



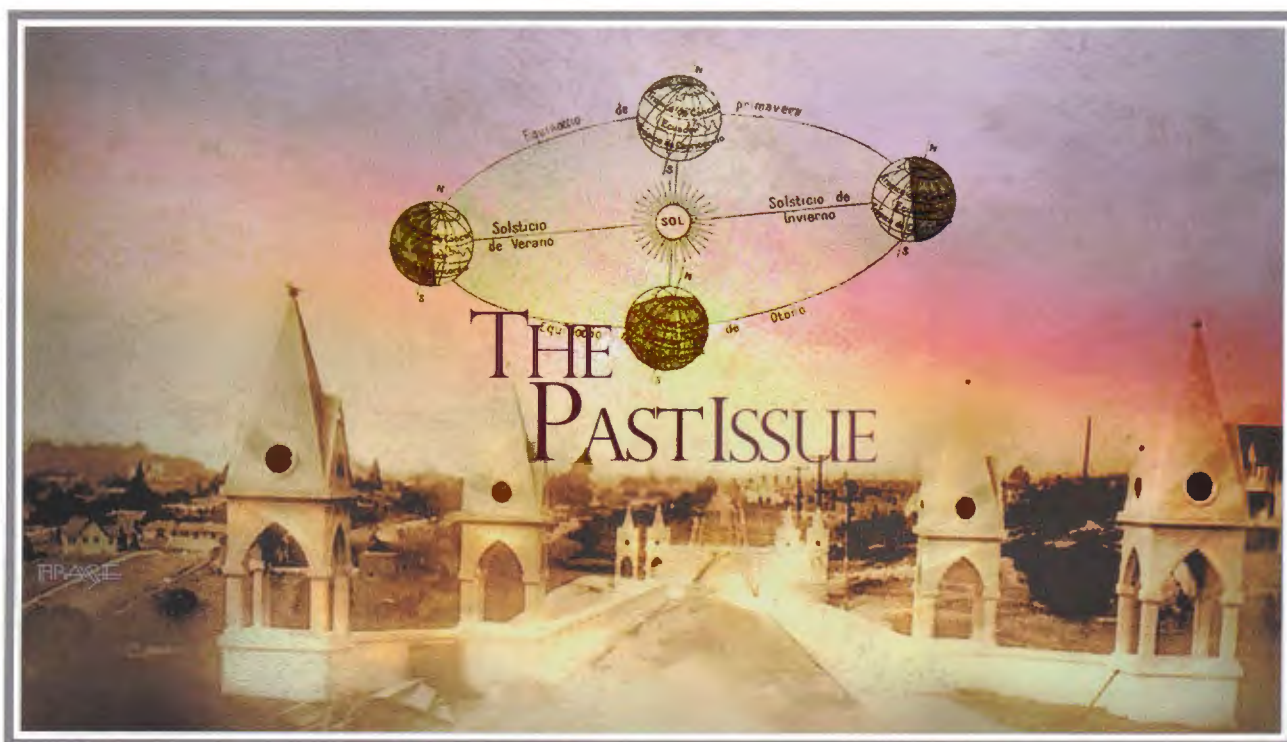
OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Issue #43

Spring/Summer

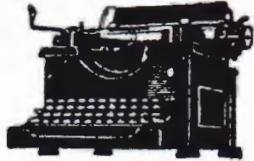
2012



**Join your neighbors for the FHRA Annual Meeting
Saturday, June 23rd, 11 am - 1pm at the Historic Prospect Studios
We'll have lots of Franklin Hills history and much more - RSVP required see page 5**

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President's Comments / *Chris Boutelle***OVERVIEW**

A semi-annual publication created and distributed by volunteer residents, neighbors, friends and supporters of the Franklin Hills Residents Association—a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization
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Neighbor to Neighbor

What makes a neighborhood? Is it the geographic boundaries such as a river or a freeway or a major boulevard? Or is it a feeling of the folks who live there and their interaction for a common good? Actually, it is both; one confining it to the spot and the other connecting the people together. Without the second half, you just have a place or an area.

What can you do to be part of your neighborhood? To start, you should get to know your neighbors around you. It always amazes me that many people in Los Angeles don't know their immediate neighbors even to nod to. As you get to know your neighbors, you will naturally look out for them and their property. I don't mean being in and out of each others' houses all the time or being nosey, but looking out for each other. On Hollyvista Avenue, we have a progressive evening of food and drinks at a number of homes on a winter holidays evening. That gets us talking to each other and finding common interests while not putting the burden of an entire large party on one

household. In the summer, perhaps a pot luck barbeque would be a good casual idea. Several of us also share recycling and other Department of Sanitation bins to lessen the need for city trucks to stop every fifty feet in our hilly part of the 'hood.

Even businesses add to the value of the neighborhood beyond their actual product. Tony Fanara of Palermo's Ristorante Italiano, volunteers food and help on many of the FHRA projects and Joseph Tanous, a building contractor on Hyperion has videotaped for police, several people putting graffiti in the neighborhood. Koko Bakchajian, of Hi-Tech Automotive on Fountain has painted a large wall across from his business and landscaped that area just to make the neighborhood look nicer. As for individuals, Vivian Shea, our "Cookie Lady" has for years, made delightful treats for our annual meeting (which is coming up this month on Saturday, June 23 at Prospect Studios.) Carol Skinner put in many years and countless nights editing and publishing the **Franklin Hills Overview**, a job

presently done masterfully by Eric Frase. David Farmer put together the Marshall Area Neighborhood Watch. And the list goes on and on (but I won't.).

You can also volunteer to help out on neighborhood projects that give you a feeling of "Skin in the Game" rather than just owning a piece of real estate. That can be as simple as writing a short article for the **Overview** or spending an hour delivering it to helping put up the holiday lights on the Shakespeare Bridge in December or as involved as becoming a member of the board of the Franklin Hills Residents Association to help guide the Association in the future. Start (with the help of our senior lead officers) a Neighborhood Watch Program on your block. Spend a couple of hours cleaning up the median near the Shakespeare Bridge or some of our public stairways that weave our community together. Whatever the amount of time you have to give, there is probably something that you can do to add to this great neighborhood. ■




Membership Up - Deficit Down

FHRA Treasurer's Report / *Bruce Carroll, Treasurer*

The FHRA ended 2011 with just \$17.29 less than we had at the start of the year. That's a \$1,910 improvement from our 2010 net deficit. Don't we wish Washington and Sacramento could have such results? We also improved our membership numbers with 262 paid members vs. 244 in 2010, a 5.7% increase. Our biggest revenue source, *Overview* advertising, at \$7,265 also increased, by 8.20%. Please keep patronizing the local businesses whose ads provide this key support for the Franklin Hills community. And the 2011 sales of FHRA t-shirts and historic photos were up 360% year-to-year. Look through this issue of the *Overview* or at FranklinHills.org for info on how you can get yours.

Alas, not everything was posting good numbers last year. Our gross 2011 revenue of \$15,474 was down just over \$3000 from 2010, but most of that extra amount was in a special large city donation to help with funding improvements at Marshall High. Donations from FHRA members in addition to their yearly dues came out exactly the same at \$1,280 each year. A big THANKS to those of you who go beyond the basic dues. You can also make specific contributions for various FHRA projects like the Franklin Ave. Median. This year we need to replace the irrigation system so we'll need extra donations more than the \$200 we received in 2011...a 33% drop from 2010. And likely just like your bank account, we saw our interest income decline again in 2011 by about 30% to \$57.29. *(Continued on next page)*



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(Treasurer—continued from page 3)

Just as the *Overview* produces our biggest chunk of income it is also our biggest expense at \$8,934. Each issue, now that it is in color, costs about \$835 more than ad revenue. The second biggest area of spending is nearly \$5,000 on the community. FHRA spent over \$2,200 on the Myra Ave. mural IV which was completed in May 2011. We spent over \$1,780 on maintaining the Franklin Ave. Median and the Shakespeare Garden below the bridge. Nearly \$300 went to graffiti removal supplies, much of it handed out to members at our annual meeting. We donated \$150 to the Hillside Federation, and the Norman Harriton Community Garden spent a little over half of \$1,050 in dues paid by the garden's 21 garden plot holders.

The rest of our expenses, about \$1,580 went toward administrative costs. The biggest chunks: insurance \$971; membership mailing and annual meeting \$350; Internet, Voicemail, PO Box \$180.

We hope all Franklin Hills residents will help to support our community efforts, but so far this year our membership figures have been running below 2011 so now would be a great time to make your contribution. Current members can use the return addressed envelope in the FHRA letter you should have received. If you're not already a member use the convenient membership form printed in this *Overview* or come to the annual meeting and join us there. Indi-

vidual membership is \$15; \$30 for a household and of course extra contributions are always welcome and tax deductible since FHRA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charity. And now for those who just can't tear themselves away from their computers, our FranklinHills.org website can now take your credit card donations via PayPal. Thank you for your continued support for FHRA and the businesses whose ads make the *Overview* possible. ■



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It's Annual Meeting Time!

All Franklin Hills residents are invited to the 24th annual meeting of the FHRA on Saturday, June 23, 2012, from 11am to 1pm. We are going back to one of our most popular meeting locations, The Prospect Studios. Due to studio security you'll need to RSVP so your name(s) will be on the list at the gate. You can RSVP by calling 323-908-6078. Once you enter the studio lot from the main gate at 4151 Prospect Ave. you'll be directed to parking and the meeting location in Rehearsal Hall 1. There will be arrangements for those who need disabled parking.

The main theme of this years meeting is a look back in time as our largest neighbor, the studio, prepares to celebrate its centennial. We'll have movie clips from old Vitagraph stars, Spectacular scenes from Warner Bros. 1928 feature "Noah's Ark" and hear from long time Franklin Hills resident Brady Rubin who starred in educational films decades before kids learned everything from YouTube. Also on the marquee will be LAPD Capt. William Murphy, who heads up the Northeast division, along with other city officials to answer your questions about topics of concern in our area. The "official" business of the meeting will be to elect members to the FHRA Board of Directors and to vote on a proposed major revision to the FHRA bylaws. We'll also have at least two of the three "R's" Refreshments and Raffles. Check-ins for FHRA members old and new begin at 10:30am. Then, check out the FHRA collection of historic area photos and FHRA t-shirts on sale. Join your neighbors in celebrating and helping your neighborhood, and please remember to RSVP. ■

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An Odd—O—Mobile
Text and photo by David Farmer

Maybe you've walked or driven along Tracy Street recently and seen a slightly odd automobile parked at the curb. It's an ordinary white, compact car, but with an unusual structure on its roof. This resembles a small snowmobile covered by a form-fitting canvas tarp.

But it's actually a mast that stands about 10 feet high when raised to use its LIDAR—which is like radar but employs light instead of sound waves to determine location—and camera capabilities. It's a Bing photo car, driven by Philip Triantafyllou, 37, a resident of Tracy Street.

Philip is one of 25 people engaged in mapping almost every roadway and highway in America from street level for Bing, a Microsoft internet search engine. Maybe you've seen this kind of picture provided by Bing and Google. Philip has been on the project since January 2011, though he moved to our neighborhood only recently. He previously worked in the Brooklyn, Miami, Dallas, and San Francisco Bay areas. He now concentrates on Southern California, one of three people doing so.

Philip trained in Philadelphia before starting the job, which entails hours of driving along precisely selected routes. Each route can last from a few days to a few weeks. Instructions from Bing come by email. Philip programs them into the car's computer, which resembles the kind you see in police autos. A satellite receiver keeps the car on track, something like a GPS device. The LIDAR instrument on the mast picks up over one million data points per second, producing 3D images. Meanwhile, twelve cameras scan the surroundings to add accurate color to the images. As Philip drives, the pictures are stored on the hard drive in his car, to be transmitted later to Bing for final processing and distribution.

He says it's an assignment that gives him lots of time to talk on his cell phone or listen to music. When not on the road, Philip works on improving his skills on the guitar. ■

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Griffith Park's New Projects and New BIG Cat / *by George Grace*

As usual, big things are planned for Griffith Park, and even more exciting is the recently confirmed discovery of a mountain lion on the east side of Cahuenga Pass/101 Freeway. There are also several major projects currently on the books or already in progress in the park.

Since 2007, the FHRA-supported "Griffith Park Natural History Survey" (GPNHS) and other organizations have sponsored efforts to document the flora and fauna of Griffith Park. GPNHS is presently collaborating with U.S. Geological Survey and others to study how large mammals may be moving in and out of the park across Cahuenga Pass. The study is led by GPNHS' scientific advisor Dan Cooper and other wildlife ecologists.

Since last July, the thirteen cameras deployed on both sides of Cahuenga Pass have recorded bobcats, coyotes, mule deer, raccoons, skunks, and various urban species. In late February, Cooper and fellow ecologist Miguel Ordenana got a big surprise when images of a mountain lion were recorded on the east side of Cahuenga Pass. Although there have been many "sightings" of mountain lions in Griffith Park, these are the first known images documenting mountain lion activity east of Cahuenga Pass. They reported the discovery to a number of wildlife scientists and organizations. On March 28th, National Park Service biologist / mountain lion expert, Seth Riley, and a team from the Santa Monica Mountain Recreation Area (SMMRA) trapped the three year old male puma in the Griffith Park area, collared, took DNA samples, and released him at the capture site. Puma-22 (as he was named) now joins five other mountain lions in the region in a decade long study to understand how mountain lions exist in our fragmented urban landscape, and how best to conserve them.

Puma-22 is being closely monitored, and because Griffith Park is only a fraction of a puma's normal range, has probably left the area already. You can see slide shows of wildlife photos taken by the study cameras at the GPNHS website. You'll need to scroll down to the bottom of the page to view them. The puma photos are not in any of the slide shows, but he is in the accompanying photos. <http://www.friendsofgriffithpark.org/GPNHS/GriffithMam.htm> *Continued on next page*

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In other Griffith Park news, Councilman Tom LaBonge recently sponsored an open-top bus tour to "take a look at a number of sites around Griffith Park to discuss their status and future." About 40 city representatives and park stakeholders, including representatives of neighborhood organizations like FHRA, Symphony in the Glen, the Shakespeare Players, and park advocacy groups, boarded the bus, and proceeded to the first stop, a picnic area adjacent to the Pote Field baseball diamond on Crystal Springs Drive. Tom envisions new baseball fields here to replace those lost to the I-5 expansion. An admirable cause and the only real controversy about the ball fields is where to put them. There is no doubt that as funds become available they will be built.

As we started towards our second stop - the Old Zoo area - the bus broke down and our tour abruptly ended. After a little scrambling, enough vehicles were rounded up, and we drove to the Old Zoo area. Here, the tour actually ended, but not before we heard from Tom, his deputies, and members of City Departments involved in all the new Park projects included on the tour: There were no real objections to any of them, and stakeholders' questions were appropriately addressed. Projects include:

1. A permanent band shell in the Old zoo area for public use. Symphony in the Glen and the Independent Shakespeare players' performances will be there.
2. North Atwater Equestrian Bridge. Financed by private donations, this connection to the stables in Atwater has long been a dream of local equestrians.
3. Restoration of Ferndell Canyon. Friends of Griffith Park has secured grants, and is making plans for a complete restoration of this historic, popular area.
4. Toyon Land Fill. Restoration of Toyon as a passive open meadow recreation area is well underway. Good for wildlife, and the public.
5. Headworks restoration. This 40 acre area will hold huge underground water reservoirs to replace the Silver Lake and Ivanhoe Reservoirs. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will finance and restore the above-ground area. Plans are being made now, and the Corps of Engineers will sponsor community outreach meetings in the next few months.

These important issues are not the only ones involving Griffith Park. New things are constantly happening. You can stay updated by visiting the Friends of Griffith Park website at: <http://www.friendsofgriffithpark.org>

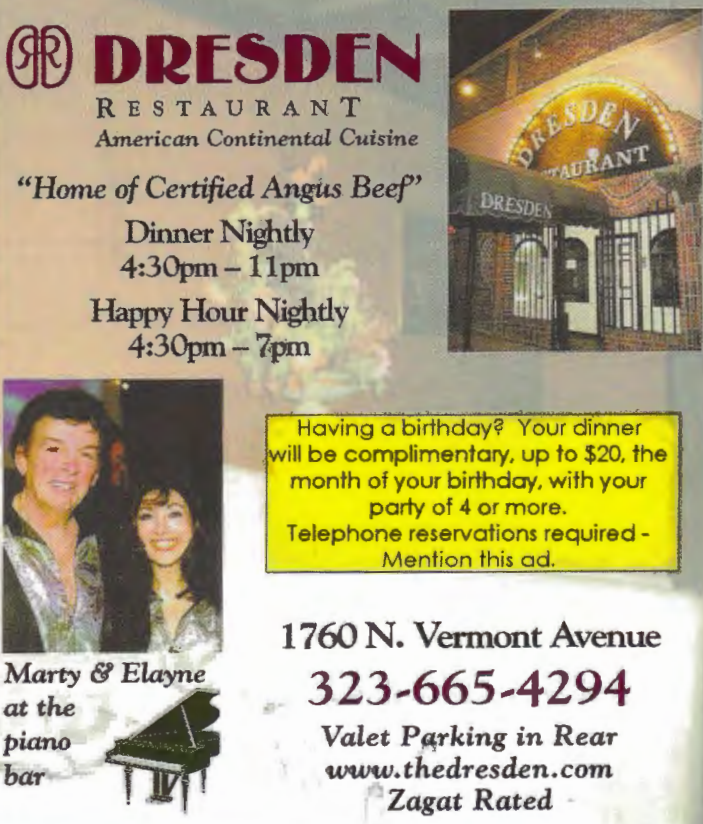


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The Critter Report



Coyote Tracks / *George Grace*

In 2003, I set up an internet survey to record and report on local coyote encounters. I recently updated the sightings report. You can read the 350 plus postings and record your own coyote experience at <http://www.gmrnet.com/Coyotea.html>. (The "C" in Coyotea has to be in caps to access the page.)

Of the 41 coyote reports filed in the last 11 months, 16 are from Griffith Park, and 25 from streets and yards around Franklin Hills, including (but not limited to) Hollyvista, Clayton, Monon, Russell, Tracy, Mayview, Prospect, Sunset Drive, and Ronda Vista. Many of the 25 sightings were the same coyote(s), and probably represent a local population of five or six individuals.

Here are excerpts from comments in the past year:

Clayton and Talmadge 7PM. I walked outside my house to see one lone coyote; very skinny and hungry looking....I shooed him from the neighbors yard, and he took off towards the hills. I see coyotes very often in this area.



Russell Ave 7:45PM. Finishing some yard work when I heard some rustling behind a block wall. I picked up my cats and brought them inside the house....suddenly I heard a loud thump behind me and turned around to see a coyote looking dead at me. He was standing on top of the neighbor's flat garage, his eyes lit like fire against the remnants of skylight behind us. I have seen them on the hills at the end of the street by the French School.

Corner of Franklin and Hollyvista 8:10AM. Driving downhill on Franklin...At Hollyvista a young coyote came around the corner heading uphill. Looks like the same coyote I encountered a couple of months ago in front of my house. As I opened the garage door I saw the coyote trotting downhill. I shook my keys and raised my voice. He stopped and stared, then moved into my neighbor's bushes. As I drove off, he came back on the street and trotted uphill.

You can read all reports at the Coyote Sighting website mentioned above.

Coyotes were here before us, and are here to stay. It may sound like a contradiction, but the best way to live peacefully with them is to teach them to fear and avoid us. Coyotes habituated to humans are the ones that get in trouble. So if you meet a coyote, puff yourself up, yell, blow a loud whistle, or even throw something at them. You'll be doing yourself and Wily Coyote a favor. Loud whistles are a good deterrent, and we'll be giving them away at our annual meeting at Prospect Studios June 23. ■

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Franklin Hills / A Look Back

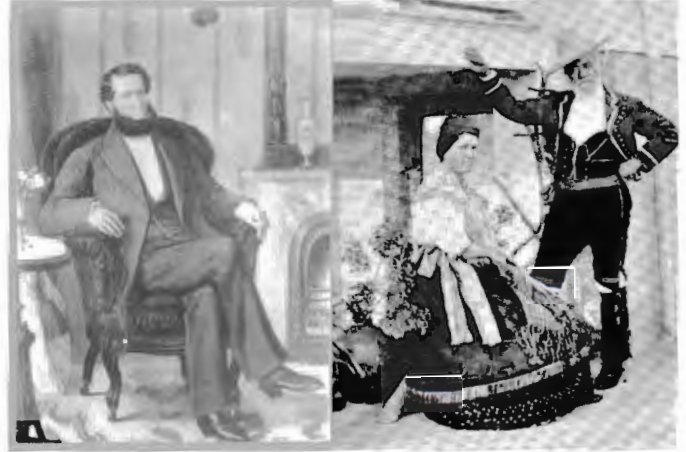
THE FRANKLIN HILLS BEFORE YOU

By Bruce Carroll

For thousands of years before you set foot on your Franklin Hills property the Gabrieleno Indians called it home. Then around 1769 a bunch of strangers with names like Gaspar de Portolá and Junipero Serra passed through the area carrying guns and crosses. A dozen years later one of those strangers, Corporal Jose Vicente Feliz, led a band of settlers to found El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles. He apparently got the job because he was the only one who could read and write. He went on to serve as the new city's military commissioner, sort of mayor, police chief and judge and was rewarded with the land you now call home.

For his service he got a 6,647 acre rancho which included the Los Angeles River and began barely a mile from the heart of the small pueblo that he just founded. It's the smallest of the earlier Spanish land grants, but perhaps its key location proves that even in the 18th century real estate was all about location, location, location.

After Feliz's death the rancho passed to his children and their children who eventually passed the land on to family lawyer Antonio F. Coronel in 1863. Coronel was LA mayor in 1843 and then served as a captain in the Mexican army battling the first wave of illegal aliens into California, those pushy intruders from the United States. Not deterred by the 1848 defeat in the Mexican-American war Coronel went on to serve again as mayor of LA in the 1850s and Treasurer of California, becoming one of the richest Californios. He sold the rancho to James Lick the richest man in California. Lick, a



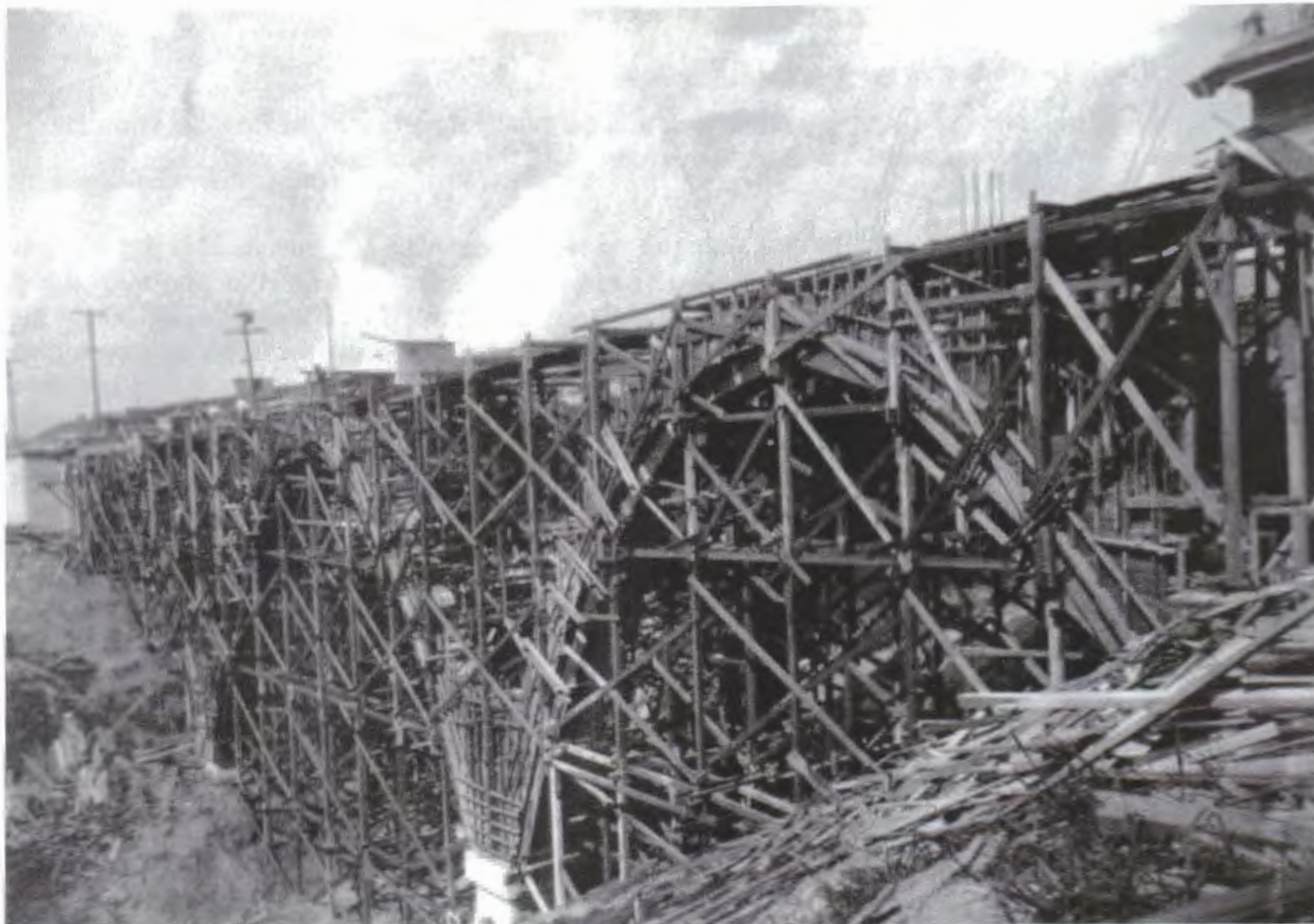
piano maker, had arrived in San Francisco a few days before the discovery of gold, but made his fortune investing in the land instead of sifting it for nuggets. While most of his holdings were near San Francisco he did own all of Catalina Island in addition to the Franklin Hills when he died in 1876.

In 1882 self appointed "Colonel" Griffith Jenkins Griffith acquired about two-thirds of the original rancho from Lick's estate and years before Griffith donated most of his holdings as a park, he sold the City of LA water rights to the LA river, which the city had used for free before he demanded payment. Lick's remaining land, the Lick Tract, was sold off to developers. One of those parcels, now The Prospect Studios, was purchased around 1912-15 by Vitagraph studio founder Albert Smith for \$20,000 - about \$850 an acre. It replaced Vitagraph's Santa Monica studio because it had lots more sunshine and our hills could star as the then not so old wild west.

The former KCET studio on Sunset sprang up in 1912 and the Triangle Studio at Fountain and Bates followed soon after. Director D.W. Griffith built his huge version of Babylon for the film "Intolerance" where the Vista Theatre now stands. All those studios needed places for the workers to live, so developers like Frank Smith started eyeing the nearby hills.

Continued on page 14

Franklin Hills / A Look Back



Clockwise, from above left:

Two of the richest men in 19th century California owned this neighborhood. James Lick, left, bought the property from Antonio F. Coronel, right, shown with his wife Mariana Williamson.

Construction of the Franklin Avenue (aka Shakespeare) Bridge in mid-1920s (Cost—\$59,960).

Director Robert Monroe (center with knickers) poses with his cast and crew in front of the Vitagraph Studio gate.



Franklin Hills / A Look Back

Franklin Hills □ *Continued From Page 12*

In 1917 he filed plans that laid out the lots and streets in the southern portion of the Franklin Hills. He wanted to name the streets after his children, but the city nixed that idea in favor of names like DeLongpre, Fernwood, and Sunset Drive.

Back then most of the streets in the area were just on paper, or graded, but unpaved. The big changes were just around the corner. The city was expanding rapidly and in the Franklin Hills the 1920s was a defining decade. The Shakespeare bridge was built between 1924 and 1926 for less than \$60,000 at the same time as the roads we know and the water lines and sewers that run under them. Because back then the ratio of cars to people was much lower, hillside lots with their great views posed great transportation challenges. To create shortcuts between homes and the Pacific Electric "Red Car" trolleys on Sunset and Hollywood boulevards our extensive network of public stairs was constructed. Lots of houses followed, but construction went downhill in the great depression, and again during World War II. Then flourished in the post war boom years until nearly all the lots were filled. ■

The Census Time Machine by Bruce Carroll

Early this spring the Census Bureau put online the census takers handwritten data from the 1940 census. It will be a while before it's all digitized so one can search by name, but if you are of a certain age, and know where you lived in the spring of 1940 you may be able to find your name. Even if you weren't around yet, perhaps your house was.

Most of the Franklin Hills was in census Enumeration District 1952 A&B. While my house at Franklin and Mayview wasn't around until a decade later, the house across the street at 2155 Mayview did turn up as a surprising listing. Back in the early 1970s I often chatted with its then owner, nonagenarian Rexie Bennett, a retired LA High School teacher who told me she and her sister had built the house in 1939. But the census listing has Roy Sumner, his wife Ada and their 23 year old daughter Kathryn as the only residents.

There is detailed info about them all. Roy and Ada had 4 years of high school the daughter had 2 years of college, but did not attend any school in 1940. In 1935 they all lived in San Diego and while Ada was from Kansas, father and daughter were native Californians and both worked 40 hours during the last week of March 1940. Roy was foreman for an oil company and Kathryn was an artist/cartoonist. She made \$1,400 in 1939, while her dad earned \$2,400, each worked 52 weeks and no one in the house received more than \$50 in income from other than wages.

In all there were over 30 questions including the value of the home. Summers said 2155 Mayview was worth \$7,500 the highest on the page. (I bought it and the empty lot next door for \$70,000 in 1976 and sold the house in 1980 for \$170,000) Renters were asked how much rent they paid. 3834 Franklin was a bargain at only \$15 per month, 3804's tenant paid \$65 each month. Only about 10% of the houses appeared to have been rentals.

Unfortunately it's hard to find just which page your house may be on because census takers had to go back to houses where no one was homes so the order is often seemingly random. The www.FranklinHills.org website has a list showing which streets are mentioned on which pages to help you start the search. ■

Franklin Hills / A Look Back

Although the census takers had good penmanship you'll need good eyes and a good magnifier to navigate the finely packed data.

Franklin Hills / A Look Back

DRIVES AVENUES & BOULEVARDS



Franklin Hills / A Look Back



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Clockwise from far left:

-Franklin Avenue Bridge, looking east.

-Auto Club touring map.

-Looking northwest up Glendale Blvd with Fletcher Drive cross street in foreground.

-Looking east at Hyperion Avenue with Waverly Drive overpass.

Franklin Hills / A Look Back

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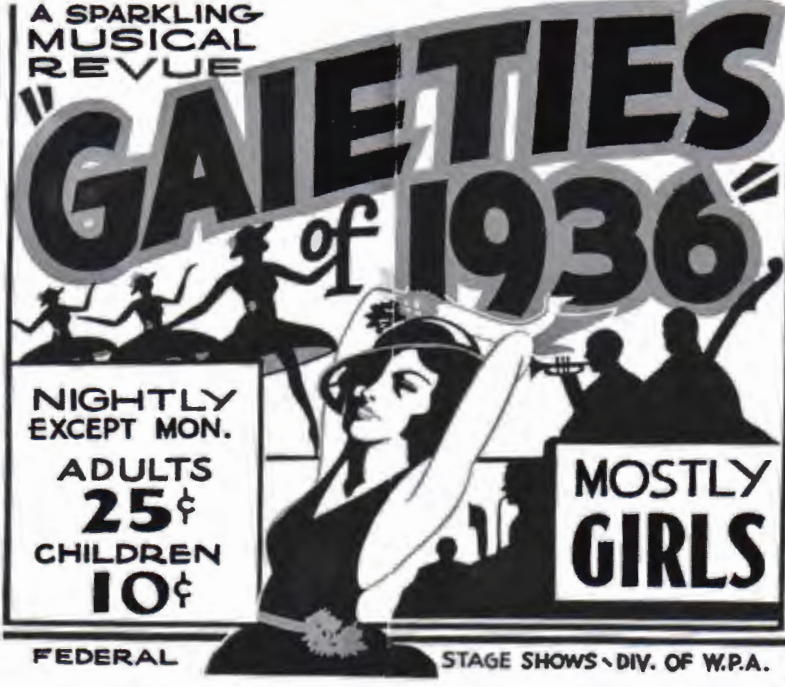
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Franklin Avenue Median
by Armida Bolton

The Franklin Avenue median, a community improvement and beautification project of FHRA since 1995, has undergone a spring cleaning and will soon be getting a “plant-lift.”

FHRA volunteers, together with regular gardeners Benjamin and Guadalupe Mercado, spent several hours on two warm weekends ~ March 10 and April 22 ~ pruning branches, pulling weeds, scooping up brush, and gathering enough debris to fill more than 50 giant trash bags. Thanks to the Department of Street Services who took them all away.

Plans for the rest of this year include installation of a new irrigation system, placement of boulders in keeping with architect Riccardo Accorsi's original plan, plus new plantings of California native shrubs and succulents to provide the median with fresh vegetation.

Regular weekend clean up days will be scheduled for the remainder of the year, but volunteers are needed. Contact Armida Bolton at the annual meeting—June 23 at Prospect Studios - or phone her at (323) 661-5495. ■

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Street Stench Turns to Rose Scents / *by Shirley & Charley Mims*

Thanks to Mary Rodriguez of Tom LaBonge's office, the stench of rotting debris and the threat of mosquito infestation at the end of Monon Street underneath the Shakespeare Bridge have been virtually eliminated since the installation of concrete gutters by the Bureau of Street Services. The gutters were newly installed in November 2011 and have substantially decreased the amount of standing water and rotting vegetation that used to regularly occur in the eroded asphalt. FHRA requested the improvement and we are grateful that the work has since been completed.

For years the concrete gutters adjacent to the curbs ended short of the turn-around at the end of Monon. Nuisance water ran across the asphalt pavement into the catch basin at the end of the street. Over time the asphalt wore away and created ruts where pools of water with decaying vegetation stood in the hot sun. When we were cutting back the overgrowth one fall day, we complained to Brigid LaBonge and Mary Rodriguez about the stench caused by this condition. The next business day Mary asked the Bureau of Street Services to fix this problem. They saw cut the pavement, removed the asphalt and replaced it with concrete gutters that are not worn away by water. This resulted in a dry and clean street turn around, that no longer competes with the roses for olfactory sensations!

The bridge's arches frame the garden which was dedicated in 2003. A bed of iceberg roses is outlined by ivy, plum-bago and bougainvillea. Rosemary and nasturtium lace the boulders in front. The new concrete gutters are on either side of the catch basin in front of the garden. Rain is running into the catch basin and no water is ponding on the pavement. This pleasant destination of many walks and community garden work parties has become even nicer since the concrete gutters were added! ■

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