



La Verne Historical Society

Preserving Old La Verne's Environment: Making History for the Future



PO Box 7761, La Verne, CA 91750 909-596-4679

lvhs@lavernehistoricalociety.org September 2018

Tidbit from La Verne's Past... The Veterans Hall

This structure was built in 1934 as the American Legion Hall. It later became the La Verne Community Center, and is now the Veterans Hall.

The article below is from the Los Angeles Times, dated September 17, 1933, and tells about the organization of the La Verne Legion Building Association.

BUILDING GROUP FORMED

LA VERNE, Sept. 16.—Organization of the La Verne Legion Building Association by members of La Verne Post No. 330, American Legion, has just been completed, following the receipt this week of a State permit. Officers of the organization include: Grady Mills, president; Ellsworth Green, vice-president; Dr. Roy St. Clair, secretary, and A. E. Harwood, treasurer.

Here is some further information about the officers:

- Henry Grady Mills (1890-1955), a younger brother of Scubie Mills, was a citrus grower on Emerald Avenue and the son-in-law of Charles E. Straight, whose home is on the National Register of Historic Places. Mills was also employed as a janitor at La Verne Heights School. During WWI, he served as a horseshoer in the Field Artillery.
- Ellsworth Green (1896-1985) was a long-time Bonita High School Science Teacher and Coach. The first gymnasium at the present Bonita High School is named in his honor. He served in both World Wars and as Commander of the La Verne American Legion Post.
- Dr. Roy St. Clair (1891-1951), was a physician and father of two physicians, Eugene and

Donald. He participated in the Student Army Training Corps at the University of Minnesota during WWI and later graduated from their medical school. He and his wife served as missionaries in the Philippines.

- Alfred E. Harwood (1896-1979), was a postal clerk and later, Postmaster (1939-1966). He was elected Commander of the La Verne American Legion Post N. 330 in 1932.

The LVHS has several artifacts from Post N. 330, which it hopes to display at the Veterans Hall in one of our new display cases. The Veterans Hall is the site of many city-sponsored activities. On December 14, 2018, at 5:00pm., join the LVHS at the Veterans Hall for its holiday potluck and silent auction.



Front and side views of the Veterans Hall



Meet our 2018-2019 LVHS Student Board Member

Meet Marina Saake: the new LVHS student board representative. She is a senior History major at the ULV, and plans to go on to graduate school to study history. Marina brings a dedication to history, organizational ability, and leadership skills to the LVHS. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, the national honors society for history majors. Marina is also a member of the executive boards of multiple student organizations at ULV, including the school's choir and the History and Political Science Association, where she serves as vice president. Marina will be introduced at the October 8th Member/Community meeting at the Hillcrest Meeting House at 7:00pm. Look for her at La Verne bicycle, walking, and home tours.



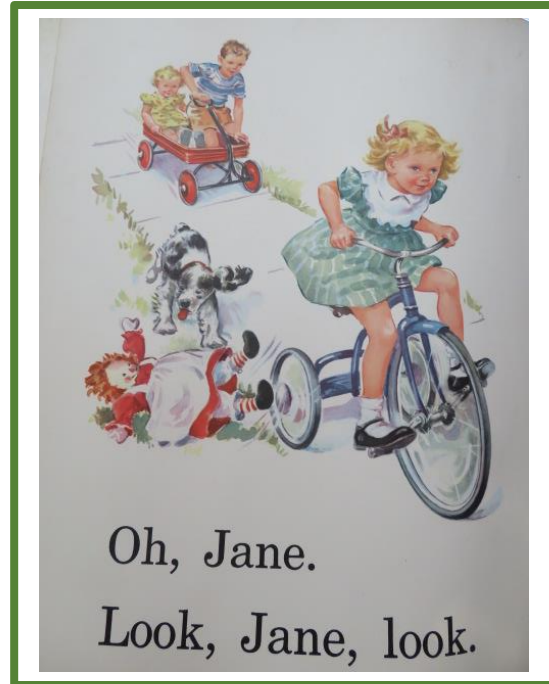
Look Jane Look. The LVHS has a New Book!

Many of us remember learning to read with the Dick and Jane books. The characters of Dick, Jane, Sally, Spot, and Puff empowered us to unlock the magic of the written word in our early years. The LVHS was recently gifted with a "Big Book" copy of *Dick and Jane* which will proudly become part of its collection on display at the Gallery at Hillcrest and shared with third grade students who visit as part of their social studies curriculum. Joanne Wagoner, who donated the book, tells this story:

In the fall of 1973, I found the big book of Dick and Jane in a large closet in a classroom that had been vacant for a while at Cedargrove School, in the Charter Oak School District. I dusted it off and inquired as to what I should do with this old treasure, and was told to just toss it out. As a Reading Specialist, I did not have the heart to discard it and thought it should be saved, so I took it home and stored it in a closet in my house for the past 45 years! (I didn't realize I'd kept it so long until I figured it out just now!) It is an old classic text book of the 1950's that emphasized sight words as

much, if not more, than phonics. Interestingly, during the late 80's and the 90's big books were revived as a basic teaching tool and their use continues today in beginning reading programs.

Thank you, Joanne for sharing this piece of history with the community through the LVHS.



President's Message: Previews of LVHS Activities



September is the month for planning LVHS activities. Each year we add new programming while retaining old favorites. You will receive the calendar of activities via email and print copies will also be available at the fall member & community meeting. Here are some of the LVHS program highlights through December, 2018:

- **Member/Community Meeting:** Don't miss the fall member/community meeting on **Monday, October 8th at 7:00pm** at the Hillcrest Meeting House. Our featured speaker, Mike Patris, will tell us about Mount Lowe and the life of Thaddeus Lowe.

- **Phillips Mansion/Spadra Cemetery Tour:** We will visit the Phillips Mansion and Spadra cemetery on **Tuesday, October 23**. This exclusive tour begins at **10:00am** and is limited to 30 participants. The cost is \$5.00. Watch for a flyer and reservation information.
- On **Sunday, November 4**, members of the LVHS are invited to the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum to hear a lecture from Museum Director Paul Spitzzeri entitled **“Through the Viewfinder: Exploring Early Photography in Los Angeles”** from **2:00pm-4:00pm**. Watch for a flyer with more details.
- **“Murals of La Verne” Bicycle Tour:** On **Saturday, November 17, at 9:00am**, the La Verne Bike Coalition, Bike San Gabriel Valley, and the LVHS are co-sponsoring a bicycle tour of murals in La Verne. This event is planned as “family-friendly” and will be accompanied by commentary by Eric Davis, one of La Verne’s celebrated mural artists. Watch for a flyer.
- **“Doing Business in La Verne”** On **Saturday, December 1**, visit La Verne businesses on a walking tour with Bill Lemon. Meet at Mainerio Square on the corner of “D” and Third Street. The tour is scheduled for **3:00pm**, before the Stroll La Verne event from 4:00pm-7:00pm.
- **LVHS Holiday Potluck & Silent Auction:** The annual holiday potluck will be held on **Friday, December 14, at 5:00pm** at the Veterans Hall. Bring your favorite potluck dish. This will be a perfect place to shop for a holiday gift as the LVHS will conduct its first silent auction. Auction items include housewares, silver, china, tools, and more. There is sure to be a treasure that you won’t be able to resist so support this LVHS fundraiser with a purchase or a donation (tax deductible, of course).

The LVHS has lots more planned in 2019. Stay tuned...

Sherry Best,
LVHS President

A.J. Milne House on 2779 Bonita Receives a Bronze Marker

A craftsman bungalow, built in 1903/04, received bronze marker designation from the LVHS and City of La Verne. Currently occupied by Dave and Jane Olson, this 1½ story bungalow house appeared on a postcard (see below) when Bonita Avenue was still called Fourth Street (and La Verne was called Lordsburg).



Occupied from 1909-1916 by A. J. Milne, the house changed hands multiple times, as follows:

- 1919-1922, Ernest H. and Louise Morrison lived in the home as renters. He was an auto mechanic who later owned Morrison’s garage at 125 W. Third Street.
- 1922-1926, Dayton S. and Lela B. Newcomer were residents. He was a cashier at the Farmers and Merchants Bank at 234 N. “D” Street.
- 1926-1950, Roy E. and Florence Case St. Clair owned the home. He was a physician. In 1927, the City of La Verne changed its building numbering system. 237 E. Fourth Street became 2279 Fourth Street (today’s street address). The home was valued at \$6500 in the 1930 census and \$6000 in the 1940 census.
- 1950-1960, J. Onis and Blanche E. Leonard lived in the home. He served as Assistant to the President of La Verne college and she was a home economics teacher.
- 1960-1962, William J. and Lois E. Hammond occupied the house. During this time (1961), Fourth Street was renamed Bonita Avenue.
- 1970, Robert E. and Pamela K. Tichenor lived in the home.

Records of occupancy of the A. J. Milne house are unavailable between 1962-1970. The Olson’s have owned the home since 1989.



The photo above, taken in 1924 in front of the A. J. Milne House, is of the “Mothers’ Class” of the La Verne Church of the Brethren. This photo was taken by the well-known local photographer Burton Frasher.

Today the carefully preserved Milne House sits amid mature trees and in front of a garage and apartment that replaced the original barn.



The Milne House has four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The front entryway has a coved ceiling with original baseboards, trim, and picture rail. A built-in china cupboard, flanked by two 12-over-1 windows, is original to the house. Upstairs bedrooms have unique walk-in closets that are tucked under dormer spaces. An exterior rock chimney replaced the original brick, which was damaged in an earthquake.

A dedication for the Milne House is scheduled for Saturday, October 20th, at 11:00am. All are welcome!

Well Deserved Praise...

On July 14, Mr. Waleed Rashidi became a new LVHS member. With his membership form, he enclosed a letter to his former bus driver, Bill Lemon. Mr. Rashidi graduated from Bonita HS in 1996, Cal Poly Pomona in

2000, and Cal State Fullerton in 2008. He earned a doctorate from ULV in 2016 and is currently a Professor of Communications at Cal State Fullerton. These are some of the words he wrote to Bill:

“You were my bus driver when I was a student at Ramona MS in 1989-1991. I rode the Gillig Bus #6 from Ramona to my stop at Wheeler and Via De Mansion. I was just getting into all things automotive at the time and would ask you questions about the bus mechanicals. You were very patient and informative, and I learned how a dual-range transmission operated and what a “Jake Brake” does. You were very kind to all of us. I am glad that you are still active in the community and hope retirement is treating you well.”

Isn’t it nice when people take the time to remember the kindness of others?

BUSD Recognizes Hillcrest Gallery Participants

Docents who participated in the spring 2018 tours for third grade students of the Bonita Unified School District were recognized at their September 5th School Board Meeting. More than 400 students visited the gallery exhibit entitled “*The Story of La Verne*” and learned about La Verne’s history through the lens of six themes: Art & Culture, Education, Transportation, Commerce, Family & Community, and Faith. Tours are planned for next year’s third-graders.



Welcome New LVHS Members!

- Donna Bennett, Debbi Breno, Richard & Judy Holmstrom, Bobbie Iselin, Kathy Kalousek, Sarah Long, Thom & Susan Osborn, Gayle San Miguel, Joe & Lili Montez, Waleed Rashidi, Joe & Anna Rogers, Shirley Ross, Suzanne St. Pierre