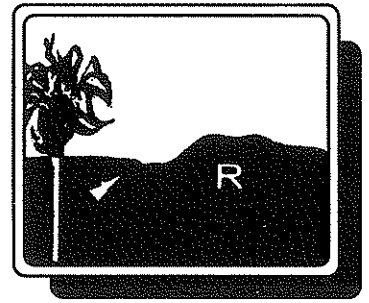


REDLANDS CHRONICLES



March, 2006

The Demise of the Redlands Citrus Industry

Presented by Tom Atchley

March 27, 7:00pm

Assembly Room, A.K. Smiley Public Library

So just what happened to the Redlands Citrus Industry? The Chamber of Commerce sign proclaiming "Redlands the Navel Orange Capital" was based on the Department of Agriculture estimate that the "Redlands District" encompassed some 15,000 acres of citrus. The district included Bryn Mawr, Highland, Greenspot, Crafton, and Redlands. The citrus industry dominated Southern California from Orange County, Los Angeles County, Riverside County and San Bernardino County. World War II saw profits for citrus reach those experienced before the Great Depression. The Federal Government included citrus products as a part of the Lend Lease Act. When the United States entered the war the Agriculture Department introduced canned citrus concentrates to keep troops in battle enriched with vitamin C.

During the war the Naturalization and Immigration Department negotiated with the Labor Department and Mexico for the use of Mexican Nationals (Brocero Program) to fill the void in citrus labor. Federal labor camps closed with the end of the Depression in 1941 and reopened in 1943 with Mexican laborers. The Redlands Highlands Farm Labor Board simply had to "order" the number of pickers required for each season and the demand was met. Cone Camp, the 1934 Civilian Conservation Camp, bustled with hundreds of workers picking grapefruit in Indio and navels or valencias in our valley. The cheap labor problem seemed solved.

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OLD HOUSE GROUP MEETING

Wednesday, March 15, 7:00 pm

Sanders Home, 25 East Fern Avenue

Gerald and Marilyn Sanders will be hosting the March meeting in their 1904 "HERITAGE AWARD" Winning home located at 25 East Fern Avenue in Redlands.

This home was built in 1904 by T. S. Holiday who had moved to California from Minnesota in 1886. In 1895, he opened a "harness and saddle house" on Orange Street. The Holidays lived in this home until 1913 when Ulysses F. Lewis, an attorney, took up residence. Later, Fred and August Renter moved into the home and lived there until the 1950s.

Gerald and Marilyn found their "Victorian Cottage" style home in 1977. They loved the offset gable in front that sits atop the three sided bay window. They could just see themselves enjoying their garden from the

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A Letter from your President...

PERSPECTIVE! All of life has to do with your perspective. Either the glass is half-full or half-empty, it just depends on perspective. Each of us has our own subjective perspective on life and this certainly rang true when eight of the past mayors of Redlands presented their individual viewpoints at our General Meeting on Monday, February 27th. This proved to be a very interesting program. Historically documenting the various perspectives of these individuals was not only important, on that particular evening, but it will prove to be significant in the future. Each stated they had done what they could and had no regrets. I think the message, from several speakers, was that the mayor does not act alone and needs the entire City Council to accomplish their goals. We thank Tom Atchley for conceiving and coordinating this marvelous glimpse into Redlands' past.

My son, Joshua, and I were in the car driving last week while it was raining and he told me that he did "not like the rain". Interestingly, once I told him that "I love the rain" he then agreed that he too liked the rain. Perspective! All this beautiful rain will bring the flowers for the Redlands Horticultural & Improvement Society's 94th Annual Flower Show, Garden Tour and Sale of Uncommon Plants. You definitely do not want to miss this wonderful show plus how else will you be able to participate in all the talk about the gardens after the show? Be sure to attend on Saturday & Sunday, April 22 and 23, 2006.

As promised, the Redlands Area Historical Society will be concentrating our March 27th and April 24th General Meeting programs on preservation. First in March, Tom Atchley will discuss the demise of the citrus industry here in Redlands. Then in April, we will have a panel discussion on preservation in Redlands. Both programs will prove to be very informative. Please join us at one or both of these meetings for two interesting topics, some socializing, and cookies.

Additionally, on Saturday, April 15, 2006, the Redlands Area Historical Society is proud to present a new event! Tom Atchley will lead a walking tour of Alvarado Street from 10:00 am - 12 noon. As this will be an official RAHS fundraiser, we will collect \$10 per person on the morning of the tour. No reservation necessary, just show-up with your \$10 and your walking shoes at the corner of Walnut Avenue and Alvarado Street that morning. You will find more information regarding this event in the next Newsletter.

Finally, it is time for me to graciously request that each and every one of our members answer the call when asked to be a docent for the Heritage Home Tour & Quilt Show to be held on Saturday, May 13, 2006. The Historical Society will be supplying all of the docents for the tour this year and we really need all your help. Thanks, in advance, for any and all support you can lend.

Judith Hunt, President

Old House Group, continued

wonderful wrap-around porch. So Gerald and Marilyn moved into their vintage home. That was almost 30 years ago and the Sanders have been hard at work on their "cottage" ever since. Early on, they upgraded the heating and air conditioning systems. Then they set to work restoring and remodeling almost all of their three bedroom, three bath home. Over the years, they have painted it twice. They have just completed the revitalization of their kitchen and have set to work on both their front and back porches.

The Sanders' hard work has brought their home to its present condition and it has not gone unnoticed. In 1983, Gerald and Marilyn received the Redlands Area Historical Society "Heritage Award" for restoring and preserving their historic home. In September 2003, Redlands Horticultural and Improvement Society revived the 1896 Smiley Brothers program to recognize outstanding front yard landscapes in the Redlands area. In March 2004, the Horticultural Society presented the March 2004 "RHIS Front Yard of the Month Award" to the Sanders for their beautifully tailored front yard filled with brick walks, graceful living sculptures (mature olive trees, pyracantha bushes) and plantings of colorful poppies, pansies, begonias, and ferns.

Gerald and Marilyn enjoy working on their one-of-a-kind home and garden. They both look forward to sharing their hard work with the Old House Group.

SEE YOU THERE!

Citrus Industry, continued

Rainfall was abundant for seven years. From 1937 to 1944 rainfall was above average and Big Bear Lake was overflowing after the 1938 flood. The underground basin was replenished by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, which formed in 1937. Surf was up at Mentone Beach and water spreading operations expanded every year.

Lessons were learned from the Freeze of 1937 to store oil reserves throughout the orange district. Protective Associations built mammoth oil tank farms near the railroad tracks. Smudge oil was ten cents per gallon in 1948. Wind machines utilizing Mercury car engines and surplus government aircraft engines numbered 25 by 1944. Citrus thermometers were arranged throughout the valley to predict temperatures. Packing houses helped organize smudge crews and reviewed their "gangs" during the fall.

Government practiced both laissez-fair non-involvement and scientific support. Federal Child Labor laws were ignored for both high school and junior high students. Smudging in Redlands was the right of every boy to make extra money and avoid school during the winter season. The University of California's Citrus Experiment Station at Riverside employed over 100 professors studying pests and other citrus problems. Red and black scale were practically gone. Thrip, spider, and fruit flies faced potent chemicals such as parathion, malathion and chloridane. Border inspection stations still protect the state agriculture. Pest control companies efficiently wiped out the insects. The warning signs were posted after each spraying. The State of California Fruit Frost Service employed weathermen that were trusted for every word they uttered. Weeds faced oil spraying in spring, summer and fall.

New construction and innovation in the Citrus Industry brought faster packing and improved efficiency. Redlands Foothill Groves moved out of the old Kingsbury Marmalade Factory at Highway 99 and Sixth Street. They constructed a new \$145,000 packing house capable of handling one carload of fruit per hour. Gordon Donald finished the building, so Foothill would easily reach the 1500 carloads of fruit shipped each year. Redlands Co-Op installed a new automatic box dump. Crafton Orange Growers Association boasted 75 new acres and a new aluminum roof for the packing house. Fred Hill introduced the Christmas Orange Box in 1947 to spur preferred citrus orders. Mutual Orange Distributors

shipped 5,000,000 seven-pound bags in the smallest consumer friendly bag. Both MOD and Foothill used the new cardboard carton treated to protect against mold in 1951. Redlands Orangedale Groves, located at Nevada Street and Highway 99, saw their new innovation the wrapping machine reduce labor costs.

So what happened to the Redlands citrus industry? I found that my own family really couldn't answer that question and they have grown oranges since the 1920s. I grew up in Crafton surrounded by orange groves. Bob Paine was our neighbor along with the Jacinto, Farquhar, Eden, Buoye, and Gay families. I've picked, pruned, sprayed, irrigated, and smudged. And yes, for over fifty years I couldn't answer that question. All the local history I've read doesn't answer the question either. After many hours of research last summer, I have a multiple-causation answer now. You'll need to come to the program to hear the answer. Bring an orange grower with you.

Attention Home Tour Junkies!

Pasadena Heritage is sponsoring the Victorian-themed home tour "Pasadena Victorian" on Sunday, March 26, from 9 am to 4 pm. Advance ticket prices \$35 for the general public; tickets on the day of the tour are \$40. For tickets and information call Pasadena Heritage at 626-441-6333 or online at www.pasadenaheritage.org.

Restoration Grant Program

RAHS is again offering matching-fund grants to property owners who are thinking about doing repair or restoration work that will help preserve the original architectural integrity of their vintage Redlands area home or building. This is the fourth year for the Restoration Grant Program which is intended to encourage exterior restoration work on pre-1930 structures by providing some financial assistance. Other work, which may not be so visible, may also be considered if it contributes to the long-term preservation of the structure. A seismic retrofit might be an example of that.

RAHS will contribute up to \$500 in matching funds for eligible projects. Four project grants are planned for 2006. Projects should be configured so they can be completed within a year. Application forms are available at the A.K. Smiley Library Heritage Room, or by calling Ernie Dierking at (909) 793-3107. And, you can call Ernie if you have any questions about the program. Applications need to be submitted by March 31, 2006.