

# Fairview Register

Monthly publication of the Costa Mesa Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3)

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Nixon Library and Gardens via Wikimedia Commons

## Jim Kubalik on Richard Nixon

Join us for a delicious meal and a lively talk at 6 p.m. Friday, January 25, as docent Jim Kubalik of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum traces Nixon's Orange County roots, meteoric rise in politics, and presidency. Love him or hate him, you can't deny that Nixon is fascinating.

This year's installation dinner returns by popular demand to the Newport Rib Company. Dinner includes chicken **and** tri-tip, garlic mashed potatoes, roasted veggies, garden salad, corn bread and honey butter, brownies and cookies, and non-alcoholic drinks **for only** \$26. Everyone is welcome at this fun and informative event.

To securely purchase tickets with a **credit card** or **PayPal**, visit us online at [costamesahistory.org/dinner](http://costamesahistory.org/dinner). Tickets can also be purchased by phone at (949) 631-5918 between 10am-3pm on Thursdays and Fridays, or by check, by mailing us at the following address:

Costa Mesa Historical Society  
Attn: Susan Weeks, Treasurer  
PO Box 1764  
Costa Mesa, CA 92628



Jim Kubalik is a docent and leader of the Speakers Bureau at the Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library. He is also a mentor at the Orangewood Foundation, where he works with youths transitioning from foster care. He has over 35 years of experience in risk management with Fortune 100 companies. Jim is a California native who attended local schools, earning a BS and MS from Cal State Northridge.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Adobe Plaque Dedication 10am Saturday, January 12

The Orange County Historical Commission will dedicate a plaque at the Diego Sepulveda Adobe on January 12. The plaque will recognize the adobe and the surrounding Native American site. The adobe will be open to the public as part of this free event. Come celebrate the recognition of one of Orange County's gems. (See insert)



#### What do you know about Costa Mesa's fashion industry?

Costa Mesa has had a lot of industry start-ups since its 1953 incorporation (and even before that). The boat building industry is documented in a current exhibit at the Costa Mesa Historical Society museum. But there have been many other industries here. In the 1950s and early 1960s Dorothy O'Hara had a 12,000 sq. ft. plant here making fashions that were featured in *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*.

Another fashion designer, Lee Ann Weiss Stevens, supplied luxury hotels with spa clothing under the name Calispia. We'd like to learn more about these and other local fashion businesses. Please tell us what you know!

Promoting and preserving Costa Mesa's history is our mission

FAIRVIEW REGISTER, FAIRVIEW, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 2, 1889

# Mesa Verde Country Club: Year One

**On its 60th birthday, a look back on the first year of the Costa Mesa institution**

The Mesa Verde Country Club held its three-day opening on the weekend of January 16-18 of 1959. The 150-acre, par 71 course was designed by William P. Bell, Jr., an award-winning, nationally known golf course architect. He, with his father, designed countless courses throughout California. The course, known for its variety, “lying in a scenic valley pointing toward the ocean and abounding with water holes and rolling hills,” was designed to appeal to beginners and pros alike.

Facilities were a bit spartan at first. It would take a year for the clubhouse to be built. Winter rains highlighted drainage problems (fixed by adding lakes). And the road in (possibly?) wasn't paved until September! But that didn't stop the excitement. The course, originally meant to be public, was forced to go private the membership demand was so great.

Opening month festivities focused on members and their guests, servicing 150 linksmen the opening weekend. Membership fees were \$90 year, while member green fees cost \$1.50 on weekdays and \$3 on Saturday, Sunday, and holidays. Guests paid \$2 and \$4, respectively.

The first hole-in-one was recorded in late February by CM Lucas. The second came in May, when Mrs. Fred Schamer sunk a 171-yard shot on the 16th hole.

The course hadn't been open for a month before reigning state champions OCC adopted Mesa Verde as its new home. Santa Ana College and Newport Harbor High School soon followed suit. For the first time, Sailors could earn a letter for golf.

The first school match took place Friday, February 27, when OCC lost to Pasadena City College due to a technicality. The Pirates fought on, however, trouncing Santa Ana 28-2 at Mesa Verde, basically capturing the Eastern Conference. OCC went on to win the Eastern Conference Tournament. Along the way, OCC swingers set several scoring records, including Wes Smith's 69 at Mesa Verde and a state scoring record for five men (73.8).



John Plumbley congratulates Lilah Curtis, Arlene Verfurth, and Ruby Spangler.

A mixed blessing came in the beginning of February, when the course was annexed to the city of Costa Mesa. One downside: Costa Mesa had its own ideas about code enforcement, delaying the completion of the clubhouse.

You can't talk about the first year at Mesa Verde Country Club without talking about John Plumbley. Plumbley had previously been associated with Rice Institute, Laguna Beach, Willowick, and Irvine Country clubs. When he became Mesa Verde's club professional, he became a tireless champion of the course and its tournaments, often using his platform as golf columnist for the *Globe-Herald* (later *Daily Pilot*) to promote the club.

Real estate developers benefited from the promotion and used it to promote the club. The Mesa Verde neighborhood billed itself as “an exciting new country club community.” “Leave home at 8:00,” says one ad. “Tee off at 8:05.”

Throughout the first year the club hosted regular competitions, from the Mesa Verde Country Club Inaugural Match-Medal Tournament to the Costa Mesa Junior Chamber of Commerce tournament. But the biggest event of the year, of course, was the first Orange County Open.

The Orange County Open Invitational Golf Tournament, which ran from October 15-18, was called the first sporting event of national interest to occur in Orange County. The PGA event was spearheaded by the Newport Harbor Exchange Club, and sponsored by the PGA. Profits went to needy children in Orange County.

The tournament made a big splash on the community. Press banquets were held (with Vin Scully in attendance), television crews were summoned, and the course and neighbourhood were featured in *Golf Life* magazine. The club hosted 500 spectators.

The competition did not disappoint. The Open saw two holes in one (by Jerry Barber and Davis Love — both on that 16th hole) and even a “hat-in-one,” where a golf ball landed in a woman's hat. The competition ended as a nail-biter. Jack Fleck could have tied the match on the last hole, but he missed the last uphill put by four feet. Jay Herbert ended up taking the prize. Afterwards, Herbert offered deep praise for the course. “These greens were excellent,” he said. “And all of the galleries were magnificent.”

At the close of the year, plans were in the works to expand the course to 36 holes, but were never brought to fruition. ■



John Plumbley



Patricia Miller with her husband Edrick

## Remembering Patricia Miller

We at the Costa Mesa Historical Society were sad to learn recently that Patricia Miller, wife of Edrick Miller, passed away last August. She was a lovely and talented lady. She volunteered at the adobe, and she drew sketches of local historical places – the Methodist Church on 19th Street, Pink’s Drugs, the adobe, among others – that appeared on our postcards. She illustrated Ed’s three books on local history – and was an artist in her own right. Ed, who wrote the landmark history of Costa Mesa, *A Slice of Orange*, now lives in Laguna Hills.

## News in January '59

- Donald Dodge retires from the bench after 29 years of service.
- Becky Lyn Nelson of Costa Mesa is reported to be the first Harbor Area baby of the new year.
- Fairview State Hospital opens its doors to the first of its eventual 4,200 patients.
- Search crews organize to find missing 8-year-old Billy Montgomery. He’s found in his parents’ car, having played all day after missing the bus.
- Myford Irvine, called a “Quiet Croesus”, is found dead in his Tustin home, reportedly of suicide.
- Heavy “pea soup” fog causes traffic mishaps.

- Safeway celebrates its grand opening on 17th Street and Orange Avenue.
- Halecrest Park, Costa Mesa’s first (and only?) private park, is dedicated.
- A plan is reached to consolidate Costa Mesa’s four water suppliers.
- Work begins in earnest on St. John the Baptist Church on Baker Street.
- Costa Mesa wins court battle to annex 260 acres of land along Placentia south of 19th Street.
- Long lines are reported at the 19th Street DMV.
- Signals and more efficient intersections are studied for traffic-clogged Harbor Boulevard in north Costa Mesa.

## Share Your Story

We’d love to hear your Costa Mesa stories. Many changes have taken place and we want to hear from those who lived through them. Write the memories yourself or come to the museum and we’ll transcribe them for you. It’s that simple!

## Temporary Parking Instructions

Entry to the historical society parking lot is currently limited to Anaheim Avenue, but this is subject to change. If Anaheim is closed, try Park Avenue. There is no estimated completion date at this time.

## Make a Difference – Volunteer

We’re looking for a volunteer to **set up refreshments** at our monthly programs as well as members to sit on two committees: the **Newsletter Assembly Committee** prepares the newsletter for mailing, while the **Adobe Committee** recruits volunteers to plan an event, become a docent, or work on exhibits. Committees meet monthly and are chaired by board members. Interested? Visit [costamesahistory.org/volunteer](http://costamesahistory.org/volunteer). Isn’t it more fun to work as a team?

## Donate Online

The Costa Mesa Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization that depends on support from people like you. Visit [costamesahistory.org/donate](http://costamesahistory.org/donate) to make your tax-deductible contribution today. Thank you for helping preserve local history!

## Shop with us on Amazon

Every time you start your order with Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate to the Costa Mesa Historical Society – at no cost to you. Visit [costamesahistory.org/smile](http://costamesahistory.org/smile) before making your next purchase. You can use your existing Amazon account.

## Dues Overdue?

Make sure your dues are up to date by looking at your **dues expiration date** on the address label to the right of your name. If your dues are due, renew online at [costamesahistory.org/membership](http://costamesahistory.org/membership), mail in a check, c/o Susan Weeks, Treasurer, or drop it off on a Thursday or Friday from 10am to 3pm. Membership dues are listed on the back page.

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V I S I T U S

**Diego Sepulveda Adobe**

1900 Adams Ave.

Open 12-4 p.m. Every 1st and 3rd Saturday\*

Explore centuries of history when you visit one of Orange County's oldest buildings in its gorgeous setting at Estancia Park.

**Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum**

1870 Anaheim Ave.

Open 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Every Thursday and Friday\*

View a mind-boggling array of artifacts from 5,000 years of Costa Mesa history – from the first peoples to the City of the Arts.

\* Or schedule an appointment at 949-631-5918.

I N S I D E

Jim Kubalik on Richard Nixon, Mesa Verde Country Club: Year One, Remembering Patricia Miller, Call for Fashion Info, and More!

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