

Fairview Register

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

MEMBER: CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION,
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY



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A recent restoration offers a fascinating glimpse of the adobe's underlying masonry. (Via Parks & Rec Report 8/18)

Adobe Dedication Rescheduled

Because of the storms in January, the dedication of the historical plaque at the Diego Sepulveda Adobe was postponed. But the show must go on — just on a different day!

The event will feature the unveiling and dedication of a new historical plaque recognizing the adobe and the surrounding Native American site. The event is a joint presentation between the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Orange County Historical Commission, held in cooperation with the City of Costa Mesa, the Costa Mesa Historical Society, and the Costa Mesa Historical Preservation Committee.

The dedication ceremony will begin **Saturday, February 9, at 10 a.m.** Refreshments will be served at 11 a.m., with the adobe open for tours.

The adobe is thought to be the second oldest building in all of Orange County, second only to Mission San Juan Capistrano. Before that, adobe land was home to native Acjachemen and Tongva. According to Lucille Pinkley, the need to staff and furnish the adobe is why Costa Mesa established a historical society a year before Newport Beach, even though that neighboring city is 53 years older. “To me, it’s kind of funny,” she said, “because here is an old city that has never taken time to organize — they have had no occasion, you see, to need one.” But Costa Mesa had the adobe!

Everyone is welcome at this free, fun, historic event. Come celebrate the recognition of one of Orange County’s gems.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Heroes Hall 2nd Anniversary

Saturday, February 16, at 11 a.m.

Heroes Hall will be celebrating its 2nd anniversary on Saturday, February 16, at 11 a.m. The event will coincide with the opening of an exhibit on prisoners of war, *Victory From Within*.

In cooperation with Heroes Hall, we have invited any remaining veterans of the Santa Ana Army Air Base to gather. All members of the Costa Mesa Historical Society are invited. So please plan to attend and take part in the celebration.

Coming in March

Pulitzer Prize-nominee Craig MacDonald will speak on "Trailblazing Women in the Old West" Sunday, March 17, at 2 p.m. MacDonald will cover amazing women in the fields of mining, conservation, voting, law enforcement, temperance and crime.

Museum Calendar

The historical society's museums will be open on the following dates in February. Or call 949-631-5918 to schedule an appointment

Diego Sepulveda Adobe

Saturday, February 2, 12-4 p.m.

Saturday, February 9, after 11 a.m.

Saturday, February 16, 12-4 p.m.

Historical Society Museum and Headquarters

Friday, February 1, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Thursday, February 7, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Friday, February 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Thursday, February 14, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Friday, February 15, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Thursday, February 21, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Friday, February 22, 10 a.m.-3 p.m..

Thursday, February 28, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Promoting and preserving Costa Mesa's history is our mission

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

The following excerpts have been taken from the Costa Mesa Historical Society's Oral History Collection. To read more histories like this, visit the historical society museum every Thursday or Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lucille Pinkley helped found the Friends of the Costa Mesa Library, the Costa Mesa Historical Society, the Patrons of the Costa Mesa Civic Playhouse, the Costa Mesa Hospital Auxiliary, and Costa Mesa's first Girl Scout troop. She also served as president of the Women's Club and as chairman of Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce, among other roles. Her husband Alvin operated the local landmark Pink's Drugs and served on the city council for 23 years.

First impressions of Costa Mesa

We didn't come to Costa Mesa until 1933. It was Friday the thirteenth. And I think the first day he [Pink] bought this little drug store in town which had been established. All there was to the town was one block on one side of the street... I said to my husband, "You have brought me to the end of the world and dropped me."

Lending a hand during the Depression

I saw people who needed food, actually. So some of us said, "Let's have Thanksgiving baskets..." And we got the merchants to give us leftover food and we took up a little bit of money and we bought meat. And we actually did have a basket list and we gave Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to those who needed in the community... And the PTA had to supply shirts [to students] because so many of the boys' families couldn't afford white shirts for them to wear for graduation. The girls wore little dresses. Most of them could get a little dress together but white dress shirts, they didn't have money enough.

A long walk for shoes

We had no place to buy shoes other than sandals. Rubber things that might be worn at the beach. We had to go to Santa Ana to buy shoes: ten miles away to the nearest pair of shoes! One time I went to a dry goods store in town, and I said, "Why don't somebody put in shoes?" And they said, "Well, you know, all summer everybody goes barefoot. Anyway the kids do." Which they did, and they were poor... I believe we didn't have a shoe store in town until after 1940.

Visiting Wives in World War II

We had no motels or hotels in town. And here were all these guys out here at the Santa Ana Army Air Base. Once in a while one of the [wives] would want to come and visit them... And I tell you, the boys were so good to each other. They would try to find out the time. "You can have it tonight, I'll have it tomorrow night, you have it the next night." Santa Ana was ten miles away. The nearest hotels for them to go to.

Starting the Friends of the Library

That was one of the first things I helped start, and that was in 1959. It was started when I was president of the Women's Club. And I felt the need—there again, we were building a new library and Mesa Verde was going to come in. I said, "Look, we don't have any support group for our library. So

In their own words...



Mildred Fisher (left) and Lucille Pinkley

let's start one under our community service group." Which we did.

The beginnings of the Costa Mesa Historical Society

Well, the way we did the historical society, we were under the Women's Division of the Chamber and we sent out the word that we would like to get a group together who were interested in the history of Costa Mesa. Because we were going to have this Estancia (adobe), and we needed people to staff it, and people to furnish it. So anybody who was interested, would they come to a tea at my house... And we got a very good group together.

On community involvement

The town needed everything. People are always asking, "Why did you do all these things?" And I say, "Because the town needed it."

Mildred Fisher taught Costa Mesa grade school children for 37 years. She was a charter member of the historical society, and also served as president for the Friends of the Costa Mesa Library, the American Legion, and the Costa Mesa Business and Professional Club, among other roles. She was also the treasurer for the Home Rule Group that led the effort to incorporate the city. Mildred arrived in Costa Mesa in 1928.

Teaching during the Depression

I taught second grade for ten years and I taught first grade for six years. Previous to 1944, during the Depression years, I might say, there were sometimes when the teachers didn't get paid. All we got was scrip and then a promise of being paid later. We did get paid eventually.

Needless to say, the children were from very poor families, so a lot of them would come barefooted. The PTA did what they could to furnish clothing and they also furnished milk for them at lunchtime. Many times, the teacher would share her lunch with them because some of these children were just so hungry for fruit, for apples, and things like that. We would make sure that they would have fruit to eat and milk. They would probably have the staples because those were given to them through welfare and there was clothing through WPA. But, at any rate, some of these children were pretty poor.

The teachers got along all right. We weren't making too much. But, as I say, I worked all those Depression years. I didn't make a big salary, but I was always working.

A Memorable Flood

I remember the 1938 flood particularly. Before the real big flood, there had been rain for weeks and weeks. At this time, I was teaching at Lindbergh School. I remember one instance particularly. For some reason or another, this little boy had missed the bus, and so I thought, "Well, I'll take him home." He lived on Newport Boulevard in an old building which had been a store building. This is another one of these poor families that just found a place to live wherever they could. There was a big lake of water between the car and this house, so I carried the little boy. I waded across this stream to this home because of the water that was running down Newport Boulevard.

Later, school was closed for several days because of the flood. The flood came down through Anaheim and through La Palma Park. It took out trees and if anyone had a basement in Anaheim, it was flooded.

I was curious about what it had done to the countryside, so I went out on the hill where the Estancia (adobe) is located now, and I could look across toward Huntington Beach and all you could see was water. You couldn't tell where the Santa Ana River left off and the ocean began. It was just one big sea of water. It was frightening, really. There was all sorts of debris coming down the river. There were orange trees uprooted and all sorts of chickens and animals that came down the river and were deposited on the beach. It was a horrible time. Thank goodness, after that experience, they built Prado Dam which kept it from flooding like that again.

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. 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 to make your tax-deductible contribution today. Thank you for helping preserve local history!

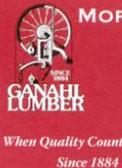
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Every time you start your order with Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate to the Costa Mesa Historical Society – at no cost to you. Visit costamesahistory.org/smile before making your next purchase. You can use your existing Amazon account.

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, 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

Adobe Plaque Dedication,
Heroes Hall Anniversary,
Mildred Fisher, Lucille Pinkley & More

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Make your checks payable to the Costa Mesa Historical Society.
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