

## THE CITY STALLS THE CLOSE OF ESCROW

The escrow on our beloved Ramona Parlor was supposed to close on February 28, 1997. All of our possessions were moved out, our tenant was gone, our side of the agreement was met. At the eleventh hour Barry Simon from Recreation and Parks Department informed us that the City didn't quite have all of the cash yet. Here are the details of what happened: Negotiating Committee Chairperson, Rosemarie Lippman placed several calls to Bob Holloway early in the last week of February in an attempt to discover the details of how the escrow should close. Bob Holloway never returned any phone calls. Finally, when the 28<sup>th</sup> arrived and we still had not received any information about how we would hand over the keys and receive the money, Rosemarie called Barry Simon. He was appalled that Bob Holloway had not contacted us and kept us informed of the funding glitch. Within minutes of the call, he had the elusive Bob Holloway on the phone and the two of them explained that because some of the money was coming from a federal source that they had to wait 21 days until a study could be completed for the Environmental Protection Agency and HUD. The letter that they sent us (as per our insistence) reads as follows:

This letter is to inform you that the City still desires to purchase your property. As soon as possible, the escrow department at Chicago Title Company will issue amended instructions to extend the closing date to April 30, 1997 or before.

Other City departments are involved in the funding of this project. One element of the Federal Funding portion requires a 21 day waiting period after the environmental document is filed and a written clearance in order to release the funds to escrow. This procedure is the reason we need to extend the escrow closing date. We will continue to pay for your reasonable operating expenses to include necessary fire and liability insurance premiums and for security services.

The letter is dated February 28, 1997 and is signed by Randall C. Bacon who is the General manager for the City of Los Angeles. We were disappointed, but not surprised by the City's action. Bob Holloway has not contacted us since the letter was faxed. The Escrow company has sent some more paperwork for us to sign and we told the officer that we would probably have to wait to sign until after our meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup> as we were uncertain of our authority to extend the escrow without the approval of our members. Additionally, Rosemarie requested that all further negotiations should be made in writing with copies sent to us and our attorney, Kevin Fiore.

Roberta Overton has still not received any money for our operating expenses since the beginning of the year. We are concerned and so is our attorney. We are forwarding all communication with the City to him to review and advise.

Our attorney has been advised to take an aggressive stance with the City from now on. They have operated in an unfair and unprofessional manner and it is time for us to put up our dukes. If they are looking for a fight they'll get it.

The Escrow papers will be brought to the next meeting. If you are interested in further details about the negotiations with the City, come to our next meeting. Your opinion is important, let us know what you think.

## MINUTES IN A MINUTE

Everything is almost moved out of the Museum and the rest of the items left in the hall should be out by February 21<sup>st</sup>. Rosemarie asked the membership for help to move the library and archives on Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Grand Parlor will be held the third week in may and we need to elect delegates to send to Concord. Nominated to represent the Parlor were; Frank Claro, Mario Zanotti, Fran Hubert, Harry Beardo and Dominic Billi. We will vote on who goes in March.

The brothers of the Pasadena Parlor were all voted into the Club. They brought \$1936.31 with them, but better than that they brought themselves. We were all thrilled to welcome them into our Parlor. Ramona will pay the dues for the eight members for the next two years.

Brother Fran Hubert reported on relocation progress. It looks like the City of Pasadena may be slightly interested. There are still a couple of buildings in San Gabriel and the possibility of housing the collection in a historic adobe. She should have more detailed information next month.

DDGP Ben White had us elect officers for the next six months. It was voted and approved that the current slate of officers should continue to serve.

Antoinette Paciulli offered the use of her pick up truck to move the current files for our club to Brother Art Claro's warehouse in Alhambra.

Brother Rosemarie reported that we will fill at least two busses for the Turnaround on march 5<sup>th</sup>.

Brother Roberta Overton gave the financial report. It would be nice if the City would reimburse us for some of our expenses. She continues to send in the bills and we should see some money soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

## PASADENA PARLOR MERGES WITH RAMONA #109

Ramona Parlor has undergone many recent changes, one of the best being the acceptance of eight new members from Pasadena Parlor. The fact that they chose to join Ramona, even though we just got thrown out of our fancy meeting place, is very encouraging and renews the true spirit of brotherhood that binds our members together. Ramona Parlor #109 will survive, grow and flourish.

Members make the difference...Welcome to boys from Pasadena...

- Douglas E. Granzow-member since 1947
- Homer H. Griffith-member since 1952
- Grady Hardy-member since 1956

- Eldon M. Hastain-member since 1933
- Thomas W. LeSage-member since 1946
- Harold H. Rodriques-member since 1965
- Ben White-member since 1946 (he might not be able to join as he is DDGP)
- Venancio Ybarra-member since 1961

### STATELINE TURNAROUND WAS A REAL *FUNRAISER!*

We had 93 paying passengers for our Third Annual Stateline Turnaround. The event was a huge success and all who joined us had a ball. All of the food was donated:

Claro's Italian Markets gave us delicious Italian sandwiches and a wonderful assortment of cookies.

Roberta Overton donated apples and tangerines. The Fuji apples were a real hit, juicy and crispy.

Verne and Laura Koenig brought cookies.

Mary Linda and George Daddona brought donuts.

Art and Angie Claro brought Chex Snacks.

Louie and Margaret Bisetti donated the beverages and brought us additional Bingo cards.

Rosemarie provided the popcorn, candy and videos.

A sincere thanks to all who helped make the trip a raging success.

Another big thank you needs to go to Brother Joe Claro and Friend of the Museum, Marion Ronchetti for hosting the Pomona Bus. They did a terrific job. Margaret Bisetti, Brother Roberta and Friend of the Museum Lottie Scavo also pitched in to help.

We ate until we could burst. We played Bingo in the way up and held a \$60 raffle based on arrival time that had gambler's on the edge of their seats. Frank Claro won the \$60 on the Pomona Bus and Pete Pianta won on the San Gabriel Bus. We also played poker for rolls of nickels and watched two videos on the way back; *Fly Away Home* and *Grumpier Old Men*. If you missed the trip this year, plan to join us next time. It was a lot of fun!

Ghostriders are the silent supporters that were unable to go, but wanted to help. This special group included: Mary and Joe Pesce, Ben White, George and Julia Lyman, Ann and Frank Ferrante, Sofia Rowe, martin Paul Diaz and John Schmolle. We really appreciate their constant support even through this difficult time.

Overall, we made about \$1200 for our efforts. The money will be put to good use once another location can be found for the Museum.

### PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Brother Fran Hubert, Al Lingua, Harry Beardo and George and Gloria Carone have all been working to encourage more young people to participate in the Native sons Public Speaking Contest.

Letters of invitation have been sent to 50 area schools. The contest will be held on April 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. More information will be given out at the March 13<sup>th</sup> General Meeting.

GENERAL MEETING  
GRAPE VINE ROOM  
SAN GABRIEL

Our next general meeting will be held in San Gabriel at the Grape Vine Room at about 7:00pm. Dinner is served at 6:00pm and earlybirds are welcome to come anytime after 3:00pm. Bring cards and dominos and relax while you visit with friends and brothers overlooking the oldest grapevine in the San Gabriel Valley.

The menu for this month is:

Roast beef  
Mashed Potatoes and Gravy  
Broccoli  
Tossed Green Salad

Pie  
Soft Drinks and Coffee

The cost of the dinner is \$6.00 with any profit made going to Cleft Palate. Don't be a bump on a log. Come and join the fun! Ample parking can be had next to the playhouse just off Mission Avenue.

SICK AND DISABLED

Vince Frontino who recovered from a heart attack, but unfortunately lost his leg to the knee, passed away this last month. We will always remember the delicious olives he used to bring to our meetings and will miss him.

Frank Borra died of a massive heart attack. It was totally unexpected and many of us are still in shock at his early demise.

Frank Frontino has a serious problem with an ulcer. He doing the best he can to cope.

Jack Berry is very ill and his wife Rosalie suffers with an irregular heartbeat.

Al Lingua's wife Betty had successful hip surgery and is recovering nicely.

Mario Brunasso had colon surgery, but is doing better.

Frank Vega is suffering with a terrible bout of pneumonia.

William Griffith has sadly passed away. He lived in Las Vegas, but maintained his membership.

Ario Pagliotti is recovering from hip surgery and is doing well.

On February 15, 1997, Grand President Frank Milani died of cancer. He had heart problems and his illness was complicated by pneumonia.

To all of our sick and disabled brothers we sincerely wish a speedy recovery. To the family and friends of our deceased brothers we offer our sympathy, support and prayers.

#### MUSEUM REPORT

The show of support by our members and friends who came and helped pack up the last of the Museum was overwhelming and appreciated. There was a lot to do, we packed 90 boxes of books, papers and records, but everyone pitched in enthusiastically. Special Thanks to those who helped:

Brother Pat Gabriele

Brothers George and Gloria Carone

Brother Roberta Overton

Brother Frank Claro

Brother Ben White

Brother Grady Hardy

Brother Joe La Casella

Brother Frank Claro

Brother Verne Koenig

Brother Rosemarie Lippman

Friend of the Museum, Lottie Scavo

Friend of the Museum, Nicole Daddona

Pat Gabriele made an interesting discovery while he was packing away some maps. He found a tribute to a friend of Biscailuz that was signed by Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry Truman. We were all quite excited about the find and like everything else, it was wrapped carefully in acid-free paper and packed safely away and into storage.

Cataloging a collection like ours is often a work of interesting discoveries. If you want to get involved, come to the meetings and help with relocation. The sooner we find a place, the sooner we will be able to plunge back into the collection and see what other documents and books we have. We have marked and cataloged the three-dimensional artifacts first, the documents still await our attention...

## MEMBER TO MEMBER Brother Joe Nuccio

*The following is a reprint of an article found by Fran Hubert in the San Gabriel Valley Tribune written by Elizabeth Pomeroy. Hope you enjoy it!*

There's a world of camellias in the Altadena foothills, and now is the time to discover it.

The history of this special collection goes back to 1935. In that year, Julius Nuccio and his brother Joe established a nursery in Alhambra, featuring camellias and azaleas. World war II soon intervened, and afterward the Nuccios found there were about 20 nurseries in the San Gabriel valley. With this competition, they concentrated instead on plants that sold in volume for landscaping homes in the post-war building boom.

In 1943 the Nuccio bought 40 acres of sloping land just below the Angeles national Forest and east of the la Vina Sanatorium. Later they added 40 acres more. Outlasting other specialists, they eventually returned to their first love: hybridizing and growing camellias. The nursery also carries azaleas, gardenias and rhododendrons now.

But camellias are the heart of Nuccio's. This nursery has more varieties for sale than any other, and they are also the largest introducer of new varieties. The catalog listing their current stock is 65 pages long. In it you will find their four new camellias for this year: "Grady's Egao", "Junior Prom", "Lemon Twist", and "Moonstruck".

"How do camellias get their names?" a visitor asked Julius Nuccio, who still oversees the business he founded more than 60 years ago. Three to five years of testing and propagating go on before a new seedling is ready for its name. Then the grower must consult the nomenclature book, which lists all known hybrids and their originators, to be sure a name is not already taken.

The growers watch a new plant, sometimes for a year or more, mulling over the perfect name. Some recent choices include "Matilija Poppy" (which looks like a California native of that name) and "Rudolph" (which blooms at Christmas and is a round red shape). There's both truth and poetry in such names as "Silver Cloud" "Firedance" and "Grape Soda".

The Nuccio say that Southern California is the best camellia growing area in the world. More varieties can be successfully grown here than anywhere else. Several hybrids are being bred especially for fragrance. Even the tea plant, *Camellia Sinensis*, with its small white flowers, is offered by the Nuccio. Camellias are native to eastern and southern Asia, but have gained popularity throughout the world. About 20 percent of the Nuccio's sales go to China, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, most of Europe; literally everywhere. The plants are sent bare-root.

All of February is the peak season for camellias, so you'll see them in bloom if you visit now. The azaleas follow with high season in March, April and may.

At Nuccio's, three sons of the two founders are carrying on the business. You can learn about camellia shows held this time of year.

A Valentine's Day visit to Nuccio's would be just the thing. From among the inhabitants of this historic spot, you could choose "Silver Anniversary", "Valentine's day", "Desire", "Pleasant Memories", or, with a little bit of luck, "Honeymoon".

*Joe Nuccio has been an active member of Ramona Parlor #109 for 24 years. He and his wife Mary have one son, Julius and three lovely grandchildren. It must be the romantic influence of the flowers they grow that make the Nuccios one of the most devoted, loving couples you are ever likely to meet. They will be married 60 years this August and live in Santa Monica.*