

House that Hiner built is quaint musical shrine

By Jean Douglas Robson



Story book house

Just like a page from Hans Christian Anderson this gingerbread house where the magic of music prevailed for many years. Here at Hiner House famed musicians of the past met for symphonic sessions.

No one driving along North Figueroa past Sycamore Grove can help noticing the charming Swiss-styled house that stands across the street from the park.

It is built of wood and stone and looks like something out of a fairy tale. A child, passing by, might easily believe it to be the house of the seven dwarfs or still better, the home of the good fairy.

But no, it is a real home. The home of one of the most

famous band leaders in America, Dr. Ed. M. Hiner.

On entering the front door of the Hiner residence, one is immediately aware of the cozy hominess of the spacious parlor. The huge, stone fireplace, especially when it is burning, exudes a friendly atmosphere. And, although the furniture is not of the latest mode, the fine quality of each piece is apparent.

Bandmaster

As bandmaster for the city, Dr. Hiner, with his wife, Anna, an accomplished singer, as well as a writer, appearing as soloist, directed concerts for nearly all the State picnics in Sycamore Grove for many years.

Every Sunday morning band rehearsal was held in a shady spot by a little stream which runs through the grounds.

Social Center

Many musicians who have played under his direction considered Dr. Hiner "a fabulous personality." On the podium he was a forceful director and exacted good music in the era when bands were highly competitive. They were the center of social evenings and pleasant listening in the parks of the country.

Dr. Hiner's instrument was the cornet and, "He didn't ask any musician to do anything he could not do himself. And he could do it better."

When Dr. Hiner passed on, Mrs. Hiner, in accord with her husband's wishes, presented some 6000 band musical scores, some of them priceless as collector's items, to the Kansas City Library. Altogether there were 23 bulging boxes, and crates.

Today, Mrs. Hiner and her son live in the "House that Hiner built," which contains many, many momentos, pictures and scrapbooks, medals etc., of both Dr. and Mrs. Hiner.

Dr. Hiner built this house in 1921, after coming here from Kansas City, where he was Bandmaster for over three decades. Previous to this, he directed the Third Regiment Band, which was inducted into regular army service during the Spanish-American War, and became known as President McKinley's Band. During World War I he organized the Seventh Regiment Band.

A warm friend of Victor Herbert, Pat Gilmore and other band leaders, Dr. and Mrs. Hiner frequently entertained John Phillip Sousa. In fact they built a rehearsal hall of wood and stone also and called it 'Sousa's Nook'. And Sousa was present at the dedication.

Edward Hiner, the leader of the band

(8th In Series)

By Charles Cooper

Located in front of the Area 7 Alternative School, partly shielded from North Figueroa Street by a 6-foot hedge, stands a wood and rock Swiss chalet which has become a city cultural monument, the Hiner House.

The House was home and studio for Dr. Edward Hiner, a pioneer in the establishment of municipal bands, a member of the elite group of band leaders from the turn of the century, and a teacher of musicians in Highland Park for a quarter of a century.

By the time Dr. Hiner came to Los Angeles, he already had an impressive career behind him, as director of the Kansas City Municipal Band and as a leader of military bands during two wars.

In the Spanish-American War, Hiner directed a regimental band and also, at the request of President William McKinley, di-

rected all 75 bands during the short war.

WORLD WAR I

The band leader served again during World War I, holding the rank of Chief Musician and again directing his own regimental unit, an award winning organization.

He established residence near Sycamore Grove Park in 1921, at what is now 4757 North Figueroa Street; and the Park's bandshell was to be the scene of many concerts by his band in years to come.

His attempts to organize a municipal band program for Los Angeles ended with his death in 1948, at the age of 76, but he helped provide the impetus for the Los Angeles Bureau of Music program, still one of the more advanced in the nation.

John Phillip Sousa, who represents in most minds the quintessential band leader, was a close friend of Hiner's, and helped dedicate his Sycamore

Grove studio.

In later years, the March King used the Hiner house as his Los Angeles headquarters during band tours; and the house was popularly dubbed "Sousa's

Nook" by many.

The house was declared Cultural Monument Number 105 by the Cultural Heritage Board of the city on Nov. 15, 1972.

By Charles Cooper



HINER HOUSE, now a city cultural monument, was for 27 years the home and studio of Dr. Edward Hiner, pioneer musician and band leader and friend of John Phillip Sousa.