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Torrance Herald

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TWO
SECTIONS
14 PAGES
THIS ISSUE

TWENTY-THIRD YEAR—No. 1.

SECTION A

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1937

PER COPY 5c

City Charter in Print; Decision March 16

G. P. PLANT EXPANSION ANNOUNCED

Wholesale Bulk Center Being Erected Here Costing \$12,000

Further evidence of the recognized importance of Torrance as an industrial and distributing center is found in a building operation just started here by General Petroleum Corporation, in the construction of a whole sale bulk plant, now in course of erection.

The plant, representing an investment of approximately \$12,000, is rising on a portion of the big Torrance refinery property of General, at the southeast corner of Hawthorne and Dominguez boulevards. Construction is under the supervision of H. H. Mosher, operating department manager of General Petroleum's Southern California division, while the contracting is handled by Myers Brothers.

Planned for completion about Feb. 1, this establishment will consist of warehouse for the storage of large quantities of Mobiloil and Mobilgrease and the company's industrial lubricants; three large tanks to hold a total of 52,000 gallons of Mobilgas and other gasoline marketed by the company; a garage for the delivery trucks and an office for the use of William Campbell, wholesale agent, in charge of the wholesaling of General's products in this area.

Move Headquarters Here
Up to the present, Campbell, who has developed a large and constantly growing business, in the supplying of Mobil products to service stations, has maintained his headquarters at Redondo Beach. But as soon as the Torrance plant is completed, headquarters will be moved here. From this point, deliveries will be made over a large area, including the cities of Torrance, Redondo, Hermosa, Hawthorne, Inglewood and contiguous territory.

Decision to locate the plant at Torrance was made after a careful survey, according to the statement of Fred C. Davies, Southern California sales manager for General Petroleum, who says this spot was picked as the most appropriate distributing center of the district. In this area, most remarkable business gains have been achieved during the past year.

LESSONS BEGIN

More than a score of firemen and police officers attended the first of a series of 12 Monday night instruction classes in first aid this week. The lessons are being given by a qualified Red Cross instructor in the city council chamber.

Surprisers Surprised

Job Paddock Honored on 90th Birthday at Home in Lomita

When a man as popular as Job E. Paddock of Lomita is 90 a windy rainy night on his birthday is no bar to friends who want to honor him. That was the case last December 30 when a score or more of Lomitans tendered him a surprise party that proved to be a surprise to most of the guests. Few of them knew the others were planning to call on Paddock, but nearly all brought their own refreshments and the resultant party was thoroughly enjoyed by the nonagenarian and his well-wishers.

Confined to his bed for the first time in many years, Job Paddock, 90-year-old Lomitan, is now reported quite ill at his home. He suffered a heart attack late last week and was ordered to bed by his physician Sunday. All members of the Paddock family enjoyed the first reunion in several years on that day and their visit cheered him greatly, according to his daughter, Postmaster Birda Paddock, of Lomita.

On Tuesday, Dec. 29, Paddock appeared at the Masonic installation in Lomita to take the office of chaplain of the lodge for the seventh successive time. Al-

Building Year Off to Good Start Here

Erection of two oil derricks and a \$3,000 alteration job at the National Supply Company office building launched the 1937 building program in Torrance, according to records on file today in City Engineer Frank Leonard's office. The total was \$13,000.

\$300 Found in Overalls Sent to Laundry

A cotton bag containing \$300 in bills of large denomination, representing months' of savings by a local resident in anticipation of a long dreamed-of eastern trip, went to the Torrance Laundry with a pair of soiled overalls last week and emerged intact.

The money was discovered by a laundry worker employed in the marking department and promptly reported to Owner Manager William Rojo. Before the owner learned of his loss, he was notified that the money was awaiting him at the laundry office.

"And then he did not call for it until his laundry was ready," Rojo said, taking an evident and justifiable pride in the knowledge that his customer placed complete trust in the laundry. The bag of bills was pinned in a pocket of the overalls. When the owner claimed both his money and his laundry he offered to substantially reward the worker-finder but the honest employee would only consent to accept half of the gift, Rojo said.

Rainfall Double Last Season's

This season's drenching rainstorms have more than doubled the rain total at this date last year, according to a report received from the high school where daily rain recordings are being made. The total to date is 7.24 inches as compared with 3.21 inches at this time last year.

The high school weather bureau reports that the storm covered the city with 1.44 inches of rain from last Wednesday (Dec. 30) at 4 p. m. to this morning. Last night's downpour amounted to .12 of an inch, the report stated.

COOPER BOUND OVER ON CAR THEFT COUNT

Awaits Hearing On Hit-Run Charge But Denies Money Theft

Without his asking any questions of the three state's witnesses or offering any defense, Eugene Cooper, 41, whose one wild hour, Dec. 29, included failure to pay a \$5 fine for drunkenness, alleged theft of a car, hit-and-run driving and asserted theft of \$90 and a revolver, was bound over to superior court for trial on the car theft charge Monday afternoon.

Cooper had been arrested by Capt. John H. Stroh late Wednesday afternoon while he was walking on Acacia street. He was turned over to sheriff's officers after being booked on the auto theft charge here and his arraignment before City Judge Robert Lessing set.

After the preliminary hearing in Judge Lessing's court, Cooper was taken to Gardena by deputy sheriffs for arraignment on the hit-and-run charge but this examination was postponed until next Monday morning. He is now in the county jail awaiting trial which was set for Jan. 20.

Denies Theft of Money
The defendant, a large, florid unmarried man and former Columbia Steel worker, was not represented by counsel but a public defender will be appointed for him at the time of his superior court trial. He testified against him here were C. W. Parks, foreman of Columbia's warehouse, and owner of the car allegedly stolen by Cooper. He said Cooper knew where he cached the ignition key in the machine, a 1929 Cadillac.

Second witness was R. E. Schumert, 911 Beech street, chief order clerk at the Columbia plant. He said he saw Cooper in the machine between 4 and 4:15 p. m. Nov. 29, and learned it was gone about 4:55. Capt. John H. Stroh was the last witness and he repeated a conversation with the defendant after Cooper's arrest in which the prisoner admitted he took

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Chambers Meet Here On Jan. 14

Harbor District Group to Install Officers

Continuing the custom of holding the installation dinner-meeting of the Harbor District Chambers of Commerce in Torrance, the annual event this year—Thursday evening, Jan. 14—will be combined with the quarterly session of members of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce. The dual meeting will be held at the Woman's clubhouse, beginning at 6:30 o'clock. Supervisor Leland M. Ford will be the main speaker and E. C. Thomas, public relations representative of the Pacific Electric, will be the installing officer. The retiring leaders of the Harbor organization are Ray O. Baldwin, president; Loren Howe, first vice-president; Thomas Blair, second vice-president; Hugh B. Johnston, third vice-president; Fred Pym, fourth vice-president; Irving P. Austin, vice-president; Dan L. Holland, secretary; and George P. Larson, treasurer.

New Officers for 1937 are: Loren Howe, Hawthorne, president; Atty. Irving P. Austin, Compton; Thomas Blair, Redondo Beach; Hugh B. Johnston, Gardena; and E. C. Power, Bell, vice-presidents; George P. Larson, West Los Angeles, secretary; and Ray O. Baldwin, Long Beach, secretary.

The Torrance Municipal band will entertain during the dinner hour. To assure seating arrangements and dinner service (at 75 cents per plate) for all, reservations should be made with Secretary L. J. Gilmeister of the local chamber, not later than Tuesday, Jan. 12.

All 15 Freeholders Approve Their Work for Better Government; Citizens Urged to Study Draft

Complete Text of City Charter Will Be Found On Page 5-B



—Photo by Hag & Hag

THEIR WORK DONE. 12 of the 15 Freeholders delayed their final session Monday night to pose for these photographs. Later, Judge Robert F. Lessing, secretary, was snapped as he watched Chairman Carleton Bell affix his signature to the City Charter draft. The jury-boxful of Freeholders shown above are, rear row, left to right: Otto Kresse, James A. Obble, J. Orrin Bishop, William K. Adolph, Jack O. Boyd and Raymond C. Young. Front row, left to right: Chairman Bell, Secretary Lessing, Mrs. Jane M. Burger, Mrs. Selma C. Keefe, Charles E. Ackley and Charles A. Curtiss. Absent when the picture was taken were Freeholders Irvin C. Rous and Alden W. Smith. They signed the proposed Charter later.

Advantages of Constitutional Law Reported

By ROBERT F. LESSING
Secretary, Board of Freeholders

The proposed charter of the city of Torrance represents ten months of careful research and planning on the part of the 15 persons elected, as freeholders last April. This document did not just "happen." Each section is the result of a close examination of the charters of nearly every chartered city in the state of California and a careful analysis of the leading supreme court decisions relating to the subjects in question.

The reaction of those reading the document for the first time will be one of surprise at its unusual brevity and simplicity. But therein lies its strength. The charter is so designed that when the electors go to the polls to ratify it, they will be confronted, not with a mass of confusing questions, but, rather, with two clearly defined issues: First, "Shall Torrance adopt a charter form of government?" and, second, "Shall Torrance schools be made into a district separate from those of Los Angeles?"

City Charter Advantages
A number of other issues were discussed during the meetings of the freeholders, all of which were of importance, but it was recognized that if we attempted to go the whole distance to "municipal bliss" in one stride, we would not only confuse the greater part of the electorate who have neither the time nor the inclination to make an exhaustive study of the law, but we might also involve the city in a maze of litigation on matters that are not yet definitely settled in the courts. These matters may be treated from time to time by ordinance or by charter amendments.

To analyze each separate provision of the charter in the limited space of one article would be impossible and so I will discuss at this time only the two major issues mentioned above.

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Without a single dissenting voice, the board of freeholders elected April 14, 1936, to draft a city charter for Torrance, closed their 10 months' effort Tuesday when they filed their concise constitution of organic municipal law with the city council.

Without delay, that body at its adjourned meeting authorized its publication today of the charter draft and approved the date of Tuesday, Mar. 16, for the special municipal election to decide the acceptance of the charter form of government.

At their meeting Monday night, the freeholders unanimously signed the "proposed charter and the following day it was presented to City Clerk A. H. Bartlett by Freeholder Chairman Carleton B. Bell and Judge Robert Lessing, secretary of the board. The 15-member board had set the date for the special election in the charter draft, according to law.

Two Major Features
Thus closed a chapter in Torrance municipal history which, the will of the people deciding in about nine weeks, will change from a sixth class city bound by outmoded state laws that control small communities from 500 population up to any kind or condition, to a municipality with its own constitution, based on its own particular needs and opportunities for future development.

That is one of the major features of the proposed city charter. The other is the creation of a Torrance city school district. Thus Torrance would be

(Continued on Page 7-A)

Your Questions . . PLEASE PUT THEM IN WRITING . .

Have you any questions concerning the proposed City Charter? Send them in writing to The Herald or Judge Robert Lessing and they will be answered in this newspaper. Comments by residents are also invited by The Herald and these will be published as space permits. The proposed Charter is concise, clear and to the point. "Letters to the Editor" should be the same.

Background of Charter Draft Frankly Told

By CARLETON B. BELL
Chairman, Board of Freeholders

Almost ten months ago you elected a Board of Freeholders 15 in number, to study municipal government under a charter and to draft a charter suitable to the peculiar needs of the city of Torrance. This board has now completed its work and the proposed charter is ready for your study and action.

I believe the voters of Torrance should have a report of the manner in which the Board of Freeholders worked and finally arrived at the conclusions upon which the proposed charter was built.

None of the members of the board could be termed other than amateurs in the matter of charters and the administration of municipal affairs, hence, it was necessary first to make an extensive study of the subject before an intelligent start could be made on the task of drafting a charter. For this study the entire board was divided into several committees and specific phases of municipal government assigned to each for study and report back to the board.

Eliminate Verbiage
At least 90 percent of the time taken in preparing the charter for presentation to you was given over to this study of the subject and the presentation by the different committees of proposed sections and their discussion and adoption or rejection by the board. More than a score of charters of other California cities were studied and desirable features taken from them, their mistakes also noted. In this way a tentative charter of approximately 200 pages was accumulated which, in the opinion of most of the members of the board, contained many valuable features.

It is a common trait of human nature, including boards of freeholders, to wish to leave behind them monuments of words such as this to mark their

Vermont Work To Widen Road Starting Soon

Elimination of the Vermont avenue "bottleneck" in Gardena is scheduled to start immediately in order to be completed in February, according to word received here this week. It is understood that work orders for the job have been issued by the Pacific Electric.

This project, costing \$31,700, provides for the enlargement of the narrow highway between 164th and 166th streets. An entire crew of workmen is to be moved directly from a similar project in Hawthorne to Gardena upon completion of the Hawthorne improvement.

The work orders for the Gardena project call for approximately 30 days to be spent on the job of lowering P. E. tracks and paving the widened portion of the avenue.

Amateur Contest Series of Shows Begins Jan. 22

An "amateur contest" to end all "amateur contests" was announced today by the Torrance Recreation department. This will consist of three preliminary free shows a month apart at the civic auditorium and a gala presentation of the winners in an April entertainment when the Torrance Retail Merchants' Association will donate the cash awards to the three best acts of the whole project.

Registrations will be taken for the three "warm-up" shows, the first to be held Jan. 22, at The Herald office by a representative of the Recreation department on Tuesday and Friday afternoons from 2 to 4:30 o'clock. There will be no restriction on the acts other than the reservation that the sponsors will arrange balanced programs for each of the three preliminary entertainments and no contestant may appear in two shows except the finalists.

Talent of any description is wanted and the contest is open to all residents of Torrance and vicinity. All of the shows will be free to the public.

Abrams Riggering for Oil Test Well Here

John Abrams and associates of Los Angeles are rigging for an initial test in the southwest area near Dearborn Oil's producer in the Torrance field. Hunt Oil company, near by, is in oil zone in its re-drill of an old Fullerton Oil hole at 4,300 feet. Chancellor-Canfield-Midway is starting to deepen another of its Del Amo wells in the same territory.

Plan President's Ball

Torrance and Gardena to Unite For Riviera Festivities, Jan. 30

"Dance so that hundreds may walk," is the apt slogan inviting millions of Americans to enjoy the fourth annual President's Ball that will be held in every city, town and hamlet throughout the nation, Saturday night, Jan. 30. And Torrance and Gardena, jointly, will hold their festivities on President Roosevelt's 55th birthday at the Hollywood Riviera clubhouse that night.

Once again, hundreds here will throng that beautiful center paying their \$1 per couple to enjoy the music of Graff's orchestra or play cards with friends, neighbors and friends-for-the-evening so that infantile paralysis may be fought with their admission fees. For the third year, 70 percent of the proceeds will remain in this area for treating local victims of that dread disease, while the remaining 30 percent will go to a national foundation headed by the President for continued research.

Tickets for the President's ball will go on sale in many stores here and in Gardena Saturday, according to Mrs. Harry U. Higgins, general chairman of the event for the second year. en's organizations are also expected to distribute blocs of tickets among their memberships. Announcement will be made next Thursday of the patrons and patronesses for the ball at Hollywood Riviera.

There will be card games for those who do not desire to dance and a \$5 door prize will be awarded. Mrs. Higgins is being assisted by the following committee in arranging for the Torrance-Gardena festivities: Mrs. Harry Doley, treasurer; Mrs. Alfred W. Johnson, secretary; Mrs. Robert Lowellen and Mrs. Emma Quaglin, ticket committee; Mr. and Mrs. James R. Wilkes, cards; Sam Levy, master of ceremonies, and Grover C. Whyte, publicity.

CIVIC BUILDING BIDS TOO HIGH OFFICIALS SAY

Alternate Construction to Be Recommended to the City Council

Seven bids, ranging from \$23,350 to \$29,986, were received by the city council at its adjourned meeting Tuesday night for the construction of the proposed civic administrative building adjoining the civic auditorium on El Prado.

"But the offers were considerably higher than estimates of the work by City Engineer Frank R. Leonard and Architect P. A. Eisen. They had figured the building would cost about \$17,000 and not over \$18,000 on a basis of \$4 to \$4.50 per square foot.

As a result of the wide discrepancy, Mayor W. H. Stanger said yesterday that he would welcome a recommendation from the city engineer to throw out all bids and call for new estimates.

Concrete Instead of Steel
"I believe we should amend the specifications to include an alternate of reinforced concrete construction instead of the specified steel under the original plans," Stanger said. "We cannot build the structure with any of the present bids because our PWA allocation toward the cost will not permit anything over \$18,000."

"We are going through the bids carefully to determine just where the 'bugs' are," Engineer Leonard said. "The bid prices were 'way over our estimates and considerably higher than the cost per foot of the other new civic center buildings. We intend to find out where the proposed administrative building costs have advanced and eliminate factors which have caused this increase."

A large number of contractors (Continued on Page 2-A)

Rotary Governor To Address Club

At their first meeting of the New Year, members of the Torrance Rotary club will be honored tonight with a visit by Marshall DeMotte, district governor. The session will be a tri-city event, with Rotarians from Redondo and Hermosa Beach clubs present to welcome the new governor.

President Charles V. Jones has arranged a splendid program for the occasion. Bunola Kay will make a return appearance as entertainer as a guest of Mme. Teala Billini, and Governor DeMotte will give an important address.