

Torrance Historian

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

March 1999
Debbie Hays, Editor

I Believe I Can Fly ...

History of the Pegasus Logo

Mobil has been a part of the Torrance community for 70 years now, and their logo, the flying red Pegasus, is one of the most recognized logos in the world today. Mobil was kind enough to let us share an article with you that appeared in their Winter 1998 *Mobil Community Report* which explains the history of how their logo came to be:

“Pegasus, Mobil’s famed red flying horse symbol, has been flying his way out of mythology books and into people’s everyday lives for years. If you’ve ever wondered how a winged red steed came to be a symbol for Mobil, here’s the story.

Roots in Ancient Greece

Since ancient times, Pegasus has been a symbol of power and speed. It is told in Greek mythology that when Perseus, the Greek hero, cut off Medusa’s head, the blood soaked into the earth



and produced a marvelous horse with wings. Athena, the goddess of wisdom, caught the horse and tamed him. She named him Pegasus and gave him to the Muses, the nine goddesses

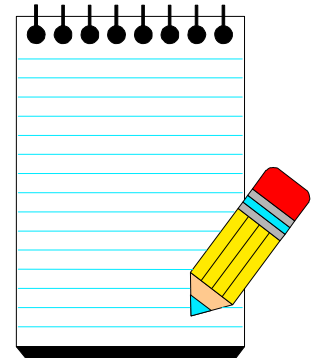
I Believe I can Fly ... continued on page 3

Pieces of the Past Requested

Do you have any memories from “days gone by” that you’d like to share with the readers of the *Torrance Historian*?

Perhaps it’s a memory of riding on the Red Car as a child, or your time spent in the church choir, your first job in Torrance or what your neighborhood was like. We’re taking written submissions now (not to exceed one typed page). The selected entries will appear in the next issue of the *Torrance Historian*. Mail your fond memories to:

Debbie Hays c/o
The Torrance Historical Society
1345 Post Avenue • Torrance, CA 90501 ☺



Historical Highlights by Tony Kriss, President

In addition to the usual demands of the holiday season, your Board was able to select a variety of outstanding tour destinations designed to enrich your awareness of the people, places and things that make ours such a “historically rich” area. These popular tours always deliver more than promised and it’s our hope that you will be able to enjoy them all.

The “Ghost Town” miniature display at the Museum is a marvel in detail and authenticity that we hope you’ll be able to see before it is relocated. ☺

Welcome New Members

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to over a dozen new members who have recently joined the Torrance Historical Society:

Don Bill
Rhett & Catherine Bise
Joe & Judy Burrow
Virginia Butterfield
Robert Easley
Helen Hernandez
Konnie Kenny
Michael Maiuri
Al Muratsuchi
Carol Muro
Cliff Numark
Betty Running
Leon & Elaine Taylor
William Wallace
Iolene Whittenbrook

Welcome all! ☺

Member Reception

The Torrance Historical Society (THS) would like to honor all new members with a reception at the Museum Thursday, March 18th, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

We would also like to extend an invitation to existing members to stop by and personally meet and greet our newest members. Everyone is welcome to attend the Board Meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m.

You can also take this time to view our current exhibits, including the miniature ghost town buildings crafted by local artist Bob Easley. ☺

And the Winner is ...

February is *Membership Renewal Month* for the Torrance Historical Society. In an effort to facilitate a more timely response in renewals, the Historical Society announced that a drawing would be made from all membership renewals that were received by February 28th. *What a response we had!*

The grand prize was six free passes to the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles (a \$42 value). Linda Kraemer is the lucky winner. ☺

Historical Society Sponsors Sesquicentennial Reading

The Torrance Historical Society (THS) was the recent sponsor of the Sesquicentennial Reading Program, held February 3rd at the Katy Geissert branch of the Torrance Public Library. Dr. Arthur Verge, Professor of History at El Camino College, facilitated the program — the third in a series of free reading and discussion groups commemorating the 150th anniversary of the California Gold Rush.

Tony Kriss, THS President, opened the evening with welcome remarks to the participants and a brief outline of the Historical Society. Tony traced the Society's own history from its founding to the present — highlighting several milestones accomplished along the way. He also focused on the many activities in which THS is involved which further the preservation of the history of Torrance. Tony concluded his remarks by encouraging all interested parties to become personally involved as THS members, noting that he happened to have a few membership application forms with him. Tony then turned the evening over to Dr. Verge.

The reading group is part of the *Rediscovering California at 150* California Sesquicentennial project of the California Council for the Humanities. The reading program series concludes in March.

This write-up was contributed by Peggy Basile, Secretary of THS and Library Commissioner. ☺

Historic Art Exhibit

Expand the realm of your cultural exposure and stop by the Joslyn Fine Arts Gallery and view the Salvador Dali (1904-1989) collection that is now on display. The exhibit will remain until April 9th. The hours of the Fine Arts Center are 12:00-5:00 p.m. Tues.-Fri., and 1:00-5:00 p.m. Sat. Admission is free of charge.

For additional information, please call (310) 781-7159. ☺



I Believe I can Fly . . . continued from page 1

whose names are associated with all the arts and graces of civilization.

The symbolism of Pegasus and the Muses reflects Mobil's philosophy of emphasizing creative innovation and support of the arts. The Flying Red Horse appearing on Mobil products around the world also symbolizes the power and speed associated with the use of Mobil products.

Reborn in 1911

Mobil and the flying horse first got together in 1911, when a company affiliate used the symbol and registered Pegasus as a trade name. The original Pegasus was white; the red color was suggested by one of Mobil's managers in Japan some years later. The Mobil Pegasus was adopted as a trademark in the U.S. in 1931, though the symbol had been used abroad for many years.

Now, Pegasus is seen flying on flags, on trucks and over gasoline pumps all over the country and around the world. Because customers tell us how appealing the symbol is, in recent times, Pegasus is seeing even more activity. An animated, 3-D version of Pegasus is the star of television commercials featuring the Grammy award-winning song *I Believe I can Fly*, by R. Kelly.

The popular symbol is also the star of a children-oriented web site. The address is <http://www.mobil.com/this/pegasus/playground/index.html>. There you'll find a coloring book, a puzzle of Pegasus in motion, and other Pegasus fun." *Thanks for the history, Mobil!* ☺

Docents Needed

Volunteers are needed to docent at the Museum on Sunday afternoons from 1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. Orientation is available. For details, call Lucille McComas at (310) 328-5392. ☺

Private Museum Tours

Special hours can be arranged for private tours of the Torrance Historical Museum for your senior group, scout troop, classroom or organization. Depending on your schedule, tours can last from one to two hours and are free of charge. For additional information, please contact Grace Elgin at (310) 328-5392. ☺

Local Leaders Learn History

President, Tony Kriss, greeted 28 class members and organizers of Leadership Torrance/South Bay at the Museum on February 18th, after a hosted continental breakfast . . . *mmmm good!*

Janet Payne, 1st Vice President of the Historical Society, then gave the participants a "short course" in the history of Torrance — *What's in a Name: Torrance A to Z: Gregorio del Amo to Louis Zamperini*, which also included a feature video presentation about Jared Sidney Torrance.

After a short walking and bus tour of Downtown Torrance, everyone was privileged to hear Father Patrick J. McPolin of the Dominguez Rancho speak about the history of the Rancho Dominguez land grant and tour the Dominguez family adobe, a National Historic Landmark.

The Historical Society is pleased to continue supporting the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce Leadership program for the 12th year. ☺

Museum of Miniatures Tour

On Saturday, February 20th, 22 of us boarded a bus headed for the Museum of Miniatures — the only museum of its kind in the world.

Founder Carole Kaye's love for miniatures blossomed seven years ago after wanting to find a hobby both she and her grandson, Peter, could do together. She started by putting together a doll house, and the result is now a two-story Museum of a unique kind of Art. *This is a must see!* ☺



A group of 22 toured the Museum of Miniatures



Toy Talk

*Toys &
Toy Trains
1930's - 1960's*

Jeff Remy of the Old Torrance Transfer Co., an antiques and collectibles store located in the heart of

Historic Downtown Torrance, will present a unique program about toys and trains from the 1930's - 1960's.

Many of these antique toys will be on display along with a few present day Disney collectibles and lunch pails.

You and your family are invited to join us for this interesting presentation, which will take place at the Museum Sunday, March 21st, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Admission is free. Please call the Museum to R.S.V.P. at (310) 328-5392. ☺

Antique Street Fair

On Sunday, March 14th, from 8:00 a.m - 3:00 p.m., the Downtown Torrance Association is sponsoring their monthly Antique Street Fair.

Dealers from all over Southern California will be offering a wide variety of antiques and collectibles, such as furniture, lamps, pottery, art, vintage clothing, jewelry, glassware, toys and other memorabilia.

The streets of Downtown will be alive with food, fun, wonderful entertainment and hours of great bargain hunting. ☺

Museum Hours

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

Tuesday - Thursday & Sunday
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

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

Torrance Historical Society & Museum

1345 Post Avenue
Torrance, CA 90501
(310) 328-5392

Return Services Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Torrance, CA
Permit No. 27

Inside

- ◆ History of Mobil Logo
- ◆ New Member Reception
- ◆ Historic Art Exhibit
- ◆ Local Leaders Learn Torrance History
- ◆ Antique Toy Talk