



Torrance Historian

Newsletter of the Torrance Historical Society

Remembering Louis Zamperini

Over the July 4th weekend, the flags in our city flew at half staff to remember a man we call our Home Town Hero — Louis Zamperini.

The rest of the world knew him as that incredible person who survived 47 days adrift on a raft in the Pacific during WWII. Floating for 2000 miles after his plane crashed on a reconnaissance mission, only to be captured by the Japanese military. He was taken ashore to an enemy-occupied island weighing only half of his original body weight. He withstood over two years of unimaginable torture and humiliation at the hands of those who knew they had someone “famous” as a prisoner.

The Torrance Historical Society has a revolving display from the collection of the Louis Zamperini Trust, including . . .

- 1934 trophy for setting the Interscholastic World Record for running the mile (4:21.2) — which remained unbroken for 19 years
- Training shorts and sweat shirt from the 1936 Olympics
- Wallet - in his back pocket when the B-24 Green Hornet crashed in the Pacific
- Death certificate, and other “Lucky Louie” treasures



Read the book, see the movie . . .

The book, *Unbroken*, Louis' life story as told by Laura Hillenbrand, was finally released in paperback on July 29, 2014. *Unbroken* has been on the New York Times best seller list for more than 180 weeks (17 weeks at #1), and counting!

On Veteran's Day, a Young Adult Adaptation of *Unbroken - An Olympian's Journey from Airman to Castaway to Captive* (By Laura Hillenbrand / Delacorte Press) will hit the streets.

The movie, *Unbroken*, directed by Angelina Jolie, is scheduled to be released Christmas Day. *Don't Give Up, Don't Give In - Lessons from an Extraordinary Life* by Louis Zamperini & David Rensin will go on sale November 18, 2014. In this book, Louis Zamperini shares his wisdom, values, lessons, secrets, and other insights gleaned from his remarkable experiences.

On New Year's Day, in memoriam, our Hometown Hero, Louis Zamperini, will be honored in the Tournament of Roses Parade 2015, themed “Inspiring Stories.”



A Picture is Worth A Thousand Words



Alex Moreno, author of Beach Mexican, spoke about growing up locally



John Crayton, Goodyear Blimp pilot for 37 years, shared his memories of events, adventures and the Southland



Valentine Day Tea



Hula Hoop, Ice Cream Social and Rock Painting at Rock Around the Block Summer 2014

A Picture is Worth A Thousand Words



The new Torrance Historical Board was installed and the newly restored Torrance High senior patio was unveiled. Jamie Watson, President presiding with Dr. George Mannon of TUSD



The Historic Home Tour weekend was a HUGE success. The houses were fabulous and the docents were wonderful. Lots of people liked peeking into the past and walking around the Old Torrance neighborhood.



Names on the Wall Remembrance Memorial Day



Torrance Historical Society & Museum

1345 Post Avenue

Torrance, CA 90501

www.TorranceHistoricalSociety.org

What's Coming up at the Museum

~FREE~

Meet the Peanut Man of Dodger Stadium

Sunday Nov 9, 2p.m.

Sparkle & Shine:

program by Maureen O'Donnell. Care for your silver.

Sunday Nov. 16, 2pm

Reading 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

Sunday Dec. 14, 4pm

SURVEY PROJECT

Three years ago, gearing-up for the City's Centennial, the Torrance Historical Society, and over 100 volunteers from the community, assisted in a sidewalk field survey to document all structures within the Olmsted Tract -the original footprint of the City.* The area is comprised of 109 city blocks with residential, commercial and industrial sub-districts totaling nearly 2000 structures (see why we needed so many volunteers?). Borders encompassing this area are Dominguez St. to Plaza del Amo, and Crenshaw Blvd. to Western Avenue. In response to a past City Council directive, the purpose of the survey was to document all structures, landscape design and other features - paying particular attention to those historic in nature. The completed 2011-2013 Survey of Historic Resources is available for review at the Torrance Historical Society & Museum.

**The Olmsted Tract is the area of the city originally planned by Fredrick Law Olmsted, Jr. The plan is most notable for its axial landscaped mall (El Prado Park) aligned to have a view of Mount San Antonio in the San Gabriel Mountains. The Olmsted Tract includes a number of buildings designed by the noted*

Southern California Architect Irving Gill. Torrance was planned as a new prototype industrial city based on the principles of the Garden City Movement.

Feeling Lucky?

Right now, the Torrance Historical Society is selling opportunity tickets for a **Gourmet Progressive Dinner for Six**. We'll be serving a Farm-to-Table Menu in three Historic Homes -- all within a two block radius between Post Ave. & El Prado Ave.

The drawing for the lucky winner will be held on November 13th - the winner will be notified.

• **Sips and Nips** • **Main Course** • **Dessert**

Tickets: \$10 each or 3 for \$25 - cash or check (payable to "Torrance Historical Society") - Tickets available for purchase in the Museum until November 13th. Or you can mail a self-addressed stamped envelope and payment to the Museum (1345 Post Ave., Torrance 90501) and your stubs will be mailed to you. Or email:

debbie.simpson@acssoftware.com.

Info: Call the Museum at 310.328.5392 or visit

www.TorranceHistoricalSociety.org

Dinner Date coordinated for early 2015.

Proceeds support museum programs.