



# La Verne Historical Society

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



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## The Sweet Smell of Success!!!

Photos: John Best

The LVHS celebrated with a holiday party from 3:00-5:00pm on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, on "G" and Third Streets. Featuring refreshments, baked treats, vintage items, and holiday ornaments, the event ended with a flourish when the **Bonita HS Bearcat Band** brought holiday music to the scene. LVHS-members Donna & Jeff Dye and Carolyn & Randy Cockrell hosted the event on one of the most beautiful streets in La Verne.

Thanks to all those who braved the cool and misty day to celebrate La Verne with the LVHS.



The Bearcat Band gets ready to serenade (above) and the bake sale table does brisk business (below).



Volunteer decorators and board members Clark Palmer, Brenda Gonzalez, and Tami Lomma (top), a sampling of holiday gifts (middle), and City Councilman Rosales looking over the tempting treats (bottom).



## President's Message

The Year Behind Us, the Year Before Us...



This vintage card reminds us that it is time for a new year. 2019 was packed with LVHS activities and you can expect more of the same for 2020. Thanks to all who participated and special thanks to everyone who volunteered at an event, donated a vintage item to our collection or loaned a precious item from your own collection

to share at the Hillcrest gallery exhibit, posted on our Facebook page, contacted us on the LVHS website, encouraged someone to join our organization, baked for the holiday sale, or demonstrated your interest in La Verne and its history.

2019 was a year of new adventures and projects. Look on the last page of this newsletter for the award that went to two members for their special efforts to support the LVHS. The year's activities in images show us the scope of our exploration of La Verne and its surroundings. This is not the entire picture, however. Newsletters, President's Messages, and various email blasts keep information flowing and everyone interested (I hope).

2020 will be a mix of established, ongoing, and new events and projects. Based on their popularity, quarterly member/community meetings, a fall lecture at the Veteran's Hall, walking/bus/bicycle tours, the *Story of La Verne* exhibit at the Gallery at Hillcrest in spring, the spring home(s) tour, and our summer potluck picnic will continue. The big bus trip will occur in May so check your LVHS calendar and wait until early spring to book your reservation. The October cemetery tour was so popular that we will bring it back in 2020 showcasing the stories of individuals who are part of La Verne's history. Support this event as a new or returning docent. I am building a collection of costumes to help participants get into the spirit of re-enacting La Verne's history.



Expect to see some ongoing projects completed in 2020. Several weeks ago, I attended an Eagle Court of Honor in which Samuel Neeley was awarded his "Eagle" for getting the LVHS display cases refurbished and ready for displays. The final step will be to visit our collection of artifacts and select items for each case, then deploy them at public places throughout the community.

Another exciting project is nearing completion. Bill Lemon and I have been working diligently on *La Verne* for Arcadia Publishing as part of their "Images of America" series. We are four chapters down and three more to go. Who knew that writing captions could be so difficult? Actually, it is MUCH harder to write a meaningful, historical vignette in a 50-70 words caption than in a longer essay. We anticipate getting the document to the publisher by the end of February with a publication in late spring or summer. You can reserve a copy (or several) when you renew your membership this month. Own a piece of history and help the LVHS bring more programming to you.

In December three houses were approved for Mills Act designation by the La Verne City Council. The Miller, J. Y. McClellan, and Marshall Houses, all on Bonita Avenue, received this status. In completing the application and abiding by the contract for this state-level designation, their owners will protect their homes from demolition or being remodeled beyond recognition. Their ongoing efforts to restore and maintain their properties help to maintain the historic value of their neighborhood. A house on Third Street was awarded designation for a bronze marker. This city-level award recognizes the unique nature of the home and property. We may see all four homes on an LVHS-sponsored home tour before too long.

Plans move forward for restoring the 1938 International flatbed work truck left to the LVHS by Inman Conety, a former LVHS President and long-time city of La Verne booster. You will be notified via email

and Facebook of the move so you can watch as the “International” settles into its new home for a radical makeover.

The LVHS is on firm footing with a talented Board of Directors, affectionately called the LVHS Warriors. They contribute their time and energy tirelessly to so many activities and all have agreed to stay on for another term. That’s true service and it is all on a volunteer basis – even more impressive. Our winter retreat in February will be dedicated to reviewing our projects and developing strategies for improving member numbers and involvement.

January is the month for membership renewal. Your renewal notice is on the back page of this newsletter. Guess what? The price remains the same as last year. The LVHS is keeping ahead of inflation. If you joined between October-December 2019 your membership will be held over until 2020. Contact me if you are unsure of your membership status. On your membership form there is a spot for reserving a copy of *La Verne* by Bill Lemon and the La Verne Historical Society. I am keeping a list and have prizes for the first person to sign up and the person who signs up for the greatest number of books. These books make great stocking stuffers, birthday gifts, graduation presents, commemorations, etc. Royalties will be donated to the LVHS to finance programming, so be generous.

This is the time of year when everyone is inundated with ways to donate. We are no exception in requesting your help. There are many worthwhile causes and so many needs that it is tough to choose. Here is the LVHS pitch:

- ✓ Your get the direct benefit of a donation through enhanced programming;
- ✓ The LVHS never sells its email list to other organizations;
- ✓ We accept artifacts that reflect La Verne’s History and provide a non-cash donation form;
- ✓ All our work is volunteer-based. You won’t be funding any inflated corporate salaries;
- ✓ We try to keep our activities as green as possible (not sure what I meant here but it sounds good);
- ✓ You are us and we are you, it doesn’t get any better than that.

*Sherry Best,*  
LVHS President

## Two Beautiful Gifts from Two Generous Donors

The LVHS received the gift of a wonderful watercolor of the Carrión Adobe, painted by Mrs. Evelyn Keiser around 1952. It is a beautiful depiction and professionally framed. The donor was Joann Brewer of Claremont, a neighbor of Mrs. Keiser. In addition to art, Mrs. Keiser taught science, mathematics, and Greek. The early photo below shows her (standing at left) with Lordsburg College art students.



**Mrs. Keiser taught art at Lordsburg College from 1907-1910.**

The Carrión Adobe, photographed in 1934, straddled present-day La Verne and San Dimas. Built in 1868 by Saturnino Carrión on land he received from his uncle



and aunt, Ygnacio and Concepcion Lopez Palomares, the adobe was restored in 1951 and is privately owned.

The watercolor of the



Carrión Adobe was exhibited by Evelyn Keiser in the 1952 Pomona Valley Art Association’s First Annual Member exhibit.

Another gift of art to the LVHS was a panoramic photo of Brackett Field, circa 1977. It was donated by Jackie Gain from the estate of her father, Jack Gain, an avid amateur pilot.

Both gifts will be displayed at the *Story of La Verne* exhibit at the Gallery at Hillcrest in spring of 2020. We look forward to seeing you at the gallery to enjoy these generous gifts to the LVHS.

### **Delores Gonzales: An Indomitable Spirit**

Written by Peggy Redman

Delores Gonzales, a long-time resident of La Verne and recently honored by the ULV as an historic alumna, passed away December 13<sup>th</sup>. Peggy Redman, Delores' colleague at ULV, offered this tribute. Delores Gonzales lived in La Verne, nearly all of her 87 years. She came to this small town filled with orange groves for her father's job in one of the citrus packinghouses. She came as a toddler with her mother, father, and brother. She was destined to become a powerful force in the city, always standing up for the rights of all to a quality education.

Delores' mother was a strong woman, providing this role model for her daughter. She insisted her children attend Lincoln Elementary School, even though she was told it was a school for the white children. She pointed out to the powers that be that her husband's check indicated money taken out for public schools. Because of her persistence Delores and her brother, Manuel, were enrolled in Lincoln Elementary School.

Delores was a good student, always conscientious in completing her assignments. She participated in a multitude of activities at Bonita High School, serving as a cheerleader while always keeping her eye on success in her academics. She met the love of her life, Ruben Gonzales, while in high school. He was the star football player at Chino High School, but when their paths crossed both knew the partnership would be for life. At the time of her death she and Ruben had been married for 70 years.

Ruben and Delores married out of high school and attended Mt. San Antonio College. At the conclusion of their first year their counselor, Jerry Deal, encouraged them to transfer to his alma mater, La Verne College. Delores and Ruben had two of their four children while at LVC. Her mother, again, was there for Delores. She provided support, both monetary and in taking care of the children while

Ruben and Delores attended classes. They were the first Hispanic couple to graduate from LVC in 1953. Delores was recently honored by the University of La Verne as one of its historic alumna. Her picture is on the north wall of the Wilson Library commemorating this tribute.

Delores taught for thirty years in the Bonita Unified School District at Roynon, Ekstrand, and Grace Miller Elementary Schools. She was recognized for her innovative practices in the field of writing. After retiring from her elementary school career, she enrolled in the PhD. Program at Claremont Graduate School with an emphasis on reading. When Delores received her degree, her mother was there in the audience. Delores always acknowledged the degree as partly belonging to her mother.

The next phase of her life began when she was hired by her beloved alma mater as a supervisor of student teachers. Her belief in preparing teachers that were ready for the classroom resulted in students under her tutelage becoming outstanding teachers. She was exacting, but loving at the same time. She also worked in the University Teacher Education Program as an adjunct professor. As she shared her experiences as a child growing up in La Verne the soon-to-be teachers gained empathy and understanding for the varying lives of their future students. It was excellent preparation for the diversity of the classrooms in California.

With all of the honors and accolades Delores received in her career, she never turned her back on her community. She supported parents in making sure their children focused on academics. She took time with students to prepare them for the education that would move them forward. Many of the young children came with her to the class with whom she worked at ULV. Here the children would share dreams and desires for their lives with the ULV students in the teacher preparation program. A majority of these children went on to attend college.

Delores leaves her husband, Ruben, her sons, Philip and Maurice, and her daughter, Laurie. Her oldest daughter, Kathy was a City Attorney with the City of Riverside. Kathy predeceased Delores.

Delores Gonzales was truly a woman of indomitable spirit. She loved a challenge. No task was too difficult when it came to educating children and supporting her community. She was impossible to subdue or defeat.