

TORRANCE'S GOLDEN NUGGET

(An Editorial)

A golden nugget lies in the South Torrance fields waiting to be picked up and turned into a substantial asset in the immediate postwar era. Large private interests already have their eye on this golden money-making opportunity ready to snatch it up—but the City of Torrance has first claim to the rich stake, IF WE ACT QUICKLY.

We are talking about the so-called "Lomita Flight Strip," which is located entirely within the corporate limits of Torrance. Experienced aviators testify that from the standpoint of air currents, length of flight strip, and other characteristics advantageous to airports, the South Torrance air strip surpasses even the Los Angeles Municipal Airport.

Following unofficial reports that the airport at South Torrance was to be placed on the surplus list of the War Department landing facilities, and alarmed at the activities of private interests negotiating for the purchase of the flight strip, a tour of inspection was made by The Herald along with other civic leaders. Inquiries were also made as to the current status of the property.

It was disclosed that the United States Government recently paid \$380,000 for the 475 acre airport, obtaining the property through eminent domain from the Weston Ranch interests. It was learned from good authority that the policy of the War Department is to relinquish command of emergency ports of this type and nature to municipalities, wherever such city governments are willing to furnish adequate service to the flying public. The previous owners of the property—in this case the Weston Estate—have the first opportunity to buy back the property at the price received from the government. However, the Westons indicate their willingness to relinquish all rights to the property on the re-acquisition policy, which leaves the City of Torrance next in line of preference. In the case of the city acquiring the airport site and its improvements, it is believed that the cost would be only approximately one-fourth the price paid by the Federal Government—if the deal is handled properly.

Several major oil companies—interested in securing sales for their surplus gasoline now that it is no longer needed for war purposes—are believed to be ready to underwrite the purchase of the airport in exchange for leases or similar concessions. So it appears the airport may be acquired by the City without any tax levy or bond issue, if properly managed. Revenues from other concessions, such as repair shops, flying schools, testing facilities for airplane manufacturers, rentals of hangars, parking, etc. would net a profit over the upkeep of the airport, according to experienced airmen.

There are forty employees of North American Aviation, Inc., currently holding private pilot licenses, approximately the same number with Douglas Aircraft Co., at El Segundo, and undisclosed numbers in the general area. Add to the list the returning veterans who have been in aviation and who will undoubtedly wish to continue flying, and you have an estimated clientele of some five hundred pilots who would either have their own planes based at the Torrance airport or would rent aircraft maintained there by an operator.

The airport was used for a time as a sub-base for March Field operation and an emergency Western Defense Command utility. The main runway is 1½ miles and there are a number of supplementary runways for taxiing and cross-wind landing and taking-off. A nose hangar and a number of barrack buildings have been installed. Landing lights, border lights, radio station and range-finder, together with other valuable equipment go to make this airport an up-to-date operation.

If the City Council negotiated for the procurement of this airport, it would entail making some improvements, employing a capable airport manager, A & E mechanics, installing refueling service, repair shops, restaurant facilities, parts and supplies departments. All of these, with the possible exception of the airport manager and his mechanical staff, could be contracted under concession arrangements.

Private flying will be taboo at the Los Angeles Municipal Airport owing to the pattern flying hazards where airline operations are carried on. The Torrance airport is the only airport between Los Angeles and the harbor. This will mean that all private flying operations in the entire trade area and surrounding territory will be based here.

Airmail pickup and passenger pickup service would be rendered. At the present time, a potential airline passenger is required to travel to the key airports by car or company bus. This ordinarily takes two hours or longer. The automobile travel to and from these key airports takes longer than the actual elapsed flying time to arrive at destinations. The same holds true of the airmail service. Airmail and passenger pickup service would obviate these unnecessary and long delays as the time saving element of air transportation is its only feature. Airmail and passengers could be flown from the Torrance airport to the Los Angeles Municipal Airport in a few moments, where immediate airline connections could be made.

Torrance needs an airport—and no time should be lost in snatching this golden opportunity to acquire it.

GILBERT, HITCHCOCK AND TOLSON VOTE TO SUSTAIN ACTION SELLING BUS LINE

Councilman N. H. Cuccel set a well-planned trap for three of his colleagues last Friday night, sprang it and caught Mayor W. H. Tolson, Councilman J. E. Hitchcock and Councilman C. M. Gilbert.

Voting on their stern conviction that they, as duly elected representatives of the people of Torrance, had a lawful right to sell the municipal bus line to interests represented by Charles F. Koors, the councilman trio was maneuvered with deftness into voting:

1. That they did not want the sale of the bus lines referred to the people for their judgment.
2. That they did not want the bus lines referred to the people under provisions of Act 5203.
3. That they refuse to rescind their action of July 24 selling the lines to Koors for \$65,000, plus inventory of stock, supplies and tools.

All three of the councilmen so voting made it plain that they had no objection to referring the matter to the people, but they were voting on their conviction and the opinion of City Attorney J. E. McCall that their action was legal, and that they as elected representatives of the people had the right to dispose of the lines without the vote of the people just as the lines were created without the vote of the people.

In either case, it was pointed out, a motion to table would have avoided their embarrassment, but Cuccel's campaign to get additional evidence to use

NORTH TORRANCE WATER DISTRICT REPORT SHOWS STABILITY OF PROPOSAL

Annexation of 160 acres of county land south of 190th st. at the Redondo Beach city line is included in the proposal for formation of Municipal Water District No. 2 in North Torrance which Taylor & Taylor, consulting engineers, declare will show an income of some \$60,000 a year against operating cost of about \$40,850.



Picture: Courtesy Bob Roberts RECEIVES WINGS. Charles T. Rippey, Jr., left Tuesday for Douglas, Ariz., following leave with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Rippey, of 1611 El Prado. His leave followed exercises at Douglas Army Airfield where he received his wings and was graduated as a flight officer. His work entails flying the new B 25's.

Steel Men At Work As Parley Is Undertaken

Local Union 1414, through their president A. McJannett, issued the following statement to The Herald reporter, Aug. 20:

"Local Union 1414, United Steelworkers of America, C.I.O., voted at 3:30 p.m., Friday Aug. 17, to resume work. The Union was not on strike but had notified management, upon their refusal to negotiate with union, that when management was willing to negotiate the men would return to work which they did the moment management set the time for negotiations, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m., Aug. 21, at the Hermosa Biltmore Hotel."

No information could be obtained as to the result of this meeting other than both management and labor officials were satisfied as to the results of their negotiation, according to A. McJannett.

A special meeting is to be held Friday night of the members and it is said that the results of the negotiation will be bared to the members.

G.P. Hook-up To MWD Line Is Approved

General Petroleum Corp. becomes Torrance's biggest customer for water as a result of action of the City Council Tuesday night in approving the connection of the big refinery to Metropolitan Water District's 16-inch main on Crenshaw Blvd. just east of the refinery.

Action of the council was unanimous, on recommendation of Manager William Stanger, of Water District No. 1. The water to be used by General is essential to its expansion, and it will be metered by the City of Torrance. In the motion to approve the connection, Councilman J. E. Hitchcock stipulated that any funds derived from sale of water be applied to the city's indebtedness to the Metropolitan Water District, thus reducing the tax rate which is 50 cents per \$100 assessed valuation this year.

RAISE IN PAY
The City Council, Friday night increased the rate of pay for maintenance of radio mobile units for the Police Department from \$10 per week to \$12.50 per week. Charles J. Long, radio engineer, maintains the radio equipment and the increase was due to the addition of one set.

Torrance Chamber of Commerce Campaign To Build Membership

A community-wide membership campaign was launched this week by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, in order to widen the scope of participation in chamber activities and strengthen the financial status of the organization. This action, announced by President Reed H. Parkin, was taken following a meeting of Chamber directors Tuesday evening.

"The Chamber of Commerce is now operating on a self-supported basis, free of tax-money subsidy. We are anxious to have every business, professional and industrial concern, as well as to have every resident who is interested in the development of Torrance, enrolled as members," stated President Parkin.

"The problems of postwar conversion, now suddenly thrust upon us can be turned into vast community betterment and development assets if we all pull together through the Chamber of Commerce," continued Parkin, "and for this reason we are inviting all firms and individuals interested in the community to share in this opportunity to develop Torrance by taking a membership and actively serving on committees in the Chamber."

Five Classifications
Memberships have been grouped in five classifications, according to Robert I. Plomert, Jr., directors in charge of the membership drive, as follows:

A—Non-business, resident membership, \$12 per year;
B-1—Very small commercial (not more than two staff members) \$25 per year;
B-2—Commercial (small industrial companies, professional office), \$60 per year;
B-3—Larger Commercial, including chain stores and banks, \$100 per year;
C—Industrial and public utilities, \$100 to \$500 per year.

To strengthen Board
At present the chamber has 85 active members, including Dr. Rollin R. Smith, veterinarian; C. Earl Conner, postmaster; John Stroth, police chief; and John E. McMaster, fire chief, who joined the chamber this week. The goal of the directors is at least 200 members, which are needed to meet the annual budget of \$8000 for operating costs, according to Blaine Walker, executive secretary.

President Parkin stated that the chamber board will be immediately brought up to the full membership of nine directors, and it is the adopted policy of the board to fill vacancies with local residents. Present directors are: Reed H. Parkin, president; Hillman R. Lee, treasurer; I. Washner, Robert L. Plomert, Jr., Grover C. Whyte, George Chapman and Charles V. Jones.

BIG NAMES APPEAR IN LINEUP AS CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL PLAY ENTERS DECISIVE STAGE

Baseball fans are in for some real treats as the Southern California championship baseball tournament in Torrance ball park reaches the decisive stage with some teams falling by the wayside and other fighting to maintain their top positions.

Tonight will see two fast two-time winners meet for the privilege of playing the favored Rosebell Plumbers Sunday night. The game tonight will be between Standard Oil of El Segundo and Pacific Clay Products.

Standard has defeated Signal Oil, now eliminated, and Arcadia, in the tournament, while Pacific Clay Products won over Paramount Studio and the fast Pacific Pipe Lines nine.

Rosebell won the right to enter the four-game fourth round of the tournament Monday night by defeating Bondy's All Stars 5 to 1.

The winner Sunday night is the contender for the Southern California championship and will meet a team yet to be selected in the 30th game. If this team and it will be either Pacific Clay, Standard Oil or Rosebell Plumbers, wins the 30th game, the tournament will be over in a fast Laker day game.

If the opponent wins (and they will be the winner of the game 29) a 31st game will be played between the two to decide the championship as this is a double elimination tournament.

Pacific Clay Products' Outfit is managed by Joe Miller, and it is made up, with but a couple of exceptions, of United States Marines who have had from two to three years' overseas service. They are stationed at El Toro Marine Air Base.

They are just baseball players at heart, Miller told the Torrance Herald, and while the big leagues are smiling on a couple of the boys there are no real present-day professionals among them.

For instance, Red Edwards, (Continued on Page 4)

Oregon Herald Reader Sends \$10 To Vets' Fund

It remained for the Torrance Herald to tell the members of Bakery and Confectionery Workers Local Union No. 114 Portland, Ore., about the Veterans Memorial Building plans of Post No. 2551, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Torrance, and the articles have brought at least \$10 from out-of-town sources.

Mrs. Bernice Lefelman, whose husband, John Lefelman, Jr., is business agent for the union, mailed a check for that amount to Commander C. Earl Conner, of the post.

"We have been reading of the activity in Torrance in raising funds for the Veterans' building," Mrs. Lefelman said. "We get the Torrance Herald every week, and its looks like Torrance is going right ahead."

TO FORMER BASE
Lt. Harvel Guttenfelder, Jr., AAP, has returned to his former base, Luke Field, Phoenix, Ariz., from Waco, Texas.

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CITY COUNCIL Buys Trophy For Baseball Champ

American Legion Post No. 170, Torrance, co-sponsors with the Southern California Baseball Association in the championship double-elimination tournament being played nightly in Torrance ball park, informed the City Council Tuesday night that success of the tournament was exceeding expectations, both for gate receipts and quality of games.

As a result of the advertising value of the games the council, upon this report, decided to buy a \$50 trophy for the winning team.

The council also decided to buy uniforms costing \$500 for members of the Torrance Athletic Club team, recently eliminated in the tournament. The team will continue to play other games all winter, it was said. The Chamber of Commerce requested that the uniforms be purchased by the city.

Cuccel's Firing Of Callihan Was Illegal

Councilman N. H. Cuccel did not have the legal authority to discharge H. C. Callihan, No. 1 bus driver of the Torrance line, City Attorney J. E. McCall informed the City Council Tuesday night.

The opinion was ordered forwarded to the Civil Service Board which was to conduct a hearing on Callihan's case.

Callihan's point that Cuccel did not have a legal right to discharge a civil service employee being sustained, it will have a bearing on the status of all other city civil service workers, it was pointed out.

The civil service board had "sustained" Cuccel's discharge of Callihan, but the city attorney's ruling in effect declares that this action also was illegal.

CAR STOLEN
J. F. Newkirk, 1617 Acacia ave., reported that his car, a 1935 Chevrolet coupe was stolen while parked in the front of his residence, August 18. Torrance police report the car has not been recovered as of this date.

WAR'S END SLOWS BUILDING CAMPAIGN OF VETERANS, BUT MEMORIAL DRIVE IS GAINING

Commander C. Earl Conner, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and chairman of the veteran memorial building campaign, reported that the fund-raising efforts of the various divisions still is progressing. When contacted by a representative of the Torrance Herald, Conner stated that the cessation of hostilities naturally has slowed down the momentum, but that the ultimate goal of \$20,000 from industry, commerce and citizens will be reached soon, and that he anticipated completion of the memorial and center by the end of the year.

"We want to be able to hand over the key as New Year gift!" Continuing, Conner said: "Now that World War II is over, fifteen millions of men and women have served in our armed forces, and with the exception of necessary armies of occupation and standing regular army, navy and marines, will be flocking back to community life all over the nation."

"The veteran's home town is best equipped to help him return to civilian life in a satisfactory and effective manner, providing that all resources are utilized. While the legal rights and privileges granted World War I veterans are more comprehensive than in any previous war and extensive government facilities exist to assist veterans, it will be up to the groups and individuals of Torrance to see that his increased skill, self-reliance and maturity are fully utilized as a postwar asset by this community—and by the nation."

TORRANCE CITY TAX RATE CUT BY CITY COUNCIL; LEVY FOR YEAR 1945-46 IS \$1.11

Torrance became one of the few cities of the Western United States to cut its tax rate when the City Council Tuesday night fixed the 1945-46 rate at \$1.11 per \$100 assessed valuation. This is a reduction of three cents from the \$1.14 of last year. The tax rate for the general fund was cut two cents and for the library fund one cent. The library fund has a substantial surplus, it was pointed out.

The general fund rate is 93 cents this year; parks, music and advertising, 10 cents; general promotion, 1 cent; public library, 4 cents; bond election, Sept. 27, 1935, 2 cents; public assembly hall, 1 cent. The rate for taxpayers living in the Municipal Water District No. 1 will be 25 cents higher, the same as last year, and the Metropolitan Water District rate will be 50 cents this year as compared with 48 cents last year. The schools also contemplate an increase of about 3 cents per \$100, and a like increase is due from the county, it is said.

However, the city has been able to pare original budget estimates to bring about the decrease, according to Mayor W. H. Tolson.

The assessed valuation of Torrance this year, both districts, is on the secured base, \$26,023,360, unsecured, \$1,012,100, a total of \$27,035,460.

Last year the secured base was \$23,219,940 unsecured, \$4,240,750, a total of \$27,459,690.

The secured base is the figure upon which the city must set its tax rate. While it is true that the secured tax roll has increased, this is accounted for by the fact that approximately \$2,500,000 of this total was on the unsecured tax roll last year.

Total figures above do not include solvent credits which are taxable at \$1.00 per \$1,000, of which the city gets only one-third.

A budget of \$443,147 was adopted by the City Council Tuesday night, and contemplated revenue approximates that figure, and the actual revenue for last year was shown to be \$420,468.70.

The actual expenditures last year were shown to be \$345,192.05.

The budget this year includes: General administration, \$55,030; health and sanitation, \$9,300; protection of life and property, \$151,710; streets department, \$105,850; garbage department, \$8,080; recreation, \$15,390; parks, general, \$17,740; parks, advertising, \$27,000; miscellaneous, \$16,000; equipment, \$15,475; library, \$8,350; Walteria library, \$3,650; promotion and publicity, \$2,600.

FATHER, SON VACATION
A. E. Falk and son, Burton, left Friday for a week's fishing trip near Bishop.

Bradley stated that many referrals have been made for those who lost their jobs, and that there are more than 300 jobs open to be filled.

Bradley estimated that the unemployment relief payment checks had increased nearly 100 per cent. This, however, was more largely due to workers living within the Torrance area being terminated at the shipyards and other outside plants.

He was unable to predict at this time what the final terminations would figure for the local area.

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Ask the Professor
(By H. F. Noake)

Dear Professor: Will you please give me your idea of an optimist?

Answer: A baldheaded man looking at a window display of hair brushes.