

P R E F A C E

Highland Park was the logical community for me to survey as I have been living there for eight years, yet actually knew nothing about the district. I have done my best to represent Highland Park accurately from all angles, but the task has been difficult as no official records have been kept.

I wish to thank all the local merchants and business men who took of their time to talk with me. Those who were of greatest help to me I must acknowledge individually: Mr. Sol Cohen of "Sol's"; Mr. Lester Cortland of "Cortland's"; Mr. W. E. Keeler of "Keeler Realty Co."; and most particularly Mr. Patrick Fagan, publisher of the Highland Park News-Herald.

I think that what I lost in weight and time and gained in callouses and leg muscles is possibly balanced by the personal contacts I made and the interesting people I met.

All factors considered, I can't say I'd enjoy doing another similar project.

Helen Gorian
April 20, 1952

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF HIGHLAND PARK

Location: The Northeast section of Los Angeles. See H.P. Boundaries.

Topography: Hills and valleys.

Area: 10.78 square miles.

Climate: Mediterranean.

Temperature: not available.

Precipitation*:

Grand total (44 years): 774.17"

Average': 17.59

Lowest (1898): 5.85"

Highest (1938, big flood year): 30.84"

Population: (1947 estimate) Between 55,000 and 60,000.

Population density: (1930)

Average: 5,442/ sq. mile

Maximum: 23,000/sq. mile

Water supply: Pumped from City of Los Angeles reservoir (probably the Buena Vista Reservoir, the oldest existing reservoir in Los Angeles).

*From Rainfall Record, 1896-1939

Garvanza-Highland Park

Under L.A. County Flood Control

District, Station 394

'From the author's observations, the yearly rainfall in recent years (1952 excluded) is somewhat less than 17.59".

HIGHLAND PARK BOUNDARIES

ZONE - 42

Northern:

A line northeast from 1599 Campus Rd (included) to Wildwood Trail (not schemed), east to Eucalyptus Lane, Buena Vista Ter (both included) and Pasadena City limits.

Southern:

Hellman Ave (not included) from South Pasadena City limits to Burr St. (not schemed): a line west through Arroyo Seco Park and Sycamore Grove intersecting 4700 N. Figueroa St. (included), along Crane Blvd., Cross St., and Moon St. to San Rafael Ave. (none included).

Eastern:

Pasadena City limits and South Pasadena City limits.

Western:

San Rafael Ave. (4200 to 4899) and Mayo St. (both included). Terrace 49 (included), a line north intersecting 1099 El Paso Dr. (included), and along Avenue 47 to 1599 Campus Rd. (both included).

AUGUST - 1950

HISTORY

At one time the rolling hills and natural springs of the Highlands were enjoyed by the inhabitants of many Indian villages. These Indians were possibly an offshoot of the Shoshone tribes. Later, the region became the princely Rancho San Rafael, owned by the Verdugo family and kept as a grazing land. Part of this land was purchased in 1870 at \$1.00 an acre by Andrew Glassell and A.C. Chapman. The Rogers brothers purchased the land from Glassell and subdivided it.

The tract of Garvanza, named after the garbanzo flower which grew on the surrounding hills, was the first of the Greater Highland Park districts to be settled. The town was centered at Pasadena Ave. and Ave. 64, extending a few blocks in either direction. It was born simultaneously with the laying of rails for the old Los Angeles and San Gabriel Railroad in 1885. Later York Valley, Hermon and parts of Highland Park were subdivided by Ralph and Edward Rogers. Highland Park was annexed to Los Angeles in 1895 and Garvanza in 1899.

Probably the most impelling reason for annexation was the need for a better water supply. Pumping plants had been installed that piped the water of the Arroyo to a reservoir. But in years of drought such as 1898, when there was less than 6 inches of rainfall, there was not nearly enough water in the river to meet the demands of the communities. Moreover, the city of Pasadena had built a plant at what is now Brookside Park, thus taking what little water there was before the Highland Park and Garvanza interests could get to it. The only answer to the water problem was to join Los Angeles and get "city" water.

HISTORY (continued)

There were other reasons for annexation. Sycamore Grove, at that time, was a beer garden and there was a fear that saloons would spread out. As a part of the city, the saloon menace could be controlled. Other reasons included the public services that a city government can give.

Soon it was felt that the communities of Northeastern Los Angeles should unite to better advance their interests, and it was proposed to combine the communities of Highland Park, Hermon, Garvanza, Annandale and York Blvd., sometimes referred to as the Five Friendly Valleys, into one community to be known as Greater Highland Park.

THE OLDEST REMAINING BUSINESS ENTERPRISE IN HIGHLAND PARK IS OWNED BY A. L. NIES - GENERAL BLACKSMITHING - AUTO FORGING.

Born in Iowa, Neis came to Los Angeles when he was 8 years old. After living with his family in various parts of the city, he married a Highland Park girl and started his business there in 1898 (only in those days it was the Garvanza district). He can be found in his shop almost every day.

As to retiring, "What would I do?" he asks. "I don't have many customers. Most of the people who come in with work for me are friends. I can stop my work and talk with them as long as I like. I couldn't do anything if I retired."

He looks for more City expansion if the water problem can be solved.

Author's note: Your author attempted to interview Mr. Neis, but he was going to the doctor that day and seemed to be very upset. Furthermore, he is very deaf.

THE FIRST MUNICIPAL POWER POLE ERECTED IN LOS ANGELES was located at North Figueroa Street and Piedmont Ave. (Highland Park) March 30, 1916. Erection of the original pole was symbolic of the start of distribution of municipal power in Los Angeles. Distribution of power purchased from the Pasadena Municipal Power Plant began November 13, 1916 throughout the Highland Park area.

THE ARROYO SECO

Before the white men came, the Arroyo Seco was a real river, even in the driest seasons, when it sank into the sand below what is now Sycamore Grove park. After the cities of Pasadena, South Pasadena and Garvanza began to divert its waters for irrigation and domestic purposes, the stream commenced to dry up, except in the wet seasons, when it became a raging flood. Now, except in very unusual seasons, floods have been stopped up as the great Devil's Gate dam catches its flood waters.

BUSINESS

The growth of Highland Park as an important center of retail trade cannot be overlooked. It has grown from an area largely used for grazing in the 1880's to a major trading zone in the 1950's. The community has well over 1,000 retail stores, mostly located along York Blvd., North Figueroa and Monte Vista street. The extent of these business districts has been constantly growing.

The majority of the stores are small shops, but it seems that many of these smaller stores have difficulty competing with the established larger businesses. There are 9 former shops now for rent on No. Figueroa Street between Avenues 56-58. One store that recently closed was a fur shop. Evidently the residents of Highland Park are not of the income bracket to support such an enterprise.

While small stores closed and others opened to try their luck, several stores have definitely become a part of the community. Notable among these are "Ivers" and Cortlands". The former has just added several adjacent stores to its property and is now in the process of remodeling. The latter store is the second endeavor of Moe Cortland, his first store being located in Eagle Rock. That Highland Park was more responsive to Cortland's higher quality merchandise is borne out by the fact that recently another Highland Park store was added to the Cortland chain, a women's store (the first two stores were for "men and boys") and that even more recently the two stores were greatly modernized.

The development of another store that the Highlanders boast of is that of The Boys Market. The Goldstein brothers started their first real market in Highland Park. It was so successful, they opened one in Pasadena in 1937. But by this time Highland Park had so outgrown itself that an addition to the original store was made.

It is the largest volume independent market in the area, despite the fact that it is not located on the main business street, as are the other markets. The Boys chain now consists of four stores and a new one will be opened soon.

"Sols Yardage" is still another store of which the community is proud. Starting in Highland Park as a section in another store, Mr. Sol Cohen now has several stores in different parts of the city.

The merchants of this self-supporting community like doing business here. They serve the people not only with their products, but by generously contributing to the numerous money raising affairs sponsored by various organizations. They know it's good business.

About 75,000 persons use Highland Park as a shopping center. This includes neighbors from El Sereno, South Pasadena and Eagle Rock. Prices are slightly higher for some items that cannot be purchased in volume, but for the most part prices are standardized. Some customers report prices to be lower than in Pasadena. The enjoyment of shopping entirely in specialty shops as one does in Highland Park is a matter of opinion. Many people prefer to do all their shopping in one store as it saves time and energy; on the other hand, often a specialty shop offers more variety and better service.

The following list of businesses taken from the pages of the Highland Park Buyer's Guide, altho highly innacurate, will give a general idea of the self-sufficiency of the community.

BUSINESS - continued

Highland Park is large enough to support two community newspapers, the Journal and the News-Herald. The former has a circulation of about 13,000. The paper is distributed once a week on Fridays and the nominal fee is 10¢ per month. The Highland Park News-Herald will be discussed in more length.

Founded in 1905, the Highland Park News-Herald is the oldest community newspaper in Los Angeles. Published Mondays and Fridays, it is delivered wholly by local carrier-boys (see at a rate of 25¢ per month. Besides the many columns of local and society news, the classified pages are a constant source of interest, for the News-Herald carries more classified lineage than all other newspapers in Northeast Los Angeles combined.

In 1948 the News-Herald publications (Highland Park and Eagle Rock) became affiliated with the Morgan Murphy newspapers. The Murphy affiliated ownerships include papers and radio stations in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Louisiana. The circulation of the News-Herald is discussed on the following page.

CIRCULATION - The Highland Park News-Herald like most Southern California community newspapers, at all times wants complete coverage of its area. But while this newspaper's circulation completely covers what is known as Highland Park proper, it is not satisfied to offer its advertisers just a minimum of coverage. Instead, as you will see on the following map, the News-Herald has extensive circulation in Glassell Park, Cypress Park, El Sereno, South Pasadena, and parts of Eagle Rock.

CIRCULATION - Continued

The circulation department has long conducted reader-sampling tests in areas adjacent to Highland Park. By this method a large paid circulation in these areas has been developed, and more people have been induced to shop in Highland Park. It is this newspaper's policy to continue such reader-sampling, establishing greater circulation in adjacent areas and contributing to the greater prosperity of Highland Park merchants.

Reader acceptance is of prime importance in selecting an advertising medium. This is the first test used by leading advertisers and advertising agencies throughout the nation. Mass circulation, while it has a recognized value under favorable delivery methods, is secondary.

The News-Herald offers both mass circulation and reader acceptance, coupled with excellent delivery. Prime consideration in determining reader interest is a willingness to pay for the publication. The News-Herald's system of voluntary payment offers two distinct advantages: proves reader acceptance and creates efficient delivery. There is no substitute--no short cut--to this basic quality in the circulation of this newspaper. A comparison of the reader interest and delivery service of the News-Herald with any community newspaper in Southern California demonstrates the truth of this statement.

The News-Herald guarantees its advertisers a minimum of 15,000 copies every issue, delivered in Highland Park and adjacent areas. Of that number there are now approximately 9100 paid subscribers, with the balance of the circulation delivered free. The paid list is constantly growing, demonstrating conclusively

the high reader interest the News-Herald enjoys.

The paid list is always augmented by free circulation, though in varying numbers, bringing total circulation from 15,000 to 17,650, but always a minimum than 15,000, but when paper becomes more plentiful, the News-Herald will be the first to increase circulation.

Advertisers are invited to inspect News-Herald circulation. Its offices are open to those who want to determine route numbers and areas where paid or free circulation is greatest.

The final determination of readership is delivery, for poor delivery brings no advertising results. The News-Herald employs more than 100 carriers to insure early and efficient delivery, and these carriers receive more than 60 per cent of all money paid by subscribers.

The area covered by the News-Herald is almost double that of any other local newspaper, giving maximum results at lowest costs to advertisers. Forty seven years of community service have developed this great medium that has achieved such great reader-acceptance in the Northeast Los Angeles field.

INDUSTRY

Industries are noticably lacking in Highland Park. A small scale industrial attempt was made but local residents insist that the community is zoned as residential and thus it is to stay. There is however, a concentrated industrial section in adjacent Lincoln Heights.

TRANSPORTATION

Highland Park residents are well provided with coaches and cars to all parts of the city. The L.A. Transit and Pacific Electric lines provide service to downtown Los Angeles, Eagle Rock, outlying sections of Highland Park, Pasadena and Alhambra.

The Arroyo Seco Freeway makes Highland Park more centrally located than ever. Los Angeles or Pasadena can be reached in 10 minutes.

The Santa Fe line has passenger and freight trains passing thru Highland Park.

RESIDENTIAL

All types of homes can be found in Highland Park today. The majority are, of course, old because the community was established so many years ago. Typical of these homes are the two story houses above Figueroa Street. There are also houses that were constructed (the term is used loosely) during the twenties when building restrictions were not enforced. As a result, actual shacks can be found, especially along the railroad tracks. Mt. Washington Drive also has many old and poor houses. These were probably constructed when this mountainous district was considered unaccessible and therefore undesirable property which was cheaply available. Now, of course, the beautiful view of the city from Mt. Washington has turned it into a famous artist's colony, with new and beautiful homes being erected. Montecito Hills is another section of new homes, some worth \$30,000 and more.

The average Highland Park home is a frame house selling for about \$9000.00. The stucco houses pictured are typical homes of

the slightly newer section of York Blvd.

Highland Park is a community of old people as well as old houses. Not only are these elderly people who have lived here all their lives, but also those who have moved here for their health and because of the quiet environment.

There is still the possibility of Highland Park becoming a more youthful community. Mr. W. E. Keeler, real estate broker, foresees in the not too distant future, the tearing down of the old houses and replacement with modern housing units and apartment houses.

This is a very logical prediction. Before long Los Angeles will have to stop expanding outward. Even with freeway systems throughout the city, people will not want to travel 30 miles to work every morning. Eventually Los Angeles will have to build upward, and Highland Park is the logical community in which to start. It offers an excellent climate, a ten minute drive to downtown Los Angeles, an established community in so far as adequate shopping districts, good schools, educational facilities etc. and room to expand if the capital is provided with which to work.

CHURCHES

For many years called "The Sunday School of Los Angeles," Highland Park is very proud of its numerous churches representing all denominations.

PLACES TO VISIT IN HIGHLAND PARK

Southwest museum. The Foundation of the Southwest Society, out of which the museum grew was formed in November 1903 by Charles Lummis. The museum itself was opened in August, 1914 at a cost of \$80,000. Since then \$18,000 was spent to complete its equipment of cases, and \$50,000 was contributed for the construction of an elevator for conveying passengers thru the rocky hill to the museum.

In 1940-41 a new wing was built to house a collection of American Indian basketry. The running expenses are met from the income of various endowments. The museum has never received public money nor has it charged for service. It is dependent largely upon private generosity for all new collections, improvements and the various archeological expeditions.

Casa de Adobe. In 1915 an Hispanic Society of California was organized, composed largely of those related thru birth or marriage to the original families. They desired to create an enduring picture of the home life of the Spanish settlers of California and so set out to build a reproduction of an old ranch house and furnish it in keeping. The Casa was presented to the Society of the Southwest museum in 1925. It is a beautiful old house of sun-dried brick, an authentic reproduction of a Spanish hacienda of 1800. The resident hostess is Senora Marcella Wolfskill de Paethorpe (Cella) who lives there with her husband.

The Lummis Home. This State Historical Monument is the stone house built by Charles Fletcher Lummis (3-1-59--11888) the founder of the Southwest Museum. Lummis also saved four old missions and studded and recorded Spanish America

ARROYO SECO BRANCH LIBRARY

Architect: Frederick M. Ashley

Cost: \$ 44,775.11. (including site and construction)

Construction: Brick

Building dimensions: 54' X 63'

Floor space: 8736 square feet

Volume capacity: 20,000

Built in 1914, this branch was an outgrowth of the old Garvanza Branch, which in turn had united with the Highland Park Branch established in connection with the Stimson Memorial Library at Occidental College. Located on a V-shaped plot of ground, it occupies a unique position fronting on two streets with terraced approach.

This was the first branch library ever built in Los Angeles, and to insure its location, the people raised thousands of dollars for a site which they presented to the city.

RECREATION CENTER

A modern recreation center for elderly men was constructed at the Highland Park playground. It was made necessary when the new swimming pool was constructed .

Sycamore Grove Park.

This park covers 29 acres of natural surroundings and takes its name from the old sycamore trees that sprang up on the banks of the stream and assumed fantastic shapes. The park is excellent for picnics and is the home of the State picnics.

SCHOOLS

Highland Park is served by numerous elementary schools, Burbank, Nightingale and Irving junior high schools and Franklin senior high school. There are also two colleges in the vicinity: Los Angeles Pacific College and Occidental College.

In the late nineties (1898) when everyone was "hard-up" all over Southern California, Highland Park residents raised sufficient funds to buy a ten acre tract which they presented to Occidental College as an inducement to secure its location in the Highlands. The institution grew so fast that in 1914 the college moved to the magnificent 95 acre campus which Ralph Rogers gave it in York Valley. Although the college is now in an area considered as Eagle Rock, the residents of Highland Park still think of it as their college.

HIGHLAND PARK

IN REVIEW

Highland Park's function as a community is a simple but important one: that of residence. The town began, as was mentioned, when the railroads started thru, and its proximity to downtown Los Angeles ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles) made it a good place for settlement. At the start of the century, Highland Park was considered a haven for retired business men, the "high and dry" location and climate being healthful. Even today many people settle here for health reasons as Highland Park is said to have the best climate in Los Angeles.

Highland Park is primarily a home district, with a good size business district and little or no industry. Its residents are largely home owners. The people are of all occupations, but outstanding is the number of railroad workers and civil service employees. The churches here are numerous and well supported. Many large and active club groups furnish the social life of the community. A.. of the leading fraternal organizations have units here. Three service clubs and three Chambers of Commerce serve Highland Park. The cultural side is not neglected, for here is the home of one of the finest colleges in the United States, Occidental College (see fig. 18), and a junior college with high rank, Los Angeles Pacific College. The public parks Sycamore Grove (see fig. 22) and Arroyo Seco park are centers of many outdoor activities. Schools, libraries and playgrounds are among the best. Highland Park music lovers have built a strong symphony association which sponsors one of the finest symphony orchestras in Southern California. Civic choruses here rate just as high. Highland Parkers can well be proud of their community.

Highland Park's problem of becoming too " old" a community may be ~~solved~~/solved if new housing units are put in. Her problem of no room in which to expand is not a real one for there is much empty land available if buyers look for the safe sections of the hilly land.

Highland Park has a bright future ahead if it makes the most of its potential.

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Files of Highland Park News-Herald

Highland Park Post Office

Boys Market Advertising director

Mr. Cal Tilton, Security First-National Bank

Mr. Sol Cohen, past president of Highland Park Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Lester Cortland, member of Chamber of Commerce and several
local organizations

Mr. W. E. Keeler, Real Estate Broker

Mr. Pat Fagan, Publisher of Highland Park News-Herald

Highland Park Chamber of Commerce

Auto Club of So. California