

JOURNAL
of the
Riverside
Historical Society

Number Twenty Five

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Foreword

Do you realize that in just two years when we reach the year 2020 Riverside will be 150 years old? Founded in 1870 by John W. North, our city has a rich history of places, events, organizations, and people. The purpose of this journal is to bring to light some of those places, events, organizations, and people.

In this issue (our twenty-fifth), we have glimpses into the lives of three Riversiders. Howard Boylan gives us a short anecdote on his younger brother, Nelson, who in 1964 wrote a letter of condolence to Mrs. John Kennedy. Katie Wider brings to light a few facts on the life of George Flower who died just last year. George was a main figure in the preservation and protection of Riverside's landmark Mt. Rubidoux. In researching the history of White Park, I, your editor, came upon Franz Hosp. Hosp is an often-overlooked figure in early Riverside's horticultural history.

The other two articles in the present journal deal with organizations and the buildings which they occupied. The First Congregational Church is Riverside's first church. Don Miller gives us a brief history of this church, the third structure in its history that still proudly stands in downtown Riverside. Kim Jarrell Johnson on the other hand relates to us the story of an organization and building that no longer exist. Lasting only about twenty years, the Rubidoux Club played an important social role in Riverside just before and after the turn of the twentieth century.

With the upcoming Sesquicentennial anniversary of Riverside, the Board of Directors of the Riverside Historical Society has decided that we will produce a larger, special edition of the journal for this celebration. Covering mostly the last 75 years, this edition will highlight the stories of those years that make Riverside what it is today. If you have some ideas of topics and writers, contact Board member Theresa Hanley.

Meanwhile we are always looking for good articles on the places, events, organizations, and people that played a role in Riverside's history.

Glenn Wenzel, editor

Riverside Historical Society Journal



About the Authors

Howard Boylan was born in Riverside on April 17, 1950. He attended Magnolia School, Grant Elementary, Central Jr. High and Poly High. He then attended U.C. Santa Barbara from with a major in Environmental Biology. He was employed by the County of Riverside from June 1990 to July 2012 in several departments. Since 1998 he has been a board member for the Riverside Medical Clinic Charitable Foundation. His father, Dr. Richard Boylan, was the first physician to be invited into the Riverside Medical Clinic in the late 1930's (in the lower Mission Inn Rotunda).

Kim Jarrell Johnson has had a lifelong fascination with history and has authored or coauthored seven books on local history, including *Wicked Jurupa Valley*, *Riverside's Mission Inn*, and *A Brief History of Eastvale*. Kim has been writing history columns for local newspapers for the past fourteen years and currently shares writing duties with Steve Lech on the "Back in the Day" column, which appears Sundays in the *Riverside Press Enterprise*. Kim currently serves as an elected director on the board of the Jurupa Area Recreation and Park District and is an at large member of the Riverside County Historical Commission.

Donald Miller was born 1948 in Pasadena. His father retired from the Army in 1953 and moved to Riverside to work at UCR. Don taught high school in Moreno Valley from 1972 to 2012. In 1971, he married Beth Tanner at First Congregational Church. Don and Beth had two kids: Scott and Autumn. Scott succumbed to leukemia in 1986. Scott's death inspired the 24 bell memorial carillon in the Congregational Church tower. Beth and Don raised the money and helped install the system in 1988. He is the chair of the Board of Trustees and project manager for the Beacon of Hope capital improvement campaign.

Glenn Wenzel is a retired Lutheran minister who together with his wife Nancy has become interested in local history. He serves on the board of the Riverside Historical Society, Friends of Mt. Rubidoux, and the Riverside County Heritage Association. He was also very active with Totally Mt. Rubidoux, the group which raised funds to save the cross on the top of the mountain. For the past 10 issues he has served as editor of this journal.

Katie Wider joined Friends of Mt. Rubidoux when it was re-activated in 1994 and was elected Secretary in 1995. In 2005, she briefly served as Secretary for the newly-formed Evergreen Memorial Historic Cemetery; and in 2012-2013, she participated in the Totally Mt. Rubidoux campaign to preserve Mt. Rubidoux peak. Katie and her husband Steve live in Riverside. They met by chance through a Mt. Rubidoux walk on December 26, 1982. They enjoy walking several days weekly and collecting trash (trashercizing) along the way.

Franz Philip Hosp: Riverside's Own Horticultural Artist

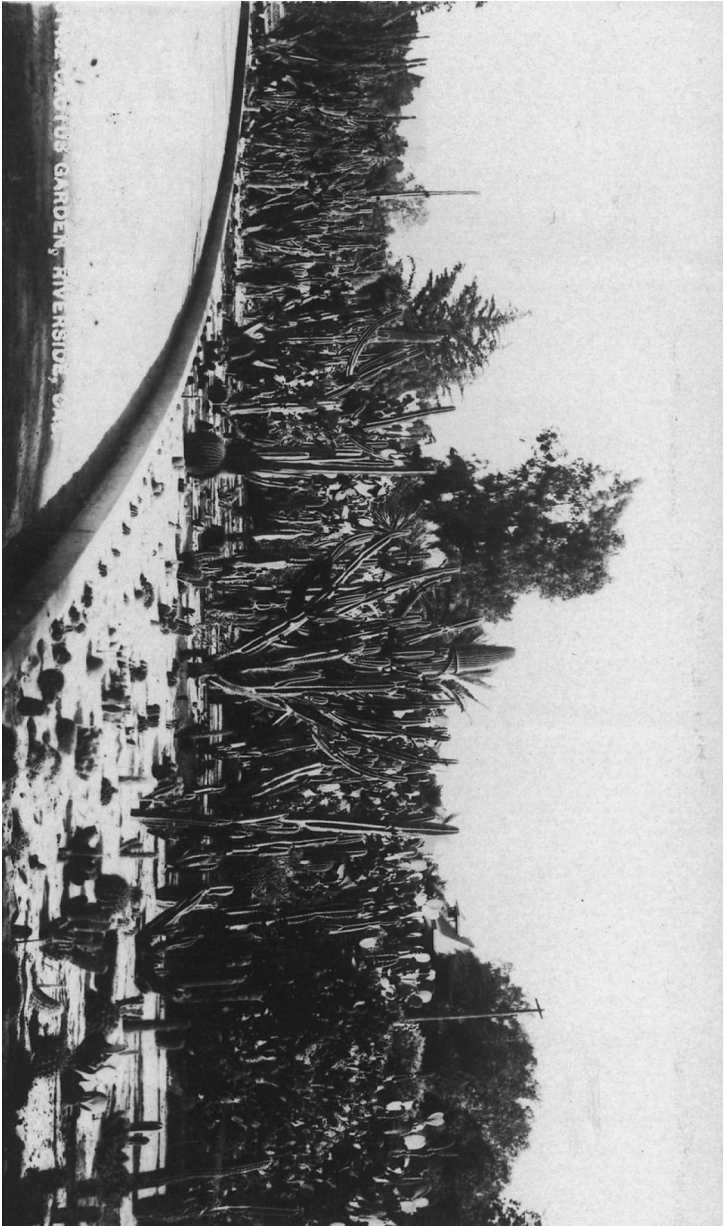
By Glenn Wenzel

Franz Philip Hosp was born on March 30, 1853 in Uberlinger, Baden-Wurtemberg, Germany, the son of Joseph and Barbara Hosp. Franz Hosp eventually played important roles in the development of Riverside and other communities. At the age of fifteen, Hosp was apprenticed to a landscape gardener in the gardens of a German Grand Duke. In that training "his proficiency was such that even at an early age he won many compliments for his artistic and skillful work."¹ In 1872, at the age of nineteen, he arrived in New York. There he first served as an assistant to his cousin William Fisher, who did landscaping work in Central Park. A few years later, Hosp established his own florist business in New York.² His greenhouses were on 129th Street in Harlem.³

While in New York, Franz Hosp met Margaret Bender, and the couple married on January 17, 1878. The couple's first child, Alice, was born in New York on September 20, 1879.⁴ A few years later, on November 9, 1882, a son named Carl was born.⁵

When the property on which Hosp had his greenhouses was sold for residential use, Hosp relocated to Cincinnati, where he also opened a florist business.⁶ At one time he had twenty-one greenhouses where he cultivated orchids and many other special plants.⁷ A second, son, Franz Philip Hosp, Jr., was born on September 8, 1883.⁸

Moving farther westward, the family arrived in Riverside in 1886, where he again set up a florist business. Hosp then expanded his business in various landscaping projects that netted him fame throughout the region. The last three of his children were born in Riverside: Martha or "Mattie" Hosp, was born on December 26, 1886,⁹ Margaret on August 26, 1888,¹⁰ and Della on June 10, 1891.¹¹ The 1893 Riverside city directory lists the Hosp family living at 235 Date Street.¹² In the 1897-98 Directory, the family lived at 347 E. Ninth Street.¹³ They lived on the southeast corner of Twelfth and Mulberry from about 1901 to 1908,¹⁴ in a house purchased



Early Postcard of White Park. Author's Collection

Winter Flowering Plants



Carnation Pinks, Pansies, Primroses, Roses, etc.

Only Best Varieties at Lowest Prices.

ALSO CUT FLOWERS.

Ornamental Shrubbery, Fruit Trees,
Flowering Bulbs and Grass Seeds.

Nursery on Sedgwick Street,
between Eighth and Ninth.

F. P. HOSP,

no28m1 Nurseryman and Landscape Gardener.

*Ad for Hosp in the Riverside Daily Press,
November 24, 1894.*

from H. W. Leighton.¹⁵ Finally, in 1908 the family moved to 323 Tenth Street, where Hosp lived until his death in 1936.¹⁶

Within a few years after arriving in Riverside, Hosp's reputation had risen to the extent that he was asked to submit plans for the ornamentation of Riverside's City Park. His 1888 plan called for putting in lawns, flower beds, and shade trees, at an estimated cost of \$2,500.¹⁷ The *Daily Press* later wrote, "F. P. Hosp, the great landscape gardener, in one year transformed the unsightly five-acre lot in Riverside into one of the most beautiful parks of its size in the State . . ."¹⁸ Hosp brought some of the cactus specimens from the

Devil's Garden area near what is now Desert Hot Springs.¹⁹ In May of 1893, Hosp returned from a trip out to Twentynine Palms with a carload of splendid specimens of cacti for City Park.²⁰ A reporter wrote: "Probably the most unique feature of the park is Mr. Hosp's miniature desert, which contains almost every variety of cacti known in California."²¹ City Park was officially renamed White Park in 1899, in honor of Albert S. White, an early park commissioner and also a developer of the park. Albert White and Franz Hosp were mainly responsible for making this park one of the finest collections of cacti in the United States, according to the Smithsonian Institute in 1908.²² San Bernardino also sought advice from Hosp regarding a park in that city.

The first flower show in Riverside, the Chrysanthemum Show, was held in November of 1889. The main display was made by Hosp, who exhibited over one hundred varieties of the choicest plants ever seen in

the state. Not surprisingly, Hosp won First Prize for the largest and finest display. He declined to enter any other categories, “against amateurs for other prizes.”²³

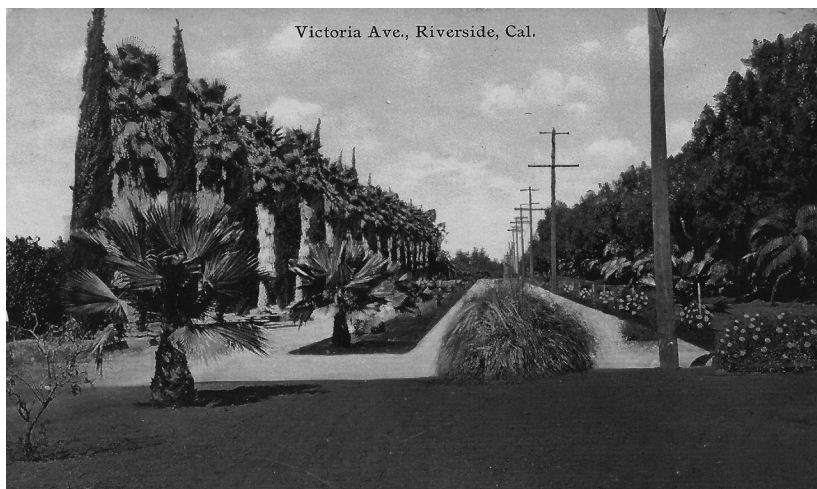
In Riverside, Hosp continued to build up a reputation as a gardener, florist, landscape artist, and supplier of various plants. In 1893, he brought in seeds from Siam, which he felt would be a good substitute for the cranberry. The Jamaica Sorrel was from the hibiscus family, and it grew to a height of three feet and produced seed pods. Hosp reported that excellent jams and jellies could be made from it.²⁴

In addition to White Park, the Hosp family was also interested in Riverside’s Fairmont Park. In February, 1900, Hosp gave the following variety of trees to Fairmont: Sycamore oriented, box elder, tulip tree, flowering pomegranate, flowering quince, eucalypti, and pepper. His son Carl donated a Canary Island Date tree.²⁵

One of the other projects that Hosp took on in the 1890s was a major one in Redlands - landscaping the homes of the Smiley Brothers. Years later a newspaperman wrote: “First achievement of note in landscaping was the planting of the famous Smiley Heights in Redlands.”²⁶ Canon Crest Park, as it was called, contained over five miles of roadway including the main road, Crest Road. Hosp lined Crest Road with flower beds, some which were seventy-five to one hundred twenty-five feet deep.²⁷



Canon Crest Park in Smiley Heights, Redlands. Author's Collection.



Victoria Avenue, circa 1905. Author's collection.

While still working in Redlands, Hosp returned to Riverside in the spring of 1892 to supervise the planting on the newly-graded Victoria Avenue, an idea conceived by Matthew Gage. Harold Snyder wrote: "Hosp's plan is a masterpiece of drive-by landscape planting, as appropriate to the horse-and-buggy era as it is to the automobile age. Over the years some of the plant material has changed, but the original concept has not altered."²⁸ The trees originally planted came from around the world, including pepper trees from Peru, eucalyptus trees from Australia, and also palms and silk oaks. The avenue was developed as a promotion for land sales in the area newly irrigated by the Gage Canal.²⁹

In addition to trees along Victoria Avenue, Hosp also planted shrubs and flowers. Among those were twelve Cecile Brunner rose bushes. They became the inspiration for his first propagated rose.

During the year following the initial planting, Hosp noticed in one of the Cecile Brunner plants a long branch of extraordinary vigor of growth. Instinctively he suspected that this abnormal growth might be a sport. He cut part of it off and made several cuttings from it that he rooted in his propagating garden in

Riverside. The resulting plants showed the same characteristics as the parent branch, proving that it was a true bud mutation or sport.³⁰

Hosp introduced this new Climbing Cecile Brunner rose to the public in 1894. This rose was unusually free from disease and insect pests, and it had blossoms that were used for cut roses and boutonnieres.³¹ At this time Hosp had a nursery on Sedgwick Street, between Eighth and Ninth Streets.³²

In 1898, Hosp introduced another propagated sport, the Climbing Papa Gontier. Developed in a fashion similar to the Cecile Brunner, this climbing rose grew eight to ten feet with numerous flowers.³³ The Climbing Papa Gontier was described as “one of the freest blooming roses known, perfectly adapted to California conditions and one of the state’s most popular varieties. The flower is rosy crimson with carmine center.” A flourishing example was growing in 1929 at the home of Ethan Allen Chase, at 1315 Lemon Street.³⁴

Soon after working for the Smiley brothers, Hosp also advised about the plantings on Thomas Young England’s property, now known as Prospect Park in Redlands.³⁵ This property was described as “comprised of a large orange grove and winding carriage roads lined with ornamental trees. Like its large and famous cousin Smiley Heights, it was visited by thousands of tourists in the railroad age and by three Presidents of the United States.”³⁶ In 1968 the property was donated to the city of Redlands to be used as a city park.

Following Hosp’s early successes, other projects in Redlands came his way. In 1897, Albert Smiley purchased twenty-two acres near downtown Redlands for a park and a library. Hosp was engaged to supervise the plant selections and the landscaping work.³⁷ His work was described as follows: “Mr. F. P. Hosp is on the ground and busy as a beaver superintending the landscape work.”³⁸ The A. K. Smiley Library and grounds were finished by 1898. The grounds surrounding the mansion of A. C. Burrange on Smiley Heights were laid out by Hosp in 1900.³⁹

When Mrs. Cornelia Hill purchased three and a half acres on top of a hill for a new home in Redlands, she engaged Hosp to design and plant

the surrounding grounds. The front terrace was planted with citrus and stone fruit trees, and the back was a formal garden.⁴⁰ A local reporter wrote: “Mrs. Hill will have one of the prettiest homes in that picturesque section – the grounds laid out by F. P. Hosp, of Riverside, being set to the choicest varieties of shrubbery and tree.”⁴¹ This house was purchased in 1905 by John and Helen Kimberly, and today is known as Kimberly Crest.

In 1911 the Redlands Cemetery Association hired Hosp to design a new section of the cemetery. A news article announced that he was “known to be one of the best men for this kind of work in the country.”⁴²

Other cities joined in seeking the services of Franz Hosp to beautify their city parks. In 1898, the trustees of Santa Ana hired him to lay out two city parks.⁴³ The Board of Trade from Pomona engaged him in 1901 to improve Ganesha Park. A reporter stated that Hosp was “an expert in his line having planned some of the most beautiful places in



*Mrs. Cornelius Hill Home, later Kimberly Crest. Photo courtesy
Archives of the A. K. Smiley Public Library, Redlands.*

Southern California, including Smiley Heights.”⁴⁴ His work must have been appreciated, for in 1904, Hosp was again in Pomona overseeing improvements at Ganesha and also Central Park. On a trip to New Mexico for the Santa Fe Railroad, he brought back “32 new varieties of cacti and grotesque desert plants for planting in the Mexican garden for Central Park and has ordered a vast quantity of strange plants that will flourish in arid soils for planting in Ganesha park.”⁴⁵

By 1900, Hosp was well known in many areas of Southern California. He was selected to be one of the judges for the Pasadena Rose Tournament for January 1, 1901.⁴⁶ The Tournament of Roses started on January 1, 1890 as “a parade of flower-decorated horse-and-buggies and an afternoon of public games on the ‘town lot’ east of Los Robles between Colorado and Santa Fe.”⁴⁷ In 1901, the year Hosp was a judge, the parade first allowed motorized vehicles which had to bring up the rear in order to not scare the horses. The first Rose Bowl football game was played in 1902.⁴⁸

Back in Riverside, Franz Hosp was active in the Riverside Horticultural Club and in the Concordia Society, a club of German families.⁴⁹ He also was busy landscaping the newly-purchased property of Cornelius Rumsey in the Arlington Heights district.⁵⁰

By 1901 he needed more room for his work. On October 17 of that year, the newspaper announced that “new and commodious green house and grounds” were now opened on Ninth Street between Main and Market to serve the orders of the Riverside citizens. The article stated that “shrubs, plants and bulbs in endless variety will be kept in stock, and an invitation is extended to the public to call and inspect the greenhouse and yards.”⁵¹

More room was needed for growing plants. In 1903, Hosp tore down his hot houses on Ninth Street and moved most of his floral nurseries to Oceanside. He felt that he could grow more and better plants on the coast.⁵² Over the years, the Hosp family often packed up for some of the hot summer months and spent time in Oceanside.

Sometime in the 1890s, Hosp also worked for the Santa Fe Railroad. He served as superintendent of parks for seventeen years, laying out the “beautified station grounds along the line of the Santa Fe from San Francisco south to San Diego and east as far as Albuquerque, N.M.”⁵³



El Tovar Hotel in Grand Canyon. Postcard from Author's Collection.

Hosp was in charge of the garden work for the park just north of the Santa Fe depot in Perris.⁵⁴ Hosp's grandest project for the Santa Fe was in designing and planting the gardens around the El Tovar Hotel in the Grand Canyon. Hosp had a role in planting low-growing plants in the sand along the Santa Fe tracks in order to prevent blowing sand from drifting over the tracks. This was needed in the sandy wastelands of much of Arizona and New Mexico.⁵⁵

In 1905, Hosp laid out new plans for the grounds around the Arrowhead Hot Springs Hotel north of San Bernardino. The *Redlands Citrograph* remarked that because Hosp was doing the work, the grounds "will be a dream of beauty."⁵⁶

With all this traveling and working elsewhere, how was Hosp able to keep his business in Riverside going? That question is answered in the column announcing the marriage of his daughter Martha or "Mattie" to Carl Jahn. One paragraph stated: "The bride is a young woman of exceptional business ability, and since leaving school has been in complete charge of the florist shop owned by her father."⁵⁷

Over the years Hosp did find time to do other projects in Riverside. When the county fairgrounds needed improvements in 1916, Hosp designed "a complete plan for driveways, future building sites, picnic

grounds and the attendant tree planting.”⁵⁸ In 1917, Hosp was hired to prepare plans for the planting and beautifying of the Polytechnic High School grounds. He proposed “planting the arroyo bank across the front of the buildings with native flowering shrubs, the wild lilac buckthorn, wild phlox and others which will make a beautiful mass effect as viewed from across the arroyo.”⁵⁹ In 1918, he was hired to do landscape work on the new Fremont School on the Northside of the city.⁶⁰ In addition to schools, Hosp continued to landscape homes. In 1917, he was commissioned to lay out elaborate and beautiful gardens for the remodeled home of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Boyd on La Cadena Drive.⁶¹

Another venture that Hosp undertook was the planting of eucalyptus groves in northern San Diego County. The *San Diego Union* called him “the father of the eucalyptus industry in Southern California.”⁶² In 1906, the Santa Fe railroad purchased the San Dieguito ranch, with the intention to grow Eucalyptus trees. Initially sixteen thousand trees were planted under the supervision of Hosp. The plan was to use the wood for railroad ties and stove wood, and the leaves for medicinal purposes.⁶³ In 1908 Hosp was part of the Eucalyptus Plantation Company, which purchased 219 acres for growing Eucalyptus near Carlsbad. Many of the stockholders were prominent men from the Santa Fe railroad.⁶⁴ However, the wood was too brittle and easily cracked. Other uses needed to be found.⁶⁵ Some trees were sold for replanting in other parts of the country. In 1909 Hosp shipped over \$10,000 worth of trees.⁶⁶ Hosp’s son, Franz Hosp, Jr., a professional baseball player, spent at least one-off season planting Eucalyptus trees in northern San Diego County.⁶⁷

Most of the eucalyptus groves in Carlsbad were sold for housing developments. However, in 1986 the city of Carlsbad purchased 53 acres that remained and created Hosp Grove Park. In Carlsbad, people still enjoy seeing the work of Franz Hosp in a park, and they can honor his memory.⁶⁸

On Sunday, January 15, 1928, family members and friends gathered at the Hosp home at 323 West Tenth Street (later number 3323) to celebrate 50 years of marriage for Franz and Margaret Hosp. The festivities were described:

Dinner was served at 5 o'clock, places being marked for eighteen guests, golden Ophelia roses being used as table decorations. A huge and beautifully decorated wedding cake was a most important feature of the dinner. During the dinner hour and throughout the evening music was furnished by Mrs. Ula Wolfe and her Melody Maids. The living rooms of the home were attractively decorated with roses and golden acacia.⁶⁹

All of the Hosps' children were present, as was their one grandchild, Franz Hosp III, the son of Franz P. Hosp Jr. Tragedy struck the Hosp family later in 1928. Traveling along the Coast Highway north of Carlsbad, Franz P. Hosp, Jr. was killed in an automobile accident at the age of 44 on June 30. Franz Jr. had starred in baseball in high school in Riverside and went on to play professionally for many years.

At the California State Fair in Sacramento in August of 1929, Riverside County had a display featuring a figure of a woman presenting the navel orange, the American date, and the climbing Cecil Brunner rose to the attendees of the fair.⁷⁰ That was quite an honor for Hosp, to have his rose associated with the date and navel orange in a representation of Riverside County.

When Hosp was about fifty, the following description concerning him was made: "Both in politics and in religion he is independent, never having allied himself with any organization, although maintaining an interest in what conduced to the progress of his city and adopted country."⁷¹

At the age of 83, Franz Philip Hosp, "pioneer Riverside florist and noted landscape gardener" died on Monday, March 9, 1936, in his home at 3323 Tenth Street, after an illness of several weeks.⁷² He was buried in Olivewood Cemetery (Plot R-25-4).

A few months after Hosp's death, A. D. Shamel of Riverside honored Hosp with the following comments:

I have never seen them (Climbing Cecil Brunner Roses) more beautiful during any more than 25 years of residence in this community. A visit to the arbors, which hare now in their full

glory of buds and blossoms, will be a worth-while and never-to-be forgotten joy to most people. It seems almost as though his wonderful rose variety is giving us a particular beautiful display in honor of the memory of Riverside's pioneer nurseryman and plantsman who originated it, the late F. P. Hosp.⁷³

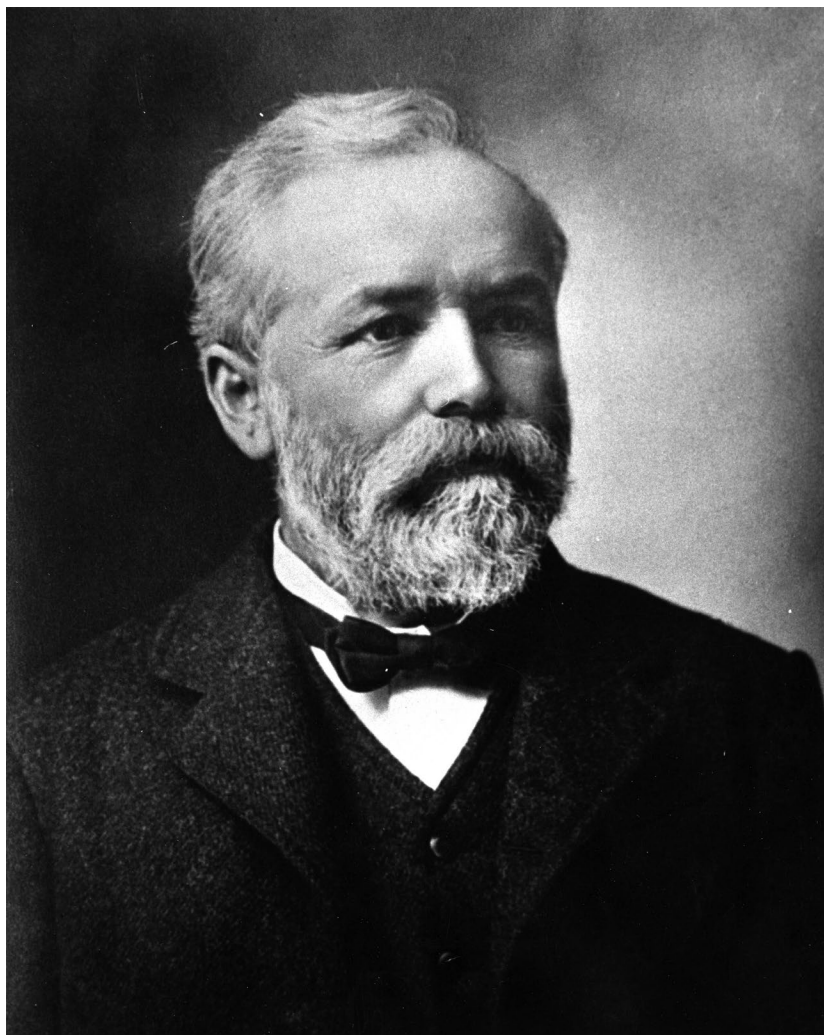
Franz Hosp's wife, Margaret lived another nine years, dying on November 25, 1945 at the age of 88.⁷⁴ She was buried next to her husband in Olivewood Cemetery.

Riverside honored Franz P. Hosp on Monday, April 8, 1940, with a special plaque in White Park, the park for which he had designed the landscape. The bronze tablet was furnished by the family and was placed west of the fountain. The plaque read:

In memory of Franz Philip Hosp – 1853-1936 – landscape architect, originator and propagator of the climbing Cecile Brunner and Papa Gontier rose varieties, whose accomplishments brought both fame and beauty, this tablet is affectionately given by his family, and is dedicated to his honor by the board of park commissioners of the city of Riverside in grateful appreciation.⁷⁵

Sad to say, this plaque is no longer in White Park. Also lost is the memory of Franz Hosp in the minds of many people in Riverside. That should be corrected, because he played an important role in the early history of Riverside and beyond.





Franz Philip Hosp. Photo courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

ENDNOTES

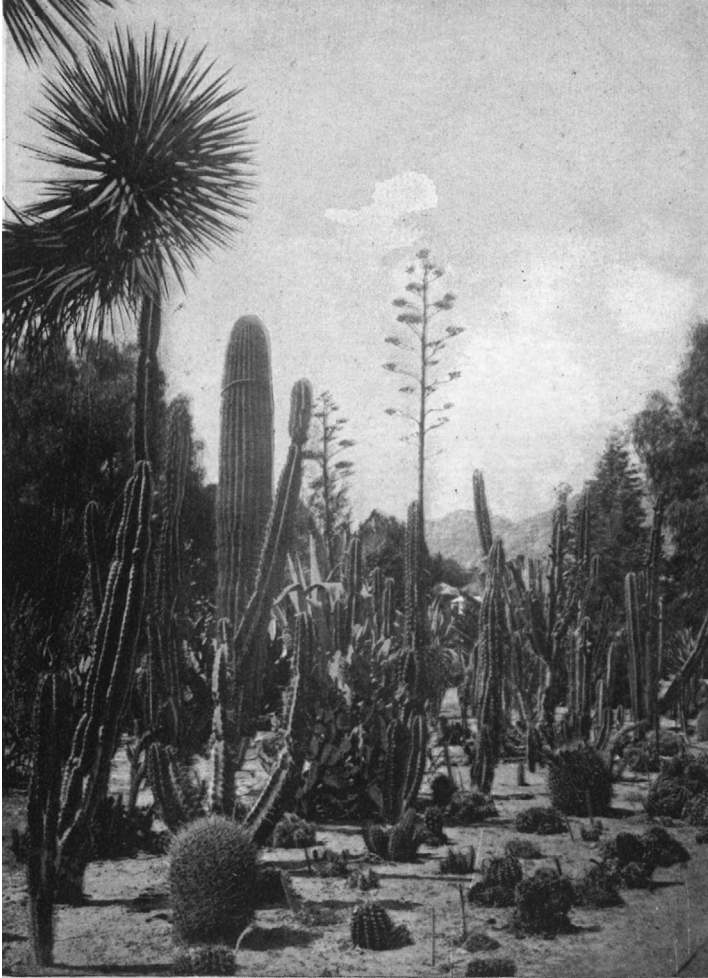
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ALBERT S. WHITE PARK, RIVERSIDE, CAL.

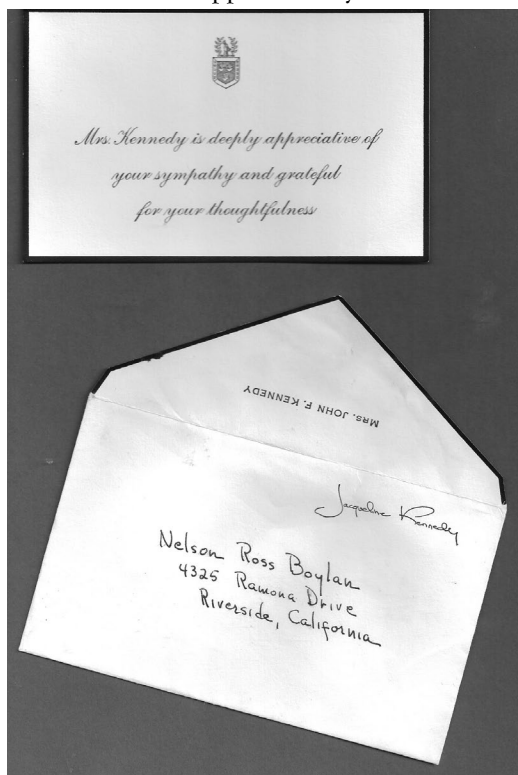
Condolence Letter to Mrs. Kennedy, 1964

by Howard Boylan

My brother, Nelson Ross Boylan, was 11 years old when President Kennedy was assassinated on November 22, 1963. Nelson was very sorry for the Kennedy family, and wrote a letter to Mrs. Kennedy expressing his condolences. The Walter Kinney family of Riverside also wrote to Mrs. Kennedy. Pictured is the envelope returned to my brother by Mrs. Kennedy's staff, and a newspaper article about both letters from *The Press* dated March 24, 1964. That is approximately four months after the Kinneys and Nelson

mailed their letters to Mrs. Kennedy.

Nelson Boylan was very honored to receive an answer from Mrs. Kennedy. My parents, Dr. and Mrs. Richard Boylan, were impressed that their 11 year old took the time to write and send the letter. My older Brother, Rae, was a student at Riverside Poly High School at that time. I, Howard, was a student at Central Junior High School, and Nelson attended Grant Elementary School then. We all remember the events of November, 1963 vividly.



The Press

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 1964

SECTION B—PAGE ONE



*Mrs. Kennedy is deeply appreciative of
your sympathy and grateful
for your thoughtfulness*

Jacqueline Kennedy

*The Kinney Family
844 Randolph Street
Riverside, California 92503*

From Jackie

Local post office officials estimate they've handled "a couple of hundred, easily," of the engraved notes Mrs. John F. Kennedy is mailing to acknowledge letters and cards of sympathy she received at the death of former President John F. Kennedy. Above is the card received by the Walter Kinney family of 8444 Randolph—edged in black with Mrs. Kennedy's name on the postage-free envelope where a stamp is usually placed. Her name is printed on the other side of the envelope which is also bordered in black. Another Riversider who reported receiving one of the cards is 11-year-old Ross Boylan, son of Dr. and Mrs. Richard Boylan of 4325 Ramona. He wrote the former First Lady a letter and sent her his picture.

Riverside's First Church

By Don Miller

“If you don’t know history, then you don’t know anything. You are a leaf that doesn’t know it is part of a tree.”

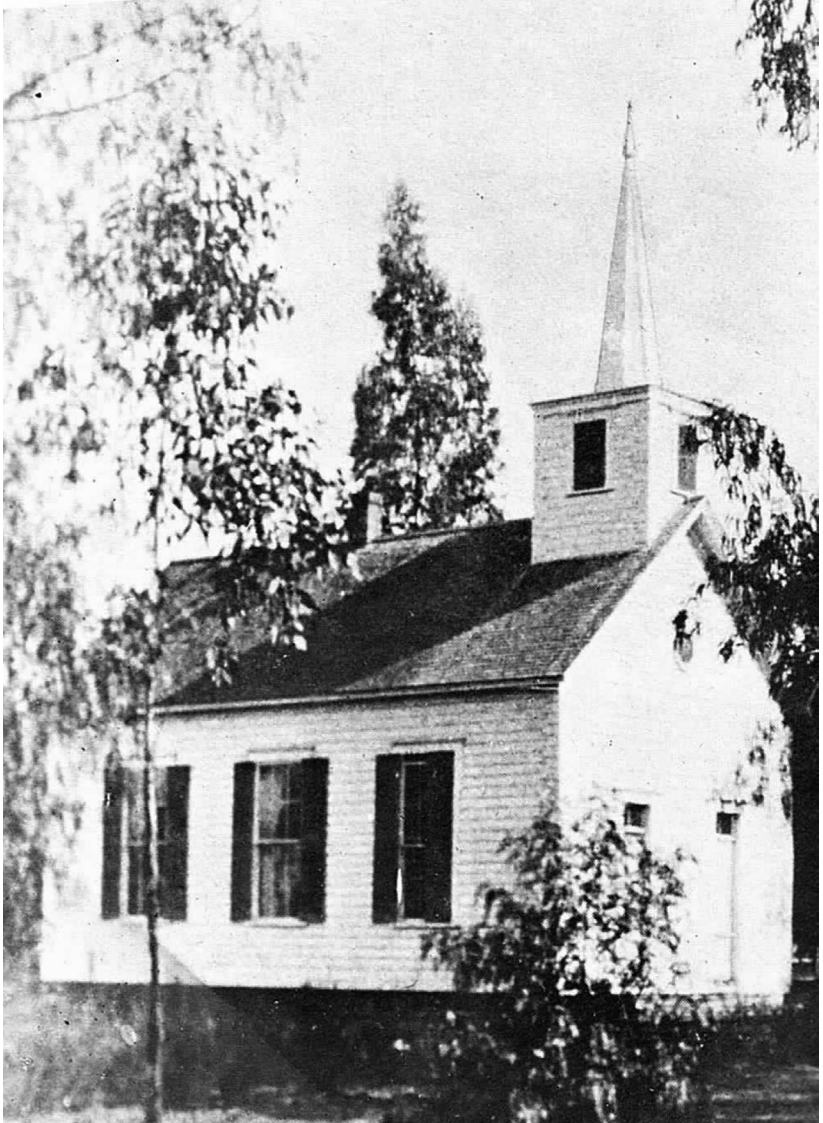
- Michael Crichton

Midsummer 1870, a buggy with two riders wound through the brittlebush and chaparral to the northern bank of the Santa Ana River. Dodging quicksand, a second attempt to cross was successful, and an inspection of the low plateau that became the city of Riverside was undertaken by these visionaries. This journey began in Los Angeles, which was still a small city of mostly Spanish speaking people, and then it passed through San Bernardino, which was barely recovered from the exodus of Mormon pioneers three years prior. With the exception of adobes at Chino Ranch and Cucamonga, a small town in El Monte and the village of Spadra (notorious for Rubottom’s Inn), there was literally nothing between Los Angeles and the future site of Riverside. The little New Mexican village of La Placita remained near the current north end of Orange Street, but Agua Mansa had been washed away in the disastrous floods of 1861-62. ‘Bleak’ is an apt description.

Judge John W. North and Rev. Isaac Atherton spent the afternoon checking the soil, and according to Atherton, this was the day that Riverside’s founder decided to purchase the land from the Silk Center Association and form the Southern California Colony, if ample water could be secured.

Judge North studied for the ministry as a young man, but when his Methodist denomination refused to condemn slavery, he abandoned the ministry and studied politics. He was an ardent Republican abolitionist, and it is likely that failure to experience real change in racial attitudes in Tennessee, despite the Civil War and Reconstruction, encouraged him to form a new society in the wilds of California.

Reverend Isaac Atherton was born in Milton, Massachusetts, in 1826, and began his career as a Presbyterian minister in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



*First Congregational Church, 1873.
Photo courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.*

He arrived in California in 1868. He organized the First Congregational Church in Los Angeles, and was drawn inland hoping that the drier climate would ease his chronic pulmonary distress. It should be noted that Congregationalists were prominent in the Abolition movement prior to the Civil War, and I propose that both men shared the hope for a colony of like-minded people.

By November of 1871, Rev. Atherton had moved to the “Colony” with his family, joining the 25 or so families struggling to establish roots. The town had a company office, hotel, store, and shops for a carpenter, butcher, blacksmith and shoemaker. The Colony Association included a school on Sixth Street between Mulberry and Lime. Education was a priority even in those earliest days of Riverside. The first church service in Riverside was held at the school late in 1871 by Rev. Higbie of Compton, who was the town surveyor. Rev. Atherton began his ministry soon after, and the schoolhouse served multiple duty for the town. Although Rev. Atherton was the only resident minister, the early colonists had a variety of Protestant affiliations. Some people were simply not interested in church, since there was so much work to be done.

The establishment documents for Atherton’s church listed 5 members, including the minister and his wife, in April of 1872. However, by March 23, 1873, the first building for the “First Church of Christ of Riverside” was dedicated on the corner of Sixth and Lime Streets. Establishing this church was underwritten in large part by a grant from the American Congregational Union, as well as from sister churches in California. John North led the choir, and in 1878 Frank Miller joined the church, becoming a leading member of both church and community. This tiny church was shared by all the active Protestants in town until the Methodists began holding separate services in the schoolhouse. It was often known as the “mother church” of Riverside. When membership in First Church grew to 130, construction of the second church building began on the corner of Seventh and Lemon Streets. Finished in 1887, it was a classic example of a Gothic revival wooden church, and it held the first pipe organ in Riverside. It was at this time that the church was renamed the First Congregational Church of Riverside.



*First Congregational Church, 1887.
Photo courtesy of the Riverside Metropolitan Museum.*

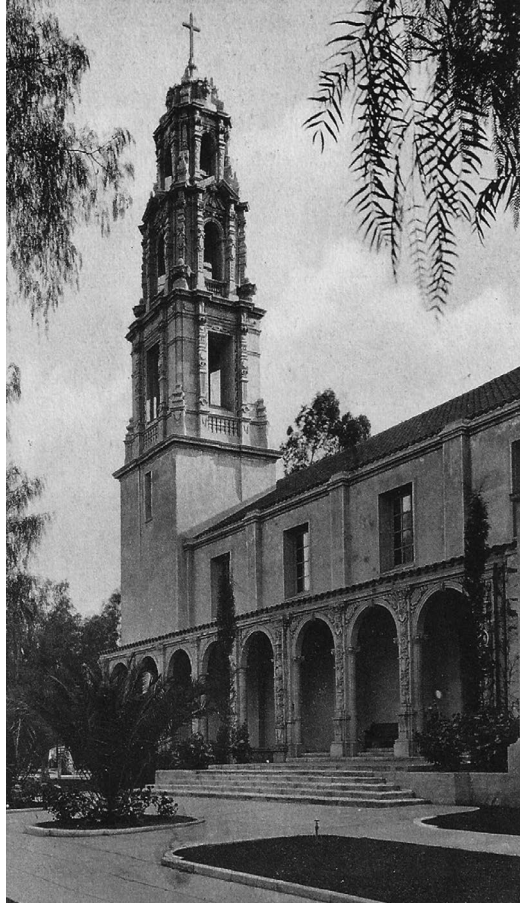
By 1910, it was apparent that a larger structure was needed and the decision to tear down the Gothic Revival church and build something quite different took place. The famous California architect, Myron Hunt had been retained by Frank Miller to build additions to his ever-expanding Inn, and Hunt was hired across the street after a design competition to build the structure that now exists at 3504 Mission Inn Ave. The grand sum of \$100,000 was subscribed and construction quickly began. The contractor was J.H. Cresmer, and the tower was engineered by Riverside's own Henry Jekel (spelled Jeckel by some). "First Church" is probably the first important example of Spanish Baroque Revival (Churrigueresque) architecture in the United States. Mr. Hunt explained his design saying, "The climate, and the architectural traditions of California, especially in the southern section of the state, lend themselves to opportunities for picturesqueness of design and a certain consistency as to environment, that are not present in the East."¹ Although current criticism suggests that Spanish Baroque Revival architecture was the result of an intention to diminish the Mexican heritage of California, I am inclined to believe it was merely a more decorative version of Mission Revival styles. Mission Revival can include classic arches, arcades and strategies to cope with our hot weather. Judging intentions 100 years after the fact is always difficult, but the clearly Catholic Mediterranean style of this building is pretty remarkable for a tradition with roots deep in New England. I am inclined to believe it reflects Frank Miller's stated desire to diminish denominational differences and reflect the unity of Christianity.

Ironically, the terrible freeze of 1913 not only destroyed much of the area's citrus, it also forced cost savings to the building under construction and the acquisition of a mortgage that wasn't retired until 1943. But the building persisted through war, depression, earthquake and constant economic doubt. The building committee had hoped it would stand for "centuries," and so far it has survived 104 years. In 1988, a 24 bell Paccard carillon was added to the tower as a memorial to many, and it plays both the hours and melodies every day. Unique to this system are the four largest bells, which can be swung for celebratory peals at weddings and other events.

¹. Hunt, Myron, (1914, May 27). First Congregational Church, *American Architect*, p. 267.

While most mainline Protestant churches retreated to the suburbs long ago, First Church voted to stay downtown. I believe this choice was partly because of tradition, but mostly because we could not abandon this unique and historic building. Our roots are deep in Riverside. At 7th (Mission Inn) and Lemon Streets, we have hosted Chinese and Japanese congregations, gathered hundreds to hear Booker T. Washington, housed GI's during WWII, produced five Riverside Mayors, fed the poor for the last 26 years, hosted a free medical and dental clinic every other week, adopted open and affirming policies, housed 12 step groups almost every day, and here we continue to challenge all to work for justice and mercy in our city.

Time and weather has taken its toll, and now First Church must make significant repairs to the elaborate tower decorations. A community-wide fund raising effort will begin in October, 2018, to support this project as well as necessary seismic retrofits. It is my fervent hope that a hundred years from now, the building will still stand and bells will continue to ring out in the mile square of the city of Riverside.



*First Congregational Church, 1914.
Photo courtesy of the
Riverside Metropolitan Museum.*

The Rubidoux Club

By Kim Jarrell Johnson

Several months ago, a shorter version of this article appeared in the Press-Enterprise as a "Back in the Day" column. However, much more information was available than could be included in that column. Here is a greatly expanded version of the original article.

In 1888 a new men's social organization was formed in Riverside. The group, calling itself the Rubidoux Club, was successful enough in its first year that it incorporated in 1889 with eleven directors and a set of bylaws which included rules banning gambling and intoxicating liquors in its club rooms. Over the next 18 years, if you were one of the male movers and shakers of Riverside, you probably belonged to the Rubidoux Club. Members included Albert S. White, early resident and investor for whom White Park is named; J.G. North, lawyer and son of founder John North; John S. Castleman, an early settler and investor who built the Castleman building at the southeast corner of 8th (now University) and Main Streets; and Dr. C.W. Sylvester, a dentist and land developer.

The club initially took a set of rooms in the Cosmopolitan building, located at Eighth and Orange Streets, to use as their club rooms. Based on the club's building selection, it can be seen from the start that it was aiming to be the best private club in Riverside. The Cosmopolitan building was built in 1888/89. Newspapers of the time paid the building many complements. On December 10, 1888, the Riverside *Daily Press* said the Cosmopolitan would include "the most ambitious job of brick ornamentation ever seen in Riverside."

The club occupied the entire second floor of the Cosmopolitan building. A newspaper reporter was invited to see the club rooms and reported on how they looked. He said the front room, facing Eighth Street, was 18'x27' in size and was "furnished elegantly." Its floor was covered with a Brussels carpet and the furniture was solid oak. The sofa, easy chairs, arm chairs and rocking chairs were all upholstered with green leather. A massive oak table, richly carved, occupied the center of the

room. It had cost the club \$80. Over the fireplace was a handsome oak mantle, upon which rested a "beautiful marble clock." A committee of the club had gone to Los Angeles to buy the oak furniture because, according to the *Daily Press*, the class of furniture they desired was not available in Riverside or in Riverside County.

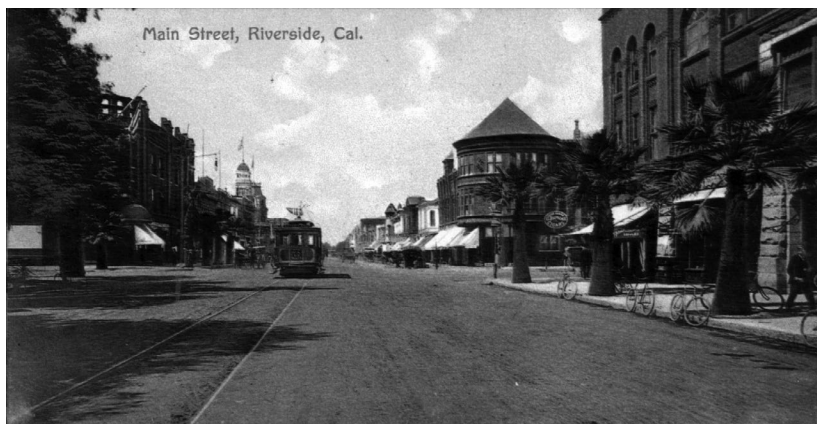
The furniture in the separate reading room was all cherry with red upholstery. The club had subscriptions to many of the prominent daily newspapers of the time, as well as Harper's Weekly, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, Puck, Judge, and Scientific American, among others.

On Wednesday, June 5th, 1889, the club held an elegant, invitation only, reception to show off their new club rooms. Three hundred men and their ladies were invited. The event started at 8 pm and, by 9 pm, the *Daily Press* said the rooms were "crowded with the beauty and wealth of Riverside." The gathering was served lemonade and the very finest of ice cream from the Candy Kitchen. A trio consisting of piano, cornet and violin provided music.

In May, 1891, the *Daily Press* reported that the initiation fee to join the club was \$10, and monthly dues were \$2. Each member had his own key to access the rooms at any time. On August 18, 1891, the *Riverside Enterprise* said, "Every young man in Riverside wants to join the club." While the bylaws of the club initially set membership at 100, the Rubidoux Club was so successful that by May, 1892 they had raised that number and had 123 members.

While the club was for men exclusively, once a month they had a social event that included the wives. These evenings usually included card games such as Whist, Euchre, or Hearts, as well as live music, and sometimes dancing. Occasionally, especially in the early years, a big event was thrown, where everyone dressed up in their finest.

By the beginning of 1892, just four years after the club had formed, it had grown to the point that its board decided to take a much larger set of rooms for its clubhouse in the brand new Rubidoux block. The club leased the entire second floor of that building, which was half again as large as the rooms they rented in the Cosmopolitan. The new rooms looked out from a bay window and balcony at the corner of Main and Seventh Streets, one of the most significant corners in Riverside at that time.



Main and 7th Streets, shown here about 1910. The Rubidoux building, where the Rubidoux Club leased the entire second floor for its clubhouse, is the brick building at the far left. The Rubidoux building was torn down in the 1930s to make way for a new Sears store. An antique store now occupies the old Sears building.

Postcard from the collection of Steve Lech.

In March, 1892, it was reported that Los Angeles decorators were at work on the new club rooms. The rooms were to be decorated in the same style as the Loring Opera House. Given that Frank Miller of the Mission Inn was associated with both the Loring and Rubidoux buildings, it is no surprise that the Rubidoux Club would be encouraged by him to look to the Opera House for decorating inspiration.

Local newspapers could not say enough about the elegance and décor of the new club rooms. Everything from the wood the furniture was made from, to descriptions of every picture on the walls was reported upon. It was suggested that they were the finest club rooms in the state, outside of San Francisco.

According to newspaper reports, the first room you entered when arriving at the club was a large hall, fitted with coat racks, a dresser, and a mirror. A Brussels carpet covered the floor. This room acted as the entry hall where coats could be left, and quick adjustments could be made to hair and attire before entering the parlor.

The parlor was the next room. It included solid oak furniture, mohair and leather sofas, a fine mantel piece, an upright piano, and choice works of

art on the wall. One item hanging on the wall that attracted considerable attention from everyone entering the room was what was described by the newspaper as one of the largest photos ever made. It was a “picture from life” of a lion, and the photo was entitled “The Monarch.” The newspaper gushed that everything in the parlor harmonized perfectly “in color and tone.”

Next to the parlor, through an archway, was the reading room. It was furnished with tables and chairs as well as the standard periodicals of the day for members to read. Stationary was also provided, in case they desired to write a letter.

Another room was outfitted as a card room. It had matching walls and carpet in a delicate light blue color. Whist was the principal game played at the card tables. Another room was outfitted for billiards. It had three tables, a floor covered with linoleum, and easy chairs scattered about. The other club rooms included a dressing room with closets and a lavatory, and a room used by the janitor. The finishing touch was an elegant sign over the club’s private Main Street entrance, announcing to all who passed by the name of Riverside’s most elite club.

On June 3, 1892 the Riverside *Daily Press* reported on the event held to show off the new club rooms. The *Daily Press* said it was one of the most “brilliant society events ever held in Riverside.” The Hungarian Orchestra of Los Angeles, with famous violinist Dion Romandy, provided the music. The rooms were decorated extensively with flowers.

The Rubidoux Club seems to have acted as an informal Riverside booster club as well, almost as a city chamber of commerce. The newspapers reported on various special guests to the city being entertained at the organization’s club rooms. The National Editorial Association meeting was held in Riverside in May, 1892, and the club entertained members of this group in their rooms. On November 7, 1892 an informal reception was held for California governor H.H. Markham at the Rubidoux Club. In October 1893 the International Irrigation Congress was held in Los Angeles, and the Riverside delegates brought delegates from other areas back to Riverside, where they were entertained at the Rubidoux Club rooms. It was also reported that the club held a reception for U.S. Senator Thomas R. Bard when he visited the city in October, 1900.

Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

In addition to its club rooms, the Rubidoux Club also started a nine-hole golf course in October 1898. It cost the club \$500 to put in the course. Newspaper reports said the course was located east of the Gage Canal and Chicago Avenue, on Eighth Street, which would put it where the University of California, Riverside is located today. A year after building the course a little club house was added. It was reported in one newspaper that the links were “admirably laid out.”

Meanwhile, as Riverside grew in population, other clubs and activities became available to the gentlemen of the city and of the Rubidoux Club. Two in particular, the Victoria Club and the Elks Club, seem to have attracted the attention of the members of the Rubidoux Club and a number of them became members of those clubs as well. However, in spite of that, the Rubidoux Club’s activities continued to be featured in the local papers as often as always, and the club’s membership remained in the 90-100 member range as the years wore on.

Then, seemingly out of nowhere, it was announced in March, 1906, that the Rubidoux Club was considering disbanding and turning its club rooms over to the Elks Club. One newspaper report said membership was still up, but interest in the club was lagging. The only other explanation given in the newspapers was that most of the Rubidoux Club members were also members of the Elks club, and the 93 members of the Rubidoux Club “do not care to keep up both organizations.” Both groups voted in favor of the proposal and any Rubidoux club members who were not members of the Elks were added to their rolls. Just like that, as of April 1, 1909, a prominent player on the social scene of Riverside for 20 years was gone.



Earliest Recollections of Riverside - Stories from 1947

By Laura L. Klure

The earliest memories that I can really date are from about 1947. One involves vague images of being in a Methodist Church, at the corner of Sixth and Orange Street in Downtown Riverside, that burned down in 1947. I could see my parents holding my baby brother, in a chapel with light streaming through stained glass windows.

At some early time I recall sitting on the floor in my family's home in West Riverside (Rubidoux), listening to President Harry Truman (president 1945-1953) on the radio.

Kindergarten was special, because in September of 1947 there was no room available for holding kindergarten in some of the crowded local schools. My parents took me around to various schools in Riverside, trying unsuccessfully to find a kindergarten class that could accept another student. Learning that local kids were not getting to attend kindergarten, a very generous lady, Mrs. Violet Hummel Curtis, volunteered to set up a kindergarten in her own home. Mrs. Curtis lived at the end of Mennes Avenue, near the airport.

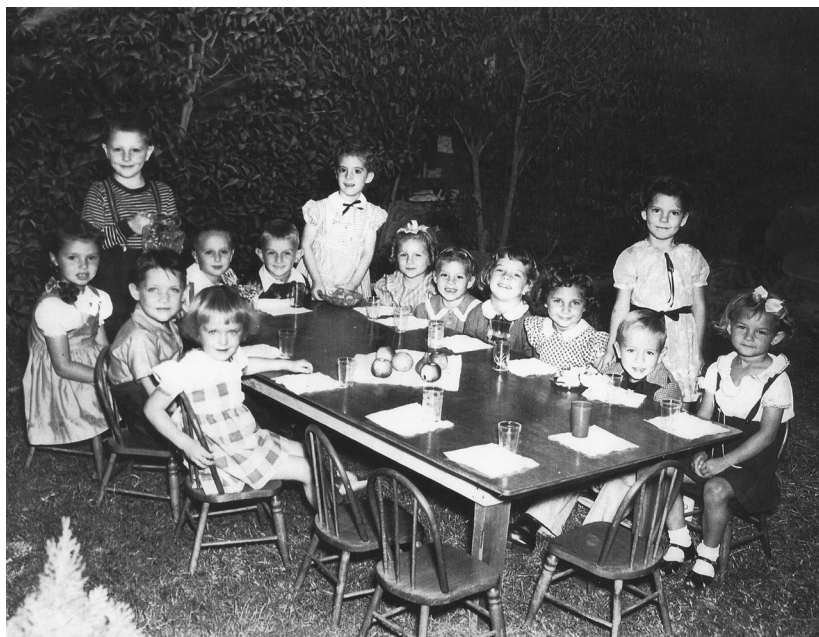
I remember having some lessons and singing in her front



Violet Hummel Curtis, who converted her home into a kindergarten in 1947.

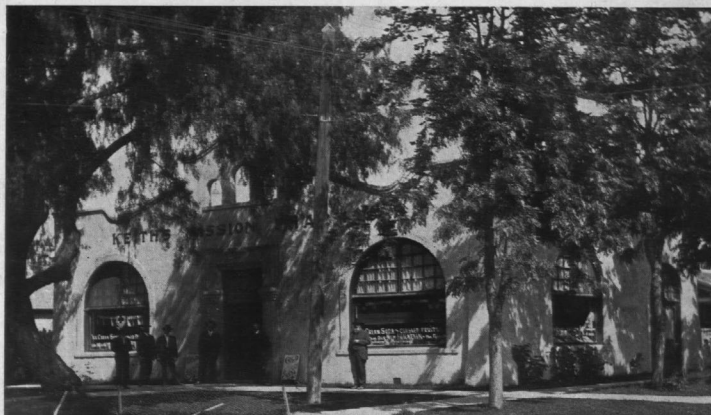
room, facing the fireplace. She was a great teacher. Some families helped her by providing tables and chairs. We ate snacks and did drawings at tables on her back porch and played on a swing in her back yard.

Toward the end of that kindergarten year, we danced at a program, held in the nearby Flabob Airport hangar. For at least one dance we were supposed to move around a circle in boy-girl pairs. But there were not enough boys to go around. Mrs. Curtis paired me with another girl and asked me to dance the boy's part. She privately explained to me that she thought I was "big enough" to tolerate the assignment, whereas some of the other girls were too sensitive, and would have cried if she asked them to do it. Mrs. Curtis wrote a book about her teaching experiences, titled "OUR KINDERGARTEN: Experiences in Applying Montessori Principles" (published in 1964).



*Kindergarten students in the yard of the home of Violet Curtis, 1947.
Photo by Russ Kennedy*

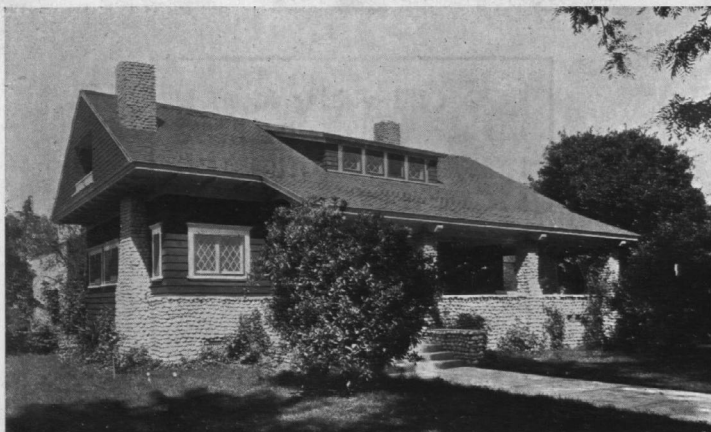
Postcards from Our Area



Boyd Keith's Mission Drug Store, Arlington Station, Riverside, California

Boyd Keith's Mission Drug Store and residence at Arlington Station, circa 1903. Boyd Keith opened his Mission Drug Store in May, 1902. It was a welcome new business in Arlington, being the first drug store and the first building with a plate-glass front, and also represented the first concrete sidewalks in Arlington.

Postcards from the collection of Steve Lech



Residence of Boyd Keith, Van Buren Street and Magnolia Avenue, Arlington Station, Riverside, California

George Huston Flower: Mt. Rubidoux's Preservationist

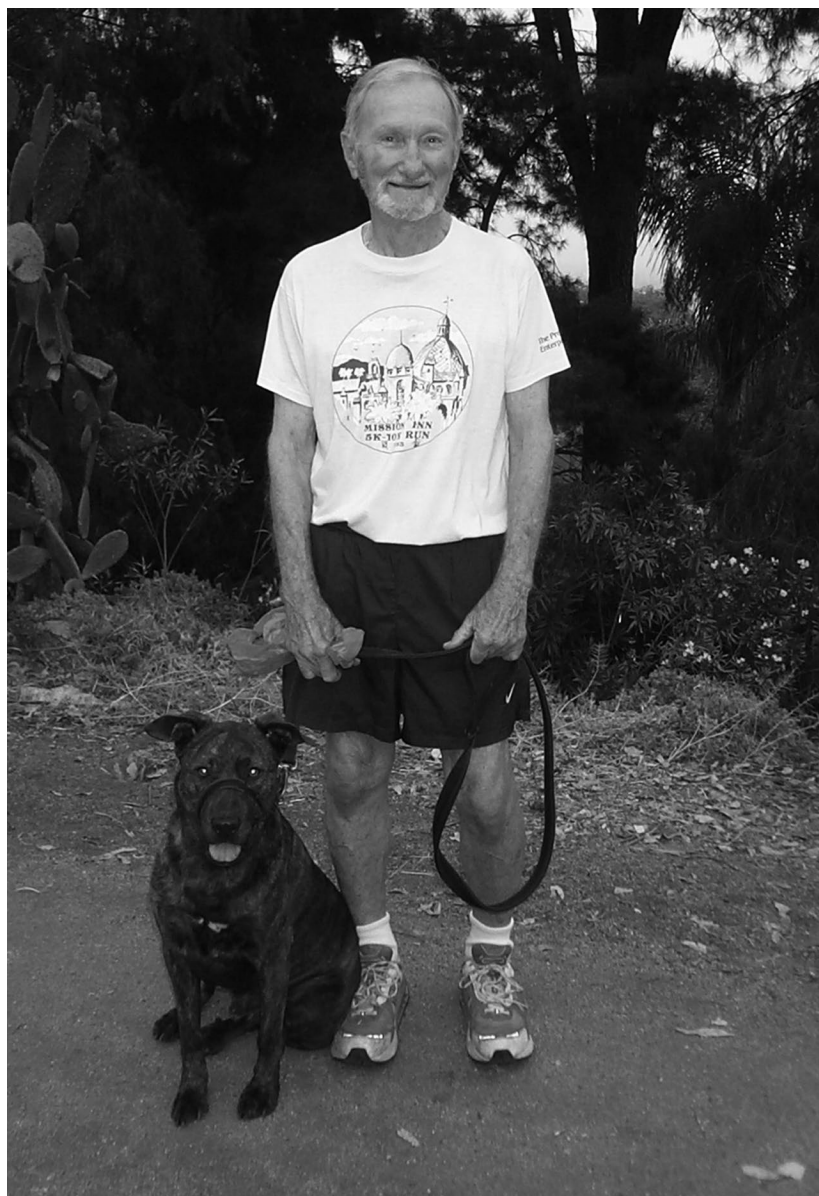
by Katie Wider

Even without promotion, Mt. Rubidoux draws visitors. It is easily seen, convenient to visit, and popular to many who love climbing hills - for the view, peace and quiet, wellness, and inspiration.

Recognizing this broad appeal (and opportunity), two extraordinary Riversiders devoted decades of their lives to promoting Mt. Rubidoux – Frank Augustus Miller (from 1905 until his death in 1935) and George Huston Flower (from 1994 until his death in 2017.) Messrs. Miller and Flower grew Mt. Rubidoux's popularity through their love of the hill, partnerships with others who could help, and promotion for all to enjoy Mt. Rubidoux.

Frank Miller's contributions are superbly documented in *"Anecdotes on Mount Rubidoux and Frank A. Miller, Her Promoter"* by Glenn Wenzel. Mt. Rubidoux's road; ceremonies such as Easter Sunrise Service and Armistice Day; plaques and edifices memorializing World Peace and visits by renowned leaders; and the hill top monuments – the flag pole and historic Serra Cross – are among Frank Miller's gifts in promoting Mt. Rubidoux. In 1955, Frank Miller's family donated Mt. Rubidoux to the citizens of Riverside.

On Valentine's day, 1926, George Huston Flower was born in Orlando, Florida, the son of Gladys Huston and Harold Knott Flower. At age 18 months he and his mother moved to his grandfather's farm in Blandinsville, Illinois. At the Blandinsville High School he was president of his class for all four years, graduating in 1944. He served in the U S Navy from 1944-1946 in the South Pacific and Okinawa. He also served from 1952-1953 in the Korean conflict. He attended the University of Illinois, from 1946-1950, and graduated with a Business Administration degree. In high school and college, he made letters in football and basketball. After that he was an "Illinois Fighting Illini," ever cheering his team on.



George Flower with "Vince," June 25, 2008

Journal of the Riverside Historical Society

The editor of the Blandinsville Star Gazette newspaper, in a letter of recommendation dated July 13, 1950, stated, “George is a man of outstanding qualities, a fine personality, dependable, a leader in any group, and ideals that make him the kind of person in whom anyone can put his trust ... He is the type of young man of whom our people here say proudly, “He is from Blandinsville.”

We can also proudly say, “He is from Riverside.” George came to Riverside in the early 1960’s. A realtor by day, he also moonlighted as a true “Friend of Mount Rubidoux” for more than 30 years.

George began his love of Mt. Rubidoux as a runner. He and his wife Clarice (and their dogs over the years) regularly jogged from their home near the base of Mt. Rubidoux up to the peak and down, collecting recyclables from Park trash cans, and donating the recycle proceeds each Christmas to purchase turkeys for the Salvation Army Riverside Corps’ dinner for those in need. In 1994, George re-grouped the then inactive Friends of Mt. Rubidoux (FMR) to promote the Frank A. Miller Mt. Rubidoux Memorial Park. George was elected President. FMR’s mission statement was drafted in the living room of George and Clarice’s home:

- **to restore, preserve, and beautify** Mt. Rubidoux Park
- **to enhance knowledge of the rich history** of Mt. Rubidoux Park
- **to foster enjoyment by visitors** to Mt. Rubidoux Park

Through George’s very humble leadership, FMR flourished:

- teams of volunteers regularly cleaned trash, painted out graffiti, restored trails and native vegetation, maintained kiosk information and re-supplied pet waste bags
- historic plaques and monuments were restored, or replaced if missing; and State Historical Landmark recognition was achieved for Mt. Rubidoux Park
- communication was maintained with Riverside City Fire and Police Departments, County agencies, California Conservation Corps,

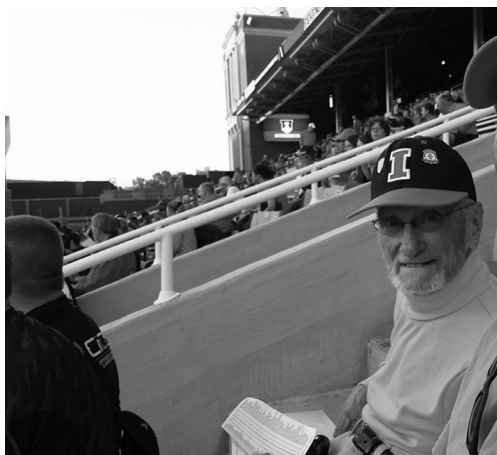
California Department of Forestry, UCR's "Restoration of Native Scrubland" project, and others for safety of Mt. Rubidoux visitors and neighborhoods. This included firefighter training during controlled burns.

- events for education, beautification and recreation were fostered with many Scouting organizations, local Unified School Districts and universities, California School for the Deaf, local churches, Master Gardeners, American Association of University Women, Teen Challenge, regional walking, climbing, bicycling clubs, Keep Riverside Clean & Beautiful, Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District, the Sierra Club, the Astrological Society, Northside Improvement, Riverside East Rotary Club, Mission Inn Docents, Riverside's Earth Day Regional Celebration, many Easter Sunrise Services, and several episodes featuring Mt. Rubidoux in Huell Howser's "California's Gold" series
- publications including a brochure for Riverside's Visitor Center and an educational Coloring Book were distributed to thousands of school children. Local artist Martin Tobias illustrated the coloring book. Calendars featuring Mt. Rubidoux's history and natural beauty were published from 2013-2018.
- FMR members generously helped George with projects including AMR Co.'s underwriting Mt. Rubidoux's flag for years
- In 2003, George partnered with the Honorable Vic Miceli for the kick-off of Evergreen Cemetery restoration. He served as the first Vice-President, and second President of the Evergreen Memorial Historic Cemetery. Frank Augustus Miller is among those interred in the EMH Cemetery.
- George co-led a collaboration between Friends of Mt. Rubidoux, the Mission Inn Foundation & Museum, and the Riverside Land Conservancy to ensure that the peak of Mt. Rubidoux would be preserved. This group was called "Totally Mt. Rubidoux" and was organized in response to an August, 2012 complaint from Americans United for Separation of Church and State challenging

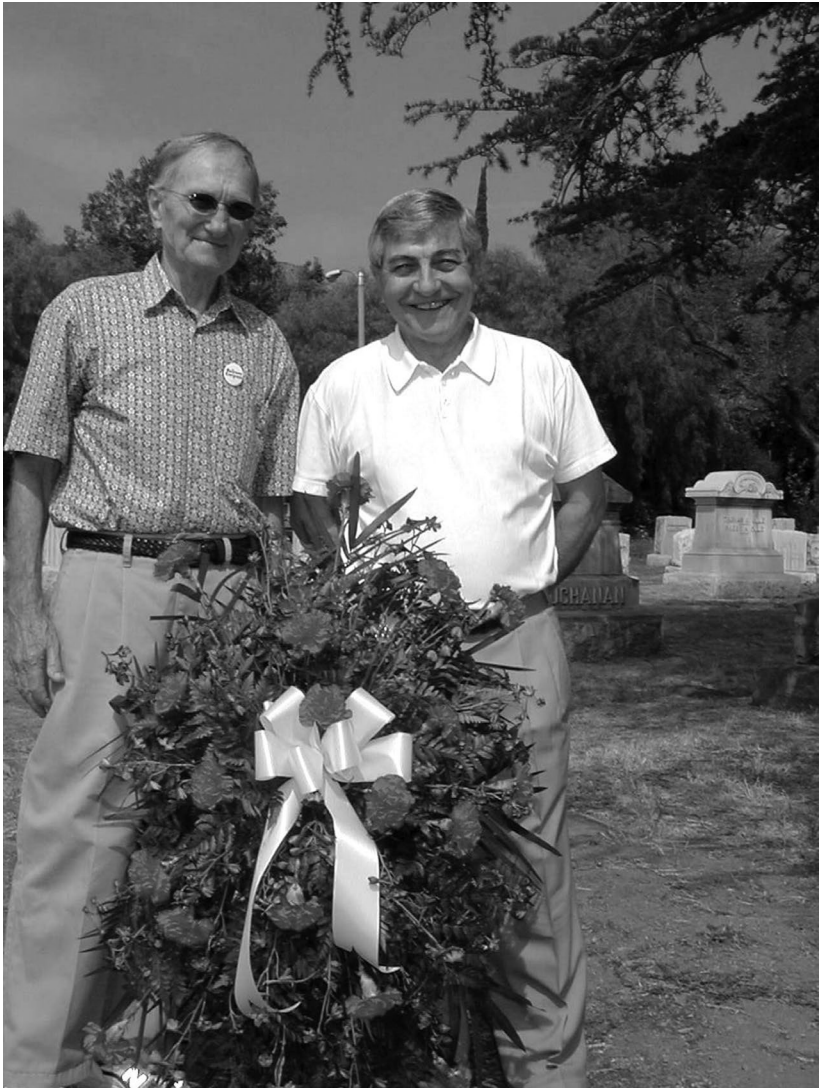
the constitutionality of the cross that stood atop Mount Rubidoux since 1907. The land had been a public park since 1955 when it was donated to the City by the family of Mission Inn founder Frank Miller. Riverside City Council voted to sell the 0.43 acres at the top of Mt. Rubidoux at public auction. Totally Mt. Rubidoux raised funds, purchased the Peak property for \$10,500, and funded a non-wasting perpetual endowment to assist in the annual expense of monitoring and caring for the peak. With ownership of the property in private hands, the threat of legal action against the City was removed, and the historic Serra Cross was safe to stay on top of Mt. Rubidoux.

George and Clarice owned a beautiful farm in Blandinsville. They treasured vacations there and were beloved by citizens and deeply appreciated as fans and benefactors of U of I.

Over the years, no FMR volunteer offered to replace George as President. Instead, he was promoted to "President for Life." He loved preserving and promoting Frank A. Miller Mt. Rubidoux Memorial Park. George passed away at the age of 91 years on December 11, 2017. He left a dedicated FMR team to carry on Mt. Rubidoux's preservation.



August, 2017 - George got to a U of I Fighting Illini football game which they won 20-7!!!



*2003 Kick-Off event for Restoration of Evergreen Memorial Historic Cemetery
with Honorable Victor Miceli*

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