

### A Message From Our President Tom Richins

Dear Members:

Saturday morning, October 11th, was a special day for the Corona Historic Preservation Society. Many members were able to gather at the old Corona Theatre and take a tour of the inside. It is a magnificent structure and surprisingly, even though it is now a church, many of the original architectural elements from when the building was first constructed are still in place today.

A few days before the tour, I set out on the internet to do a little of my own research on the theatre and to my delight I discovered that Laurel and Hardy were in attendance of the grand opening on August 29, 1929. Not only did they attend opening day, they also performed a 20 minute skit for all to see at the entrance of the theatre. I can just imagine what a wonderful event opening night must have been. On a personal note, when I was a young kid, I would spend hours sitting on my grandfather's lap watching old Laurel and Hardy movies. We would both laugh out of control at the slapstick humor. The time spent together built a wholesome, loving bond that was only between him and me. Being reminded of this time in my life, I pulled up some old Laurel and Hardy clips on YouTube to relive the memory. I was laughing out loud at the comedy once again and it wasn't long before my four-year-old son was sitting on my lap laughing right along with me. My time researching quickly turned to reliving memories and creating an experience I will always cherish. This memory is even more special to me now as I think of Laurel and Hardy attending the grand opening every time I drive by the old Corona Theatre. We would like to extend our appreciation to Pastor Jesse Reyes and his congregation for their hospitality in sharing this architectural gem with our members.

It is these memories that allow us to cherish our town's past and enjoy it's historic structures. From the old movie theatre and civic center to the old houses and streets, even Grand Boulevard, the once race track, we are fortunate to have such a rich history. And subsequently, we are fortunate to have such a supportive historic preservation society flush with many dedicated members.

Looking back upon the year, the Corona Historic Preservation



The photo above shows CHPS members in the lobby of the Corona Theatre.

The photo below is of the magnificent and well-maintained theater or sanctuary as it appeared on October 11, 2014.



Society has been very busy with many successful events. We were able to sponsor another Vintage Home Tour displaying some of Corona's finest homes. We also took a full tour of the Heritage Room at the library and attended the Riverside County History Symposium. In addition, CHPS sponsored a panel discussion titled, "Growing up in Corona - 1940s". Not only was the discussion entertaining, it was enlightening and uplifting. Our six panelists, all of them now in their 80s and 90s, really opened up on a personal level and verbally painted a picture of the life and times of Corona back in the 1940s. Next year in 2015 we will hold the panel discussion again, only jumping ahead 10 years to, "Growing up in Corona - 1950s". I strongly encourage everyone to make mental plans now to attend. I promise it will be time wisely invested.

To close out the year, we will be having our annual Holiday Party and traditional potluck dinner. Some of the usual activities will take place however, from what I am told, we will be mixing it up a little bit as well. If you have attended the party in the past then it will be good to see you there again. If you haven't been attending, please make the effort to do so. The food is delicious and you have the opportunity to eat and mingle in a 101 year old structure.

Last, but certainly not least, our Society isn't new. As an organization we were founded over 31 years ago in 1983. We are lucky to have grown a large membership. The Society has earned a solid reputation and over the years we have developed important relationships as well as established the most effective methods for preserving Corona's history. Our current board members draw on this experience. They have willingly, without pay, dedicated much of their time to keep the wheels of the Society spinning forward. With that, I would like to close this message publicly thanking and recognizing them. It is because of the hard work of Tom and Paula Munoz, Doris Osko, Christine Gary, Fred Parr, and Richard and Mary Winn that our success is sweet and our future is bright.

Sincerely,

TOM RICHINS



## Progress Report on Corona Historic District No. 10 By Richard Winn



We have been working hard on the detail work of naming a new Historic District on the west end of

like” cups in the concrete that originally were painted to mark the lane boundary. We have had an engineer working on the “Restoration Standards” drawings of the elements to be preserved/restored. The Wardlow Wash Bridge has the year it was built (1939) stamped into the concrete curbing on both sides of the road. The south side curb and date stamp are seen below at the arrow.



town. This image is of the western end of this one-mile remnant of California State Highway 18 and US 91 and we hope to preserve the historic timber guardrail in its current style, with 8-inch square wooden posts with 45-degree beveled tops and triple 2” x 6” wooden rails.

The roadway itself has a great deal of character and we are striving to preserve as many elements as we can. The concrete median has a repeating pattern of “divot-

## What's New With Our Historic Site Marker Program

The Corona Historic Preservation Society's Historic Site Marker Number 20 is scheduled to be placed at the current Corona High School campus, which is more than 50 years old. The granite slab is in the shop, but we were notified that there was a problem with our 1960s image to be etched onto the granite. This issue has been resolved and the marker will be picked up soon. We really liked the silhouette of the Santa Ana Mountains in the background, and the telephone booth and trash can in the foreground. To the right you can view our proposal.

We are also waiting on responses from Corona's two American Legion Posts regarding placement of granite markers to mark these sites. Post 216 is located in the 1000 block of Main Street, on the west side. Post 742 is located on the east side of Yorba Street in the 1500 block.

We are also making plans to mark the site of the Exchange Lemon Products plant and its surrounding campus on North Joy Street. This facility was located immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks and processed and shipped locally grown lemons and other citrus fruit from 1915 to 1983. For many decades, Corona residents could set their watches by the timing of the plant whistle.



### CORONA HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Historic Site Marker # 20

CORONA HIGH SCHOOL NO. 3

Corona's third high school campus was built in the Mid-Century Modern architectural style.

Opened January 1961

Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall  
Architects & Engineers

Taylor & Clark  
General Contractor

The campus was given a “facelift” in 2005 with a remodeled façade, addition of a performing arts center, two-story classroom building and other improvements in the Contemporary Modern architectural style.

Greg Chapman, PCH Architects  
Architect

Neff Construction, Inc.  
Contractor



# Our Traditional Holiday Party and Annual Meeting



## Potluck Dinner Assignments

BASED ON 1<sup>ST</sup> LETTER OF LAST NAME

PLEASE PROVIDE 6 - 8 SERVINGS

~~~~~  
A-H Vegetables or salads

I-Q Appetizers

R-Z Desserts



Woman's Improvement Club

The Annual Election of our  
Board of Directors  
will be held

~~~~~  
We just may surprise you with  
fun new party activities!



Music will be provided by Corona High Madrigal Choir



**Date:** Thursday, December 4, 2014 from 6:30 - 9:00 P.M.

**Location:** Woman's Improvement Club of Corona

1101 South Main Street

Come and enjoy the spirit and music of the Holiday Season with other members  
of the Corona Historic Preservation Society.

If you plan to attend, please be sure to call  
Doris at 951.737.1766 by December 1



## Annual Election of Board of Directors

The election will take place at our Annual Holiday Party on Thursday, December 4, 2014.

As of the publication of this Newsletter, the Nomination Committee presents the following  
slate for your consideration. One Director position remains to be filled.

### Directors

Christine Gary  
Paula Muñoz  
Tom Muñoz  
Mary Winn

### Advisors

Marla Benson  
Janette Neumann  
Ted Taylor

Per CHPS bylaws, Director term is for two years; Advisor term is for one year.

# Visit to the Corona Theatre By Doris Osko

As Tourmaster Tom Muñoz and Docent Mary Winn led the group of CHPS members on Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, through the old Corona Theatre, now Covenant Life Church, it was not difficult to imagine the magnificence of yesteryear that characterized the theater. One could imagine the sounds of the Meisel-Sullivan organ, the largest and most modern pipe organ in Riverside County at the time, being played by owner Glenn Harper's son, Leslie, before the showing of a film or during intermission. The movie might star Greta Garbo, or Maurice Chevalier, or Al Jolson. Imagine the drama as the music stops, and gigantic oak doors on wrought-iron hinges swing open and the film begins.

The gates appear to be in a lush garden setting. The audience of nine hundred or so sit in bluish-gray Spanish leather-covered seats in a setting reminiscent of the outdoors. The ceiling is light blue like the sky with massive wooden beams. The high wooden carvings are intricate and lovely. Side walls are decorated in light ivories with panels of rose and gray. Some theatergoers pay thirty cents to sit in the balcony, others forty cents to sit in the orchestra seats, and others pay fifty cents to sit in the loges. Children could see a western on Saturday for ten cents. The audience members could purchase



Tom Muñoz

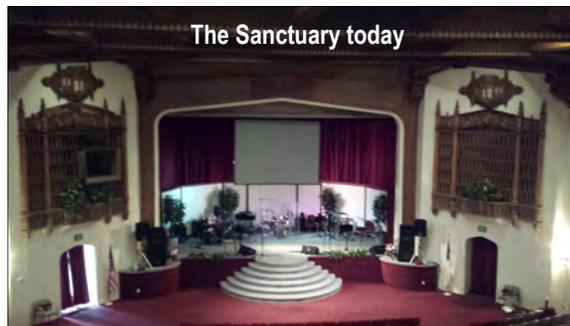
candy in the lobby—maybe from Jo (McCord) Ollarman who was the first “candy girl” (Clarcy Phillips, Jo’s sister who was on the tour, provided this bit of information.)

The tour began with Tom Muñoz giving a brief description of what was happening globally 85 years ago when the theater first opened.

The Great Depression was around the bend, but had not yet happened. Guests for opening night paid the expensive price of five or ten dollars to attend. The Lions Club sponsored



An early photograph of the interior of Corona Theatre featuring huge wooden garden gates behind which the movie screen was located.



The Sanctuary today

the tour group had viewed movies in the old Corona Theatre. (At least one, who shall remain unnamed, remembered sneaking in the side door while in his youth.)

All CHPS members enjoying the tour gained a deep appreciation for this historic Spanish Colonial Revival theater designed by noted theater architect Carl Boller and the efforts of CHPS to save the building from destruction 23 years ago in 1991. We



Ceiling: Decorative beams & speaker enclosures

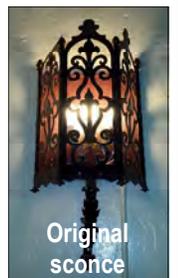
the opening and raised \$3,000 with the avowed purpose of purchasing property for a future hospital. Celebrities in attendance on opening night August 29, 1929, included stars of both stage and screen such as Laurel and Hardy, Dolores del Rio, Irving Berlin, Clara Bow, and many others. The lavish Norconian Resort was in full flower, and famous persons visiting there would also plan a visit to the Corona Theatre. The theater closed in 1982 and was taken over by the church in 1985, then named “Amor Outreach Ministries,” and now named Covenant Life, which has maintained and restored the original building, preserving most of its original features. Richard Granado, an elder of the church led the

tour group backstage and also up to the balcony to show the workings of the theater not usually seen by the audience. At least four people in



Backstage view of the stage door, catwalk, curtain counterweights and ropes

also learned that construction was supervised by Perle Glass, a Corona volunteer firefighter. Each attendee was given a replica of the opening night poster, the front page of the *Corona Daily Independent* for the day following the opening night gala, and photos of the building, courtesy of our CHPS Tourmaster, Tom Muñoz.



Original sconce

# Meet Betty Bowers... By Doris Osko

During her sixty years of marriage to "Bud" (Maurice Dean) Bowers, Betty Bowers lived in Bermuda, Miami, Memphis, Seattle, Indiana, and many other places. Her memories of all are vivid, and so are the years in Corona, the couple's home base since 1955 when they came here on vacation from Terre Haute, Indiana, to visit a cousin and stayed. Betty, who will be ninety next June, is vivacious, loquacious, and has a love of history and historical artifacts that is rich in her story telling. (Betty has an unusual collection of egg beaters in her home which was built in 1946.) She was a professional singer at age 16 for a 14 piece band in Terre Haute, singing at churches, lodges and private parties.

In the 1950s, Betty's friends were Mrs. Hopkins who had a children's store downtown, and Ida Mae Gross who had a garment store for women. Ida Mae had started her business in a house on 8<sup>th</sup> Street, but moved to the downtown near Cunning Drugs as her business prospered. Betty's daughter, Marcia, was to eventually marry Joe Tenney whose father owned Tenney's Men's Store across from Cunning Drugs. Betty went to work for the *Corona Daily Independent* (CDI) where her good friend, "Toots" (Lorene) Roof, also worked. Toots' husband, Harold Roof, was the top manager at Lemon Products on the Grand Boulevard Circle. He built his own home on Olive Street and saved crates from Lemon Products to build cabinets which are still in the home. On the acreage behind,



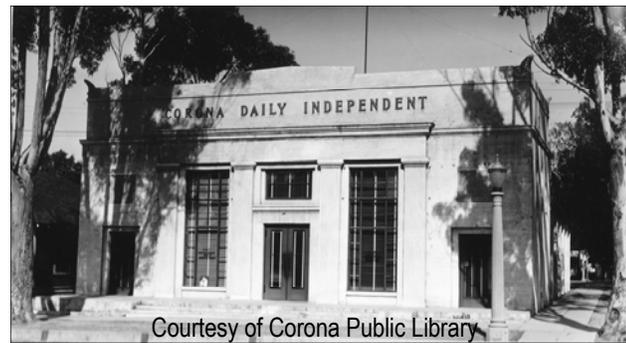
the paper after his death. Fred Eldridge bought the paper from Lucille and became Betty's last boss at the newspaper. The CDI eventually gave way to the *Press Enterprise*, a much bigger newspaper firm. Away from her work on the newspaper, Betty and Toots and friends attended potluck dances at Redman Hall which is no longer there. Betty characterized the Redman Association as similar to the Elks. The women's branch was called Pochahantas. Betty and her friends

got together and planned their Saturday evenings wearing the same style formal gowns. Meetings were held behind Phil's Market at Lincoln Avenue and Sixth Street.

Betty was also part of "The Dirty Dozen," which met for years to create gourmet meals. Four are left of the group and they continue to meet.

The 1950s also had Betty and Bud attending The Boat and Ski Club which still exists today. Betty is the longest attending member presently. The club was created to get folks together to go camping, hiking, and fishing, and Betty stated those were the days of potlucks and tents. The recreational vehicles now are motor homes and fancier rigs, and about fifteen couples meet the first Thursday of the month at Sizzler. Through the years Bud Bowers, an engineer by profession, worked at the Naval Weapons Station in Norco, flew Apache airplanes and gave lessons in flying, wrote a series for the newspaper called "Prop Wars," ran for City Council, and traveled with Betty extensively. Years ago, he got the permit to tear down the First Christian Church at Ninth and Main Streets with Bill Cervantes which they did within sixty days working on weekends. Presently there is a medical building on this site.

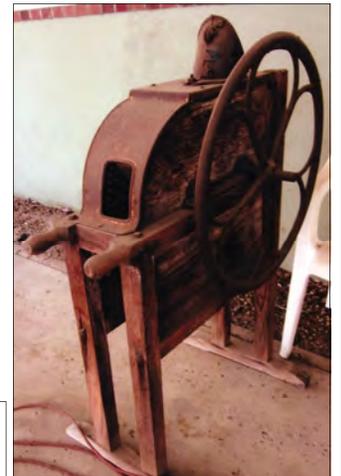
A recent journey took Betty to Springfield, Illinois with her daughter, Cathy Dixon, to present a blackboard that belonged to Abraham Lincoln to the Lincoln Institute. The blackboard had descended to the family via Bud's grandfather who had been a teacher, and the blackboard had been authenticated as genuine. Betty continues to be a charming, dynamic person and lover of history, and an active member of Corona Historic Preservation Society.



Roof also built a small railroad train to work on and allow children to ride.

Betty was both a proof reader and a photo engraver for the *Corona Daily Independent*. She burned images into plastic so the ink would go into the plastic to make good pictures. Betty recalls her days at CDI as being one, big, happy family. She worked on the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Edition of the paper. Her first boss was Justin Hammond, whose wife, Lucille, took over

This antique corn husker is among Betty's collection of artifacts.



## Architectural Salvage Available



CHPS has limited amounts of architectural salvage items or materials available to those of you who may be restoring your vintage homes. Included in the inventory are vintage windows, shutters, doors, cabinets, molding and hardware. If you need such items, call CHPS at 951.898.2044, leave a brief message (< 1 minute) and be sure to leave your name and telephone number.

## Editor's Note: Please Consider This

For those of you who receive this publication as a hard copy, please consider making a change and instead receive it in digital format via email. The email version of the CHPS Newsletter is in full color so photographs are more interesting to see and you can enlarge the size to view all contents more clearly. In addition, it also saves the editor and her husband from having to prepare the hard copies for mailing.

With stamps at 49¢ apiece, it is costly to mail the newsletters via "snail mail." Printing of hard copies is not inexpensive so CHPS can also save money by printing fewer hard copies. For those of you who do not have access to a computer, we understand and are happy to continue to mail them to you. Please contact me at [toothladytwo@aol.com](mailto:toothladytwo@aol.com) or 951.371.5291 to let me know.



*Thank you!*

## Westward Extension of Foothill Parkway Gives CHPS an Opportunity

The Foothill Parkway extension project resulted in at least one unintended consequence that offered a preservation opportunity to the CHPS. The Mabey Canyon Creek debris basin (a Riverside County Flood Control District resource) had to be enlarged to provide required retention capacity when the road improvements were made. CHPS was offered an opportunity to work with the city to commemorate this artifact from Corona's early history.



A marker was proposed that will include the image to the left and be faced with some of the rock removed from the bridge.

Highlights from the text for the marker plaque are

seen below:

The bridge over Mabey Creek was located on land that was part of the 17,787 acre Rancho La Sierra granted to Bernardo Yorba in 1846 by Governor Pio Pico. It was in 1921 that Fred A. Geith was awarded a patent under the Homestead Land Act for the land that he had filed on in the late teens and "proved up" on Mabey Canyon where the bridge over Mabey Canyon Creek is located. The Geith homestead was accessed by driving into the foothills of the land adjacent to the Cleveland National Forest on Mabey Canyon Road and crossing the creek using this small concrete bridge which was located some 800 feet south of this marker. The slightly arched bridge over Mabey Creek measures approximately 20 feet long and 10 feet wide. This width could barely accommodate a horse and wagon or Model T Ford automobile or truck. The bridge was most likely constructed by Fred Geith. The bridge was slightly arched in the middle, and had very low side walls, to allow any precipitation to run off quickly and unimpaired. The sides of the bridge were faced with varying sizes of locally available river rocks set into a thick parging of concrete mortar. The stonework on the bridge did not appear to have been done by a professional craftsman or highly talented amateur. The stones were applied in an uneven manner with uneven mortar joints between the stones. The mortar joints did not appear to be worked, raked, or tuck pointed with any consistent design or level of skill. The stones themselves were set in a curve across the sides of the bridge, and not set in horizontal courses.

# 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

Brock Acosta  
Roger L Atkinson  
Barbara Becker  
Thomas & Mary Conklin  
John & Carolyn Coutts  
John & Jane Farr  
Nancy Fay  
Aaron & Lauralynn Hake  
Richard & Angela Harris

Steve & Tracy Lech  
Randy & Cathy Leonti  
Mitch & Karen Lloyd  
John & Barbara McCawley  
Gary & Doris Osko  
Linda A. Pearson  
Richard Polen  
Esther Prichard  
Tom & Sunny Richins

Nancy Royce  
Ted & Cindy Taylor  
Mike & Maria Ugalde  
Andrew & Donna Vermette  
Michelle Watts  
Peter & Connie Weber  
John R. Wiles

## Our Home Preservation Grant Program

The CHPS Grant Committee along with the Board of Directors of the Corona Historic Preservation Society would like to assist local homeowners in making necessary 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

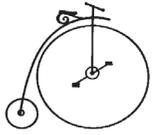


own or a neighbor's, please feel free to contact CHPS Home Preservation Grant Program Chairman Tom Richins at [trichins@dbacinc.com](mailto:trichins@dbacinc.com) or 949.795.2288. We will assist you in any way possible to provide the information you need to complete the application process.

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!***



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

## Board of Directors

President - Tom Richins  
Vice President - Mary Winn  
Secretary - Doris Osko  
Treasurer - Richard Winn

### Directors

Christine Gary  
Paula Muñoz  
Tom Muñoz  
Fred Parr

### Advisors

Marla Benson  
Janette Neumann  
Ted Taylor

To contact us call  
**951.898.2044**

*Please leave a brief  
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, persuasion, 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.

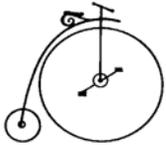
**All members are invited to attend.**

The next meetings will be:

**Thursday, Nov 24, 6:30 P.M. at CHPS office**  
**Thursday, Dec 4, 6:30 P.M. at WIC Clubhouse**



**Visit us at: [www.Corona-History.org](http://www.Corona-History.org)**



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

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



**Happy Holidays from CHPS**