

HERITAGE

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October/November, 2012

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

With another School District bond issue on November's ballot, a possibility that the District and the City may reach détente soon in their mutual law suits, and the current kerfuffle over the drop-off arrangements at Orchard School in the news, this seems an appropriate time to look back at the history of the Tustin School District.

It was 1870, and the newly-arrived Columbus Tustin family consisted of five children – all of them school age or soon to be. What to do, what

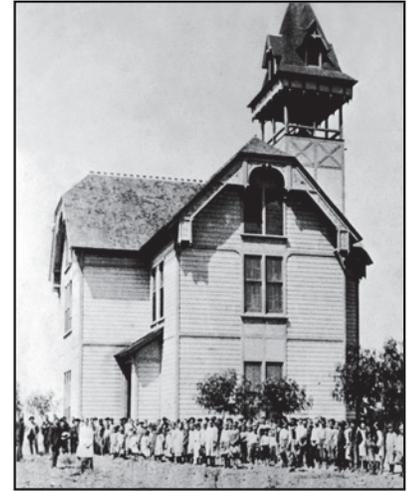


to do in a town that wasn't even a town yet – only a pie-in-the-sky dream of the good Mr. Tustin? Details are sketchy, but in recollections of Tustin old-timers, there is mention of a small school on the south side of Main between 'C' and 'B' Streets before 1872. This school predated even the oldest of the old-timers' memories, so details are lacking, but it seems likely that Mrs. Tustin, anxious to corral some of their children for at least a few hours of the day, suggested to Mr. Tustin that a school would be nice, and why didn't he build one. He may have done just that.

By 1872, Tustin City boasted a Post Office plus a scant handful of businesses, and the rich farming possibilities brought more families with children to the area – enough children to encourage the County of Los Angeles, of which we were still a part, to set up the Sycamore School District encompassing Costa Mesa, El Toro, and the foothills to the east. A property tax of \$900 was levied for the one-room school's construction, and another \$300 for school 'purposes', according to the District Trustees' minutes of March, 1872. Columbus Tustin donated the land for a school block bordered by 'B', 'C', Second and Third Streets.

More new residents arrived, lured by the prosperity of

the late 1870s, and soon the little school was no longer large enough. In 1882, another bond elicited \$3,000 for a two-story, four-room Victorian-style school building facing 3rd Street. Unfortunately, there were cost over-runs, forcing the Trustees to return again to the voters



for another \$2,000 to complete the building. The old one-room schoolhouse was sold to a family who moved it onto Grand Street in Santa Ana for a residence.

When Orange County separated from Los Angeles in 1889, the District's name was changed from Sycamore to Tustin, and with the floating of another bond for \$7,000, the size of the Victorian school was doubled. Because the District was so geographically large, however, attendance continued to grow at an alarming pace. Although the ninth grade was eventually eliminated to save space, a larger school was again needed, and in 1914 an ornate three-story Mediterranean-style elementary school was built facing 'C' Street. Because students came from far and wide on bikes, horseback, and even in buggies, part of a fence separating the boys' and girls' playgrounds was removed to accommodate a bike and stabling area.

continued on page 2



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P.O. Box 185
Tustin, CA 92781

Tustin Area Museum
395 El Camino Real (at Main Street)
Tustin, CA 92780
(714) 731-5701
FAX (714) 731-7691
E-mail: tustinmuseum@att.net
Web Site: www.tustinhistory.com

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Museum Hours

Every Tuesday and Thursday

9 am – 2 pm

First and Third Saturday
of each month

12 pm – 3 pm

Open to Visitors
Admission is Free

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is hard to believe that Thanksgiving is almost upon us and with that, the realization the year 2012 will soon be drawing to a close! This has been a wonderful and enriching year for the Tustin Area Historical Society, and we are very thankful to all of you, our volunteers and members, who have given your time and support to help make this year the best yet!

It will soon be time to renew your membership, and so I would like to remind you that by continuing to support TAHS with your membership dues and – if you are able to do so – your time, you are promoting the preservation of Tustin's history for generations to come! Our wonderful Museum with its History In A Box program, ongoing tours led by our wonderful docents, and the annual JoAnn Bollesen Art Contest – all for our community's 3rd graders – depends on your support. The always-popular Promenade (mark your calendars for Saturday, May 4, 2013!) keeps our

lights on and enables us to continue our archival work. However, in addition to your dues, we hope to engage you as well – to enjoy local historical sites through group events such as our recently offered Modjeska docent-led tour, and to be entertained and informed by guest speakers at our four yearly general meetings. When you receive your renewal letter, won't you not only take a moment to renew – but also consider inviting a friend to join as well? Every single membership in TAHS is valued, appreciated – and needed! Thank you for the difference you make by being a part of us!

With the holidays fast-approaching, let us all take some time out of our busy schedules to reflect on and be thankful for our blessings of community, family and friends.

Warmest wishes to everyone for the happiest of holidays!

Gretchen Whisler

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

continued from page 1

In 1921, even this grand edifice of learning became too crowded, causing the first through third grades to be moved to a new Mission-style Primary building facing Main Street. Second and Third Streets were truncated, and two blocks to the north and south, intended as residential neighborhoods, were incorporated into the enlarged school block, allowing for a girls' playground south of the elementary school, and a boys' playground to its north.

At that same time, a new state law was passed, mandating that every elementary school be within a high school district. Tustin students wishing education beyond eighth grade had been compelled to travel to Santa Ana, but to avoid annexation of its elementary district, the Tustin High School District was formed and a high school built with boundaries extending to Laguna Beach, Irvine, El Toro and the canyons. The elementary and high school continued as separate districts for several decades, each with its own Board of Trustees. Students from the foothills and surrounding farmland were eventually siphoned away by growth to our east, and Tustin, with multiple primary schools, became a unified district. Much has evolved within our District over the years, but the money needed to keep up with our growth seems to be a constant.

DOING THE TILLER PARADE IN STYLE



Left to right: Pete Beatty, Ed Corwin, Max Zimmerman (winner), Doreen Corwin, Erma Zwirner, Gretchen Whisler, Elise Carlin-Jones (winner), her mother Cameron, Tony Coco.
Photog: Brad Zimmerman

It wasn't all of the TAHS Board who got on Al Ricci's Old Town Trolley, but it was a full busload nevertheless, especially after we added in two of our JoAnn Bollesen Art Contest winners and their families, who thoroughly enjoyed watching the parade from a different vantage point. Joining us were six City of Tustin Community Service Commissioners, including Parks & Rec Director David Wilson, who added a lot of enthusiasm and community spirit. Most importantly, it was a happy group waving to the crowd, with the crowd responding in kind.

NEW YEAR – NEW MEETING PLACE

Change is challenging for those of us engaged in history, but we're going to suck it up and make a MOVE, beginning with our first meeting of 2013. The new Tustin Library has offered us its lovely and modern meeting facilities, with all the accoutrements (we will still bring the cookies and punch, however!), for our February general meeting, and all meetings to follow. Not only will this change be a boost for our budget, it will offer ample well-lighted parking, and our programs might even pique the interest of a few library patrons who discover us and wish to become involved with TAHS.

Accessions:	Robert Ammann	Sunbeam "Mixmaster" circa 1960's
	Del Pickney	Tustin PD Ephemera
	Donor unknown	TUHS photos, circa 1930's, 1936 60 th Reunion photos
	Special Donation:	Phil Cox

Join the Tustin Area Historical Society and keep your newsletter coming. Please send your dues or an additional gift today. Ask a friend to join!

ANNUAL DUES:

(Please check one)

- \$20-\$34 Contributor
- \$35-\$59 Explorer
- \$60-\$99 Colonist
- \$100-\$249 Settler
- \$250-\$499 Frontier
- \$500-\$999 Pioneer
- \$1,000 Heritage
- Renew New

Special Contribution as Friends of the Museum

\$ _____

Make your check payable to:
Tustin Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 185 • Tustin, CA 92781

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

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New Members:

Jim & Marcia Cortese

Obituary:

Jim Sleeper

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Tuesday, 13th at 7:30p.m.
Tustin Senior Center
Community Room
(200 S. "C" Street)
ENTERTAINMENT:
"The Voices of Tustin"
a musical program

COME ON AND HEAR.....the

"Voices of Tustin" is a community-based choir comprised of all ages and experience levels from beginners to soloists. "Voices" has been active in the area for a number of years, but their numbers were dwindling until TACFA, a volunteer organization dedicated to the arts, stepped in recently with a marketing campaign that produced results exceeding the group's wildest recruitment hopes (although, if you're a tenor or bass, they'd love to talk to you). They've grown to a 40-member group of dedicated musicians and vocalists who have performed at a number of venues, including a "Song from the Heart" Valentine concert in the Beckman High School auditorium this year, as well as a wonderful performance during Broadway in the Park, with an upcoming performance at the Tustin Library.

The group meets weekly in the choir room at Tustin High School, where under the direction of David Peay (two-time Tustin Teacher of the Year award winner) and Corey Hirsch (Julliard alumna and professional composer), they blend their voices in musical numbers that encompass popular songs,



Broadway musical hits, and as their website states, "just plain good sounding 4-part harmony songs".

Get a jump on the holiday season by joining us in the Community Room at the Senior Center on November 13th at 7:30 for a fun and memorable evening of music performed by the full choir, led by David with accompaniment by Corey. It will feature old and new songs, some tying into the holiday season, and all sure to please. We promise your toes will tap to the beat, and you'll leave humming a happy tune!