



OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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An O-38 (O for Observation) plane like this took the 1932 photo. The pilot sat in front with the cameraman behind so the wing wouldn't get in the picture. This photo is from the Air National Guard website at: www.ang.af.mil/ for a better look at the large photo, see pages 12-13

ANOTHER LOOK BACK...FROM ABOVE

By Bruce Carroll

There was a lot more open space, a lot fewer houses and almost no trees when this aerial view of John Marshall High School, with the Franklin Hills in the foreground was taken on June 26, 1932.

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Whether the California National Guard 40th Division, 115th Photo Squadron, was doing reconnaissance for defense of the strategic Shakespeare Bridge...or they were just on a routine training mission is a fact lost to history.

What luckily wasn't lost, is this very detailed high resolution photo donated to the FHRA by Sterling Weaver. In the early 50's he was a fighter pilot in the Air National Guard based at Van Nuys Airport when he recalls "a couple of guys I knew were just ditching pictures." Some of the other photos Weaver saved and thankfully donated to interested organizations showed "train wrecks around the area and the Griffith Park Observatory."

This photo, of then one year old Marshall High, also has a connection with Griffith Park. In 1932 the O-38 observation bi-plane that took this picture was based at the long gone Griffith Park Airport.

A careful analysis of the picture shows some things never change. Note the very cracked pavement on the streets in the lower half of the picture (l-r Sanborn, Melbourne, Prospect, Deloz, Hollyvista and Franklin). Also of interest is what looks a lot like a trash dump below the intersection of Sanborn and Melbourne (above the first "H" in "High") and what appears to be a stable at the end of Sanborn on land now occupied by the LILA School. The rest of the LILA property, south of the bridge, remained a ravine until filled in with dirt from the Hollywood Freeway excavation in 1949, 17 years after this photo was taken.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Ricardo Gomez

I recently assumed the presidency of the Franklin Hills Residence Association because I am interested in improving the quality of life for all residents of our neighborhood. Although most of Franklin Hills is quaint and beautiful, there are a few areas that are neglected and in dire need of attention. This neglect adversely impacts the entire neighborhood.

Identifying the Problems

As president, I have pledged to address the infrastructure needs of all of Franklin Hills, and one of my paramount goals will be to improve these previously neglected areas. For example, we need to focus on the streets themselves - on street re-paving, improved street lighting and street sweeping, not to mention the removal of bulky items that are frequently dumped on our streets. Owners of blighted properties need to be encouraged, or required, to improve their own properties.

Another quality of life issue is excessive noise. Many residents are frustrated because their peace and quiet is disturbed by a continual bombardment of noise from loud and raucous parties and other gatherings in the area immediately bordering King Middle School. Public transportation is also a problem. We have a new subway system that can whisk passengers to Downtown or North Hollywood in a matter of minutes. Yet, the MTA and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation have prevented Franklin Hills residents from taking advantage of our local subway stop by refusing to provide a shuttle service from our neighborhood to the Vermont and Sunset station.

My Own Background

When I attended Franklin Avenue elementary school, King Middle School and later graduated from John Marshall High School in 1973, most of these problems we are now facing did not exist in the Franklin Hills. After completing my undergraduate and legal education at U.C.L.A., I practiced law in Downtown L.A., lived in other parts of the City and spent a lot of time working on projects around the country. About ten years ago I moved back to the Franklin Hills area and was astonished at the blight that had crept in on a few streets and at the City's failure to provide basic services to the area. I had a tough time even getting the City to sweep the street in front of my house (this is still a problem around King Middle School). Ultimately I joined FHRA because it provides an excellent vehicle for getting involved and effectuating improvements in our neighborhood. Over the last several years, I have witnessed a lot of major improvements, and we achieved many of these by using the political structure afforded by FHRA.

Our Accomplishments to Date

Unfortunately, the City of Los Angeles is no longer user friendly towards its residents. In many instances the City will fail to provide basic services and improvements. If you want something done, you have to fight for it or the tax dollars will wind up being spent elsewhere. For example, members of the FHRA spear-headed and monitored the restoration of the Shakespearean Bridge which was damaged by the Northridge quake. Without our activism, we may have ended up with an uninspiring utilitarian looking bridge. The median just west of the bridge was an ugly asphalt slope until members of the Association took it upon themselves to organize a landscaping project. It was the FHRA, not the City, that landscaped the area and to this day the FHRA maintains the median.

From the President

Several years ago the residents of Cumberland Avenue organized themselves and, after years of pushing, they got the City to repave Cumberland Avenue between Sanborn and Talmadge. Although we are still trying to induce the City to repave more streets in our neighborhood, at least we have gotten a start on addressing a major problem in Franklin Hills (if not City wide), that of crumbling

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029*

Sunset Drive Becomes Memory Lane

As told to Bruce Carroll

"It looks a lot different...everything has changed" That's what first struck Bud Young when he visited his old Franklin Hills neighborhood after being away for nearly 70 years. Bud, along with his older sister Ella and younger brother Francis moved away from the small house at 3914 Sunset Drive in 1930. "There used to be a lot of vacant lots...it was better for the kids," recalled Bud after his sentimental journey

The house, built by his father Harold and his uncle Paul in the 1920's, was according to Bud, "the first place I remember." As he recalls the neighborhood, "most of the people who lived nearby worked in the movie business, not actors, but people who built sets and the like." And he remembers being able to look down Hollywood Boulevard and "see the search lights at Grauman's Chinese Theatre."

But the bright lights faded quickly for the Young family when the depression came. Bud's father, who had "finally gotten an old Model T," eliminating the walk down the hill to climb aboard the Sunset street car for the ride downtown, had lost his job. The pharmaceutical company McKesson Robbins no longer needed men to mix chemicals. And soon the Youngs lost their house at 3914 Sunset Drive. The family was "forced to leave the furniture and everything," laments Bud, who was 9 years old at the time. His father eventually found work on gold dredges and sawmills in the foothills northeast of Merced. By 1935 the family had finally set down new roots in Chula Vista where Bud's father worked for the Customs Service and Bud worked as a route salesman in the overall supply business before retiring.

On Easter in 1995 Bud got to thinking, "gee, I'd like to see it again." So he decided to show his bride of over 50 years the house where he grew up. "it was a special trip," he reminisces. "I just got kinda curious...so we jumped in the car and took off early that morning...there wasn't much traffic...everything has changed from what was there." Well almost everything. The Franklin Hills hospitality was still there and the current owner of 3914 Sunset Drive, Brenda Kilbourne, welcomed the time travelers and showed them around the house. In exchange Bud sent a packet of vintage family photos showing the old neighborhood. What does he remember about his trip down memory lane?

"I didn't realize the streets were so narrow."



In a picture that could have come right out of "Our Gang" Bud Young (center) is flanked by his brother Francis (l), the next door neighbor girl Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified dog. The house in the background is 3917 Sunset Dr.



Looking east down Sunset Drive from in front of 3914...Bud Young (r) with sister Ella (c) neighbor Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified doll riding in brother Francis' carriage. The lack of trees makes it easy to see the nearly naked hillside across Hyperion



Standing in front of 3914 Sunset Drive mother Lucille Young reaches out to keep Bud's younger brother Francis from rolling down hill.

Los Feliz Branch

Eight months after opening, the branch is very busy. We have become more than just a new warehouse of books, magazines and videos, we are also a community center where families of toddlers and parents come weekly, teens hang out after school & adults find needed community information.

We are a "link" on the web pages of Los Feliz On-Line: the LF Village Business Association Home Page, featured on Leonardo DiCaprio's web pages and along with Barton Phelps, the library was in the September issue of Architecture Magazine. In addition, many people come in looking for community referrals to banks, restaurants, day care and auto repairs.

In response to requests from people for "good places to eat" after their library visit, we are working with the business association to collect area menus into a reference collection call "A Taste of Los Feliz". So far it has been very popular and we have had a wonderful excuse to try out lots of great food.

Traditional library services continue with circulation continuing to grow. In the temporary building 21,000 books were borrowed from January to March. From April 8 to June 30, 51,000 items were borrowed and from July 1 to September 30, 53,000. The gate count shows 246,250 people passed into the building. The carpets have now been cleaned three times.

As promised there have been more adult interest programs. The Internet Resource Workshop and the Computer Comfort Clinics are offered twice a month and we look forward to offering more of them as the staff and the hours expand. The computers (both Internet and Word Processors) are in use constantly with people looking for library materials, writing resumes, checking their e-mail and learning how to search the Internet.

We launched an author series called Lounge Chair Literature (like Armchair Travel). The idea is a cross between an author reading and a book discussion group. Both author and patrons gather in a small circle with tea & cookies and just talk. The first of the series were very successful chats with local authors Paula Woods in September and Yolanda Alaniz in November.

The series will continue in 2000 with Eve Babitz on January 11 th.

The Los Feliz Library League raised & donated \$10,000 to establish a books-on-tape collection and arranged a donation from the Times Foundation Reading by 9 project for an additional \$10,000 for children's books and audio sets. The League also presented very successful Architecture Lectures that will continue next year. For information on joining the League and a schedule of lectures call (323) 644-9449.

The Friends of Los Feliz Library continued the 4th Saturday monthly Book Sales. \$950 supported children's & teen programs and supplement additional copies of best sellers and \$2,750 will be used to establish a Los Feliz in Literature collection.

In addition, the Los Angeles Dodgers donated incentives including team balls, caps, bats & game tickets to encourage children to read. The Buffy the Vampire Slayer Production Company contributed teen reading incentives and the Los Angeles Zoo once again provided a free family zoo pass. A new Children's year-round at home reading club, "2000

Reasons to Read" is in effect now. Sign-ups are at the library reference desk to get a reading log and after 2000 minutes each child receives a grade level dictionary as a prize.

The library will be closed from Dec. 23rd to Dec. 27th and again on Dec. 31st to Jan. 3rd.

The entire Los Feliz Library staff wishes our Franklin Hills neighbors an excellent holiday season and a safe new years. We look forward to seeing you all in 2000.

-submitted by Pearl Yonezawa Senior Librarian



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