

Historic bench

This stone bench overlooking the Arroyo at the end of South Ave. 63 once served as a stop for the Sierra Madre Stage in the 1880s. It has been restored by Highland Park Heritage Trust. The bench was located adjacent to the Garvanza Villa Hotel (below) which stood on a site near what is now York Blvd. and Ave. 63.

A stone bench that once served as a Highland Park stop for the Sierra Madre Stage in the 1880s has been restored by the Highland Park Heritage Trust group, member Anne Marie Wozniak announced this week.

The bench once sat beside the fashionable Garvanza Villa Hotel which was located on what is now York Blvd. near Ave. 63. The hotel was opened on Nov. 15, 1886 and was later destroyed by fire.

Wozniak states:

"The hotel was later replaced by a bungalow court and apartments. The bench served as a stop for the Sierra Madre Stage, which carried mail and passengers between Los Angeles and Pasadena, and later, for the Pacific Electric."

The bench is constructed of arroyo stone with a concrete slab for its seat, and overlooks the valley of the Arroyo Seco at the end of S. Ave. 63. Defaced over the years, the bench and its restoration became a goal of the Heritage Trust Group. But problems remain, says Wozniak:

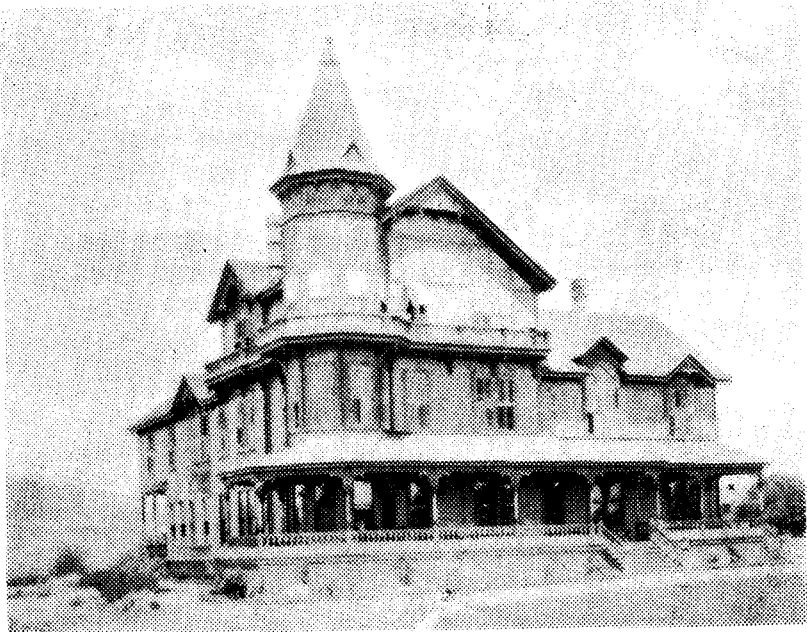
"Unfortunately, the area at night has become a haven for vagrants and transients and some people in the neighborhood feel that the bench

Old stage stop bench restored by Trust group

is an attractive nuisance. The problems, however, would exist with or without the bench, says Wozniak.

Heritage Trust hopes that the community will take advantage of the restored bench and enjoy the view of the arroyo. "The railroad still winds around Santa Fe Hill in a panoramic view that also includes the majestic Santa Fe trestle that was built in 1889. It is also a beautiful spot in which to view the contours of the land and the hills beyond and see what drew so many people to this area a century ago."

The bench project was headed by Roy and Pat Sampson and the co-workers included Rene Kesler, Highland Park Heritage Trust president; Kathy Salazar, Wozniak, Charlie Fisher, and Bob Bauer.



Garvanza Villa Hotel

Fashionable Garvanza Villa Hotel, first opened on Nov. 15, 1886, and later destroyed by fire, was a stop for the Sierra Madre Stage.
