

Corona
Historic
Preservation
Society

Newsletter

June - July 2006

"Preserving the Best of Corona"

Editor: Mary Winn E-mail: Toothlady2@juno.com

A Message from Our President Jim Bryant

The first two months of summer start off Sunday, June 4th, with the City of Corona's **Olde Tyme Community Picnic** at Corona City Park on East Sixth Street. CHPS will have an information booth to answer questions about historical efforts in Corona. We'll also be selling some of our refreshing lemonade and scrumptious chocolate chip cookies. The Picnic, held annually on the first Sunday of June, is sponsored by the City of Corona and gives residents a chance to enjoy a petting zoo, "bouncies", games, and a variety of vendors.

The following Saturday, June 10th, CHPS will have a booth at the **Annual Antiques & Collectibles Faire** at Corona Heritage Park. One end of the booth will have our Corona Races t-shirts, author Mary Bryner Winn's *Images of America - Corona* book, and an assortment of printed items for sale. The other half of the booth will have for sale **salvaged items** or materials re-

covered from historic homes. In the past, these items have included such things as interior and exterior doors, windows, doorknobs, hinges, and dining and kitchen cabinets. The Society's **lemonade stand** will be set up at this event, again selling icy lemonade and chocolate chip cookies. The Faire will run from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

If you're a fan of Huell Howser's *California Gold* series on PBS, this event offers you an opportunity to purchase the DVD version of his trip to Corona in March 2002. Mr. Howser was gracious enough to have a special batch of the discs burned solely for CHPS. If you've never seen the episode, "**Corona Race**", Huell Howser begins at CHPS's Historic Marker No.10, the site of the Start and Finish Line for the races of 1913, 1914, and 1916. He dons a racing cap of the era with goggles and ear flaps and

proceeds to ride around the Grand Boulevard Circle, the "speedway", in a 1913 Mercer race car similar to those driven in the early 20th Century races. A second race car, a 1916 National, drives alongside Huell's car as Corona PD's motorcycle officers lead the way. As always, Huell paints a picture of California's history using his small-town style palette and brush. The DVD's make great gifts for schools, rela-

tives, friends, and new residents to Corona. Get a copy while you still can; they're informative and very entertaining.

In May, we decided to travel outside the borders of Corona for one of our quarterly events with a tour of **Riverside's Heritage House**. Those of us who enjoy historic structures cannot help but be impressed with the quality and extent of the craftsmanship of this beautiful home on Magnolia Avenue. Attending as a group, CHPS was able to have a private tour of the home prior to its opening to the public that day. The gift shop was also

opened early for us. For the first time, we sent all our members a reminder card prior to the event with a photo of the Heritage House on one side and the date, time, and related information on the other. Hopefully, these cards helped you keep the tour on your calendar. This event occurred through the enthusiasm and dedication of Board Member and Program Coordinator, Chifra Holt. If you have suggestions or requests for upcoming events, please feel free to call her at 737-4566.

On a finishing note, I'd like to say "**Welcome!**" to our new members and to those who have renewed their memberships. Your passion for Corona and its irreplaceable historical resources is greatly appreciated. Your support goes far in keeping history alive for future generations.

Jim Bryant



The Dictionary Project: CHPS Adopts
Lincoln Alternative School

(L-R) School Board President Pat Scott, Kiwanis Chair of the project John Wiles, and Mary Winn & John Kane of CHPS Board distribute 190 new dictionaries to all third graders and their teachers at a special assembly held at the school.

Caravan of the Markers Wows Attendees

On Saturday, March 25th, we conducted our first organized driving/walking tour of CHPS' 12 historic markers. The brain child of our Programs Chairman, Chifra Holt, the tour was advertised in the newspaper and brought out both members and non-members. A bright blue and yellow umbrella marked our progress as we moved from site to site. Many Coronans who weren't attending but saw the umbrella while driving by on other errands commented that we seemed to be everywhere that morning.

The picture above shows some of the members of our group at the marker commemorating the location of Corona's first school building. The historic Lincoln



School was located on 10th Street between Victoria and Howard. The area is better known as Victoria Park to current residents. Richard Winn was our guide.

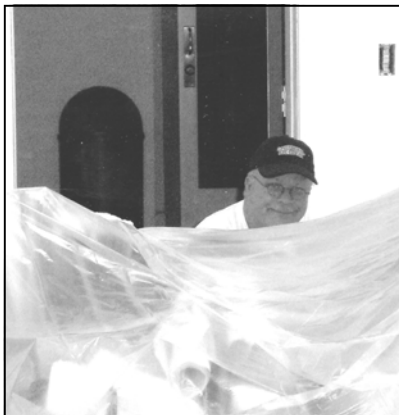
The best question of the day was, "What used to occupy this lot?" (the empty lot south of 8th, between Main and Ramona) The answer, of course, was that Corona's Carnegie Library occupied the site from 1906 until 1978. CHPS hopes to place an historic marker on this site sometime in the future.

The tour received favorable comments in the local press from Press Enterprise reporter, Jerry Soifer, who interviewed attendees during their after-tour lunch at Corona Heritage Park and extensively quoted these sources in his article.

Photos From Recent CHPS Efforts



↑ Bret painting away ↓



Update on our "new digs" at Historic Civic Center

- Bret & Lennie Keesler spent many hours prepping and painting the walls of our new office a classic tan color. What a difference this made to the office!
- Jim Bryant cleaned the carpeting not once but twice to make sure it was as clean as possible.
- Richard Winn assembled the shelving used to store our posters, pamphlets, books, t-shirts, supplies for the lemonade stand and Cemetery Walk, salvage items, Society records and documents and various and sundry other items.
- Meeting tables and soft-cushioned folding chairs have been purchased and have already been put to good use. Lovely decorative screens are also in place to create a division in the room and to camouflage our storage shelves.
- The Bryants have graciously donated cherry wood office furniture so our office is coming together quite nicely.
- The telephone and answering machine have been relocated to our office from Heritage Park.
- Other tenants are beginning to move in so we should soon have neighbors. The Corona-Norco United Way is relocating to the office right across the hall from our office. The city is making other improvements to the building. Renovation of the auditorium will make it more accessible without harming the historic character of the structure.
- Once all our improvements have been completed, we hope to host an Open House for our members, other tenants and members of the public.

Tour of Riverside's Heritage House

Text and photos by Lennie Keesler

What a way to start a weekend! It was a beautiful morning as our members gathered in the courtyard with the birds singing and the smell of orange blossoms. You could hear them whisper to each other, "I always wondered what the inside of this house looked like." They were finally going to get the opportunity to find out.

It began with a personal guided tour of the Heritage House for our scheduled CHPS Quarterly Activity on Saturday, May 20th, 2006. The Heritage House is located at 8193 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, CA. Our guided tour was provided by Riverside Museum Associates docents, Gayle Nelson and Sylvia Alfred. Both Gayle and Sylvia, in Victorian dress, made the tour a success.

Gayle began by giving a little history of the Bettner Family and other well known families in the Riverside area. James and Catherine Bettner settled in Riverside in the late 1870s, James Bettner, a lawyer and civil engineer in Yonkers, New York, had been diagnosed with Bright's Disease, a kidney ailment, and they came to Southern California hoping that its healthful climate might prolong his life.

James Bettner died at the age 45, survived by his 45-year old widow, Catherine, and two sons. In early 1891, younger son Louis died of tuberculosis at age 22. Catherine deeded the family home to her son, Robert. She then started construction of a new house which is known as the Heritage House. Her motivations in building a new home

were first, the old house had the sadness of the loss of her husband and son. Second, she was determined to have a showplace. The construction cost would be \$10,755.



The house has been restored to reflect a typical house in the period 1891 to 1900. The 45 minute tour included touring the first and second floors. The first floor featured the reception hall with beautiful oak paneling, a stairway, and elegant fireplace mantels. Also included on the first floor, were the dining room, mu-

sic room and kitchen. All rooms were a true reflection of the Victorian period for Riverside's upper-middle class. The second floor featured Catherine Bettner's bedroom, a guest bedroom, the library, the bathroom and servant's quarters. Some of the furniture and décor triggered a walk down memory lane for some of our members.



The tour ended in the laundry room where some of our members shared their stories and others still had scars left from the rollers used to wring out the clothes from the washer.

Our members then got to shop in the gift shop which featured many items of Victorian subjects and handcrafted gifts.



A special thank you goes to Chifra Holt, CHPS Director and Coordinator of Programs, for organizing this CHPS Quarterly Activity. Job well done! All who attended had a fabulous time and were happy to have had the experience of visiting this architectural gem.

The N. C. Hudson House and Families by Diane Wright

Nathaniel C. Hudson: Corona went from a dry, barren, unpopulated alluvial plain to a lovely town with thousands of orange and lemon trees, many ranches and lovely homes due in part to the perseverance, energy and foresight of N. C. Hudson.

N. C. Hudson moved to South Riverside in 1887. He was a prominent citizen, a developer, a rancher and served as the secretary of the South Riverside Land and Water Co.

Hudson and his wife Helen (née Joy) moved to the lovely home at 163 S. W. Grand (currently 1052 E. Grand.) The house was filled with three boys, William Carlos, George L., and Nathaniel Joy as well as a daughter, Ella F. They had another son, Oakes, who died at age three when they lived in St. Louis.

This large, comfortable home, built by Leo Kroonen, was considered ostentatious by the standards of the day but it was the perfect home for the successful businessman and his family.

Before moving to South Riverside, Hudson had already enjoyed success. He was a graduate of New York State National Law School at Poughkeepsie and had a successful law practice in St. Louis. While in St. Louis, he was elected to the state legislature in 1874 and later to the State Senate. While in St. Louis, Hudson served as vice president and treasurer of the Beef Canning Company in the same company George L. Joy (a city founder) worked as manager. Originally, it was a wholesale salt business but later expanded to canning of beef.

The Hudsons were very active members of the Baptist church. Hudson served as a trustee and Helen discovered she had a beautiful singing voice and often sang hymns for the congregation. After moving to South Riverside, they discovered there was only one church, the Congregational Church. It was not of the faith they loved but they joined cordially and donated liberally.

In 1891, the Baptist Church was organized at a meeting in the Hudson's home on the Boulevard. There were 25 charter members and Hudson was elected deacon and trustee. While the church was being built, members met in a room on the second floor of the Old Lincoln School on Tenth between Victoria and Howard. Hudson was a member of the board of Directors of the Southern California Missionary Convention and "was indefatigable in his efforts to extend the cause of Christ both at home and abroad."

Grasshoppers invaded South Riverside in 1889 and 1890 and early citizens were hired to knock grasshoppers down from the citrus trees. Always the man to get things done, Hudson, along with W.H. Jameson and George L. Joy, arranged with Thomas Hamner to plow the open land which deterred the voracious insects for a time. Many other techniques were employed to rid the groves of the pests, but suddenly the grasshoppers van-

ished just as mysteriously as they had appeared.



In 1893, the first carloads of oranges were shipped from the depot after being packed in groves owned by George L. Joy, N. C. Hudson and a Mr. Fraser.

In 1897, Hudson became ill with influenza. He died at his home on May 9, 1897, where his well attended funeral was also held. His funeral cortege passed slowly from his beautiful home on Grand Boulevard to Sunnyslope Cemetery on Rimpau Avenue.

After Hudson's death, his widow, Helen, continued to live in the home for a short while. She later made her home in San Diego where she died on July 19, 1909. Helen is buried next to her husband at Corona's Sunnyslope Cemetery.

Robert A. Todd: The next family to occupy this house was Robert A. and Emma Todd and children Grace, Harry and Gordon. Robert and Emma married in 1891 while living in Indiana. They subsequently moved to Colorado. Even before their move from Colorado to South Riverside, the Todds purchased property in the new, quickly growing city.

The Todd family was loyal and very active in the First Baptist Church as was the Hudson family. Robert Todd was born on May 16, 1852, in Indiana to Andrew and Mary Ann Todd (née Bare.) Her parents were from England and she was born in New York. Where Robert received his dental education is unknown, but two of his brothers were dentists as well. What is certain is that he was one of the first dentists in South Riverside.

The 1910 Federal Census revealed Grace was a public schoolteacher. Four "lady lodgers" lived at the home; three of them were also public school teachers and one was a dress-maker for a private family. The two sons, Gordon and Harry were listed but no professions were given. Gordon later moved to New York City and became a successful businessman. Harry became a professor of Spanish in San Bernardino and was the last member of the Todd family to reside in this home. In 1920, Dr. Todd's elderly sister, Harriet, a widow, was also living with the Todd family.

After Dr. Todd's death in January 1921, his widow Emma lived in the house for a while. She was well known for her church work. Next to her family, church work was the most important in her life. She later moved to Los Angeles to live with her daughter Grace.

**This article was researched by Rescued and Returned, a cottage business specializing in house and family research. Kathleen Dever and Diane Wright are partners in this business. If you have any questions or comments, please call Kathleen Dever at (951)522-4679.*

We Remember When ... the Adamo Sisters

Sisters Ann and Jennie Adamo moved with their family from Princeton, NJ, to Corona in 1939 to join their aunt and uncle who lived in Corona. Ann completed high school in NJ; Jennie attended school in Corona starting with 2nd grade at the Old Lincoln School campus. Ann worked at March AFB Exchange, Joe's Jewelry Store in Corona and the local Sears Catalog Store. She retired in 1980. Jenny became a teacher and retired from CNUSD in 1993. Both are very active in St. Edward Catholic Church and enjoy participating in many community activities.



Ann & Jenny Adamo with family photographs in their entry

a hamburger bun spread with peanut butter and honey. It was wrapped in aluminum foil and then heated. It was delicious!"

- Visiting the Carnegie Library as a child made us feel very special because of the small tables and chairs.

- We bought most of our clothes at Mrs. Kroonen's Frock Shop or C.W. Harris Department Store.

- Twice a year, at Easter and Christmas, our mother took us to Riverside

to do some special shopping. Mother always bought a new hat for Easter. Early on, we took the trolley to get to Riverside. Later on, we went by car.

- There were no grocery stores. Instead, we did our food shopping at butcher shops, bakeries, Wright's Market for produce and Blandie's Market.

- Kindergarten children went to San Diego Zoo each year as a day-long field trip. They took the train from Corona's train depot.

- Dr. Hermann made house calls to visit the sick in their homes and how his Corona Hospital on Main Street continued to enlarge over the years.

- It snowed in town in 1949. Jennie was a student at Corona High School and recalls how the boys ran into the corridors after class clamoring to get to the white covered lawn areas to make snowballs to engage in a wild snowball fight. The teachers didn't have much control over the boys' antics.

- At least two parades were held each year in town. The Cinco de Mayo and Christmas parades took place on Main Street until construction of the Corona Mall. From then on, most parades were held on Sixth Street.

- We decorated cars or made floats to participate in the parades. In 1986, we decorated the flatbed of a semi-truck in the empty lot next to our house for our Catholic Daughters group to celebrate the centennial of our parish.

- Carnivals and circuses set up on any vacant lot in town. Since we didn't have a lot of entertainment opportunities, many came from all around to join in the fun. Attending a carnival or circus was a real treat for everyone.

We Remember When ...

- Our Uncle Mike ran Boston Shoe Repair shop at 520 Main Street.

- Diagonal parking spaces were found on both Sixth and Main Streets.

- At Old Lincoln School, girls played jacks while the boys played marbles when we played outside. Other popular activities were dodgeball, kickball and baseball.

- After dinner on Saturday nights, many in town congregated at Sixth and Main Streets - this was part of our social life and provided entertainment.

- Our brother Mario began shining shoes at age 9 at a stand in front of our uncle's shoe repair shop. This was a very lucrative endeavor for Mario as he occasionally received a \$1 tip for a 25¢ shoeshine. He especially liked receiving silver dollars. The money he received helped our family buy our first home for \$1,500 at 619 Joy Street.

- After he retired, our father opened Adamo's Restaurant at 1449 West 6th Street and introduced pizza to Corona residents. Pizza was called "tomato pie" in the East and our family had to explain the word "pizza" to customers.

- The restaurant was open from 1951-1957 and the menu consisted of pizza, spaghetti, ravioli, garlic bread and salad.

- From Jennie: "Letha Raney was principal when I attended Corona Jr. High School (1944 - 47.) We attended most of our classes in bungalows at that time. My favorite item to buy from the cafeteria was

Mr. Richards, the Rope Twirler By David J. Aguayo

My sister Lydia and I grew up on Quarry Street across from the City Park. The park was our universe. Our baseball field was on the northeast corner of the park. It was later plowed under to build a dirt racetrack for mini-race cars. On the southeast corner is the Armory with its huge flagpole; sometimes the neighborhood boys would take turns swinging from the loose rope flapping around the flagpole. Most interesting, however, was Mr. J. C. Richards who, in his Western garb and with his rope-twirling tricks, loved to entertain children.

He took my sister and me under his wing and taught us to twirl a rope - to dance in and out of it and to spin it above our heads. His special treat was a visit to his home and land in the Corona Hills area through which the 91 Freeway now bisects. Throughout the grounds were wagon wheels, old farm imple-

ments, cattle skulls, Mexican serapes and pottery as well as large and small cacti.



Speakers set about the house blared forth with music. Songs with words like "South of the border, down Mexico way" reverberated throughout the place. The experience was magical.

In 1958, Mr. Richards outfitted a group of us as Indians to play drums and twirl rope and march in the Indio Date Festival Parade. We won a trophy. Mr. Richards, the rope twirler, was generous with his time and money. In 1962, he bought my sister her ninth grade graduation dress, fulfilling a promise made to our mother years earlier.

The writer, David Aguayo, was born and raised in Corona. He is interested to learn of others who have memories of Mr. Richards. If you do, please contact editor, Mary Winn, by email at Tooth-lady2@juno.com or call (951) 371-5291.



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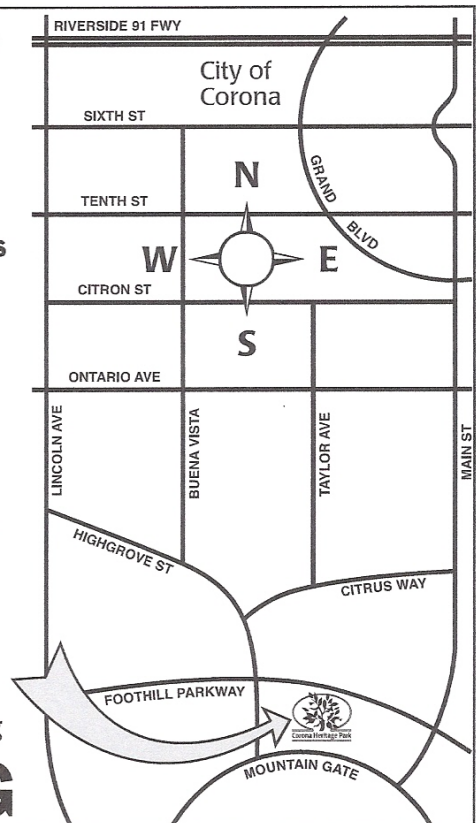
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**CORONA HERITAGE
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CHPS

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Corona, CA 92878



We Welcome Our New and Continuing Members

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John & Carolyn Coutts
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Eliza Orozco Gonzalez
Mary L Jones
Char Killingsworth (Life Member)
Mitch & Karen Lloyd
Hassam & Alison Loukeh
Teresa Lowery
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From the Editor:

WOULD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE YOUR CHPS NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL?

If so, I will be happy to send it in the future as a PDF file. Simply send an e-mail to Toothlady2@juno.com and write "CHPS Newsletter" as the subject.

Have you seen **Mega Movers** on **The History Channel**? This series recreates, explains and chronicles moving feats throughout history from the monoliths at Stonehenge to modern moving tasks, such as the relocation of the Cape Hatteras lighthouse. The engineering triumphs from centuries past to the present are fascinating to watch and are great fare for history lovers of all ages. I give the series a definite "thumbs up"!



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To contact us call
898-2044
And leave a message



Our Mission Statement

The Corona Historic Preservation Society (CHPS) is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization dedicated to preservation and revitalization of Corona's historic buildings, neighborhoods and sites.

Through education, legislation and organization, CHPS acts as an advocate for the preservation of Corona's historic resources.

Monthly Meetings

CHPS Board meetings are held each month to transact Society business, discuss issues affecting the Society and preservation of local historic resources.

All members are invited to attend.

The next meetings will be

Thursday, June 15, 6:30 at CHPS office

Thursday, July 20, 6:30 at CHPS office



P.O. Box 2904
Corona, California 92878-2904



Have a safe Fourth of July!