange County, Their History
- By Dr. Art Hansen, CSUF
- MEETING WILL BE AT
- Trinity Episcopal Church of Orange,
- 2400 N. Canal St., Orange

COUNTY COURIER

Copy deadline is the second Friday of the month
Mailing deadline is the last Thursday of the month

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.

	COST	AMT.			
Bawdy Balboa by Judge Robert Gardner	\$25.00		Labels by Gordon McClelland & Jay Last		
Cañada de la Brea by Virginia Carpenter	\$10.00		Postcard History Series	\$21.50	
Centennial Bibliography of Orange County	\$70.00		Orange County		
House of Bernardo Yorba by Don Meadow	\$4.00		<i>New</i> Orange County	\$14.00	
José Antonio Yorba by Arnold Dominguez	\$4.00		Place Names A to Z		
The Portolá Expedition 1769	\$3.00		by Phil Brigandi		
Orange Countiana II	\$12.00		<i>All prices include sales tax</i>		
Orange Countiana III	\$12.00		MERCHANDISE TOTAL _____		
Orange Countiana IV Architecture: soft \$32.00 A Window on the Past hard cover \$40.00			Postage and Handling (\$3.00 first item, \$1 each additional)		
Orange Countiana V Early Businesses soft \$22.00 In Orange County hard cover SOLD OUT \$00.00			<i>Bibliography of OC</i> is \$5 per book, \$1 each additional		
Orange County Through Four Centuries \$15.95 By Dr. Leo J. Friis			<i>Orange Blossoms</i> is \$5 per book, \$1 each additional		
The Orange Blossom 50 Years of Growth in Orange County \$40.00			TOTAL DUE _____		
ORANGE COUNTY The Golden Promise by Pamela Hallan-Gibson 2002 edition SOLD OUT \$37.00			PHONE _____		
Fruit Box Labels An Illustrated Guide to Citrus \$35.00			NAME _____		
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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.		

ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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