



REDLANDS CHRONICLES

January 2011

Faithfully and Liberally Sustained, Philanthropy in Redlands

Monday, January 24, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Assembly Room, A.K. Smiley Public Library

Dr. Larry E. Burgess and Dr. Nathan D. Gonzales will present their latest Redlands book encompassing Philanthropy in Our Town at the Historical Society's monthly meeting on January 24, 2011.

The book was published by ESRI Press in 2010. Chapters include: Philanthropy of the Orange Empire, The Redlands Style of Philanthropy, A Hand Up, Educating a Town, The City Beautiful, Home for the Arts, and Philanthropy: In Redlands's Own Words.

Philanthropy was well established in the east San Bernardino valley before the advent of the "Gospel of Wealth" announced by Andrew Carnegie. Residents living along Mission Road donated and built the first Mission school house in 1852. Myron Crafts improved the adobe home of the Cram brothers in Crafton and began a school for Native Americans in 1875. Crafts donated land for an Indian cemetery and cared for indigent sick travelers at his Altoona Ranch. He intended to donate land for a Congregational college if the denomination would build in Crafton.

In 1877, the first Lugonia School was built on north Texas Street on land donated by Texas settlers. William R. Tolles later moved the school house to his donated land on the northwest corner of Church and Lugonia Avenue. The "new" 1885 Lugonia School land was given by Frank Hinckley on the southwest corner of Orange and Lugonia Avenue. Hinckley had just arrived in Old San Bernardino two years previously.

Judson and Brown, recent founders of the Redlands Colony, donated the land for the Lugonia Terrace

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Old House Group Meeting

Wednesday, January 26, 2011, 6:30 p.m.
632 Walnut Avenue



Craftsman bungalow home at 632 Walnut Avenue

When Lauren McSherry and Sean Neelson bought the house at 632 Walnut Avenue at the end of last summer, it was in a foreclosure sale and was in serious disrepair. Portions of the house had been modified but many projects had not been completed including the removal of several walls, the entire upstairs bathroom, and a section of the foundation. Lauren explains "we had some reservations about buying the house, namely did we have the means and time to take on such a large project? But we felt the house, which was built in 1912, in the Craftsman bungalow style, had a lot of potential, and we found the overall design to be charming."

Lauren and Sean have invited us to come tour their home to see the beginning stages of the many projects

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A Letter from your President...

First of all let me give a brief correction on the Nordhoff information in the last newsletter. London evidently has *not* expressed interest in the Nordhoff graves. Relatives in Tahiti call the cemetery about every two years expressing interest in both the Walter and Charles Nordhoff graves.

December 19th arrived at the beginning of the long rainstorm for the week. About twenty brave souls donned rain gear, coats and umbrellas for the Downtown Redlands tour. Sue McClure dutifully collected the fee and we were cheerfully off along East State Street. The storm gave us an hour and thirty-five minute reprieve as we reached the old Safety Hall on Fifth Street. We quick stepped to our awaiting cars thanking God that we live in Redlands where rain is rare.

The Junior Redlands Historical Club met December 20th at the Burrage Mansion. We toured the renovated home as the deluge continued outside. The Rochford Foundation has been busy since our visit last June. Construction of an extensive barn is completed. The patio has new tile and more grounds work was evident.

We will once again have our Heritage Award program at the mansion June 8 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

This spring marks a major milestone in local history. Dr. Larry Burgess introduced his "History of the San Bernardino Valley and Redlands" course forty years ago this spring. I enrolled the second year and paid my twenty-five cent enrollment fee to Redlands Adult Education.

This course opened up the rich history of our valley and Redlands as only Larry could do. The ten-week course was two hours, once a week. I took copious notes that I still have today. Thousands have now taken the course which led to public interest in a Historical Society, Museum Association, Redlands Conservancy, revitalization of the Downtown (State Street project), a Historic Preservation Ordinance, and enthusiasm for Redlands history. Dubbed the "Tom and Larry Show" by Frank Moore, editor of the *Redlands Daily Facts*, the course continues to recruit fresh members for local historical interest.

Larry asked me to join the teaching duties in 1973 or 1974. We moved from Redlands High to Cope Junior High where I taught then. We moved back to Redlands High in 1978. Redlands Adult School only required that we pass around a weekly sign-up sheet as proof for our class each week. Larry and I were both surprised that the class continued year after year. We both thought that once the small local interest was met the class would lack enrollment. Our true test came when Prop 87 passed and the enrollment fee went from \$.25 to \$25 per person. Would a couple spend \$50 for a class on local history? That answer was yes.

Many of the years the class was offered on Monday night. I missed many Historical Society meetings in those years. Most of the attendees were "football widows" whose husbands were glued to Monday Night Football and Howard Cosell and "Dandy" Don Meredith. We moved the class by one day and behold we discovered there were men in Redlands!

Larry and I now offer two different courses. Our fall course covers the traditional history of the San Bernardino Valley and Redlands. The spring course is all about Redlands. The registration last spring was double the space of the Assembly Room and so we repeated the spring course this past fall. Enrollment fees go exclusively to the Heritage Room of A.K. Smiley Public Library.

Thinking back to those beginning teaching years, some of the students might really intimidate the instructors. Try and teach a class on local history with Dr. Lawrence Nelson, Donald Anderson, Frank Moore, Bill Moore and Horace Hinckley in attendance. Thank God they were never all enrolled in one class.

Dr. Larry Burgess truly chose a direction that many have followed and I for one am thankful I got to tag along.

Your President, Tom Atchley

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

All RAHS members are encouraged to submit articles for the *Redlands Chronicles* to Marie Reynolds at sccmarie@yahoo.com by the 1st of each month.

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they have ongoing. This "in progress" or "before completion look" will give us an opportunity to see all the great plans the couple has for restoration work. Those that have completed similar projects will have the opportunity to share ideas and to recommend special fixes for difficult situations the couple face. Both Lauren and Sean are inventive and industrious so in a few short months they have completed what they call "phase I" of the restoration – getting the house into a habitable condition. The most serious problems that needed to be remedied immediately were the leaking roof, the missing section of foundation, the door to "nowhere" in the kitchen, a gaping hole in the wall of what once was the master bedroom, and the upstairs "sitting area" which had been gutted to the studs—in addition to rewiring the house.

At the time of the purchase, the kitchen was completely inoperable, and the house was sorely in need of a paint job. In fact, three sides of the house still had the original mint-green paint, which had bonded to the redwood siding, while the front of the house was painted blue. All that has been addressed and the house now sports a uniform color coat of new paint. Another major project was the repair of the leaking roof which they discovered (like so many others) still had the original cedar shake shingles placed on slats, with no solid underlayment, covered by more recent roof layer(s).

More current projects include cosmetic defect repairs which really have just been the result of years of neglect. A portion of the house remains unheated and landscaping are tasks which they have on their "to do" list.

The house has some lovely features, including original, grouped French windows throughout the downstairs and upstairs. Visitors may note that there are 96 panes of glass in the living-dining room area with the same detailing in many other rooms, as well. The front door, though a bit battered, is original and the kitchen still contains the original "refrigerator," which is a small closet venting to the basement. Lauren thinks that the kitchen cabinets may date back to the 1950s but that built-in bookshelves that were likely present separating the living room from the dining room may have been removed in the 1950s when the downstairs bathroom was remodeled and the sunroom added. Around 1930 a detached two-car garage was added and a shade structure is currently present along the side, within a large, sloping back yard.

Like traditional Craftsman homes the roof is gabled and sloping with overhanging eaves and

brackets. The house is one-and-a-half stories tall and the front porch is a partial width and has a lovely, shade structure, comprised of horizontal beams. The overall architectural design of the house includes a lot of simple, horizontal lines – with rectangular shapes repeated throughout.

Come join us for an evening tour and help to encourage and applaud this courageous effort by new neighbors with good intentions matched by heroic efforts. For more information contact Leslie Irish, Old House Group, 951-201-8742 (cell).



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Congregational Church in 1883. Brown's cousin, Dr. Ellen Seymour, donated \$600 for the building and helped to raise additional funds for furniture and a church organ. A united community effort dedicated the church using peach pit sales and "free labor" at the two Lugonia fruit dryers.

Myron Crafts died in September of 1886 and was buried in Crafton near his famous "Crafton Retreat." Judson and Brown felt a more established memorial to pioneer Myron Crafts was due. Judson and Brown bought railroad land and donated the property, which became Hillside Memorial Cemetery. Crafts was moved to the new location overlooking all of Redlands and his beloved east San Bernardino valley.

Judson and Brown envisioned a farming settlement of thrifty moral individuals that would build a Connecticut New England style village in Southern California. They longed for virtuous energized farming families that would create an enticing atmosphere to attract the best people here. The aesthetic and cultural life of Redlands captured in the Burgess and Gonzales book demonstrates a success beyond the dreams of the founders.

Larry Burgess has trumpeted the "Philanthropy of Redlands" throughout his nearly four-decade career celebrating Redlands. Nathan Gonzales has caught the fever and together their latest work reminds us all of our responsibilities to keep the dream sustained.

Historical Society meetings are held in the Assembly Room of A.K. Smiley Public Library, a gift of Albert K. Smiley. Eldredge M. Lyon gave financial support for the library extension in 1926.

Faithfully and Liberally Sustained, Philanthropy in Redlands is available at the ESRI Press bookstore for \$29.36. The store is located at 757 West Redlands Blvd.