



*Drone photography by Peter Liebig*

## OLDE COMMUNITY CHURCH AT 125

Part 2: From Church to History Center

*(Part 1 appeared in the February 2021 newsletter)*

The First Presbyterian Church of Lakeside held its very first service on Sunday, February 9, 1896. The official dedication followed on March 29<sup>th</sup>. In April 1896, the El Cajon Valley Company conveyed the property title to the church. For 40 years, it was the only church in town. Thus, it was often referred to as the Community Church.

Reverend Charles H. Abernathy was assigned to the congregation in 1904. To that point, the El Cajon Presbyterian Church had furnished the pastors for the church. Abernathy earned \$1500 annually.

In 1911, it was decided the pastor needed a home onsite, so the W.D. Hall Company of El Cajon was contracted to build the house. It cost \$1500, most of which was contributed by residents of Lakeside. It was built on its current site, facing **Parkside (then simply "Park") Street**.

By 1914, the growing congregation needed more room, so an addition was built onto the north side of the sanctuary. It became the Sunday School and a social hall on weekdays.

**The church gained attention in 1918 as the home of the Victory Bell, a movement begun here by the Woman's Club of Lakeside. The daily ringing of the bell during World War I – seven times at noon for VICTORY – spread across the country.**

In 1938, the late Edna Swink Kouns was one of the Tawasi Club member – girls of the Sunday School – who planted the Carob trees that surrounded the church for many decades. Today, only a single tree survives.

After World War II, two surplus Army barracks were added in 1946. Referred to as the annex, the new space included restrooms and initially housed Sunday School for kindergarteners. In 1949, the manse was remodeled for more church use. In 1951, the Social Hall became an extension of the sanctuary. A weekday nursery opened in the annex in 1952.

The congregation officially changed its name to the Lakeside Community Presbyterian Church in 1951. By 1959, the church was free of debt, but the original little building had been outgrown by then and additions could not keep pace with the increase in facility need. In 1963, the church moved to its new site at 9908 Channel Road – just two blocks west of the original church – where services continue today.

**Over the ensuing years, the old building was used for a number of things: an art gallery ("Open Door for Dialogue through the Arts"), discussion groups every Saturday, drama activities, and a thrift shop in the old social hall. Still a useful part of the community, the old structure was showing its age. Then the Lakeside Historical Society got involved.**

LHS had officially formed as a nonprofit group in 1972. After years of operating without a physical headquarters, the members set their sights on the Olde Community Church (as it is often called today). In 1986, LHS entered into an agreement with the Presbyterian Church to lease and renovate the then 90-year old historic edifice. In June of that year, volunteers descended upon the building and restored it from top to bottom – including making the bell safe to ring again. LHS received many awards from various historical organizations recognizing them for their great work in saving the church. Then in 1994, a dream came true: LHS was able to buy the old church for \$140,000.

With \$25,000 down, the Society entered into a 10-year payment plan. But through dedication and determination, fund-raising and donating, LHS paid off their debt in a mere three years. **Members held a big party in 1997 to "burn the mortgage" in celebration. To this day, the Lakeside Historical Society owns, operates, and maintains one of the oldest buildings in town, continuing its legacy as the symbolic center of the Lakeside community.** *(Next month: Our church bell.)*

## OUTLAW TALES BY BILLY ORTIZ

### The Peppermint Palms Amusement Park in El Monte Valley

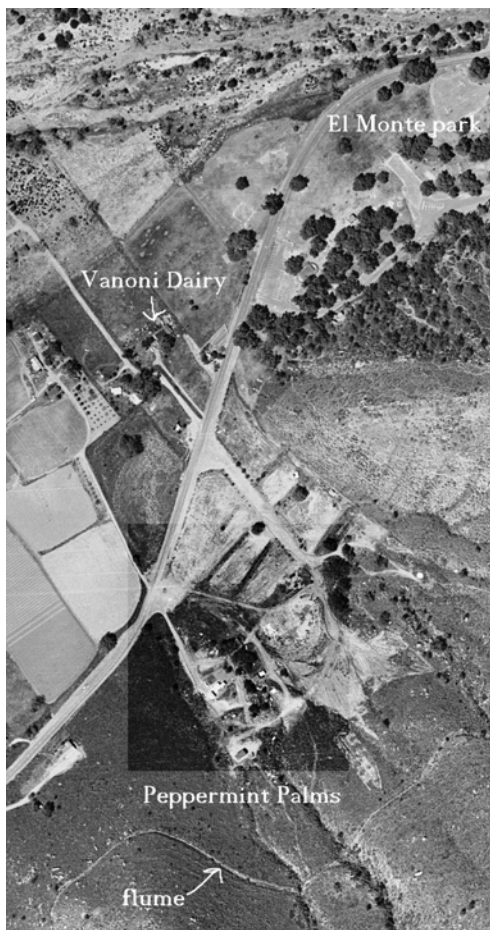
At the Lakeside Historical Society, we occasionally receive emails asking questions about local history. Recently, we received this one:

**QUESTION:** "I have been told there was some kind of 'Amusement Park' back in the 1950s or 1960s on the property I purchased in 2015 on El Monte Road. However, I have not been able to find any information on it. Do you know about, or have any information, on the purported 'Amusement Park' on the property next to El Monte Park? I was born and raised in San Diego County (Lakeside, Ramona, Poway, etc.) and went to El Monte Park as a kid, but I don't remember seeing one. Thank you! Richard."

**ANSWER:** "I do remember an amusement park out there. It was called Peppermint Palms. I checked with my mother and she wasn't sure if it ever was fully developed. We don't remember it ever being very busy. It just didn't seem to catch on, even though it was right next to El Monte Park. Hope this helps. Cathy."

Peppermint Palms Amusement Park? I had no idea – did you?

Unfortunately, there really is nowhere to reference this except those who may remember, like Cathy Wolpers and her mother, Allene, who both grew up in the El Monte Valley. The 1964 aerial provided here (*left*) is from Historical Aerials. If you have any fun facts about the Peppermint Palms Amusement Park, or remember something about it, please feel free to call us at (619) 561-1886 or email us at [info@lakesidehistory.org](mailto:info@lakesidehistory.org). You can also visit our website and learn more about Lakeside history at [lakesidehistory.org](http://lakesidehistory.org).



## WOMAN'S CLUB MARKS 111 YEARS

Lakeside's rich history dates back to when the townsite was organized in 1886. Soon came scattered ranches and a few grand homes, then a beautiful inn and boathouse built by the lake. It became a well-known vacation spot for the wealthy. Busy times ensued, with trains arriving three times daily and a main stagecoach stop on the way to San Diego and east to the Butterfield Stage line and Yuma. The area depended on the "horse economy" with the breeding, feeding and caring for the horses used to carry the supplies to the gold mines and mountain communities. Most of the population was transient, but those who stayed were trying to build a community.

*The newly formed Woman's Club of Lakeside at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Town Hall in 1911 (LHS).*

As time went by in this small, rural, dusty end-of-the line horse and buggy township, why would a few women want to add to their day and better their community? Because Josephine Mansfield, new to Lakeside, had the forethought to know that these women needed friendship, a chance for learning and culture, and a need for community involvement.

Josephine arrived from Boston in 1904 with her daughter Mary A. Ross and family, with whom she made her home. In Massachusetts, she was an active member of the Woman's Relief Corps, Daughters of Liberty and the Grange.

Eight women formed the Woman's Club of Lakeside in March 1910. Josephine was a charter member and her daughter, Mary, was elected the first president. At their next meeting each member brought a guest who joined the group.

Their mission was mutual helpfulness and sociability, the cultivation of interest in intellectual and civic pursuit for Lakeside. The red geranium became the club flower; red and green were the club colors. Dues were 25 cents a year and membership was by invitation.

*Continued on page 3*



## APRIL MILESTONES

### NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME!

Arlene Keselburg  
Patricia & Rich Hegyi  
**Denise & John "Craig" Meile**  
Emery Elles

### BIRTHDAYS

04/01 Lilyana Chandler  
04/01 Cassie Kouns Larson  
04/02 Samuel Martin Woods  
04/07 Alice Webb Johnson  
04/07 Gordon Shackelford, Jr.  
04/08 Paula Granzow  
04/08 Paul Glowatski  
04/10 Shirley Stewart Curo  
04/12 Sally Merrill  
04/13 Ann Gilbert  
04/13 Tim Kanady  
04/16 Diane Hyatt  
04/17 Fran Gibbs  
04/18 Patricia Barnes  
04/18 Colleen Hayes Anderson  
04/22 Tina Rakowski  
04/23 Sharon Armstrong  
04/24 Scott Granzow  
04/24 Robert "Bob" Carlile  
04/24 Earleen Barker Tehan  
04/24 Katie Martens  
04/26 Cindy Kelly  
04/27 Kathryn Angus Paddock

### ANNIVERSARIES

James & Terry Callen – 51 yrs  
Wyatt & Dottie Allen – 49 yrs  
Gordon & Janis Shackelford – 47 yrs  
Dan & Kathy Morton – 47 yrs  
Daniel & Kimberly Morgan Evans – 32 yrs  
Robert & Catherine Savage Wolpers – 30 yrs  
Randy & Edna Morton – 26 yrs  
David & Linda Hughes – 21 yrs  
Charles & Lenore Kephart – 15 yrs  
Samuel & Peggy McDonald Woods – 12 yrs  
Michael & Cassie Kouns Larson  
Robert Dart & April Langill  
Dennis & Andrea Canfield

### 2021 LHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### CO-PRESIDENTS:

Diane Angus & Gary Mitrovich

CO-VICE PRESIDENT: Rob Harding

SECRETARY: Catherine Savage Wolpers

TREASURER: Gordon Shackelford

PARLIAMENTARIAN: Janis Shackelford

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING LHS EVENTS

APRIL BOARD MEETING: Thu, Apr 8 @ 10am

GIFT SHOP & MUSEUM: *PENDING*

APRIL ACTIVITIES & MEETINGS: *PENDING*

MAY BOARD MEETING: Thu, May 13 @ 10am

MAY ACTIVITIES & MEETINGS: *OPEN?*

*All meetings and events occur at the LHS History Center unless otherwise stated*  
**AT PRESS TIME, WE PLAN TO REOPEN THE MUSEUM, GIFT SHOP  
& ARCHIVES ON TUESDAY, MARCH 30  
CALL AHEAD TO ENSURE WE ARE OPEN!**

## **WOMAN'S CLUB OF LAKESIDE** *Continued from page 2*

Over the past 111 years, the club has successfully continued these goals with the distinction of being the first and oldest community service organization in Lakeside. The club's history is full and interesting. A few of the many events in the history of the Woman's Club of Lakeside include:

- Assisted with the building of the Lakeside Town Hall in 1911.
- Established a branch of the county library in 1913.
- Purchased their own clubhouse building in 1920. Located on the northeast corner of Maine and Lakeshore, this building became the Red Cross headquarters during both World Wars, a reading room for service men, a teaching facility by civilian instructors for first aid and chemical warfare classes, and a fully equipped civilian defense station for the Lakeside district.

While the dues have gone up and the membership has increased, the original mission of the Woman's Club has remained steady through the past 111 years and will continue into the foreseeable future. It remains a viable and energetic group, striving to make Lakeside a better place for all of us. Congratulations to the Woman's Club of Lakeside and thank you for all you do!

*(Edited from the website of the Woman's Club of Lakeside. Visit the site at [www.womanscluboflakeside.org](http://www.womanscluboflakeside.org))*

## *In Remembrance*

**Dorothy P. Radell**

**May 16, 1935 - November 26, 2020**

**Jeannie R. Ford**

**May 20, 1944 - 2021**

## **HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS**

*Official publication of the Lakeside Historical Society since 1980*

**Gary E. Mitrovich, Editor/Head Writer**

Contact: [garyemit@cox.net](mailto:garyemit@cox.net) \* (619)749-3630

*Articles, emails, letters & photos are always welcome*

**Deadline: 2nd Friday of each month**

Contributors to this issue: Cheryl Chelius \* Historical Aerials

Peter Liebig \* Billy Ortiz \* Woman's Club of Lakeside

Pennie McMahon & the Newsletter Mailing Crew

*Printed by COPY CORRAL*



## LAKESIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

9906 Maine Avenue  
Lakeside, CA 92040  
(619) 561-1886

[www.lakesidehistory.org](http://www.lakesidehistory.org)

**APRIL 2021**  
**EMAIL EDITION**



**DOGS IN LAKESIDE HISTORY (Part IV):** In keeping with the history of the Olde Community Church in this issue, here is a photo of the 125-year-old edifice from the late 1940s (at left). By about 1950, loudspeakers were placed in the bell tower to amplify a new set of chimes in the sanctuary. The Carob trees along the front sidewalk, planted by Edna Swink Kouns and her Sunday School classmates in 1938, are looking pretty healthy here. A nameless black canine looks pretty comfortable in the late afternoon sun as he relaxes on the concrete in front of this quiet scene. (Photo from the LHS Archives)



**BONUS PHOTO:** The Olde Community Church takes center stage in this rare look north on Maine Avenue from about 1911. At left is the original house built by Dr. Ireys in 1907, enlarged to two-stories in 1930 by Dr. Carlile and then modified again to become a mortuary. Between that and the church is the manse garage in its original position. To the right of the church is the Neale house (built 1900), the Ross house (1904 - now a veterinary office), and finally the side of the Lakeside Meat Market (later torn down to make room for the Lakeside Store expansion). Note the lack of electrical or telephone poles. Maine was just a dusty dirt road at this time, though a recent rain probably made the puddles evident on the avenue. (From the LHS Archives)





## EXTRA SPECIAL BONUS PHOTO

Enlargement of the spectacular drone photograph taken by Peter Liebig, who generously allowed us to display it here. In the background, you can see the only structure older than the church - the Lakeside Hotel (the green building with solar panels in the upper center of the shot).