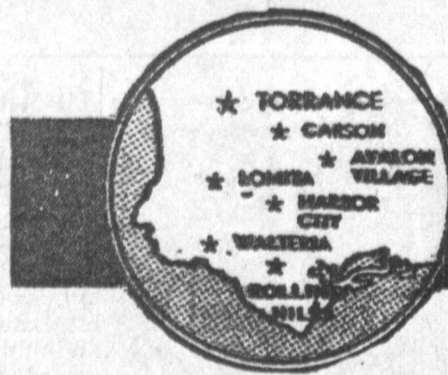


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TORRANCE PRESS

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VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 102

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 1962

3238 SEPULVEDA BLVD., TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA

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BOOK TORRANCE MAN AS SLAYER OF TWO FORMER BUSINESS PARTNERS

CONCEALED WEAPONS . . .

Torrance Police Arrest Three Burglary Suspects

A trio of burglary suspects was arrested by Torrance police officers Thursday night in a car at 166th St. and Crenshaw Blvd.

Suspected of burglarizing a Torrance residence and also of taking a check writing machine from Alphatronics Inc., 1033 Engracia St. on March 26 are Guillermo M. Ruiz, 24, William J. Sweeney, 30, and Virginia K. Iginsky, 25, of Los Angeles.

The three were apprehended after officers on routine patrol noticed them and

radioed the detectives' department for assistance. A unit was dispatched and the three suspects were taken into custody. A .22-caliber pistol, found in the trunk of Sweeney's car, was taken to the station.

Sweeney, an unemployed technician, is charged with burglary, violating the state narcotics code, cashing forged checks, and carrying a concealed weapon.

Booked on a narcotics charge as well as the burglary charge was Ruiz, an unemployed welder.

Runaway Car

A runaway car plunged over a cliff Thursday and landed in the backyard of a Torrance residence.

Car, which belonged to Mrs. Grace McFee, was parked in a driveway at 22421 Redbeam St. Brakes slipped and the vehicle rumbled down the street, narrowly missing pedestrians, crashed through a fence, toppled over the 20-foot embankment and came to a halt. No one was injured.

Bond Election

The Torrance Board of Education will consider an eight-million dollar bond issue election during a 7:30 p.m. meeting tomorrow night, reported William R. Hanson, board president.



OVER AND OVER—Driver William Joseph Martinez, 22, of Wilmington, was severely injured early Friday morning when he lost control of his car on Torrance's dangerous Crenshaw Curve. Car flipped over and over, throwing Martinez clear. He was taken

to Little Company of Mary Hospital for treatment of severe lacerations and a possible broken leg. Funds for straightening out the dangerous segment of road were recently allocated by the state, but work has not yet started.

—Press Photo

DEFER LIFE SENTENCE . . .

Court Resets Hearing Date on New Trial For Torrance Area Youth; Now April 30

Final sentencing, and bid for a new trial, in the case of Billy Romain Smith, has been reset for April 30, it was reported yesterday by court officials. Hearing had formerly been scheduled for tomorrow.

Intense interest in the case developed throughout the area following an interview, carried exclusively in the Torrance

Press, with the suspect's pretty 18-year-old wife, Sharon K. Smith.

Floods of letters, many of which were carried in the Press' Letters to the Editor column, have been received by this newspaper, each feeling that the conduct of the trial and the earlier police procedures following the arrest of the 21-year-old suspect, were "irregular."

NEW TRIAL

In the interview, which was carried in the April 1 edition of the Press, Mrs. Smith said that she had instructed the family attorney, Robert Krause of Long Beach, to seek a new trial for her husband, convicted on charges of kidnapping and assault, and pointed out that each time one of the alleged offenses was committed her husband had been in the presence of qualified witnesses who had testified to this effect at the trial.

She said that one of the court officials had chosen to call them "alibi witnesses" and had possibly influenced the jury to disregard them.

In one particular instance, she said, at the exact moment the alleged crime took place, her husband was with a group of 13 people celebrating the wedding anniversary of her parents.

Mrs. Smith further pointed

out that her husband, in no way, answered the description originally given the police by the victims, had never owned clothing such as the assailant is alleged to have worn and had never owned a gun such as the assailant is alleged to have carried.

DESCRIPTION

Original reports stated that the suspect was 5'10" tall, weighed about 185 lbs., and had dark bushy hair.

Smith is approximately 5'5" tall, weighs about 130 lbs., and has worn a crew cut for years.

Smith, a cook, was arrested by a police stake-out in January. At that time county and city strip police agencies were under considerable pressure because of a series of laundromat holdups, kidnappings and assaults.

Defense attorneys are also investigating the possibility that a youth, arrested recently in Newhall following a series of identical crimes, might be the local marauder.

The Newhall suspect answers perfectly the original physical description given by victims to the police.

Mrs. Smith Friday thanked the Press for its efforts in her husband's behalf and pledged a continuing fight to prove his innocence on all of the charges.

Prizes, Special Services for Visitors at New Guaranty Bank

Torrance's new, independent Guaranty Bank was formally opened Thursday morning in its interim quarters on Hawthorne Blvd., just south of the Del Amo Shopping Center.

A month-long celebration is planned, with a drawing for valuable prizes. Winners will be announced on May 23. To celebrate the opening, the bank is mailing special announcements containing

lucky numbers to residents of the area.

Visitors to the bank during the opening month may register their numbers and be eligible for prizes which include a Packard Bell color TV set, Packard Bell hi-fi set, and hundreds of dollars worth of free Guaranty Bank savings accounts. The bank is welcoming all registrants of lucky numbers with a free gift of a specially designed pocket secretary.

Opens Fire With Gun Concealed Under Folded Newspaper

An upset Torrance resident, at one time part owner of a Redondo Beach insulation company, shot and killed two of his former partners Friday night.

He also fired a shot at another former partner, but missed.

Under arrest is Wesley DeLane Johnson, 37, of 5216 Beran St., accused of killing Edward John Mello, 38, of Manhattan Beach, and Richard Jones, 35, of Inglewood.

Joseph Ambriz, 27, of Hawthorne, the third partner, said that Johnson fired one shot at him and that he fell as though hit. He said that Johnson apparently assumed that he was dead and left.

DEATH SCENE

Scene of the shooting was the offices of the South Bay Insulation company, 1001 Pacific St., Redondo Beach.

Ambriz told investigating officers that the four had started the company as a mutual interest but that Johnson had been "drinking, neglecting his work and taking out more money than we were making" and that the partners had forced him out in early January.

Friday evening, he said, Johnson appeared at the offices of the firm and demanded to be let back in. When the trio refused, Johnson pulled a 38-caliber revolver from under a folded paper and opened fire.

Redondo police praised the efforts of local law enforcement agencies particularly the Torrance police, who joined in the search for the suspect.

ARREST

Torrance officers Tom Pattishall and James Bell

finally made the arrest at the apartment of Johnson's mother, 350 Palos Verdes Blvd.

The suspect's wife, Germaine (Jerry) Johnson, of the Beran St. address, volunteered to go into the home and talk to him after it was learned that he was there.

She convinced him that resistance was useless and he turned the pistol over to her. She then called Pattishall and Bell, who made the arrest.

Johnson was turned over to Redondo Beach detectives for questioning and booking.

Mrs. Johnson told officers that he was also part owner of a similar insulation company in Fontana, and said that he had been "unhappy and brooding" since his eviction from the Redondo Beach operation.

AIRPORT REVENUE BOND . . .

Flying Trip to Capital by Councilman, City Attorney Assures Speedy Passage

Two Torrance city officials made a flying trip to Sacramento Thursday in a successful effort to secure ratification of the airport revenue bond issue before the State Assembly and Senate recessed.

Newly reelected Councilman J. A. Beasley and City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier reported Friday morning that the two houses had "ratified the bond issue with a concurrent resolution in the shortest time in the history of the Assembly and the Senate."

Total time, from its introduction into the Assembly to a final voice ballot by the Senate, was just one hour, Beasley said.

Beasley said.

He pointed out that the approval by the legislature would save nearly a year in time and a great deal of money, in adding the improvements to the municipal airport.

"Waiting a year before purchasing the land would have forced the city to pay an additional premium because of increased values," he said. "As it now stands the city can release the bonds immediately."

As a concurrent resolution the bill doesn't require the signature of Governor Edmund G. Brown.

"We had to get the res-

olution passed now or wait until next year,"

Beasley said.

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OFFICIAL CEREMONY—Civic dignitaries and banking officials Friday officiated at the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Citizens National Bank at 2599 Pacific Coast Hwy. in Rolling Hills Plaza. Shown turning the first shovelful of earth are Harold

Frentz, president of Torrance Chamber of Commerce, and R. P. Sherwood, senior vice-president of the bank, while James S. Bower and Albert Levitt, of Jefferson, Inc., look over plans for the structure.

—Press Photo



OPEN ON SCHEDULE—Opening day ceremonies for Torrance's only independent banking facility, the Guaranty Bank, were held Friday in interim quarters just south of Sepulveda on Hawthorne Blvd. Shown above dur-

ing the open house that followed the ceremony are Henry C. Griswold, chairman of the board; D. P. Loomis, president; Bobette King, "Miss Torrance"; and Hal Frentz, president of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce.

—Press Photo