

### A Message From Your President Wes Speake

Dear Members,

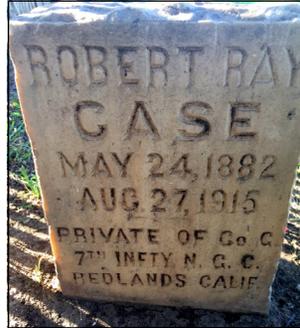
Welcome to the final Newsletter for 2017! We have accomplished so much this year (and still have two months to go) and we are looking forward to finishing the year strong. It's hard not to do a little reflecting; however, we will wait until the Jan Feb 2018 *CHPS Newsletter* to look back on 2017. So keep reading! And tell a friend about the Society; better yet give them the gift of a membership for the holidays!

Occasionally, I run across an unusual story; the following is certainly one of those. A story of unrequited love, illegal liquor, prostitution and suicide. Just in time for Halloween!

A few months ago, when participating in the re-creation of the 1927 Skyline Drive photo, I asked some of the folks that hike Tin Mine Canyon if they've seen or heard anything strange during their hikes. Several of them talked about having just a strange feeling when heading up the canyon early in the morning, especially when they passed by the abandoned mine shaft. Some say they thought it was haunted by a miner. So, I did a little research and discovered the tragic story of Robert Ray Case.

Robert Ray Case was born May 24, 1882 in Traverse City, Michigan. In 1898, he served as a Private in the US Army and served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. He was married, had two daughters, and operated a handyman business in Traverse City, Michigan. Tragedy seemed to follow Mr. Case. In July 1909, his young daughter Mary's finger was severed in a freak automobile accident when the drive chain snapped off the driveshaft of the car he was driving, and tore through the car severing her finger clean off. A short time later, Mr. Case was legally separated from his wife and he moved west. Mr. Case "wintered" in San Bernardino in 1909 as was noted in the *Traverse City Evening Record*. Later, he signed on to the 7th Infantry, Company G of the National Guard of California, based in Redlands. He was hired as the manager of the Fashion Stables in Corona, a horse and livery stable located on the corner of 5th and Washburn Avenue. I was unable to find any additional records about Mr. Case between 1909 and 1914 when he showed up in Corona in December of 1914. Case's name frequently appeared in newspaper advertisements as the manager throughout 1915.

In 1915, Corona was a "dry town" and considerable pressure was placed on law enforcement by city fathers to close blind pigs as soon as they opened. Blind pigs were illegal drinking establishments set up in shacks, back rooms and one was even set up at an old mining claim in Tin Mine Canyon. Marshal Ramsey, who had taken over for Marshal Alexander after he was killed in an ambush in 1913, had done a great job at stamping out these blind pigs in the city. In



fact, he was so successful that he was fired as Marshal in an elaborate prank and then hired as the city's first Police Chief.

In early Summer of 1915, Cora Bennett, her sister Laura Ralls, Cora's 12 year old daughter and a man named William Thompson arrived from Los Angeles. They set up a tent on an old mining claim in Tin Mine Canyon. Cora Bennett and Robert Case crossed paths in Corona sometime in 1915 and he was smitten. In early August 1915 he quit his job at Fashion Stables

moved to the camp in Tin Mine Canyon to "dig a tunnel" in the employ of Cora Bennett. As it was later discovered, this camp doubled as a blind pig and a "disorderly house", the 1915 term for a brothel.

Between midnight and dawn on the morning of August 27, 1915, Robert Case walked a half mile up Tin Mine Canyon toward Oak Flats, cut strips of fuse, connected them to blasting caps, and then laid his head down on them and lit the fuse. The resulting explosion killed him instantly, blasting a large hole in his head and shoulders. That morning, Mrs. Bennett awoke to find a letter on her bureau. The letter read "Cora, you will find my remains up the trail to Oak Flats. Do as you like, you know the cause." Case also wrote two checks, one from each bank in town for the sum total in his accounts, payable to Cora Bennett. Before taking his own life, he stopped and scribbled one more note on some tobacco paper. "You will find my children's addresses in my suitcase, please tell them what became of me. Don't forget there was one man that loved you." Robert Ray Case was 38 years old at his death.

After a coroner's inquest, Cora Bennett and her cohorts were cleared of any wrongdoing in Mr. Case's death; however, several witnesses testified that Cora Bennett was running a "disorderly house". In September 1915, the townsfolk had had enough and a warrant for vagrancy was issued. The group was finally arrested on December 31, 1915 for running a blind pig at their camp in Tin Mine Canyon, and were taken directly to county jail. Cora Bennett's daughter was removed from her mother's care. No other record of Cora was found until the 1920 Census when she was reportedly living with her mother, daughter, sister and a collection of unrelated women.

Robert Ray Case is buried at Sunnyslope Cemetery in a simple grave with proper military honors. However, his grave is hidden behind a maintenance fence, presumably as a way of hiding away Mr. Case's chapter in Corona History.

Sincerely,

WES



# Jefferson Elementary Is Now Listed!

The Corona Historic Preservation Society is delighted to announce that Thomas Jefferson Elementary School was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 28, 2017.



## ALL ARE INVITED

To celebrate Jefferson Elementary on Friday, December 15, 2017, 9:00 AM for:  
★ Its listing on the National Register &  
★ The 90th Anniversary of the Opening of the school in 1927

Mary and Richard Winn have worked with Riverside history consultant Jennifer Mermilliod, the staff in the W. D. Addison Heritage Room at the Corona Public Library, and the Corona-Norco Unified School District for nearly five years to gather the required information to properly document the architectural description, statement of significance, and history of the school for the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination was accepted by the California Historical Resources Commission on July 28, 2017 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 28, 2017.

### A Little Bit About Thomas Jefferson Elementary School:

Jefferson Elementary School, located at 1040 S. Vicentia Avenue in Corona, California, is a one story Spanish Colonial Revival building constructed in 1927. The school was built over four months for \$28,000, which included \$5,000 for the property. The architect was W. Horace Austin of Long Beach and builder was C. Haverlandt. Austin was a prominent architect in the Long Beach community, and referred to by some as the “dean” of Long Beach architects. Students started the 1927-28 school year at Lincoln School and transferred to Jefferson in January 1928. The school was dedicated February 14, 1928.

The south wing, now the school library and formerly used as the cafeteria and auditorium/multi-purpose room, was added in 1931 and designed by famed Riverside architect G. Stanley Wilson, and built by the Pinkerton-Jameson Company. Subsequent additions were made in the 1940s, 1950s, and in 2010 and there are several modular buildings on the campus. Both the original 1927 building and the 1931 addition are included in the National Register listing.

Located at the southwest corner of Vicentia and Tenth Streets, the front elevation of the school faces Vicentia Avenue. The main entry sits on a lawn including mature evergreen trees. The surrounding neighborhood is largely residential and is adjacent to Corona’s historic, east-west artery, Sixth Street. The school is located just southwest of Corona’s Grand Boulevard Historic District and lies roughly one block outside of the Grand Boulevard circular drive.

The structure is primarily stucco with stone arches and wrought iron detail. While the main building is primarily smooth stucco, parts of the 1931 addition are painted concrete. Horizontal beams are visible above the windows on both the back and front of the main building as small blue diamonds that appear decorative at first look. The tiled, low-pitch, cross-gabled roof reflects the Spanish style design. There is very narrow overhang with a visible gutter system that appears to be original and integrated into the design of the building. There is an end wall chimney on the north wall of the library addition.

The main entrance facing Vicentia Avenue features five arched bays supported by six decorated columns with metal medallions of floral design. The center three bays lead to the main entry. The structure protrudes from the arches on both sides, creating an arcade/porch between the north and south wings. Five concrete steps lead to the main entrance, covered by a wide eave overhang. There are three arched, wooden French doors as the main entry to the original core of the school. The interior hallway has painted beams and arched doors framing the hall on both sides. The five classrooms in the original 1927 building feature original cabinets, shelves, cloakrooms with coat hangers.

The front entry to the south wing also features a wrought iron gate with the initials “TJ” for Thomas Jefferson, for whom the school was named. The south wing, added in 1931, is separated from the main building by an open walkway with overhead cover. Originally built as an auditorium/multi-purpose room with a small stage, it is now the school library but maintains the stage and backstage area of the original construction. The library exterior is embellished by columns, cornices, molding and carved relief arches painted blue above each window.

**As of 2017, Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, has continuously educated children and served the Corona community for 90 years.**

# Another Wingding of a Holiday Party!



**Don't miss out on our fabulous party!**

## Special activities include:

- ★The OBCT Candy Cane Carolers
- ★Photo opportunity with festive backdrop and props for all to capture a "Kodak moment" on their cell phone or camera
- ★An enlightening Corona history game
- ★Performance by Corona High Madrigals
- ★Crate labels will be available for purchase



**Location:** Corona Woman's Improvement Clubhouse 1101 S. Main Street  
**Date:** Monday, December 4th  
**Time:** 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

## POTLUCK DINNER ASSIGNMENTS:

Based upon first letter of your last name:

A-H Appetizers I-S: Vegetables or salads T-Z: Desserts  
*Please provide 6-8 servings*



Kindly reply by Dec. 2 to Doris  
at 951.737.1766

## Annual Election of Board of Directors

The election will take place at our Annual Holiday party on Monday, December 4, 2017. As of the publication of this Newsletter, the Nominations Committee presents the following slate of nominees for your consideration.

### Directors

Trisha Henson  
Doris Osko  
Wes Speake  
Richard Winn

### Advisors

Marla Benson  
Tom Richins  
Ted Taylor

As set forth in CHPS Bylaws, a Director term is for two years, an Advisor term is for one year.

# CHPS Partners with OBCTheater By Amanda Kalkanis

In September of 2017, **Off Broadway Corona Theater (OBCTheater)** partnered with CHPS on what was, we hope, only the beginning of many successful projects. OBCTheater uses the Historic Corona Civic Center Theater for its musical theater productions throughout the year as do many other local organizations.



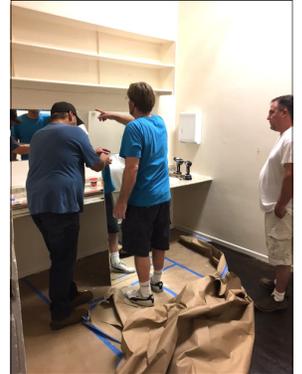
This Mediterranean Revival Style building, built first as part of Corona High School, at 815 W. Sixth Street was designed by G. Stanley Wilson, an exceptional architect from Riverside, California, who had also designed parts of the Mission Inn and the Norconian Resort. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005, championed by CHPS' own Mary & Richard Winn, the theater's history and beautiful architecture are a treasured asset to our city.

During the past year OBCTheater recognized an ongoing decline in the preservation of this beautiful

historic theater. In keeping with its mission to increase our theater company's impact on and service to the community, we partnered with CHPS and the City of Corona Park and Recreation Department. We used proceeds from our fall production *The Scarlet Pimpernel* to give the theater the refurbishing it was desperately in need of.

The theater stage was repainted, walls patched, repainted and the entire building given a deep cleaning. Dressing rooms were repainted, air conditioning vents fixed and the maintenance department installed brand new sinks and countertops.

We are extremely grateful to the members of CHPS who attended *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and helped to support this project. Not only was it an incredible production for OBCTheater, but our audience, cast members and staff all noticed the difference made through our efforts. OBCTheater plans to continue partnering with CHPS and other local arts organizations that benefit from using this beautiful historic and nearly 100 year old building.



## Looking for a Holiday Gift? Try this CHPS fundraiser

21 CORONA CITRUS LABEL reproductions are available from CHPS. Coloration and detail indicate the high quality of imagery scanned from original labels and printed on substantial paper. They are suitable for framing. **PRICES:** \$7.00 each up to 3 labels / \$5.00 each for 4 labels or more, for example 4 labels for \$20 or 5 labels for \$25 / A full set of 21 labels \$100.00 If mailed: Postage and handling \$10.00. **QUESTIONS:** Call 714.328.0010

**Labels will be available for viewing and purchase at our Holiday Party on Mon. December 4<sup>th</sup>**

**They may also be purchased online by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> under the SHOP tab by going to <Corona-History.org>.**



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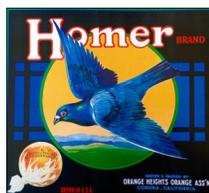
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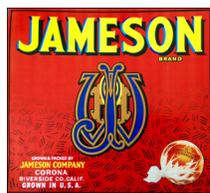
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# Private Tour of Heritage House of Riverside By Eric Bergreen

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, the CHPS held its Quarterly Meeting at the Riverside Heritage House located on Magnolia Avenue. Director Lynn Voorheis was gracious enough to set up a private tour of the house and grounds led by docents Tina Dugard, Carol Annas and Jo Matza. Our tour began at 10:00AM and we learned many wonderful historic facts about the Bettner home.

James and Catharine Bettner settled in to the town of Riverside in the 1870s, within a decade of the young community's founding. Mr. Bettner, a lawyer and civil engineer from Yonkers, New York, had been diagnosed with Bright's Disease, a kidney ailment, and came to Southern California hoping that its healthful climate might prolong his life. Unfortunately, James passed away in 1888, at the age of 45. Then in 1891, Catharine's youngest son, Louis, died of tuberculosis at the age of 22. Grief stricken, she willed her home to her only surviving son and had a new house built. The new "Bettner" house was designed by John A. Walls of Los Angeles.

The ceiling and walls of the house are paneled in beautiful white oak, and half a dozen fire places, elaborately tiled, can be found throughout the residence. We were shown sitting rooms, dining rooms and parlors downstairs and bedrooms and the library upstairs. In addition to its Victorian design, the rooms also feature Moorish, Georgian and Chinese elements.



On the lush, sweeping staircase stood a grandfather clock dating back more than 150 years. The kitchen featured a solid oak table and large brick stove. Outside we visited the carriage house where a late 1800's two-seater Studebaker carriage sat. And just outside the double doors was the original hitching post complete with a tether ring.

Heritage House, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, serves as a fine example and reminder of Riverside's prosperity as a citrus empire at the turn of the twentieth century. The house is located at 8193 Magnolia Avenue. Tours are given from 12:00PM – 3:PM Friday through Sunday. Or you can visit their website at:

<http://www.riversideca.gov/museum/heritagehouse/>

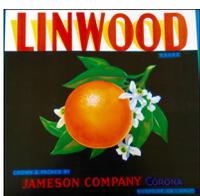


Portrait of the widow Catharine Bettner

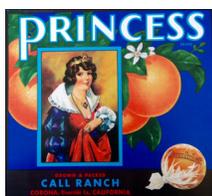
CHPS members thoroughly enjoyed our 1.5 hour tour of this elegant residence which was held prior to the public opening of the house.



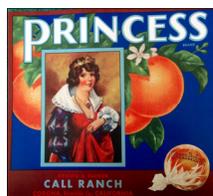
## Vintage Corona Citrus Labels



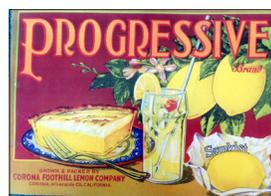
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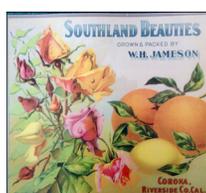
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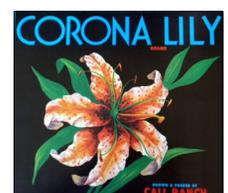
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Here are a few quotes from those who have purchased labels:

"I love the ones I purchased. They are just beautiful!"

"They look amazing in person. So crisp. Excited with my selection of 4."

# Status of Our "New" Historic Site Markers

At long last, we have been able to add additional historic site markers to our list. During September, we were able to place a marker near the site of Corona's Municipal Plunge from 1925-1966.



The building itself, located on the southwest corner of City Park, was unique to Corona. Noted Corona architect Leo Kroonen Sr. designed this singular structure in the Tudor style with castella-tions on the circular tower parapets combined with Mediterranean-Mission

Revival style tile roofs, roof lines and arched windows.

The City has elected to honor this early local architect by utilizing many of the same architectural elements in the new Ion Exchange water treatment facility located on the northeast corner of City Park at the corner of Quarry Street and Rimpau Avenue.



The construction of the monument for this marker was part of the Eagle Project for Life Scout Emilio Martinez of Troop 251, sponsored by the Elks Lodge, located just across Sixth Street from the marker.

The second Historic Site Marker commemorates the

location of Corona's Pacific Electric Depot once located at 301 Main Street, on the corner of East Third and Main Streets. While operating, this classic Mission Revival style building was the last stop on the line from the downtown Los Angeles hub.

The monument for this marker was repurposed from its earlier location temporarily marking the site of Corona's Carnegie Library. When the library marker was placed on the northwest corner of the Carnegie Medical Plaza office building, the half-ton monument was able to be relocated thanks to the generous assistance and expertise of the personnel at Trench Shoring. Both of



these markers have been equipped with QR coded tiles that will permit inquiring visitors to access additional information about the site by using a smart phone with the QR app.

CHPS is in the process of activating

the web pages associated with the QR codes

Two additional markers have been updated to include QR Coding: 1) Marker Site #15, the location of Corona's Carnegie Library, and 2) Marker site #18 on the southwest corner of the Corona Theater building. **QR coded tiles are planned for all of CHPS Historic Site Markers.**



## Our Home Preservation Grant Program

The CHPS Grant Committee along with the Board of Directors of the Corona Historic Preservation Society would love to assist local homeowners in making exterior improvements to their historic homes.

We will process any application within 60 days after submittal. Once a grant has been approved and reimbursement limits established, funds will be made available upon completion, inspection and onsite final approval.

Take this opportunity to do some fixing up and have part of the material cost covered by CHPS. Remember we are interested in helping people beautify their homes for others to see, so applications are primarily for curb appeal projects. If you have a place that you feel needs help, either your own or



a neighbor's, please feel free to contact CHPS Home Preservation Grant Program Chairman Tom Richins at [thomasrichins@outlook.com](mailto:thomasrichins@outlook.com) or call 949.231.8596. We will assist you in any way possible to provide the information you need to complete the application process.

Grant applications are available at the Community Development Department at Corona City Hall at 400 South Vicentia, and at the Heritage Room of the Corona Public Library.

More information and grant applications may also be downloaded from our Website:

<http://corona-history.org/grants.html>

**Please share this information with others!**

# Membership Information ❄

**When joining or renewing your membership, please make your  
tax deductible check payable to "CHPS"**

Individual Member	\$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>I'd like to volunteer!</b>	
Family	\$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospitality refreshments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student	\$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsletter writing articles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business	\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vintage Home Tour	
Patron	\$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	docent / volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life	\$500.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Board of Directors	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Gift from \_\_\_\_\_



Membership Status: Renewal  New

**Please complete form and mail to:**

**CHPS**

P.O. Box 2904

Corona, CA 92878



## We Welcome Our New & Continuing Members

Allegra-Image 360 Printing  
 Roger Atkinson  
 Eric Bergreen  
 Lizbeth Cervantes  
 Cathie Curtis  
 Doris Haddy  
 David & Sharon Hall  
 Don Kindred  
 Steve & Tracy Lech  
 Dian Mrosko

William O'Donnell III  
 Gary & Doris Osko  
 Jim Pixley  
 George & Carrie Pope  
 Randy & Susanne Rawson  
 Tom & Sunny Richins  
 Mitch & Carol Salgado  
 Michele Wentworth  
 Nancy Wyatt

## ❄ Donating, Renewing or Joining CHPS Online

The following explanation has been added to the CHPS website home page to explain how to join or renew your membership in the Society electronically using PayPal or in the traditional manner with a hard copy application (located at the top of this page) that is printed, filled out and then mailed to the CHPS P.O. box.

**HOW TO JOIN OR DONATE:**

**To join** electronically, you may use the PayPal "Add to Cart" **PayPal** button at the top of the CHPS home page or you may obtain a membership application from the website or from any issue of the bi-monthly *CHPS Newsletter*.

The completed application, or donation in any amount, may be mailed in with a check, in the correct amount for the desired category of Membership, to:

**Corona Historic Preservation Society**  
 P. O. Box 2904  
 Corona, CA 92878

**To donate** electronically please use the "Donate" **PayPal** button at the top or bottom of this page. If the donation is to be directed to a special project or activity (historic markers, road signs, Veteran's Memorial Wall, etc.), please describe the activity or project in the "Message" block.



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

## Board of Directors

President - Wes Speake  
Vice President - Eric Bergreen  
Secretary - Doris Osko  
Treasurer - Richard Winn

### Directors

Trisha Henson-Cabrera  
Amanda Kalkanis  
Paula Muñoz  
Mary Winn

### Advisors

Marla Benson  
Tom Richins  
Ted Taylor



To contact us call:  
**951.898.2044**  
Please leave a brief message

Or email to:  
[CHPSinfo@yahoo.com](mailto:CHPSinfo@yahoo.com)



## Our Mission Statement

The Corona Historic Preservation Society (CHPS) is a nonprofit tax-exempt 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the PRESERVATION, PROTECTION and PERPETUATION of Corona's historic sites, buildings, neighborhoods and resources. We do this through education, community events, preservation projects and tireless advocacy for the benefit of present and future generations.

## 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 Board meetings will be:

**Thursday, Nov 9, 6:30 P.M. at CHPS office**  
**Monday, Dec 4, 6:30-8:30 P.M. Holiday Party**

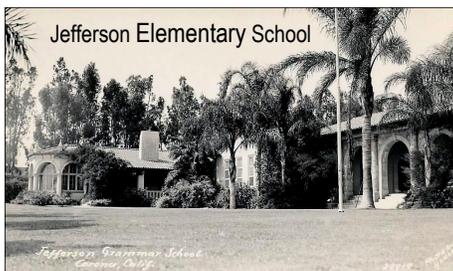


Visit our Website at [www.Corona-History.org](http://www.Corona-History.org)



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

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



Jefferson Elementary School

Was recently listed in the  
National Register of Historic Places!



**Join us at the CHPS Holiday Party**  
**Monday, December 4, 2017**