

**Not-for-Profit Organization
of the Year**

Legacy Links

PRESERVING OLD LA VERNE'S
ENVIRONMENT: MAKING
HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE

LA VERNE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Every Picture Tells a Story



On January 9th, 2023, the Gallery at Hillcrest presented a selection of the work of mixed media artist Stacey Jordan. Entitled "Embracing Ghosts," the exhibit embodies Ms. Jordan's comments about the forces that drive her creative talent. Challenging, provocative, and capable of producing great discomfort, attendees were urged to "embrace the ghosts" of public and private terrors that would silence us and also move us forward to seeking justice.

The following quote that advertised the exhibit compelled a visit to the Gallery at Hillcrest and an interview with the artist. Stacey, who grew up in La Verne, introduced her work with these words:

I'm driven by social and cultural inequalities. I express myself through a myriad of mixed media, including digital graphics. I pour my heart and soul into each piece by focusing on issues I'm passionate about. My work includes recurring colors that represent symbols of freedom.

On February 9th, Stacey and I met so I could learn more about her life and art. I was interested to explore her roots in La Verne, the forces that drive her to create, and future plans for artistic expression.

Stacey's family moved to La Verne when she was in the third grade. She attended Grace Miller Elementary School, Ramona Middle School, and Bonita High School. She has maintained friendships from these early days. When she first lived in La Verne, farm animals lived at the David and Margaret Home, and Stacey would visit them on walks with friends. Her recollections are of a tight community feel, especially in her surrounding neighborhood. Stacey's mother still

lives in the house where Stacey grew up. She raised two children in Pomona, then moved to the Arts District in Los Angeles when her children were grown up. She currently lives in East Los Angeles but maintains close contact with her mother's neighbors to provide a network of communication and caring support.

Stacey has a degree in Fine Art from Cal Poly Pomona's School of Environmental Design. Through a friend, she became affiliated with the *Press Enterprise* and then the *Orange County Register*, where she worked in Information Graphics. With the decline of print newspapers, Stacey saw an opportunity in the field of litigation graphics. Her skills involve breaking down a complex series of actions and/or events to create simple visual explanations for juries. It struck me that her art also embodies complex and difficult subject matter translated into compelling visual statements.



Three events have focused Stacey's work. First, she created a senior project that explored her interest in social justice. Second, the Trayvon Martin killing and an episode involving her son at Bonita High School made clear that life is

fragile and precarious for persons of color. The COVID pandemic did the rest, providing solitude for contemplation and creation.

When asked what the act of creating her art felt like in process, Stacey replied that it was "a purge". She does not think too much about what others may feel, nor does she want to guide viewers' thoughts with "explainers". However, I had my own thoughts as I confronted each picture in the exhibit. I had a sense of sorrow from unrealized promises of freedom and opportunity that are touted as basic human rights in

the United States, but which continue to be denied to people of color on a routine basis. I was particularly impacted by a graphic of a Black woman carrying a white infant on her back and bearing her own Black fetus in her womb, while standing on the shoulders of two other identical Black women. This tableaux was repeated until a pyramid of women and infants was created. I thought about the positions occupied by the babies, who was entrusted with childrearing yet denied agency, and the sturdiness of the structure despite its creation as a reflection of servitude. And the colors – white and black and streaked with blood red. It is called "A History of American Slavery."



When it leaves Hillcrest on March 24th, two pieces from this exhibit will go to the Claremont Laemmle theater. Stacey is currently working on two other exhibits, one on the theme of dementia and the other dealing with femicide. As seen in the graphic below, Stacey has lots to say. I think we all have lots to see, lots to reflect on, and lots to do. Thank you, Stacey Jordan.



President's Message

The LVHS started 2023 with lots of activities. We had a notable presentation by David Allen at the Hillcrest Meeting House on February 9th, and on February 11th he wrote about his experience in the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*. Mr. Allen praised La Verne and the LVHS with the following words:

Despite the rain on Monday afternoon, a gratifying 50 people showed up to La Verne's Hillcrest Meeting House to hear me read from my LA County Fair book.

A man who last saw me several years and 30 pounds ago walked up and exclaimed, "You're skinnier than (expletive)!" A woman confided that she clips favorite columns of mine and keeps them in a shoebox. And someone from the La Verne Historical Society, the sponsor, sent me home with a small bag of Meyer lemons.

Homey La Verne puts the "personal" in personal appearances.

The college student who did the camera work for the local public access channel, and was thus obligated to attend, got in the sales line afterward. To my amazement, she bought my "Pomona A to Z" book, sharing with a smile that she's a La Verne native.

Pardon me while I brush away a raindrop.

La Verne TV filmed Mr. Allen's presentation which can be watched on YouTube by following this link:

<https://youtu.be/TE3-sxKS9rw>

On January 18th, the LVHS was honored by the La Verne Chamber of Commerce with its 2023 Excellence Award in the non-profit category. The ceremony took place at Chase's Restaurant and President Sherry Best was presented with a plaque from the Chamber and certificates from the City of La Verne, U. S. Congresswomen Grace Napolitano, California

Assemblymember Chris Holden, Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Los Angeles County Assessor Jeffrey Prang, and California Senator Anthony Portantino. These recognitions will be displayed at the March 13th Member/Community meeting.

The venue at Chase's was too loud and boisterous for remarks to be heard by all participants, so it was decided to print them in *Legacy Links*.

On behalf of all members of the La Verne Historical Society, I am delighted to receive the 2023 Excellence in La Verne Award in the non-profit category. This is an especially auspicious year for the Society to be recognized, as we are celebrating 50 years as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As befitting our organization, I will open with a brief history lesson.

The La Verne Historical Society was an outgrowth of the 1969 establishment, the City Council, of a Cultural Heritage Commission, led by Ms. Rose Palomares. The La Verne Historical Society grew from this Commission and was formally incorporated in 1973 as a 501(c)(3) under the presidency of Mr. Inman Conety. Mr. Conety, a very civic-minded citizen, founded a recycling center in La Verne and raised over \$20,000 (that's 1970s and 1980s dollars) to establish the bronze marker program that continues to flourish in La Verne.

A parallel organization was also busy in La Verne in the 1970s. In response to a city zoning change, homeowners created an advocacy organization entitled "SOLVE: Save Old La Verne's Environment". They raised awareness and lobbied to change zoning, add an historic element to La Verne's master plan, complete a survey of historic homes in La Verne, and push to enact an ordinance to preserve hillsides. Their mission accomplished, SOLVE merged with the La Verne Historical Society in the 1990s.

In 1984 the La Verne Heritage Foundation spun off from the Historical Society and established itself as a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit. Based at Heritage Park, the Heritage Foundation manages the Weber House and orange grove, assists with the “Hands-On History” program originated by the Historical Society, and sponsors such family-focused events as fall pumpkin patch, orange picking/squeezing, and its spring fling thing.

La Verne is truly fortunate to have more than a single organization dedicated to preserving their history. The La Verne Historical Society, SOLVE, and La Verne Heritage were established for different purposes but are highly complementary. I perceive them as wedges of the delicious pie that is La Verne.

The motto of the La Verne Historical Society is “Preserving Old La Verne’s Environment: Making History for the Future”. We live up to this motto with multiple collaborative activities. As yet we do not have a permanent home to display our artifacts, but instead we are going mobile with the 1938 International Truck donated to the La Verne Historical Society by Inman Conety. In collaboration with Bonita High School auto shop students, our eventually restored truck will roll through La Verne as a mobile display of La Verne’s citrus heritage and be present at car shows and other city- and school district-sponsored events, including the “Hands On History” program that benefits our fourth-grade students.

The La Verne Historical Society is an active partner with Hillcrest Retirement community in creating The Story of La Verne display and videos that enhance learning opportunities for third graders in the Bonita Unified School District. Bringing the senior culture bearers together to tell their stories to children who will grow up to be La Verne’s leaders is an awesome task.

The ULV is another collaborative partner. Just the other week I was informed that Dr. Ben Jenkins,

history professor and archivist at ULV, had an article accepted in the journal *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals*. Ben and I wrote that article collaboratively and its subject was – the value of the 1938 International to material culture and collective memory. ULV Faculty and staff at ULV’s Cultural and Natural History Collections conduct walking tours on campus and assist us with our annual “Get on the Bus” tours of points of interest in La Verne.

What else do we do? Our City Historian, Bill Lemon, published a book in 2020 about – what else? La Verne! We sponsor lectures and workshops, publish six annual newsletters, produce videos with La Verne TV and post on our website, and arrange events including a visit to the Cheech Marin Museum of Chicano Art, the Raymond Alf Museum of Paleontology, and the Nethercutt collection in Sylmar. We are working on display cases to be housed in BUSD elementary schools to bring more artifacts to the children in La Verne.

How do we accomplish so much? It is certainly not because of the work of a single individual. A number of people are here as a tribute to their continued efforts to support the community through their creativity, activity, and many hours of service. Nothing provided to the public would be possible without their dedicated work. If you are a LVHS board member or a collaborative partner with our adventures, please stand up and be thanked.

When you are active there is no time to become bored. We aren’t bored, nor are we boring. We are fascinated with this community and its endless potential for its residents. And we do it all for \$20 for individual annual membership, or \$25 for a couple or family. That’s a deal we can all afford, so come with us for the learning, the fun, the commitment, and the sense of community we value. It is our past and it is our future.



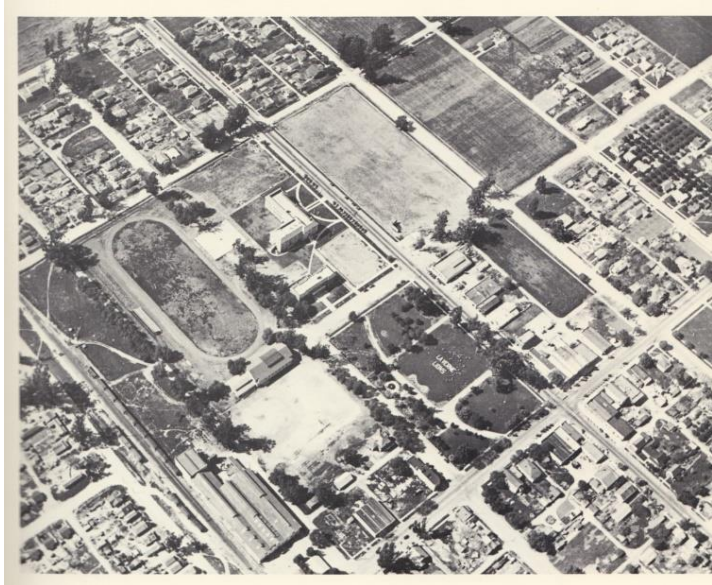
This recent photo chillingly reminds us of the 2022 wind event that resulted in the loss of many trees in La Verne. Almost a year to the day later, on January 16, 2023, a magnificent oak tree on the ULV campus fell in an area of campus affectionately known as “Sneaky Park”. The photo above shows the tree being dismembered. Many do not know the origin of the label and history of “Sneaky Park”, or that the park was once known as either City Park or College Park, and that it covered an entire square block. Looking at archival photographs, here is some history of the original park before it was swallowed bit by bit.

Built in 1887, the 130-room Lordsburg Hotel and surrounding lots were purchased by members of the Church of the Brethren in 1891 for use as an educational institution. Initially opened with departments labeled collegiate, preparatory, normal (teacher education), commercial, biblical, model training (elementary), music, and art, Lordsburg College used the erstwhile hotel for housing and classrooms.

The hotel was torn down in 1927, as it was not salvageable for continued use. The images below shows the hotel building as it appeared in 1891, and in the process of being dismantled.



The photo below is instructive for understanding the scale of College/City Park. Once the hotel was torn down, virtually all the space between “B” and “C” Streets, and from Second to Third Streets, was vacant. A city park was established, and was known as either College Park or City Park.



The image above was taken in 1930, only three years after the Lordsburg Hotel building was torn down. The large grassy area diagonally across from the football field with surrounding curved track is the entire block comprising College/City Park. It appears as a dark area bisected by two straight paths and one curved path. In the middle of the center section of this block are the words “La Verne Lions.” At this time, the Lions Club had taken over creating the park. Two ULV buildings, Miller Hall and Founder’s Hall, are located to the west across the street from the park. Going back to the park area, a grove of trees in the northwest corner of the park is where Sneaky Park is believed to have existed. People were not visible from the ULV buildings while in this part of the park, and there they went to “sneak” cigarettes. If you imagine yourself standing in Sneaky Park and then face north, the building directly across the street is the La Verne Feed and Fuel, now the parking lot for the fire station.

In later years, the park was outfitted with roque courts (a variant of croquet played by teams on a hard clay surface with mallets and driven through permanent wickets), a community building, a cement pad for dancing, a sprinkler system, horseshoe pits, and picnic tables. In the 1950s, controversy arose about the nature of dancing to be allowed in the park. After much discussion at City Council meetings, the cement pad was approved as long as it was used mainly for childrens’ activities with limited types of dancing.



The postcard image above depicts three roque courts with players. Although this image shows courts in Florida, it is not hard to imagine that La Verne’s roque courts would have looked like these.



The top image shows a merry-go-round enjoyed by children at the park.

Below, a group of girls enjoy a birthday party with the park's community building visible in the background.



In the image below, the La Verne Feed and Fuel building is visible on the left at the back; now the space is occupied by the parking lot for the current fire station. Can you spot Bill Lemon in the image below? It might be that the trees casting shade at the bottom of this image lie

at the edge of Sneaky Park.



In 1995, construction began on an amphitheater to be sited in front of the Wilson Library. However, the exaction uncovered several artifacts from the time of the hotel. An archaeological dig was established in the spring of 1996 and continued for two semesters. Among other things, students uncovered medicine bottles, a poison bottle, wooden toothbrushes, dishes, a bottle of Hamlin Wizard Oil, coins, an ink bottle, a two-burner stove, and what appeared to be a grill from the front of a buggy. Two wine bottles were uncovered in the excavation, which caused speculation as Lordsburg College was “dry” at the time it operated out of the hotel building.

The Wilson Library tower is visible at the back of the image. Students enrolled at ULV and Mt. San Antonio College participated in the dig. Artifacts from the dig are available for viewing at the Wilson Library.



Dinosaurs in Our Backyard: Visiting the Raymond M. Alf Museum

On February 21st, members of the LVHS gathered at the Raymond Alf Museum of Paleontology to visit this local historical treasure.

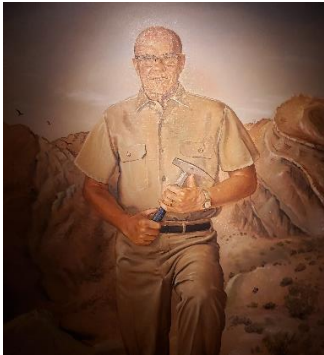


The museum is the only nationally accredited museum on a high school campus in the United States. It is located on the campus of the Webb Schools in Claremont, which recently celebrated its 100th birthday. The “Alf” is the culmination of work performed by Raymond Alf, a teacher who began his career at Webb School in 1929. Alf took a group of Webb students to a site in Barstow in 1936, where student Bill Webb discovered the skull shown above. The skull was uncovered by Webb, who tore his pants

sliding down a hill. When he looked for the cause of the damage, he saw part of the skull's jaw and teeth embedded in rock. They took their specimen to a paleontologist at California Institute of Technology, who identified it as a peccary (a pig-like creature). Mr. Alf was so inspired by this discovery that he began pursuing a career in paleontology.



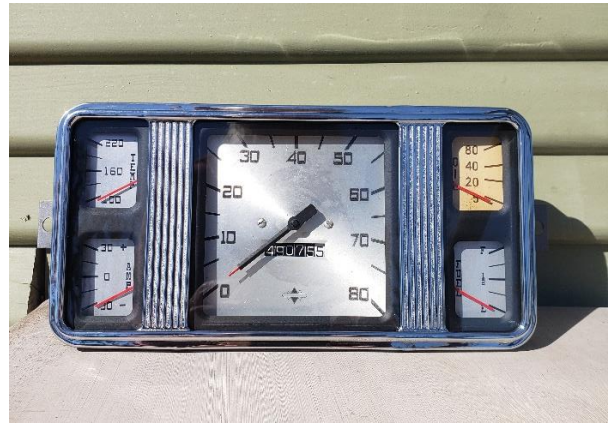
A modern camel skeleton is shown posed over a fossilized trackway (above). The 30-year-old skeleton depicts the proposed size of an ancient camel.



A portrait of Raymond Alf hangs in the museum that bears his name. The museum was dedicated in 1968. Alf retired in 1977. Some of Alf's students became famous paleontologists.

Rolling with the International

Up until now, most of the work on the 1938 International has been disassembling, cleaning, and other less-than-inspiring chores. But now the work is more active and fun. Eye candy for the truck included a pair of hubs and gauges for the dashboard. Look closely at the gauges; one has a cream-colored background and was a replacement that Inman Conety made in the 1950s.



What's in store for the truck? This list of activities was developed for Bonita High School students to complete before the end of the school year:

Rear End Suspension

- Calipers, rotors, & hubs greased and finished (buttoned up)

Front End Suspension

- Calipers, rotors, & hubs greased and finished (buttoned up)
- King pins greased
- Shackle & hangers buttoned up & greased
- Steering box installed (Pitman arm and drag link)

Motor installed

Cab Installed

- Bolt the cab back onto the frame

It may also be possible to install the side mirrors, windshield wipers, and window, door, and windshield glass.

100 Years Ago...

Organizing the collection of memorabilia left to the LVHS by Galen Beery is a daunting task. On January 27, 2023, the following article was found clipped from the January 11, 1923, edition of the *La Verne Leader*:

The price of gasoline has dropped two cents a gallon, an announcement having been made by the Standard Oil Company, the Union Oil Company, and the Doderer-Collins Oil Company, distributor of Richfield oils. The cut was made affective last Friday morning, and is in force throughout California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Alaska, and Hawaii.

This cut makes the price here 20 cents, the lowest since 1918. A cut of one cent was made less a couple of months ago.

A similar cut was made in the price of distillate.

Things were certainly different 100 years ago! Does anyone reading this article remember when gasoline was less than 50 cents a gallon? How about one dollar a gallon?

Celebrate with LVHS Events



Julia Morgan was a towering figure in the field of architecture. Come learn about California's first female licensed architect who designed over 700 buildings and is best known for designing the Hearst Castle. Anna Maria Whitaker will discuss Morgan's work

on Monday, March 13th, at 4:00pm at the Hillcrest

Meeting House. Sign-in, temperature checks, and mask wearing are required.



On Saturday, March 25th, the LVHS will be at Bonita High School for their car show in the school parking lot from 9am-12pm. Come support the BHS auto shop students! A tour of the

Methodist church will occur at 2:00pm. Walk across the street from the high school and join the tour. At 3:00 pm that same day, the LVHS will co-sponsor a screening of *The Graduate*, an iconic 1967 film. There is no charge for these events.

The Pomona Valley Film Society and the Historical Society of La Verne

present a church
tour and screening
of the



THE GRADUATE



The tour begins promptly at 2PM at the historic United Methodist Church, which is located directly across the street from Bonita High School.

Please arrive at 1:45PM if you plan to attend the tour.

The movie will be screened following the church tour at 3:15PM at the Student Union Building at BHS.



Bonita High School is located at: 3102 D St, La Verne, CA 91750
FMI, please email: sbest@lavernehistoricalsociety.org

The event is free and open to the public.



New LVHS Board Members



The LVHS board is proud to introduce Robin Carder and Cindy Sorbel.

My name is Robin Carder and I have been a proud citizen of La Verne for 43 years. I have

served our community in many ways from the moment we moved to La Verne, from PTA room mom, PTA President, Junior Woman's Club, SOLVE, President of La Verne Tennis Association, HOA Board member, I worked at the University of La Verne plus I received my degree from there. I served 9 years as a BUSD Board Trustee and then the last 13 years on our City Council. I have been married to my wonderful husband, Robert, for the last 49 years and we have 2 children and four grandchildren that we are so proud of. My Faith is especially important to me, and I serve as a Deacon in my Church Family.



Hello, my name is Cindy Sorbel. I am a retired shipping clerk with a love of history, especially California history. I've lived in La Verne for nine years and appreciate the city and its history. I have an interest in local government and like to attend City Council meetings.

Here is our 2023-2024 LVHS board roster:

President:	Sherry Best
Vice President:	Kathy Kalousek
Secretary:	Donna Dye
Treasurer:	Marv Weston
Family & Local	
History Researcher:	Bill Lemon
Membership:	Kathy Kalousek
Publicity:	Cindy Sorbel
Member-At-Large:	Peggy Redman
Member-At-Large:	Robin Carder

Our board is robust and very active on your behalf. However, the LVHS frequently sponsors activities that benefit from volunteer support. Please contact Cindy at cindysorbel87@yahoo.com



We try to recognize all our new and life LVHS members in the newsletter, but mistakes happen. Here is a list of 2022 and 2023 new members. We also wish to remember Jon Blickenstaff, who is a life member but who was not recognized in the newsletter for his contribution. Thank you! New members reflect awakening interest in the LVHS, and renewing members reflect satisfied customers. Both groups are so valuable to the vitality of our organization. Please call Sherry Best 909/596-4679 or email her at sbest@lavernehistoricalsociety.org if you have ideas for LVHS activities or have a to comment on content.



NEW 2022 LVHS Members

Yvonne & Scott Jamison
Alisa Karam
Donald Proctor
Lex Sexton
Jay Stallings
Kathy & Bob White

NEW 2023 LVHS Members

Jeff & Gailyn Bassler
Teresa Becker
Margie & Don Green
Tin Morrison
Barbara Santomero
Carroll Wheatley