

## A look back through history

**T**he community of Highland Park has a colorful history, dating back to the earliest days of Southern California. Originally it was part of the Rancho San Rafael, owned by Jose Maria Verdugo. The land was passed on to his children who, as a result of debts, were forced to sell the property — for the grand sum of \$1 — to A.C. Chapman and Andrew Glassall in 1870.

The following year the land was leased to Don and Donna Miguel Goldaracena, who used it for grazing their sheep.

The area soon came to be known as Garvanza, so named after the wild variety of plant — a form of sweetpea — that grew there. By 1887 two brothers — Ed and Ralph Rogers — bought the property and advertised lots, offering transportation and lunch for all visitors to their development. The promise of a passenger railway in the area also sparked interest and caused land values to skyrocket.

The area later became known as the Highlands, and eventually Highland Park. Even before the turn of the century, law and order were prime concerns.

For example, the Sycamore Grove neighborhood of Highland Park had become, by the 1890s, site of several notorious roadhouses used by visitors to the nearby red-light district.

In addition, the Arroyo area, an untamed, steeply sloping canyon surrounded by pastureland and gently rolling hills, was a favorite location for

bandits who preyed on travelers.

Finally, it was the inability of Highland Park residents to control the behavior of loiterers in the Arroyo that drove them to seek incorporation with the city of Los Angeles, and the protection of its police department. Thus Highland Park became the first area to be annexed to the original Los Angeles city boundaries. Access to the city water supply was another motivating factor in annexation.

As Highland Park grew, noteworthy citizens and institutions gravitated to the idyllic setting just north of Los Angeles. Charles Lummis, who was largely responsible for revival of interest in the Indian and Mexican eras of California history, made his home there.

Occidental College was once located in what is now the Savoy Apartment building at 121 N. Avenue 50, and the Judson Studios

building was originally erected to house USC's School of Fine Arts.

In 1981 Highland Park Heritage Trust sponsored a survey of historic resources in the community. Among other results, it formed the basis of a number of scenic strolls through Highland Park and Mount Washington, to bring alive the history of this unique community.

Each stroll is planned around a single group of attractive structures, with many other worthwhile streets available for exploration.

● **Heritage Square, 3800 Homer St.** — Victorian houses and public buildings moved from other sites.

● **Lummis Home, 200 South Avenue 43** — a microcosm of early California.

● **Southwest Museum, 234 Museum Drive** — a pioneering collection of Indian art.

● **Casa de Adobe, 4605 Figueroa St.** — replica of an Hispanic hacienda.

For more information call (213) 257-0060.