

# Torrance Historian

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

May 2001  
*Kristina Kaur, Editor*

## Historical Highlights

by Peggy Basile, President

Well – this is my last opportunity to occupy this spot in the newsletter as President of THS. It's been quite an incredible two years! It has been my honor to represent the Historical Society during that time. I have been privileged to take an active participation in many exciting and important events that are integral to the history of the city of Torrance, including the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of both Torrance Memorial Medical Center and Mobil Oil (now Exxon-Mobil). I have been fortunate to meet a large cross-section of our membership at our annual meetings, the Historic Homes Tour, and the many gatherings held at the Museum. And it's been great fun to be involved with the Property of the Month awards, the kick-off of the WPA mural restoration at Torrance High, and to address groups such as Leadership Torrance (see articles on all three items elsewhere in this newsletter).

But now it's time to hand over the reins to a new administration. I know I'm leaving things in good hands. I'd like to thank the outgoing Board for their unending support and tolerance during the past couple of years, and look forward to continued service to THS.

Peggy Basile, THS President  
Thanks to all of you!

## New Exhibit: "Then and Now" Opens May 8th-Don't Miss It

You know the old saying: The more things change, the more they stay the same. Come on down to the museum and check out the display and judge for yourself if fashions, and life have really changed. Some things have changed dramatically, some haven't. Were the future predictions correct? Have some designs come full circle? Is newer really better? Look for the answers in "Then and Now." Exhibit designed by Gussie Kriss and Janet Payne.



## Torrance Float Wins!

As you may have seen on TV or on the front page of the Los Angeles Times, Torrance's "Teddy Bear... An American Original" float...

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## Fletcher Residence News

The Fletcher Residence was named Property of the Month in March 2001 by the City of Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission. The property was nominated by the Torrance Historical Society and received a Beautification Certificate. Those of you who attended the Historic Homes Tour last October had a chance to view the house and see the before and after photos. Congratulations Brett and Leslie Fletcher!

## School District Thanks THS

Earlier this year, the Torrance Historical Society donated \$1000 to the restoration efforts at Torrance High School. A 1930s W.P.A. mural in the theatre lobby is in a sad state of dereriation and disrepair. The estimated cost to restore the wonderful mural exceeds \$50,000. The W.P.A. or Works Progress Administration was created in 1935 by President Roosevelt to provide jobs to artists during the Great Depression. The Torrance Historical Society has taken a leadership role in providing this seed funding, so that the restoration of the mural will be possible.

For further information on murals in general  
<http://www.wpamurals.com>

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## Welcome New Members!



Michael George  
Wendy Ogle  
David Rapella

and Thanks to All Renewing Members!

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## 5 Web Sites of Interest

Editor's Favorites

### Torrance Historical Society

<http://www.ci.torrance.ca.us/city/councils/histsoc.htm>

### Hotmail - free email

<http://www.hotmail.com>

### Etrade - free online market info

<http://www.etrade.com>

### Kelley Blue Book

<http://www.kbb.com>

### Outpost.com - free shipping + no tax

<http://www.outpost.com>

Note: Web sites can be accessed through computers at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

## THS Now a Chamber Member

Thanks to our very own Janet Payne, who gave several months of her own chamber membership to the Historical Society. This gift is much appreciated and allows the historical society to participate in Chamber activities. The Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce is a diverse group of businesses, professionals, and individuals promoting business in the area.



## Bunka-Sai April 21st-22nd

The Torrance Sister City's Annual Bunka-Sai festival is coming. Be sure to stop by this great cultural festival! Enjoy the food, flower arranging, traditional kimonos, and music. There is nothing else like it in the South Bay! The festival is at the Ken Miller Recreational Center at Madrona and Torrance Blvd. For further information call (310) 618-2930.



## Towers Elementary School Visits Museum for History Lesson and More!

More than 120 third graders visited the museum in March. The Torrance Fire Department, Torrance's City Hall and the Torrance Historical Society & Museum were their induction to civics in Torrance. Their history lesson was taught by our very own Grace Elgin, Museum Coordinator. Thank you Grace!

Mark Your Calendar! June 9th

# THE TORRANCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING & INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Saturday, June 9, 2001 • 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

T

- Socialize with friends
- Sip one of the House Specialty Brews
- See Historic “Red Car” photographs & learn about their importance in Southern California

H

- Enjoy a special gourmet “pub lunch”
- Experience being in a local landmark building formerly the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company from 1928 to 1953

S

- Honor outgoing President & Retiring Board Members
  - Applaud incoming Board Members
- Installed by Mayor Dee Hardison



• Red Car Brewery & Restaurant •  
1266 Sartori Avenue • Historic Downtown Torrance

## RESERVATION FORM

- YES, I want to be there! Save me \_\_\_ seats at \$20 members & \_\_\_ seats at \$22 non-members
- Sorry, I cannot attend, please accept my donation of \$\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Total Enclosed (Please make checks payable to: Torrance Historical Society)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_

Torrance Historical Society & Museum • 1345 Post Avenue • Torrance, California 90501  
Reservations must be received by Tuesday, June 5th

## Red Car Brewery & Restaurant – Fun Facts –

**Owners:** Laurie & Bob Brandt

**On The Menu:** Personal Pizzas, Pasta, Salads, Seafood, Gourmet Sandwiches, Gourmet Burgers, Desserts

**On Tap:** Big Red Ale, Motorman Mild, Two Rail Pale Ale, Winsome Wheat, South Loop Porter and Electra Lite

**Brew Time for Beer:** 10-12 hours

**Chef:** Maverick

**Where They Snagged Him:**  
Cheesecake Factory

**Latest Award:** Best Happy Hour, Daily Breeze

**The Building:**

Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company  
From 1928 until 1953

**Opened as Red Car Brewery & Restaurant:**  
July 28, 2000

**Location:**

1266 Sartori Avenue  
Corner of Post Ave & Sartori Ave

**Hours:**

11:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Mon-Thurs  
11:30 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. Fri-Sat  
5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Sunday

## Leadership Torrance•South Bay Visits Museum-13th Year!

In March the 2001 Leadership Torrance•South Bay class came to the Torrance Historical Society & Museum to learn about Torrance's roots. THS President Peggy Basile, THS Museum Coordinator Grace Elgin and THS Volunteer Lucille Comas were on hand to welcome the class. The history session

organized and led by Janet Payne 3rd VP, (LT '93) included a museum tour, video and presentation. The 15 members of the class are comprised of members of the



Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce. The leadership program is an intensive twenty-one weeks of learning about the local, regional and state communities of which they are a part. The group departed the Museum to further their education of local history at the Dominguez Adobe. For further information on the Leadership Torrance•South Bay program contact the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce directly at (310) 540-5858.



*Yesterday is history,  
tomorrow is a mystery,  
and today is a gift,  
that's why they call it the present  
-unknown*

## Summer Airline Travel Tips

- Arrive at the gate one hour prior to departure for domestic flights, two hours for international flights. This does not include parking the car, taking the shuttle, ticketing, baggage check etc.
- Pack food and entertainment for kids of all ages to ease the waiting.
- Contact your airline or travel agent for the size and number of carry-ons. These requirements are being enforced.
- All adult passengers must have a photo ID.
- Build in some flexibility to your schedule, the summer season is very busy.



## Summer Road Trip Tips from America's Best Truck Drivers

- Do a "walk around" before leaving your driveway. Inspect your vehicle: check the tires, wipers and fluids. It's a good idea to have your radiator and cooling system serviced. You can prevent many of the problems that strand motorists on the side of the road.
  - Leave a little earlier so you won't be anxious about arriving late, and so you can accommodate delays.
  - Know your limitations; don't drive when tired, upset, or physically ill.
  - Be aware of a truck's blind spots. If you can't see the truck driver in his or her mirrors, then the truck driver can't see you.
  - Anticipate the unexpected; look a mile ahead for a safe path, and leave yourself an out.
  - Practice courtesy, patience, and understanding toward all drivers, and avoid erratic drivers.
  - Pull off to a designated parking area to use your cell phone. You are 4 times more likely to be involved in an accident when using your cell phone.
- Courtesy of the ATA and [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com)

## Torrance Float Wins! (con't)

won the Princesses' Trophy for the most beautiful float 35 feet or less in length in the Rose Parade. Out of the 52 floats entered, only 23 trophies were awarded in this 112th Tournament of Roses. The first Torrance float to appear in the Tournament of Roses Parade was one depicting the industrial might and beauty of the modern industrial city of 1914.



## Historical Society Supports Award Winning Float

In the spirit of observing Torrance's participation in the Tournament of Roses Parade, the Torrance Historical Society donated \$200 to the Torrance Rose Float Association last month. Peggy Basile, president of the Historical Society said, "The Historical Society is pleased to get the Rose Float Association off to a good start for this year. We are proud of our City's 40+ year history of participation in the most prestigious parade in the country, and are happy to support TRFA's efforts in efforts in keeping that tradition alive for the world to see each New Year's Day."

If you are interested in making a donation to the Torrance Rose Float Association please contact: Gary Schmidt, City of Torrance, 3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503, Telephone: (310) 618-2999



*As long as you're going to be thinking anyway,  
THINK BIG.*

*-Donald Trump*

## Editor's Pick! Getty Exhibit, Shaping The Great City

This exhibit features more than 350 architectural drawings, models, and film clips about modern architecture in Central Europe from 1890 to 1937. You will learn about the

complex system of transportation, infrastructure, public spaces, culture and housing ideas developed for these vibrant cities as part of the first section entitled "The City as Form & Idea." The second section "Modernity & Place" highlights Austro-Hungarian cities including

Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Zagreb, Cracow, Timisoara and L'viv both before and after World War I. The exhibit began February 20th and will close May 6th. For further information visit <http://www.getty.edu> The Getty Center is open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday & Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday & Friday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday & Sunday. Admission is free, but parking is \$5 per car: call for reservations at (310) 440-7300. Don't miss this opportunity!



## L. A. Philharmonic Season Features Classical & Modern Music

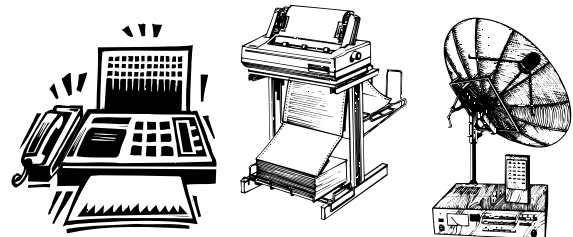
The Hollywood Bowl 2001 summer festival season kicks off June 29 and continues to September 28. If you enjoy classical music, then don't miss out the Russian Spectacular on July 17th and August 2nd as well as All Vivaldi-August 7th, All Bach-August 9th, and All Mozart-August 28th, 30th. If you are interested in big name performers, then you won't be disappointed, Stevie Wonder and Marilyn Horn will be inducted in to the Hall of Fame June

29th, Natalie Cole (daughter of Nat King Cole) performs July 7th and Ray Charles sings with the Philharmonic August 24th and 25th. Tickets, box seats and complete printed schedules are available by calling (323) 850-2000 7 days a week after noon or on the internet at <http://www.laphil.org>. Easy park-and-ride transportation is available for most performances by bus at Torrance's Wilson Park. Enjoy the great music this summer!



## Celebrate Earth Day! 2nd Annual Computer & Electronics Recycling Round-up is April 21st !!!

Don't throw your "collectible" electronics into our landfills. Load up the electronics and computers that have been collecting dust around your house and bring them to the Torrance City Hall Parking Lot (Northwest Corner), Maple Ave and Torrance Blvd. This recycling event will be held one day only, Saturday April 21st from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. For further information, call the City of Torrance at (310) 781-6900 or All Tech Computers at (310) 978-2790.



**Red Car Brewery  
& Restaurant Winner**

## Membership Contest Winner!!!

Ms. Rose Sarukian of Torrance is the winner of a \$30 gift certificate to the Red Car Brewery and Restaurant. Thank you to every member who mailed their membership dues in on time!

The Torrance Historical Society & Museum continues to make history accessible to every resident and encourages learning about our past to further guide our future. Your membership makes this happen each and every day.



## Slate of Officers 2001-2002

Carl Kaemerle	President
Janet Payne	1st Vice President
Peggy Basile	2nd Vice President
Janice Plank	3rd Vice President
Debbie Hays	4th Vice President
Mary O' Campo	Secretary
Jim Stadler	Treasurer
Kirtlyn Barto	Historian
Diane Caseltine	Special Events
Tony Kriss	Financial Secretary
Gussie Kriss	Museum Volunteers
(Appointed)	Parliamentarian*
Sue Herbers	Member at Large

### President's Advisory Board

(To Be Confirmed by Incoming President)

Arnold Woo	Legal Council
Maureen O' Donnell	Government Affairs
Richard Meyer	Red Car
Michael George	City Liaison

\*According to bylaws, this position is a non-elected position that is filled by appointment.

## Anchors Aweigh!

The USS Coronado and the Sea Shadow will make a historic visit to the 22nd Street Landing in San Pedro, April 19-23. Both vessels are homeported in San Diego. The USS Coronado (AGF-11) is a command ship and carries over 630 men and women. The 24,000 horsepower, 16,912 ton vessel is equipped with two Phalanx weapons systems and two 12.77 mm guns, plus two light helicopters. The public is welcome on board Sunday and will get to see the vessel up close. The Sea Shadow, not open to the public, is a state-of-the-art experimental watercraft - a new kind of surface ship. It is 164 feet long, 68 feet wide, 560 tons fully loaded and carries a crew of 10 people.



The vessels will be arriving April 19th at approximately 1600 hours (4:00 p.m.) flanked by 4 Coast Guard vessels, 2 LA Harbor Dept fire boats and the Good Year blimp overhead. It should be quite a spectacle!!! The public is invited to a reception that night at the San Pedro Hilton, 6-10 p.m., cost \$30, send reservations to Navy Days-LA, c/o Grant Ivey, 2210 3rd St. #119, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

To Host-a-Sailor call the Torrance Volunteer Center at (310) 212-5009. While in port, sailors will not have transportation, and this is a chance for you to invite them into your home, share lunch or a movie with a sailor. In most cases, you are the sailor's guest on the ship, and will not have to wait in line on Sunday to tour the ship.

Public visitation of the USS Coronado is Sunday the 22nd from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Tickets will be available that morning at the dock, Piers 44-48, in San Pedro.

Information courtesy of Mr. Tony Kriss, and the U.S. Navy <http://www.chinfo.navy.mil>

## Walking Tour of Historic Torrance – May 27nd! Free!

Come one, come all! The walking tour will depart from the museum at 1:30 p.m. A docent-led tour of the historic landmarks of Downtown Torrance will be held Sunday, May 27nd. The tour is an easy, but brisk walk, covering 8 blocks. Tours will be conducted the fourth Sunday of each month until October. This is a great opportunity for new residents, visitors, children, students and historians alike. And the best part is that it's free! Gratis! Nada! - Tell A Friend!

## Docents

Share your memories and the history of Torrance with visitors on Sundays 1-4 p.m. Free docent training. No experience required.

Gussie Kriss  
(310) 323-7959

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

Return Service Requested

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## Calendar April

- 
- 21 Torrance Electronics Round-up
  - 19-22 USS Coronado & Sea Shadow in S.P.
  - 21-22 Bunka-Sai Festival in Torrance

### May

- 
- 6 Getty Great Cities Exhibit Closes
  - 8 THS Then & Now Exhibit Opens
  - 19 Armed Forces Day Parade
  - 27 Torrance Walking Tour

### June

- 
- 9 Annual Meeting & Installation  
of Officers-Red Car Theme!
  - 24 Torrance Walking Tour
  - 29 Hollywood Bowl Concerts Begin

## Museum Hours

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

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

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