

# Torrance Historian

Published for members, this newsletter is dedicated to the support & preservation of Torrance History – share the history with your family & friends!

*February 2000*  
*Kristina Kaur, Editor*

## Historical Highlights

by Peggy Basile, President

This letter brings New Year greeting to you all, as we wind down the end of the 20th century...unless you're of the school that contends that we have already begun the 21st century – whichever side of that controversy YOU'RE on (and I certainly don't want to get involved in that here, this space isn't large enough!), one thing is clear: the year 2000 holds the promise of an exciting and eventful time.

Our responsibility as the Torrance Historical Society has been the preservation of the sights, sounds and events that have guided Torrance during this past century. But I believe we also hold the task of helping shape the future by keeping that history alive, by reaching out and being involved in the community. You can learn about some of the things we've already begun by reading this newsletter. And that's just for starters – we've got lots more projects that are still in the planning stages.

I am proud to be at the helm of THS in this year 2000, I am looking forward to a great and momentous year for us – and I hope you grab hold and come along for the ride!

Peggy Basile, THS President

## Torrance Police Department Issues New Patch to Officers

Effective January 1, 2000, officers were proudly displaying the new patch on their shirt sleeves. The change is part of an initiative by Chief Herren to professionally present the public safety professionals of Torrance. Along with the patch, officers have also received a newly designed shield. In the future, police vehicles will be displaying a new graphic program. According to Community Affairs Officer Dave Crespino, the (con't page 2)

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## Welcome New Members!

Hazel Taniguchi  
Shawna Hayes  
Kim Wang  
Pam & Dave Shearin  
Bob & Teri Voeste

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## Walking Tour of Historic Torrance. Bring a Neighbor!

A docent-led tour of the historic landmarks of Downtown Torrance will be held Sunday, February 27th. The tour is an easy, but brisk walk, covering 8 blocks. The tour will depart from the museum at 1:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity for new residents, visitors, children, students and historians alike. Free!

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 new patch is only the third in the history of the Police Department. The new design features Torrance's Southern Pacific Railroad Bridge. The Bridge was designed by architect Irving Gill and was built of reinforced concrete in 1912 under the city's founder Jared Sidney Torrance. Currently, the Bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places and is adorned with a bronze plaque placed by the Torrance Historical Society. The landmark bridge serves as the eastern gate to the city. For an in depth look into the Police Department, visit <http://www.tpd.torrnet.com>.



## 5 Web Sites of Interest Railway & Train Related

[Electric Railway Historical Association of Southern California](http://www.erha.org)

<http://www.erha.org>

[California State Railroad Museum](http://www.csrnf.org)

<http://www.csrnf.org>

[Orange Empire Railway Museum](http://oerm.mus.ca.us/)

<http://oerm.mus.ca.us/>

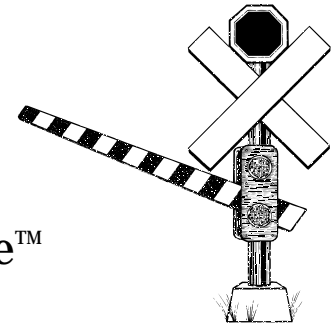
[Tom Wetzel's Pacific Electric Railway Tour](http://www.uncanny.net/~wetzelpery.htm)

<http://www.uncanny.net/~wetzelpery.htm>

[Dave Mewhinney's Pacific Electric Pictures](http://davesrailpix.railfan.net/pe/pe.htm)

<http://davesrailpix.railfan.net/pe/pe.htm>

Note: The Katy Geissert Civic Center Library has computers which are free to the public to use, and are an easy way to look up these web sites.



## TransMachine™ F.Y.I.

The mission of the TransMachine™ Foundation is to foster education and creativity with a focus on transportation past, present, and future. The Foundation's current activities include:

- Preparing fund-raising and communications programs.
- Negotiating with the City of Torrance regarding a site for the project.
- Discussing the refurbishment of the Red Car with Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

The TransMachine™ will bring to the South Bay and Greater Los Angeles area, a unique, interactive computer learning center focused on transportation. The high-tech learning center will benefit 32,000 K-12 students and 3,000 visitors every year. School-based field trips, afternoon and weekend classes, and public tours will inspire future engineers and designers.

Visitors of all ages will learn the history of various types of transportation, and have a glimpse of the vehicles of tomorrow. With the use of computers, visitors will be able to tap into their imaginations and create their own transportation vehicles. The TransMachine™ interactive computer learning center is being made possible through the donation of \$2,000,000 from American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

TransMachine™ F.Y.I. courtesy of Mr. John Powers.

Win Dinner for 2!

## Membership Contest!!!

It's time to renew your membership in the Torrance Historical Society. All memberships are renewable annually by February 29th, except Lifetime memberships.

If your dues are received by February 29th, you will automatically be entered into a drawing to win a \$30 gift certificate at Cafe Luna, a delicious local Italian restaurant. The winner will be announced in the next newsletter. As an active member of the Torrance Historical Society, you will continue to enjoy:

- \* Invitations to special "Members Only" events
- \* Research privileges in the Museum's historic archives
- \* The opportunity to become a Torrance Historian
- \* The opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors
- \* A subscription to the Torrance Historian Newsletter
- \* Docent Training

The cost to renew your membership or sign someone up as a new member is:

Adult \$15.00	* Family \$20.00
Youth (-18) \$10.00	* Senior (65+) \$10.00
Businesses \$40.00	* Organizations \$40.00
Life \$250.00	

It is the goal of the Torrance Historical Society & Museum to make history accessible to every resident, to encourage each of us to learn about our past, and to help realize our future. Thank you in advance for your continued membership support!

## Downtown Torrance Antique Fair



The next Antique Fair is scheduled for February 27th. The Torrance Historical Society will be open to the public – look for the colorful signs! Bring a friend, or just stop in and say, hello!



## Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting

Phoenix, Arizona

If you're ever in the Phoenix area, be sure to visit the Hall of Flame. The museum features five galleries of hose carts, pumpers and fire engines dating from 1725 to the present. Also located within the museum is the National Firefighting Hall of Heroes with stories and pictures of unbelievable feats. There is also a live broadcast of the Phoenix firefighting and paramedic dispatch. Many of the walls are adorned with cases full of fire department patches from around the world. Among the cases of patches is our own patch of the Torrance Fire Department, donated in 1994.

The history of Torrance's Fire Department began with the founding of the city. The Torrance Volunteer Fire Department was established on November 12, 1912. Harry Mc Manus was the first Fire Chief with a crew of 40 firefighters. Through the years, the Torrance Fire Department has kept one step ahead of the city. Today the Torrance Fire Department, led by Chief Bongard, is a professional organization of 162 safety personnel and 24 support staff. These men and women work in the areas of paramedics, hazardous materials, urban search and rescue, fire prevention, arson and public information. According to Fire Education Leader, Tad Friedman, the Fire Department has an average 3.9 minute response time for paramedic services, and handles about 10,000 emergency calls each year. The depth and efficiency of the Torrance Fire Department truly makes it "more than a fire department."  
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# Easy Membership Renewal Form

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- Adult \$15.00     Youth (-18) \$10.00
- Family \$20.00     Senior (65+) \$10.00
- Business \$40.00     Organization \$40.00
- Life \$250.00

**Mail To:**

Torrance Historical Society & Museum  
1345 Post Avenue  
Torrance, CA 90501

Make checks payable to:

Torrance Historical Society

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Upcoming Torrance Fire Department Events

28th Annual Spaghetti Dinner - March 4th  
Fire Service Day - May 13th

For further information on the Hall of Flame, visit [www.hallofflame.org](http://www.hallofflame.org). Excellent photos of Torrance's fire fighting fleet can be seen at <http://www.torrancefirefighters.org/apparatus.html>. The Torrance Fire Department non-emergency, incident number is (310) 781-7042, and their web site is at <http://www.tornet.com/city/dept/fire/History.html>

## Museum Hours

The Torrance Historical Society and Museum is open free to the public:

Tuesday – Thursday & Sunday  
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

*Special hours can be arranged for private tours or research. Please contact the Museum directly at (310) 328-5392.*

Your experiences in Torrance are important! Share your life in Torrance with visitors and those new to Torrance by being a docent. Call Gene Hassan for further details at (310) 618-8259.

Torrance Historical Society & Museum  
1345 Post Avenue  
Torrance, CA 90501  
(310) 328-5392



Return Service Requested

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