

The Southern Counties

Ventura's Peccadillos

Last month Ventura County's Harbor Commission considered two sites for a long-needed, long-desired county owned commercial harbor. Of the two sites considered (Hueneme and Ventura) the Commission selected the site at Hueneme, near Oxnard, a landlocked harbor immediately back of the government lighthouse (see cut). Soon, however, were complaints made concerning the Commission's selection. Especially disgruntled was the City of Ventura. The city's official complaint: (1) The Ventura site (cost: \$1,636,682), could be developed more cheaply than the Hueneme project (cost: \$2,000,000); (2) The major oil companies of the County were against the Hueneme site; shipping from the Ventura and Oxnard districts would be transferred too far away; (3) Certain members of the Harbor Commission were financially interested in land adjacent to the Hueneme site. (See News Review, August 26-Sept. 1.)

The Commission is eager to hear all complaints before it sets wheels in motion for the \$2,000,000 Hueneme bond election, set August 26 as the date for the hearing of all protests. On August 26 so great was the number of oral and written complaints that the Commission could not hear and consider all of them. Thereupon it set September 18 as the date for a second protest hearing. Also did it ask its attorneys to give legal opinion on the complaints.

When the Commission met on Thursday of last week its attorneys had much opinion to give. Its opinion: (1) The objections as filed by Ventura were well-founded; (2) only three days' notice had been given for the protest meeting (20 days are required); (3) plans and specifications for the Hueneme harbor were not on file in the office of the Commission (required by law); (4) officers of the Commission had never been elected for the current year.

Because of these "inadvertences," Francis Price, attorney for the Commission, ruled that the Commission was without jurisdiction to proceed with the Hueneme plan. Thereupon the Commission abandoned all proceedings to date, officially recognized, re-elected officers, fixed new monthly meeting dates, and adjourned.

While no date was set for the calling of another meeting to hear protests, it was reported by the Ventura County Star that the Bard faction (favoring Hueneme) of the Commission would set wheels in motion immediately for a bond election. On the other hand, the Santa Paula Chronicle was of the opinion that the City of Ventura's objections would probably delay the calling of a bond election this year.

As outlined by its proponents, the Ventura County harbor at Hueneme, five miles from Oxnard, would comprise an outer harbor located at the head of a deep, narrow submarine valley which lies well inshore near the government lighthouse at that point, and an inner harbor entirely landlocked with the exception of an entrance channel 400 feet wide.

Two breakwaters or jetties, with their sea walls 1100 feet apart, would protect the outer harbor. The central basin of the proposed harbor would be a smooth body of water 1200 feet wide, 1400 feet long, in which ships might turn and maneuver with safety and ease. Flanking the central basin would be the wharves for warehouses, fish canneries, oil loading facilities, lumber storage. (See diagram.)

Claim Hueneme factionists: The initial dredging program will enable the harbor to accommodate, at one time, four oil tankers, two oil barges, two lumber vessels, two general cargo vessels.

Prison Site

This week the Legislative committee charged with the selection of a site for the Southern California junior felons' prison, provided for by the State Legislature, will meet in Los Angeles, announce its choice. (See News Review, Sept. 2-3.)

In San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, or Los Angeles County will the new penitentiary be built. Committee members spent the past fortnight examining offered sites, inspecting, comparing. They found most to their liking, it is said, several tracts in the northwestern part of Los Angeles County. Location advantages have these sites—highway, railroad, water. Sites inspected ranged in price from \$50 to



PROPOSED VENTURA COUNTY HARBOR AT HUENEME

... from the government lighthouse (arrow) extends a natural, submarine valley.

\$1000 per acre; the one best liked location not revealed), costing \$200 per acre.

For men, 18 to 24 years of age, convicted of felonies will be the new prison. When completed it will cost about \$3,500,000. It will be used not only for first offenders, but for any felon within the prescribed ages.

To purchase the land, one building (not to be a very large structure), the committee now has a \$375,000 appropriation. About 1000 acres, ample, fillable, must be included in the chosen site.

Co-operating with the Legislative committee is a special committee. It includes Chairman Assemblyman Woolwine; Secretary Senator Rochester; Senators Gray, Pedrotti; Assemblyman Hawes.

Reapportionment

The Tuesday Night Club is an organization of Southern California members of the State Legislature. Last week it met for the first time since Legislature adjournment. To the fore was brought the State and Federal reapportionment problem, which will result from the census-taking of the next spring. (See News Review, Aug. 26-Sept. 1.)

No longer does the Tuesday Night Club wish Congressional and Assembly reapportionment, oft-discussed, never settled, to remain a bone of contention at political confabs, dinner tables, secret caucuses. They appointed a committee to handle the situation, to report at a meeting scheduled for October 15.

Committee members selected: Los Angeles—Senators Pedrotti and Rochester, Wilmington's Senator Carter, Long Beach's Senator Merriam, Whittier's Assemblyman Sewell, Los Angeles' Assemblyman Baum, Burbank's Assemblyman Crawford, Orange County's Assemblyman Craig, Kern County's Assemblyman Patterson; other southern county representatives to be added.

Pasadena's Pride

Populated by millionaires, dotted with church spires, Pasadena is this week girding its loins preparatory to taking action to protect the scenic beauty of the approaches of the city.

An illustration (article: "Scenic Reserves" by Horace M. Albright, in the September 14 issue of the Saturday Evening Post) showing nine large billboards on the West

Colorado Street approach to the city, stung Pasadena officials to action last week. City Planning Chairman, Ernest A. Batchelder, termed the illustration "a blow to Pasadena's pride."

Forty-eight of California's 71 major highways are to be protected from billboards, hot-dog stands. Post-Correspondent Albright's article stated, Chairman Batchelder urged cities adjoining Pasadena to support the State's stand.

Covina's Hall

At least one ground-breaking ceremony occurs to round off a Southern California week. The rite may be for an industrial plant, an educational edifice, a civic building. Less often a ground broken for a new City Hall and fire station—as happened in Covina last week.

Covina's Mayor George Maxwell, last week turned the first spadeful of earth on East College Street, where the new Covina City Hall and fire station is to be erected. Encouraging him in his civic duty were Fire Chief J. F. Kendall, Contractor T. E. Foster, Covina city fathers, Covina citizens.

Since the town's incorporation in 1901, Covina has wanted a new City Hall. Taxpayers were loath to assume the necessary debt. Transaction of city business took place in two store buildings, while city fathers hoped, planned, A \$35,000 bond issue for a new City Hall was carried by a 75 per cent majority last spring, brightening the outlook immensely.

Two stories in height, the new structure, decidedly early Californian in architecture, will house the fire station and all other offices of the city government.

Tournament Suit

A long interval has elapsed since New Year's Day in 1926 when, at the Rose Tournament Parade, a hastily erected grandstand collapsed in Pasadena, injured many, killed a few. (See News Review, Sept. 2-8.) Many have forgotten the incident. But not the eighty victims who crashed with the grandstand.

Last week attorneys for Ernest H. Lockwood, owner of the property on which the grandstand was built, were informed by the Federal court that their client must file answers to damage suits totaling \$2,000,000, against himself, against the City of Pasadena, against the Tournament of Roses Association. To the eighty victims, the memory of their downfall was still vivid. The damage suits thus filed will

be heard in the State courts early in October. If the Court of Appeals decides the evidence, in a stipulated test case, constitutes cause for action, the entire eighty cases will be set for trial.

Since the time of the accident, Pasadena has adopted a strict building code. It requires that every grandstand be subjected to severe weight tests several days before New Year's Day.

The City of Pasadena and the Tournament of Roses Association recently filed demurrers to the cases. The city's demurrer was sustained in the Superior Court.

New Pier

Vessels skirting the Pacific Coast from Canada to Lower California perceive many piers jutting out into the now placid, now turbulent ocean. To the far south is the San Diego Municipal Pier now inadequate, soon to be made the finest passenger and light freight terminal on the Pacific Coast. So declared Port Director Joseph Brennan, last week. He announced also that reconstruction would start January 1 at an estimated cost of \$225,000.

The capacity of the pier will be doubled once the reconstruction is complete. Four passenger vessels will be able to dock at the same time without confusion. Passengers, incoming, outgoing, will be handled according to the most modern practices, their comfort being the chief consideration.

One thousand feet in length will be the reconstructed pier, 130 feet in width. A double-decker structure 100 feet wide, 900 feet long, will replace the present smaller warehouse.

Victorville Fair

Residents of the Mojave River Valley Region of San Bernardino County have seen neighboring communities sponsor fairs, festivals, pageants. They have looked on, admired, well-wished. Now it is they who are receiving others' support and encouragement on a proposed fair of their own; to be known as the San Bernardino County Fair, to take place at Victorville on October 11, 12, and 13.

Confident are the fair's sponsors that great will be the interest evidenced in their exhibit. They have a vast treasure house from which to plan their displays. San Bernardino County is famed for its agricultural produce, its mineral area, are lending helping hands.

wealth, its industries, its poultry production, its mountain forests, its alpine resorts.

Residents of the Mojave River Valley region look back with pride on their achievements of the past few years. They point out the enlargement of alfalfa areas, producing a crop this year which will bring growers more than half a million dollars; the development of the dairy industry; this year's production of nearly 30,000 turkeys; prize-winning apples, pears, peaches.

Landslip

While dam planners bickered and dickered over cement prices, and dam builders scraped out the cavern of San Gabriel Canyon preparatory to building a great water barrier, unforeseen events took up the attention of both planners and builders last week. Outside observers heard with surprise, horror, of a monstrous landslide that had taken place on the west abutment foundations of the dam excavations; heard that 100,000 yards of rock and earth had slid off the mountainside, poured into the canyon below. Not surprised was Flood Control Engineer E. C. Eaton, however. Three days before, he watched tiny pebbles rain down from the heights above, sensed a loosening of the rocks, possible catastrophe. Alert, he moved men, machinery away from the danger zone, waited. The pebble showers increased; finally came the landslide. To Engineer Eaton much credit went for his watchfulness.

Cause: Eaton believed the "landslip" (technical name) was due to the outside layer of rock and clay being of "rotten character."

Damage: Most damage was done to the water and power lines. No lives were lost, no machinery was broken. Excavations were filled again. Cost of removing landslide: \$2.95 per cubic yard.

Came a storm of comment, investigations. Many considered abandoning the dam site to avert further disaster later. But Eaton and other engineers, geologists, were still confident. Last week, Supervisor McClellan of the Los Angeles County Board, speaking for the board, said it had no intention of abandoning the construction of the San Gabriel Dam.

Local authorities were not the only ones who passed upon the safety of the present dam location. Nationally and world famous geologists, engineers, were called in. Consultation agreed unanimously that the San Gabriel site was perfectly suitable. Among these consultants were: General George W. Goethals, former Army expert who built the Panama Canal; A. B. Davis, secretary of reclamation at Washington; H. S. Paul of Dayton, Ohio; D. C. Henry, of Portland, Ore.; Professor Charles D. Marks of Stanford University; Professor F. H. Fowler of San Francisco; S. D. Galloway of San Francisco.

Halted for some time, however, will be further construction work. At present the chief task is to remove the debris caused by the slip. The cost of this will be divided between the County and the dam contractors, Fisher, Ross, MacDonald and Kahn.

In the midst of the "landslip" cogitations, discussion over the price of cement went on regardless. Supervisor Graves, still strong for the building of a County cement plant, said cement could be delivered at San Pedro for \$1.24 a barrel based on a plant cost of 78 cents. From this cement could be supplied all the County building projects, roads, bridges, dams, etc. From one million to two million could be saved on the San Gabriel Dam alone, he said.

Accordingly, he sent instructions to every County department which uses cement. If they follow instructions they will send him a report on exactly how much cement they will use in the next five years. Thus Graves should be able to decide on the feasibility of a County owned plant.

