

The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society

WINTER 2017

SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS

Flying the Hump in WWII

by

Warren Jefferson (Jeff) Arnett

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

February, 2017

I hope that all of our members had a happy and enjoyable holiday season and I wish you and your families the best for a happy and healthy new year.

The San Marino Historical Society has had a busy fall and winter. The Thurnher House at Lacy Park has seen many visitors. On New Year's Day, we had more than 30 people tour our headquarters. For our October program, there was a "standing room only" crowd when Mort Mortimer presented a history of local railroads. This was a fascinating account of the various passenger, freight and interurban railroads that traversed the local landscape with many rare photos never seen before. We are very grateful and appreciative to Mort for all of his effort to present such an interesting and enjoyable program.

For our winter schedule, our society will provide you with another program in the ongoing "Before the Colors Fade" series on Monday, February 27th. The speaker will be Jeff Arnett. Jeff previously presented a program in 2013 on the Pacific Electric Railroad. This time, he will present a story on his own experiences as an Army Air Force pilot during World War II which included the resupplying efforts of the Chinese forces from India in an operation known as "The Hump." This program should be an interesting personal account of courage from someone who served his country with honor.

I would like to express my appreciation to and thank all of our board members and volunteers. Our organization has members that volunteer and contribute their abilities to our society in many unique and differing ways. They maintain our archives, provide accounting and financial services, publish and contribute to our newsletter, maintain membership records, find speakers and organize programs, provide publicity, offer legal advice, record the minutes at board meetings, maintain our website, volunteer as a docent as well as many other efforts. Some of these individuals have been doing many of these duties

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Jeff Arnett was born in Los Angeles in 1925 and has resided in the Pasadena-San Marino area since 1930. He graduated from South Pasadena High School in 1943, just one day before entering the Army Air Corps. After serving as a transport pilot in Burma and China for three years, he returned from the service to graduate from USC.

Jeff last spoke to the Historical Society on the Pacific Electric Company and his experience riding the Red Cars. On February 27, Arnett will speak on his WWII service in Asia including a three week flight from the United States to India, his service in Burma and China and crossing the famous and dangerous "Hump."

Jeff retired from fifty years in the investment business, fifty years of private plane piloting and fifteen years as a docent at the Palm Springs Air Museum. In recent years, he has returned to model railroading and a renewed focus on golf where he has managed to "shoot his age" four of the past five years.

A widower since 2009, Jeff feels fortunate that his four children, four of his six grandchildren and what will soon be five great grandchildren are all Southern Californians and can assemble within a few hours as they did on January 11th for his 92nd birthday.

Monday, February 27, 2017, 7:00pm

Crowell Public Library

Barth Community Room

1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino

Public is Welcome, Admission is Free

**San Marino Historical Society
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2017**

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President' s Message

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for several years for which we are very grateful and could not continue without their contributions.

The Thurnher House at Lacy Park is open to visitors for tours from noon until 3:00 PM on the first and third Sunday of every month and by appointment on Tuesdays. This is the former Park Superintendent's home and the docents look forward to and are happy to have visitors.

If any member is interested in volunteering with our organization, please contact me at 626-287-3734 or jvryan@pacbell.net.

I hope to see many of you at our next program or at the Thurnher House.

John V. Ryan, President

From the Archives

February, 2017, by Judith Carter

This year marks the eleventh year the volunteers have been working in the San Marino Historical Society Archives. We celebrated by updating the Past Perfect software. It will provide improvements in our membership records and allow us to better catalog the items in the collection. In cooperation with the city of San Marino, we have updated our file of houses slated for teardown. Photographs of each house are stored on the computer thereby enhancing our existing real estate files. In the past few months several architectural history consulting firms have visited the archives to determine the historical significance of San Marino homes that are before the San Marino Planning Commission or Design Review Committee.

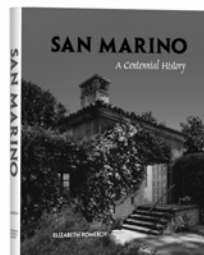
Selina Du, a San Marino High School senior has completed a video presentation on the early history of San Marino using slides from the archives and a script prepared by historical society docents many years ago. This presentation in DVD form will be distributed to all third grade teachers at Carver and Valentine Schools. It will be made available to the Crowell Library. It will be shown to visitors of the Thurnher House

Order San Marino Centennial Book Now

\$55 per copy + 4.95 tax = \$59.95. Add \$7.50 if you wish the book to be mailed to you for a total of \$67.45.

Order on-line via PayPal at www.sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org or by stopping by the Thurnher House on the first and third Sunday from 12-3 or on Tuesdays from 9:30-3.

Books are also currently available for sale at San Marino Toy and Books, Julienne, A Stitch in Time, Diana D's, The Old Mill, The Huntington Store, Vromans, Sweet and Savory, Fedde Furniture and the Pasadena Museum of History



Edwin Giles Hart: Vision of a City Founder

By Linda Mollno, PhD.

The City of San Marino was incorporated in 1913 with the vision of a residential community with fine homes, stately trees and lovely gardens. Our founders wanted to avoid annexation by Alhambra or Pasadena, a looming possibility. They also were committed to creating a city without apartment buildings and intrusive industry. Over the past century our city leaders worked hard to preserve this vision.

Who were our founders? Where did they come from? Much has been written on Henry Huntington and George Patton. The Patton home and the Huntington Library stand side by side, a living memorial to the past. Children at Valentine School learn about W. L. Valentine. Richard Lacy and his wife Maud contributed so much to our city's early history that our park is named for them. Two lesser-known city founders are Edward H. Groenendyke, a banker and shrewd businessman and real estate developer Edwin G. Hart.

Born in Cleveland Ohio in 1874, Edwin moved to California age ten. His grandparents, Christian and Catherine Hirth, immigrated to Cleveland from Germany, in the 1800s, changing their last name to Hart. Edwin's father John J. Hart was 17 when the Civil War broke out and served in the 150th Ohio Volunteer Infantry – after Lincoln's assassination he served as escort to the president's body as the funeral procession passed through Cleveland on its way to Springfield Illinois.

In 1884 John Hart brought his family to Southern California, a time when agriculture thrived. He purchased forty acres in Sierra Madre and entered the business of grapes and wine. His second son Edwin carried on the family interest in agricultural property but in a different way. He became a developer of orchard properties and subdivisions.

John J. Hart's sons all made important contributions to Southern California and left lasting imprints on the local landscape. His oldest son, John Wilson Hart, served as Acting District Attorney of Los Angeles, Frank Roland Hart was an accomplished pianist, performing with such singers as Enrico Caruso, and managed the Southern California Music Company. Edwin Giles Hart helped incorporate the city of San Marino.

Frank and Edwin Hart both moved to San Marino where Frank's wife, Enid Yandell Hart, was a theater and music reviewer for the local paper. Edwin served on the first city council. His twelve-year tenure helped guide the development of the fledgling city's main departments. Some of his descendants considered Edwin the toughest and most energetic of the Hart men, as well as exceedingly charismatic. He was certainly industrious.

His work as a real estate developer allowed him to cultivate influential friendships with important men like Henry Huntington. Edwin Hart was not only a founding member of the city's Board of Trustees but a moving force in establishing our school district. The city had to wait four years after incorporation and boast over fifty children in order to qualify for a school district. By 1917 the city had 58 children between the age of five and seventeen. Hart gathered thirty-three parents to sign a petition and San Marino had a school board.

The five-acre Huntington Drive site chosen to build San Marino's first school was purchased from Isaac and Thomas Cooper. It bordered Hart's home on the corner of West and Huntington Drives. The site later chosen for the district office bordered Hart's property to the south on West Drive. Although Edwin moved to La Habra shortly after helping found the San Marino School Board, he kept the property. His brother Frank lived there until 1938 when the city purchased the site for a library.

Edwin Hart founded a water company to serve La Habra Heights in 1919. To finance this endeavor he sold several large parcels of land on the former La Habra Rancho, land that he purchased two years earlier. Some parcels were sold with contracts to develop avocados, a particular interest of Hart's. A pioneer in the avocado industry, in 1915 he formed the California Avocado Society. Once water arrived in 1921, the irrigated hills became a blanket of green groves.

In early 1939 Edwin Hart helped organize the La Habra Improvement Association. Their stated purpose was to "encourage and promote the development of the Heights as a rural residential area." This was only one of his many real estate projects; another was Vista in San Diego County. Often the vision of his projects mirrored the vision San Marino's founders.

Edwin's interest in education and civic affairs may have influenced his niece, Frank's daughter, Enid Hart Douglass. After majoring in government at Pomona College, she held a professorship at Claremont Graduate School where she founded the Oral History Program. Throughout her life she held numerous civic and state offices, including mayor of Claremont where she played an instrumental role in the development of the city's new general plan in 1980. She created a historic preservation program and as new housing tracts developed in north Claremont she was vigilant in preserving a true neighborhood feel. Whether it was uncle Edwin's influence or her years growing up in San Marino, she clearly possessed a similar vision for Claremont.

Edwin G. Hart was struck and killed by a drunk driver in December of 1939, shortly after he had recovered from a debilitating stroke.

2016-2017 Membership Drive Off to a Great Start

Each year the San Marino Historical Society begins its fiscal year on October 1. Our members renew or join between that date and September 30. For the first quarter this fiscal year, we are pleased to have 195 current members. Most of those are renewing but sixteen are new to the organization. We give a special thanks to the following new members:

Lee Bacca
 Colleen Brown
 Alexandra Brousseau
 Linda Easthope
 Elizabeth Feffer
 Heidi Hobart
 Robert J. Houston
 Peter and Anne Kennedy
 Sadra Larsen
 John McClurg
 Christopher McNulty
 Frank Onys
 William Rogers
 Bing and Jie Guo Zhu

Current membership records show that thirty-two members are Sponsors contributing at the \$50 level, which is above the basic membership level. An additional thirty-three contributed at the Patron (\$100) level. Thirteen members selected the highest category, Benefactor, with contributions exceeding \$100, a record for any recent membership year. One of those benefactors was extremely generous by contributing \$1000. We are grateful for their support.

Enclosed with the printed copy of this issue of the Grapevine you will find a blue envelope. Take this opportunity to renew your membership and continue to support of the San Marino Historical Society. If you prefer to renew online, go to the website sanmarinohistoricalsoociety.org and follow the instructions to pay via PayPal. Your membership allows us to present programs open to the public at the Crowell Public Library, provide scholarships for graduating high school seniors, maintain the archives at the Thurnher House and to provide docent tours of the Thurnher House.

A Different Kind of Membership

Just as our local members join to support the work of our historical society, the San Marino Historical Society joins a number of organizations each year. Our membership derives benefits from the following organizations to which we belong:

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) serves thousands of organizations and individuals through advocacy, webinars, online courses, and workshops. History News magazine is available to members at the Thurnher House.

National Trust for Historic Preservation takes action when buildings, landscapes, and communities are at risk from demolition, neglect, and closure protecting these

historical sites for generations. The Trust publishes quarterly magazine, Preservation. This magazine is a must read for all who are interested in historic preservation and is available through our archives.

Historical Society of Southern California sponsors conferences and tours that focus on the history of Southern California. On Saturday, February 11, the HSSC offers a tour of the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum at Port Huemene. (See the calendar section of the Grapevine for more information.) The Southern California Quarterly is collected in the San Marino Historical Society Archives. This publication features scholarly articles on subjects pertaining to the history of this region as well as book reviews.

2017 Calendar of Events

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| February 11 | Saturday, Historical Society of Southern California lecture and tour of U.S. Navy Seabee Museum in Port Huneme. Event is free but reservations are requested by contacting the HSSC at the hssc.org or 323-222-0546 |
| February 19 | Sunday, 12 noon to 3. Docent led tours of the Thurnher House at Lacy Park are suitable for anyone interested in the history of the city. Families are welcome. Visitors can tour Lacy Park as well. |
| February 27 | Monday, 7 pm. Flying the Hump in World War II by Warren "Jeff" Arnett, Barth, Community Room, Crowell Public Library. 1800 Huntington Drive, San Marino.. |
| March 5 | Sunday, Docent led tours of the Thurnher House at Lacy Park are suitable for anyone interested in the history of the city. |
| March 19 | Sunday, Docent led tours of the Thurnher House at Lacy Park are suitable for anyone interested in the history of the city. |

Thurnher House Hours

The Thurnher House is open on the first and third Sunday afternoon of each month from noon to 3:00pm. It is also open for tours by appointment. If you would like to visit the house on Tuesdays, please call 626-304-9375 or info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org for an appointment.

WEBSITE

Visit our website to learn more about your Society's programs and activities as well as viewing current and past issues of our newsletter – the "Grapevine":

<http://sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org/>