

CONSTRUCTION STARTS ON ARMORY JUNE SET FOR COMPLETION DATE

Escapee Arrested Thru Hitch-Hiker's Mistake

It's a pretty involved story, but clues supplied by a young hitch-hiker led to the arrest in Lomita last week of an escaped convict who told inmates that he wanted "to get out to kill his wife."

Taken into custody at a Lomita motel on Pacific Coast highway was Clarence E. Northam, jr.

A heavy guard had been ordered to protect his ex-wife and 4-year-old boy after the prisoner's escape was made known.

Northam, awakened out of a sound sleep by San Pedro detectives, denied any plan to kill his ex-wife, Mrs. Naomi Northam of Pasadena.

Hitch-Hiker
Arrested by police was 19-

year-old Ray Short of Venice. Short, who was hitch-hiking, flagged down a police car by mistake shortly after leaving the motel. His own car had gone dead on him.

Short told of being offered a ride by Northam, police said, and a key found in his pocket led to the motel.

Unarmed

Northam, who stole another car from a parking lot near the bar to replace the stolen vehi-

SHOT KILLS LOMITA MAN

Firing a bullet through his head, a 30-year-old Lomita man killed himself during the night of November 29-21, according to sheriff's deputies.

Raymond William Wheeler, of 2119 W. 250th street, was found lying across a bed, with a .38 blue steel revolver and a box of shells, nearby.

He was discovered by his father. The father was unable to advance a motive for his son's death.

clé taken by Short, was unarmed when Detective Phillips entered to motel.

Taxes—'Tain't Too Popular A Topic, But He Bearded It

Anything may have happened last night in North Torrance with the discussion of a very touchy subject close to every homeowner's pocket book—taxes.

Billed as main speaker at an open meeting of the North Torrance Civic Improvement Association at McMaster hall was Assistant County Assessor Rolland E. Bouck, who was to speak on "The Operation of the Los Angeles County Assessor's Office" to be followed by an audience discussion.

The outcome of the meeting could not be determined at press time.

Jumped

"Property taxes, in some instances, reportedly have jumped more than 65 per cent over last year on a number of North

Torrance homes," according to John Crain, publicity chairman.

"We are at a loss to explain this excessive taxation," Crain said.

As an example, Crain said that a three-bedroom home, taxed at \$108 during 1953, has been increased to \$190 for the current tax year, a jump of 57 per cent.

HEROIC TEACHER HONORED

Richard Dankworth, Alexander Hamilton high school football coach, whose eye was injured recently as the result of the explosion of a dynamite cap which had been ignited and placed under a school note book, was honored this week by the county board of supervisors in a resolution, introduced by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, citing him for his act of heroism.

A native of Los Angeles County, Dankworth attended local public schools, and obtained his college education at Pepperdine college, graduating there in June, 1952. He resides at 4322 W. 176th street, Torrance.

Supervisor Hahn's resolution pointed out that Dankworth's action in trying to prevent the explosion of the dynamite cap "possibly saved the lives of many students" who were in the vicinity of the explosion.

New Zone Territory Considered

A restricted commercial zoning classification for properties near residential districts is being considered by the Planning Commission.

Under this classification commercial properties in the area would have to meet classifications laid down by the commission.

Local Unit to Have Four Officers, 90 Men

Construction was begun last week on the new Torrance Armory and it won't be long now before it will be ready for occupancy—in fact, June 1 has been set as the likely date for its completion.

This news came this week from Capt. Horton P. Smith, adjutant of the 132nd Armored Engineer Battalion of California's 40th Armored Division in Manhattan Beach.

A big celebration and dance in the new armory going up at Lincoln and Cabrillo will help mark its official opening upon its completion, Capt. Smith stated.

Successful Campaign
Erection of the armory will successfully climax a four-year campaign led by the Torrance Press and actively supported by Assemblyman Vincent Thomas.

The \$157,000 armory will consist of a 50 by 100 foot drill hall which will include two offices, a supply room, kitchen, and locker room.

The structure, being built by B. W. Horn Construction Co., Glendale, is of a pre-cast concrete tilt-up variety.

Local Strength
The local unit's strength will be four officers and 90 men. Stationed here will be the Bridge Company of the 132nd Combat Engineer Battalion of the California 40th Division.

Commanding officer will be 1st Lt. Carl E. Williams of Compton, with M/Sgt. John L. Garcia of Torrance being stationed at the armory on permanent duty.

Once the armory is completed the present recruitment campaign will go into high gear, Capt. Smith stated. Interested individuals may contact the Manhattan Beach armory, 532 36th street, Manhattan Beach.

4 New C of Directors Announced

Four newly elected directors to serve on the Chamber of Commerce board of directors were announced this week by Chamber President Paul Loranger.

Elected by ballot by the Chamber of Commerce membership were Henry W. Creeger, Dr. Gerald M. Eastham, M.D., Paul D. Loranger, and King Williams.

No fifth director was appointed at a special meeting of the assembled directors Tuesday, and no appointment will be made until the next meeting, December 13.

The new directors will serve on the Chamber board for three years beginning January 1, 1955.

where the Torrance unit is presently located.

The unit meets Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Call FR. 2-6611 for additional information.

Pivotal Spot

The new armory will serve as a pivotal spot for such communities as Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach, Lomita, Gardena, and Wilmington. Torrance is in the center of a critical defense area which was constantly under special guard during World War II.

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