

Torrance Herald

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Tracing Torrance History

Site of City Granted By a King to a Soldier

No tracing of the record of any community in Southern California can avoid reference to its own special heritage from Mexico and Old Spain.

The city of Torrance, located on a portion of a famous Spanish land grant, is no exception. The entire area of the original city, together with its later annexations, was but a small part of the Rancho San Pedro when it was granted to Juan Jose Dominguez in 1784.

The HERALD believes that its readers, very few of whom are Torrance residents, will be interested in the drama and romance of the days before Jared S. Torrance appeared on the local scene and founded the town which today bears his name.

By R. T. GILLINGHAM

The date of April 11, 1769, has an important significance in the history of California.

On that day, the Spanish ship San Carlos sailed into the Bay of San Diego, bringing a small band of missionaries and soldiers to begin the colonization of Alta California.

The combined expedition, barely 200 in all, was under the command of Gaspar de Portola, recently appointed as military governor of the new colony. Accompanying him was the leader of the Franciscan padres, Father Junipero Serra. And among the soldiers was a "leather jacket" veteran whose name was Juan Jose Dominguez.

AFTER THE BUILDING of the first presidio or fort on a hill near the upper bay, now known as Old Town, Father Serra founded the Mission San Diego de Alcalá on July 16, 1769. This began the famous chain of 21 Franciscan missions, eventually stretching north to Sonoma, above San Francisco. Three other presidios were built at Santa Barbara, Monterey, and San Francisco.

These early pioneering activities were not accomplished without considerable hardship, but by the year 1782 the missions and presidios extended from San Diego to San Francisco, and the Spanish control of Alta California was assured. The occupation of California was a defensive move on the part of Spain, to protect its claims against the English and the Russians. Spanish sea captains had explored the coast as early as 1542, but the entire region had remained neglected for over 200 years.

THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

Coleman Site Gets Beauty Certificate

Coleman Engineering Company of Torrance was announced as one of the winners of the Los Angeles Beautiful search for industrial plants that have not neglected to beautify their plant sites.

The entry was submitted through the Chamber of Commerce and Mrs. R. O. Young, chairman of the 17th Congressional District of Southern California, according to Chamber President Fred W. Mill.

Coleman representatives headed by President Ted Coleman accepted the winning certificate from the Los Angeles Beautiful Committee at a banquet at the Biltmore Hotel last week sponsored by the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

Jaycees Hold Box Social

Members of the Torrance Junior Chamber of Commerce will attend a swimming party and box social tonight at the Nickel's Ranch in Waverly. It was announced here yesterday by State Director Ted Hill, chairman of the event.

The affair will start at 7:30 with swimming and the box social will follow.

16-YEAR-OLD HELD FOR ATTACK TRIAL



MOTHER STANDS BY... Mrs. Violet H. Wilson, mother of 16-year-old Wilburn A. Henderson, accused of assaulting and shooting a 15-year-old Torrance school girl, talks with her son before his preliminary hearing here Tuesday, while B. R. Cody, the boy's attorney, confers with them. Young Henderson was later bound over to Superior Court for trial on the charges.

Victim Seeking \$410,000 Balm

Sixteen-year-old Wilburn A. Henderson, charged with shooting, raping, and robbing a local high school girl, was bound over to Superior Court for trial here Tuesday following a closed preliminary hearing before Torrance Municipal Judge Donald Armstrong.

At about the same time, a civil action was filed in the Inglewood Superior Court asking \$410,000 from the youth, his mother, Violet Wilson, and stepfather, George Wilson, for the alleged attack.

Judge Armstrong cleared the courtroom Tuesday at the request of Atty. B. R. Cody, who is representing 16-year-old Henderson. Only witnesses on the stand were permitted in the room while the Judge heard testimony from the victim and other witnesses.

THE 15-YEAR-OLD high school girl wept on the stand as she related events of the August afternoon when she was raped at gunpoint and then shot, the HERALD later learned. Her testimony is believed to be essentially the same as was reported to police at the time of the incident.

Spencer Sedgewick, also 18, who lives at 22401 Shadybrook Drive, reportedly told the court how Henderson had grappled with him in the living room of the victim's home Aug. 26, hit him over the head with a .22 caliber rifle, then sped away after taking money from his pocket and the girl's purse.

HENDERSON, WHOSE mother is here from their Colorado Springs home for the proceedings, did not take the stand.

The youth was ordered to Long Beach Superior Court for arraignment Nov. 12. Bail of \$10,000 was continued, and Henderson is in custody in lieu of the bail.

The civil action filed by Atty. Boris Woolley on behalf of the girl and her mother, alleges damages for the gunshot wounds of arm and chest and other injuries suffered as a result of the attack total nearly half a million dollars.

THE WILSONS were named in the suit with the allegation that they had aided and abetted the attack.

Hire Bus To Fight Dump Bid

A forty-five passenger bus has been chartered by the Del Amo Civic Improvement Assn., to transport protesting homeowners to a hearing to be held this morning by the County Regional Planning Commission regarding issuance of a permit for the establishment of a dump within 500 feet of their homes.

There are 216 private residences in the five-block area of the proposed dump bounded by 208th St. on the north, 204th on the south, Vermont on the east, and a line running south from Bertardo on the west.

The bus will depart from the 208th St. and Normandie Ave. service station at 9 a.m. for the Los Angeles County Engineering Bldg., 168 W. 2nd St. The hearing has been set for 10 a.m. in room 101.

PRESENTING A petition hearing more than 1,000 signatures to protest the granting of a permit for establishment of the dump will be John Wightman president of the Del Amo Civic Improvement Assn. The group will also be represented by counsel.

Seeking authorization to establish the dump is Bert Marlow of the Escondido Corp., who also operates a dump at 208th St. and Figueroa.

Opponents of the proposed dump charge that it would serve as a menace to the health of neighbors, would interfere with the peace, comfort, rest, and sleep of residents, and that its location and use would reduce the value of homes in the vicinity.

DEMOS LEAD LOCALLY

41,807 Voters Eligible For Tuesday's Election

A record total of 41,807 registered voters will be eligible to go to the polls here Tuesday in one of the hottest election contests in California's history, according to City Clerk A. H. Bartlett. Voters will be asked to mark a ballot which also reaches a record proportion with a full slate of candidates and ballot proposals.

The largest group of voters in Torrance, as usual, will be the Democrats who have registered 15,180. Republicans have 15,028 registered here, while other registrations include 11 Prohibitionists, 1273 who decline to state, and 307 miscellaneous registrants.

The previous registration total here was 37,723 prior to the Sept. 11 deadline for Tuesday's election registration, Bartlett said.

TOP CONTESTS here Tuesday will follow statewide lines as Senator William F. Knowland and Attorney General Pat Brown battle for the governor's seat; Gov. Goodwin Knight and Congressman Claire Engle clash for the seat vacated by Senator Knowland; and Cecil King, Congressman from the 17th District since 1942, meets a challenger in San Pedro's Republican Leonard D. Miceli.

Democrats Brown and King are listed by poll takers and others as odds-on favorites for election while the Knight-Engle is rated by many to be a standoff.

LIKE THE REST of California, top local interest will be on ballot propositions 15, 17, and 18.

Proposition 15 would eliminate property tax exemptions now granted to private nonprofit schools below the collegiate level if approved. Proposition 17 would reduce sales tax and hike income tax schedules, and Proposition 18 would outlaw that compulsory union shop.

Sentiment is sharply divided on 16 (The HERALD has recommended a "No" vote, everybody apparently is against 17, and you pay your money and take a chance on 18. Labor organizations are strongly opposed to 18 and have said it would be a referendum on the issue of the right to work.

AT 11 A.M. MONDAY, three North Torrance divisions will meet. Gathering at the St. Catherine Labour Church, 3846 Redondo Beach Blvd., will be divisions 734 and 735, headed by Mrs. H. H. Moore and Mrs. Richard Gerald, respectively. Meeting at the home of Mrs. William Deuel, division chairman, 4914 Hallway, will be division 736. Unit chairman for North Torrance is Mrs. Jack White.

Each of the three divisions in the South Torrance unit will meet separately. Division 731 will meet today with Mrs. Lloyd Baxley, chairman, while section chairmen and volunteers of division 736 plan on holding kickoff meetings at the home of Mrs. Warren Boggs, division chairman, just before the drive gets underway Thursday. Mrs. F. L. Buxton will meet her section chairmen at her home, 237 Via de Los Miradores, at 1:30 p.m. Monday. The section chairmen will distribute kits to workers in the Hollywood Riviera area at individual section coffee hours Thursday morning.

Residential Workers To Kick Off Chest Drive

Eight hundred volunteer door-to-door workers for the Community Chest residential campaign which kicks-off next Thursday, will receive their working kits and assignments at district and section meetings to be held this week, it was announced today by Mrs. Ruth Schrum, residential chairman.

Central Torrance unit will hold a rally at the YWCA, 2520 Carson St., at 8 p.m. Monday. Chairman will be Mrs. J. A. DeJaire, assisted by division chairmen Mrs. Harmon, Mrs. Payne, and Mrs. Towers. Attending the meeting will be section chairmen and workers representing divisions 732, 733, and 737.

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FINAL REPORTS will be turned in Thursday, Nov. 12, when workers from the entire Harbor area meet at the Plaza Hotel for luncheon. At that time reports will be made to the district and the money to be raised from the various divisions will be turned over to the Harbor area.

A Penny for your Thoughts

The newly organized Torrance Co-Ed Grey-Y Club suggested a question for this column. Your HERALD photographer asked three boys and three girls, who have just joined, "Why did you join the Co-Eds?"

Susan Bobrick, 11, 2416 California:

"Why did I join the Co-Ed Grey-Y Club? Because I thought it would be lots of fun. I like the idea of being in a fixed group club and think it is a good organization."

Paul Gillingham, 11, 1850 Sepulveda:

"I joined the Co-Eds because I think we will all have good, clean fun. I like group activities and I like being part of things. We are electing officers and hope I am picked for one."

Kathleen Skire, 11, 23101 Dana:

"I joined the Co-Ed Club so I would have something to do after school. I like to have definite plans for such activities. I think this will be good training for all of us."

Ronnie Phillips, 11, 1774 Santa Fe:

"I joined to have fun. I think YMCA organizations for youngsters is a great thing. It keeps them out of trouble and is good training for both boys and girls."

Defores Jensen, 12, 2711 Sepulveda:

"I thought it would be fun to join up and so I did. Y activities are helpful and good training. I think I can learn a lot of things by being a member and attending the meetings."

Iron Clark, 12, 2432 Andrea:

"I joined to have fun and to have something to do after school. I always wanted to join a Y group and when I heard about the Co-Eds, I came over to see Mr. Wilcox and Mr. Cannon and joined."



COBINS JUNIOR GRADE... The wickets and goblets will be out to force on six of the city's play areas. It was reported here yesterday by the Recreation Department. Here Rachel Jacobs (left) and Jeri Lubahn, both 9, get ready for the McWester Park site. The preschool party will be from 1 to 5 tomorrow and the after children from 7 to 9 p.m. Parties beginning at 4 p.m. will be held at El Nido, El Estero, Sea-Aire, Torrance, and Waverly Parks.