Hawaiian Gardens

An informal history

Written by
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Contents

Part One

Part Two

PART ONE

Folklore of the Land

The Tong-va of Puvungna

Indians once roamed the land where Hawaiian Gardens now stands

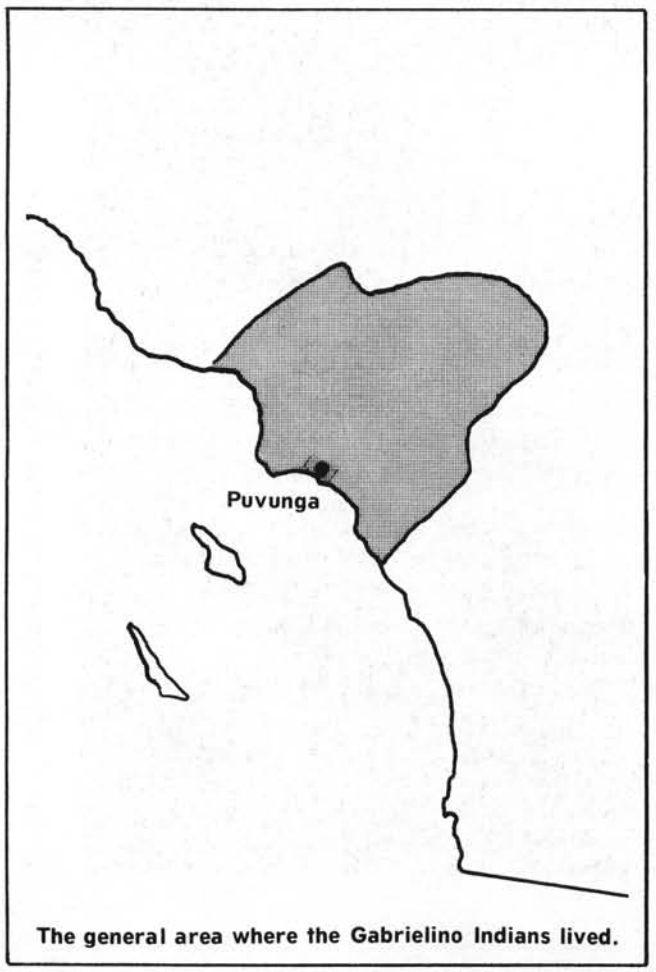
Walking down Carson Street — or almost any street in southern California — it's hard to imagine there was ever anything else besides asphalt, traffic and the bustling business of "California Living."

But if you could stand on the corner of Carson and Norwalk and wind Time back about 300 years, you'd find yourself in a land almost impossible to recognize.

You'd be standing in a wooded marsh, and you'd have to keep a sharp eye out for prowling grizzly bears! Birds and small animals would be abundant, and if you looked south between the trees, you might be able to catch a glimpse of smoke from the cooking fires of the village of Puvungna.

It would be easy to find a trail leading to Puvungna, near where Cal. State, Long Beach now stands, because the Indians that lived there often came to Hawaiian Gardens to hunt. On the Bloomfield Park side of Pioneer Boulevard it's still possible to find discarded shells from an ancient lunch, or perhaps an unwanted stone utensil or a dulled obsidian arrow point.

Following the trail to the village, you would come to a large cluster of sturdy branch and leaf huts — and a sturdy, handsome people that called themselves Tong-va. You would be in no danger because the Tong-va Indians, or the Gabrielions as they were later to be called, were peaceful and tolerant of strangers. You would find no metal in the village because their culture never progressed further than the Stone Age. But you would find beautiful baskets crafted with a skill unequaled by any other culture. You would find strong bows braced with sinew and sharp chert and obsidian knives and arrow points. You'd also find many stone articles and preserved foods that originated as far away as San Clemente Island and the mountains to the east. The Tong-va were brisk traders.



The general area where the Gabrielino Indians lived.

If you could talk to the Tong-va, they might explain — with understandable pride — that their village was the holy center of the story of how the world was created for Indians all along the coast. And if they told you the story, you would be surprised at how closely it followed the story in the Bible. The village elders might recount stories of the Tong-va coming from the east long ago, and of distant relatives that hunted buffalo on great plains. Or other cousins that built pueblos in the desert. Younger villagers would probably just scoff, and point out that for generations as far back as anyone could remember — or remember hearing of — the Tong-va were born, lived and died near Puvungna. The Tong-va were not wanderers. No one would know for sure because the Tong-va had no formal written language.

You probably could not help noticing that some qualities of life for the Indians were not too different from life for Californians today. There were plenty of neighbors. Our state supported an Indian population larger than any area of the same size in the United States — about 30 per cent of the Indians that lived in the United States.

And sunbathing was a respectable and often practiced occupation. You might even hear of some Indians joyously planning a trip to relax and bathe in the nearest warm spring.

The Tong-va were a gentle, intelligent people who learned to take from the land without destroying it. They lived in peace, in an unchanging culture, for more time than they could remember. But Time had some changes in store for the Tong-va.

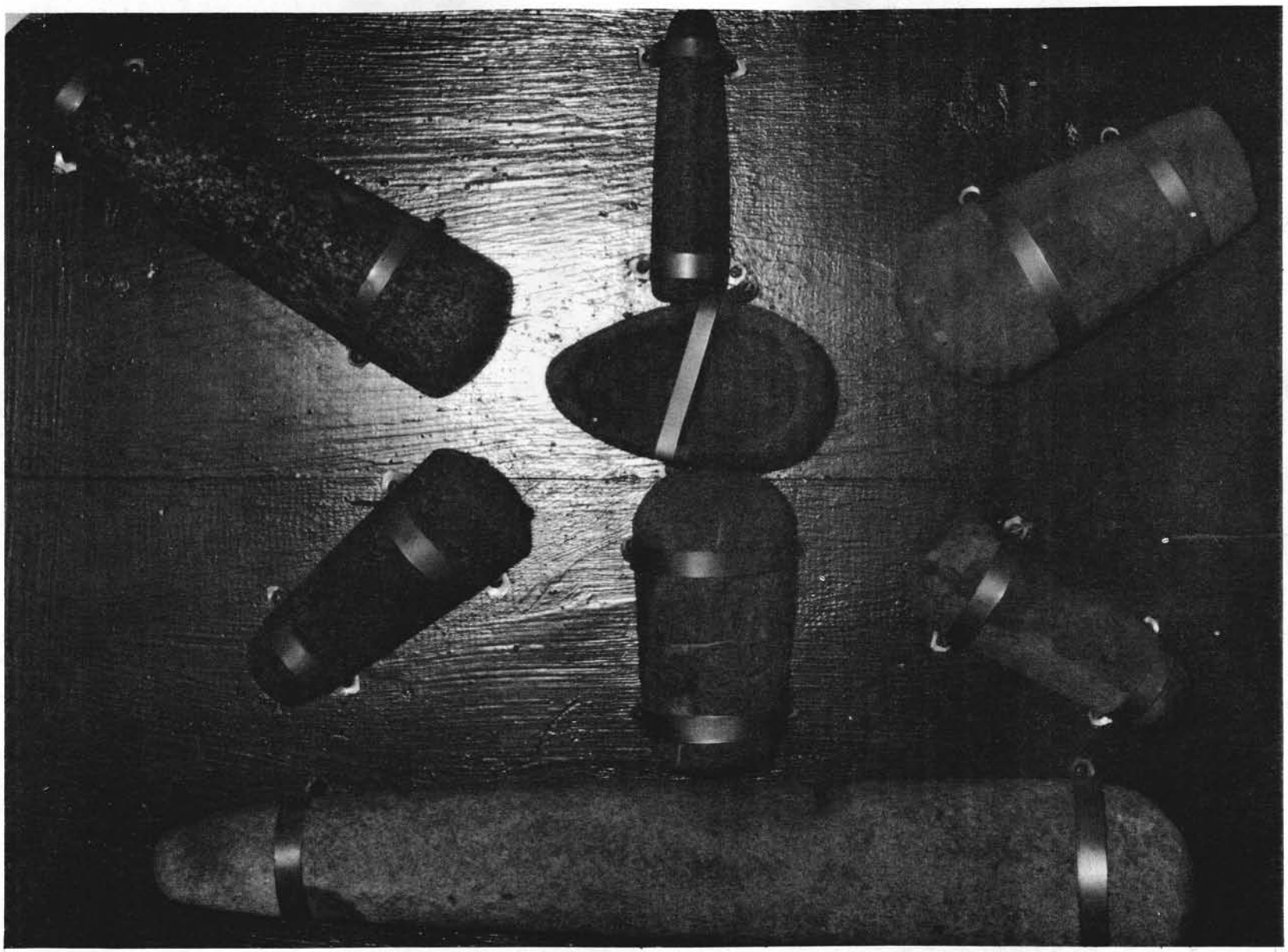
On the way back to the present day, if you could slow the clock down again to a little over two hundred years ago, you might possibly witness the first meeting of the Tong-va and the Spaniards.

The Indians were terrified when they first saw the Spaniards on horseback. They thought they were gods and quickly put out all fires while the women ran to hide in the brush. When one of the visiting "gods" produced flint and steel to strike a spark, and then began smoking, the Indians were convinced they were in the presence of beings closely related to the "Giver of Life."

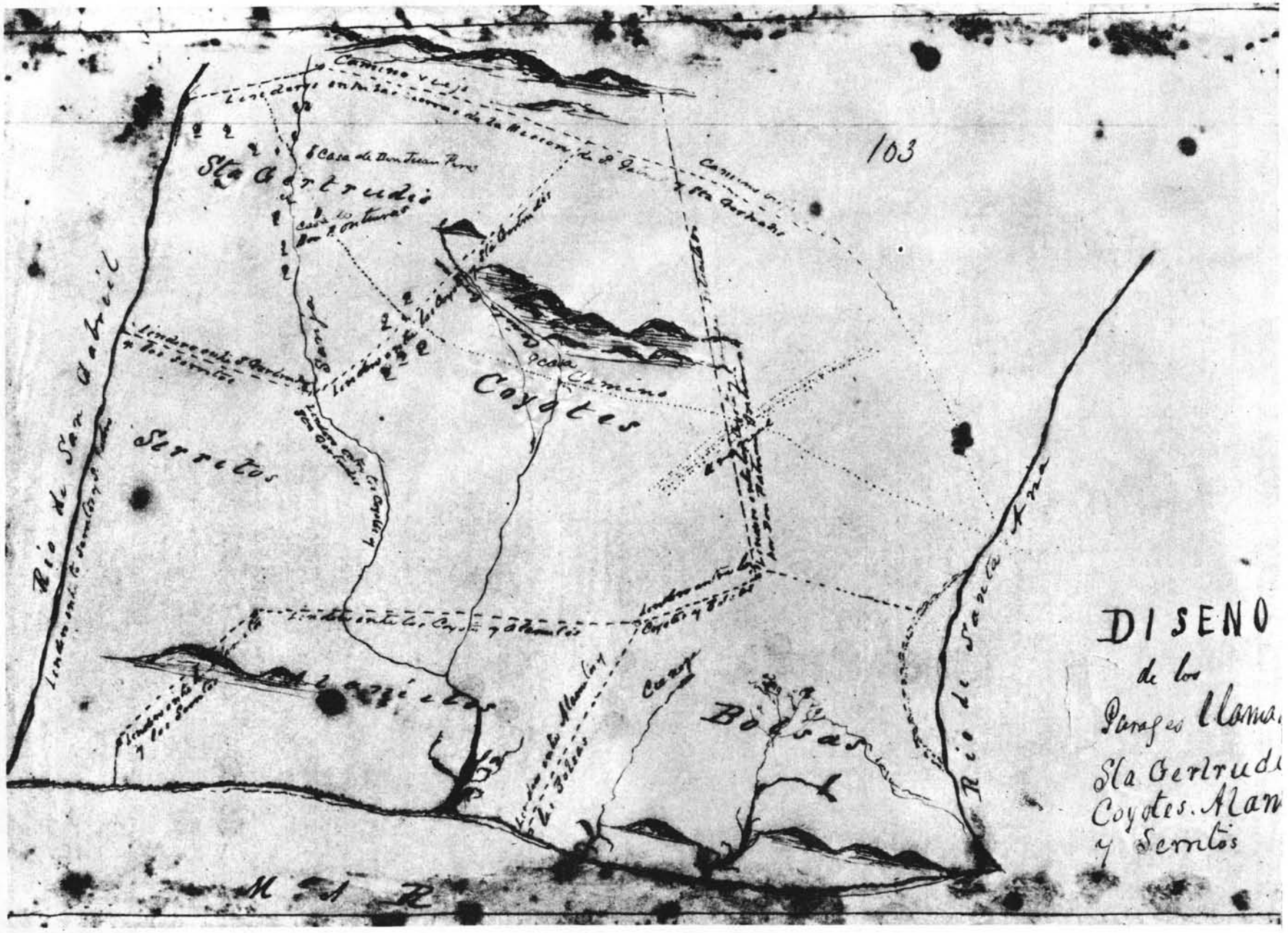
The awe of the Tong-va for the Spaniards was soon shattered. One of the soldiers took his musket and killed a bird. The Indians were frightened by the sound and fire of the musket, but were instantly convinced the Spaniards were mortal. It was impossible for the "Giver of Life" to murder animals the way the Indians did with their bows and arrows. The Spaniards must be merely men, of a nasty white color and having ugly blue eyes.

The Indians called them Chichinabros, or "reasonable beings." The Tong-va were so impressed with the Spaniards that when they acquired tools and instruments of Spanish metal, they called them Chichinabros too.

The Indians' first contact with the Spaniards was a short and peaceful one, so the Spaniards were not disliked. But it would not be long before peaceful contacts and liking for the Spaniards would be two things in short supply.



Indian artifacts found during the construction of Bloomfield Park.



A hand-drawn Spanish land-grant map estimated to date about 1838. The names and boundaries are considered accurate. (Courtesy of City of Signal Hill)

Helmets and Crosses

The European comes to California with a strong arm...and salvation

Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was the first European to sight California's coast while searching for a water route to Asia in 1542. He supposedly stopped at San Pedro Bay, naming it Bahia a Los Fumos, or "Bay of Smokes," because of the numerous signal and hunting fires of the Indians' there.

There were several later attempts to discover sound achorages along the coast, and the Spanish made several land expeditions searching for treasure. There were Indian tales of golden cities and El Dorado, the golden king whose subjects covered him with gold dust every morning. The Spanish had great hopes for California at first, but all expeditions met disappointment and hardship. Some rumors of treasure were even deliberate attempts by the Indians to send the Spanish to their deaths. It was not until 1769, with the Portola-Serra expedition, that an y serious attempt was made to settle California. The Spanish considered California a cruel land.

The Portola-Serra expedition was a "sacred expedition" planned to turn the Indians into Franciscan converts. The Spanish considered the Indians worthy of protection, admitted they had souls to save, and expected them to toil for almost no wages for the priviledge of joining the Spanish church.

In the face of tremendous physical hardship, disease and death, Captain Gaspar de Portola and Father Junipero Serra established a mission in San Diego in 1769. One was founded in Monterey in 1770 and another in San Gabriel in 1771. The San Gabriel mission was the one from which the Gabrielino Indians of Los Angeles County would be named.

The Indians were reluctant to accept the gift of religion and had to be "persuaded" to become converts. The "persuaders" were usually a ragged band of misfits that called themselves soldiers, and cared little about methods. The procedure at the San Gabriel mission was to go on expeditions after converts. They would collect a group of reluctant Neophies and drive them back to the mission.

The Indians under eight years of age would be baptised. Infants were left with their mothers, but all other youngsters were separated from their parents, so as not to be contaminated. This eventually led to the women consenting to the rite of baptism to be reunited with their children. And ultimately the men would relent to regain their families. Marriages were then performed and the Indians became converts and "brand new" churchgoers.

The Indians knew virtually nothing of the religion forced upon them, because their Spanish usually consisted of no more than Amar a Dios. Their religion consisted of being able to cross themselves, with the vague impression it had something to do with hard work and harder punishment. The priest in general could speak none of the Indians' language, so the Indians became not much more than slaves, with chains and beatings awaiting deserters.

About that time, in 1784, the land where Hawaiian Gardens now stands came under Spanish ownership with a massive 300,000 acre land grant to Corporal Manuel Nieto. Nieto developed his land into six rancheros and prospered as a cattle and horse rancher. After Nieto's death in 1804, his children divided the massive grant. The land changed hands several times in the course of a few years — sometimes under shady circumstances.

California was a rough land in the early 1800's, and shady circumstances were not unusual. In 1833, the Mexican government, which was now free of Spain and the new owners of California, passed a Secularization Bill in an effort to improve the Indian conditions. The bill's intent was to return the wealth and property of the missions back to the Indians, but it actually had little real effect.

Richard Dana, who visited California as a sailor in 1835-36 and recorded his experiences in his book "Two Years Before the Mast," described the plight of the Indians as little better than before the Secularization Bill was passed. The priests were forced back into a purely religious role, but the wealth of the missions generally landed in the hands of civil servants sent from Mexico to supervise the transfer.

While anchored at San Pedro, the port of the Pueblo de Los Angeles, Dana heard of a case which illustrated the lawlessness of the land. A Spaniard who had quarreled with a New England resident entered his enemy's home one evening and murdered him while the victim's family watched. Other New England settlers seized the Spaniard and confined him until word could be had from the governor-general. The governor-general refused to act, so the New Englanders joined with a band of Kentucky hunters in the vicinity and took over Los Angeles. They tried and executed the murderer according to their own laws and the incident progressed no further.

Dana also noted that crimes against the Indians went virtually unpunished, while an Indian that committed a crime was swiftly and cruelly put to justice. Dana had little regard for the people he met in California, calling the men "thriftless, proud and extravagant" and the women having "but little virtue."

The gentle, peaceful Gabrielino Indians, according to Dana, had become drunkards and frequently the men sold their wives for temporary use to the American sailors. It was estimated that the Gabrielinos numbered about 5,000 in 1770, but their numbers were drastically reduced with the coming of the European. The Spanish were cruel masters and brought many diseases to which the Indians had no resistance. Within a generation, the Gabrielino Indians as a culture would virtually disappear.

Even the face of the land had changed. Puvungna, by the 1830's, was gone. So were most of the marshlands. Travelers in the stagecoach era were already describing the transit from San Pedro to Los Angeles as a trip across plains. The forests had disappeared!

In disgust, Dana had described Californians as being infected with "California fever," or laziness. But change was in store for California in general and the Hawaiian Gardens area specifically. The Spanish dream of treasure in California was about to come true ... and a new "California fever" was about to infect the country!

The Rush to Riches

The Spanish dream of riches in California comes true

The chunk of land where Hawaiian Gardens is today stayed much the same for a long time. It was wooded marsh where people came to hunt, or water their horses and cattle. Some people referred to it as "The Delta" and although its ownership changed hands frequently, nothing much was done to change its wild state.

There was plenty, however, happening around "The Delta" and in other parts of the state that would eventually cause changes of which few people dreamed.

A soft, shiny metal had a lot to do with the change. Gold in California was an old Spanish dream, and it is odd they found none in California when they were so successful elsewhere in the world. The first recorded gold strike in the Golden State was actually in 1842 at Placerita Creek, about 35 miles northwest of Los Angeles. A rancher named Francisco Lopez pulled up some wild onions and found particles of gold among the roots. An attempt was made to mine the area, but the strike was small and soon petered out.

Then, in 1848, nine days before Mexico ceded California to the United States as a result of war, James Marshal found that famous nugget in the race at Sutter's Mill in the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas east of Sacramento. Sutter tried to keep the discovery quiet in an effort to finish construction of his saw mill, but it wasn't long before the rush was on!

At first, the news of gold in California was taken with a grain of salt. It was laughed off as a new version of the old Spanish dream. But when the glitteringly real thing started trickling in from the foothills, virtually everybody caught a new "California fever!"

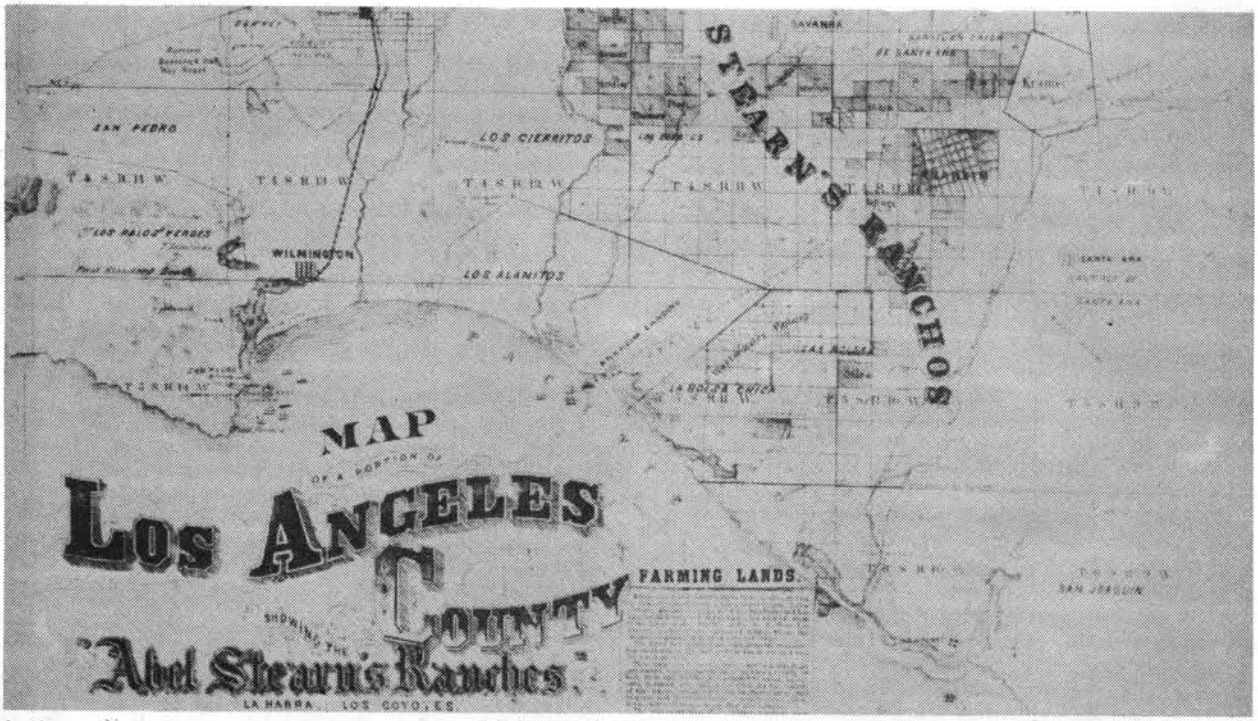
It's hard today to imagine the effect "gold fever" had. Husbands left their families. Soldiers and sailors deserted and headed for the gold fields. A San Jose jailer wanted to go too, but had 10 Indian prisoners in his charge. There was no one around to turn them over to ... everyone had left for the mines. So the jailer left too, taking his prisoners with him and putting them to work in the fields to make him rich.

In little more than a year, the foothills of the Sierras would be swarming with people looking for quick riches. But in the southern part of the state, near the first gold discovery, another way to riches was being discovered. The miners had to eat! And they would pay high prices for cattle.

The land in southern California was still in the hands of only a few people; the giant Spanish land grants were just beginning to break up. The few land owners prospered with the demands for beef from up north, but when the gold rush came to a sudden end in 1857, most land owners found themselves overspent and deeply in debt.

The solution most found to get out from under the bills was to subdivide their acres. People were lured to the Southland by the availability of land bought cheap on the installment plan. By the end of the Civil War, the area around Hawaiian Gardens consisted of small farms raising grain instead of cattle.

In 1867-68, even the face of the land took on a change. In a tremendous flood lasting two weeks, the San Gabriel River ripped and flooded the land in search of a new course for itself, finally resting in the bed it now follows. The "old" San Gabriel became known as the Rio Hondo. Rescuers from



In the mid-1800's, the huge Spanish land-grants were beginning to break up. This 1871 map shows sections of land for sale. (Courtesy of the City of Norwalk).

LOS ANGELES DAILY TIMES.

VOL. I. LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 4, 1881. NO. 1.

THE GOLDEN GATE.

A Breezy Letter from the Times Correspondent.

A VIAL OF VITRIOL.

An Unknown Scoundrel Hurls it on a Crowd.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Water-Color, Crayon and Ink Portraits a Specialty.

Payne, Stanton & Co.,

The first front page of the Los Angeles Times, dated December 4, 1881.

Wilmington were able to row as far upriver as the La Puente foothills on mercy missions.

As late as 1881, Los Angeles was nothing more than a sleepy pueblo village of about 13,000. The Los Angeles River ran dry most of the year and the villagers got their water from a few shallow wells.

That's what a man named Harrison Gray Otis found that year when he arrived. Otis saw a great future in the Los Angeles area and wanted to be a part of it. His first step was to buy a $5,000 quarter interest in the newly established Los Angeles Times.

By 1884 he was helping to organize the Times-Mirror Corporation with a capital stock of $40,000. He became president and general manager of the company two years later, and held that title until his death.

Otis envisioned Los Angeles as a great city, and had a strong drive to see his vision a reality. In 1882 he launched a virtually one-man campaign to bring people to the area. He mailed thousands of free copies of the Times to people in the East and write to Civil War veterans urging them to come to Los Angeles with the promise of inexpensive land.

He also got some unexpected help — the railroads. At the time, the Southern Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe rail lines were in bitter competition for passengers. The more passengers, the more government money and land given to the railroads. They started undercutting each other's fares, and it reached the point that, in 1886, people from the Missouri Valley could purchase a ticket to southern California for one dollar!

All the while, Otis was predicting a population for Los Angeles of 50,000 at "no distant day." Otis put out a call for men of "brains, brawn and guts!" He wanted "men of little capital and a good deal of energy — first class men."

What Otis got was a land boom and thousands of fly-by-night speculators hoping to make a fast fortune in real estate. Within months the price of land rose 300 percent and within three years the population of Los Angeles rose to 100,000.

Mythical municipalities sprang up at such rapid rate that speculators were hard pressed to think up new names. Supposedly, a gentleman who's name is lot to history, put the first and last letters of the alphabet together with U.S.A. and came up with the town of Azusa! Land advertisements described California land in such shameless prose that it makes today's hard-sell pitches for desert land seem low-key. Some ads were even written in verse.

Despite Otis' dream, few of the speculators that came to California had any intention of staying past the possibility of a fast buck. It all came crashing down in 1888 when the banks stopped loans on any real estate outside the heart of the city. In two years, the population of Los Angeles shrunk to 50,000. Otis' faith remained unshaken however. He kept pushing southern California as a land of opportunity with "special editions" of the Times, and helped form a Chamber of Commerce to build up the agriculture and industry of the area.

It worked. By the turn of the century, the population of Los Angeles was again over 100,000 and the whole area was bursting with optomistic activity. "The Delta" now known as Hawaiian Gardens sat relatively unchanged through all this activity. But land in southern California can not sit idle for long, and the citizens of the lower part of the state were soon to discover a wealth under the soil that would be longer lasting that the gold mines up north. And "The Delta" would come to be known as "Hawaiian Gardens."

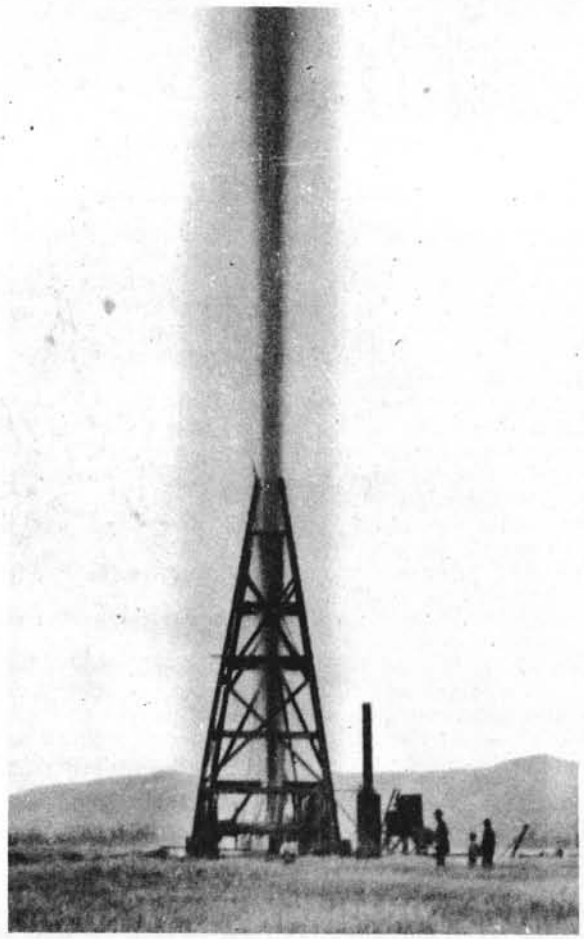
Moonshine and Oil

Hawaiian Gardens gets a name and oil speculators get rooked!

It was in 1927 that the same "Hawaiian Gardens" first came to be associated with this area. And all the credit belongs to a fruit stand owner of shady reputation.

In those days, a trail followed Coyote Creek and travelers going north or south on horseback used it frequently. An enterprising businessman built a shack near what is now the corner of Norwalk Boulevard and Carson Street as a way-stop for those travelers. It was just a bamboo frame covered with palm fronds, with two palm covered outhouses in the back! He called it Hawaiian Gardens!

It was a 1920's version of today's fast-food drive-ins, serving soda pop and sandwiches ... but with a slightly different twist. Rumor has it that if you made a special request, your soft drink could be hardened up a bit with a little homemade "moonshine." Those were the days of Prohibition, and while Elliot Ness was busting beer kegs in Chicago, Hawaiian Gardens farmers were punching up their punch with a little "hootch." Legend has it that many a traveler ... after a brief interlude at the Hawaiian Gardens stand ... would return the way they came, though not quite as steadily. The prosperous little stand disappeared after the repeal of Prohibition, but the name "Hawaiian Gardens" stayed on.



Looking for water, they found oil! (Courtesy of the City of Norwalk)

Around the turn of the century, Hawaiian Gardens was still, for the most part, an unsettled area. there were a few farms, and the wooded marsh that stood for so long was beginning to disappear. The only police protection available was a handy loaded pistol, and a bucket of water near the door served as the fire department.

Frederick "Sheep" Smith owned about 360 acres in the vicinity of Norwalk Boulevard and Carson Street at the time, and — true to his nickname — grazed flocks of sheep there. According to his Grandson, John, who was born here in 1911, Sheep Smith drove his flock to markets as far away as San Francisco, grazing all the way and taking three months! John's father later donated a whole block of that same land for the Bloomfield School. It was good land to keep sheep on, but it wouldn't be long before the price of Smith's land would skyrocket because of what might be under it, not on it!

Even during the days of the Indians, the land around Hawaiian Gardens was desirable, but in the early 1900's people began suspecting there was something underneath the land that was even more attractive: oil!

The Indians knew of the oil. They called the thick, asphalt-like stuff that bubbled up from the ground capatote. They used it to waterproof baskets and join arrow points to shafts. The Spanish used it to waterproof their roofs, and a few people in the missionary era distilled kerosene from it to use in lamps. But nobody seriously started looking for oil until 1916.

In that year, the Union Oil Company sank a well on Signal Hill. It spurred some minor land speculation in this area but most people lost money. Union Oil lost too, when they gave up in disgust after drilling to almost 3,500 feet without a strike. It was not until 1921 that the Royal Dutch Shell company punched through to 3,114 feet and brought the first gusher in on Signal Hill. It blew high, wide and out of control for almost two days before being capped.

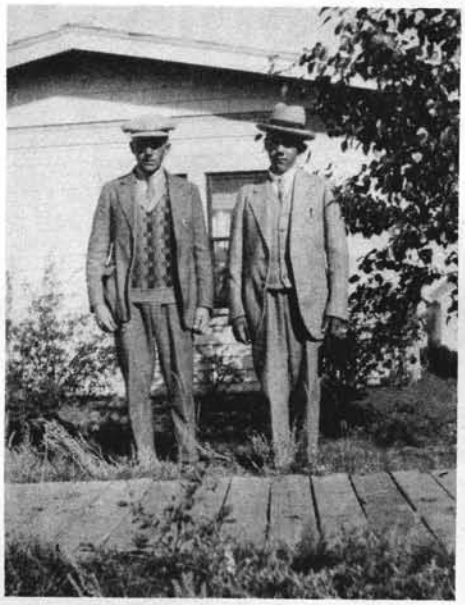
Meanwhile, north of the Hawaiian Gardens area, people were looking for water to relieve a shortage. They sank test wells in 1922 ... and came up with oil instead! Another rush to riches in California was on!

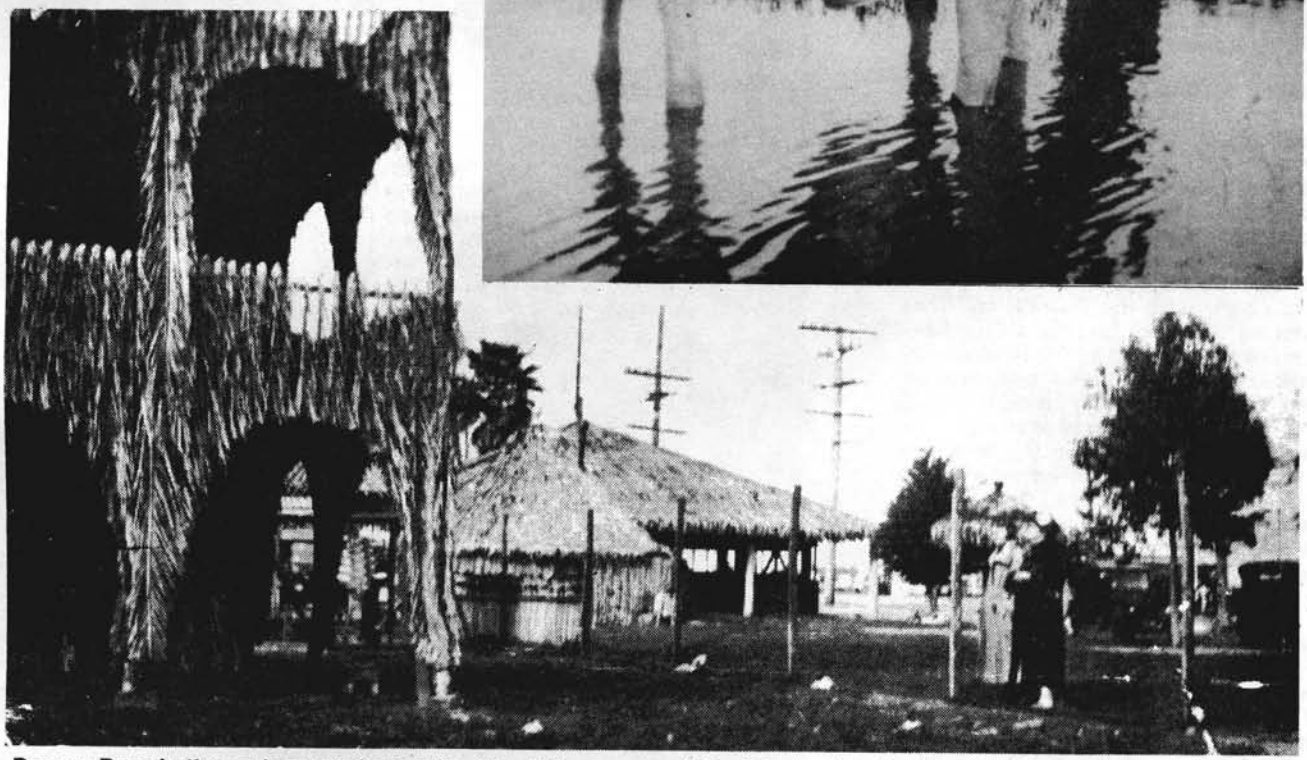
People sped to the oil fiends in search of the high wages the oil companies were paying. It was hard work, though, and there was a constant danger of fire. James Anderson, a farmer who came to the Hawaiian Gardens area in 1921, remembered one fire.

"We woke up about three o'clock one morning," he said, "and this area was just as light as day! A gas well had caught on fire. Boy, was it a sight!" There were many fires after that, but the smell of oil was the smell of money ... and the smell of smoke was not strong enough to mask it.

Before long, promoters were buying up land, subdividing it and selling it to people looking for their own "black gold."

The Smith land was subdivided into small oil lots going for real estate outfit went as far as to erect an office near where the Hawaiian Gardens refreshment stand would be later to help sell lots. According to residents at the time, there were women singing, Hollywood personalities putting on shows, and free coffee for everybody. They say it was quite a deal to sell lots on those days!





Dapper Dans in the early 1900's (top, left); "Pop" Furgeson milking his cow despite the floods (top, right); the Hawaiian Gardens fruit stand from which the city got its name (above.)

But the lots were no deal. There was no oil under Hawaiian Gardens, and those high priced pieces of land later were picked up for taxes for as little as $10. A lot of money changed hands, but the land changed very little.

By the late 1920's, Hawaiian Gardens was still an agricultural area and sparsely populated. Norwalk Boulevard was paved with funds from a state bond issue n 1913, but all other roads were dirt. Mrs. Olie Peel, who came to Hawaiian Gardens with her husband in 1928, recalls how undeveloped the area was. "We bought a little lot on the corner of what is now Wardman and Brittan," she said. "We built our house in '28, and there were only three houses on that side of Norwalk Boulevard."

Water was gotten by artesian wells, and when the sugar factory in Los Alamitos was producing, the wells would not flow. The farmers then used windmills to pump the water up.

The land was low and floods were something to live with, but most of the time the San Gabriel River was not more than a ditch. The area was not much more than a group of small, prosperous dairy farms.

The discovery of oil had brought workers and their families to this area, and started it growing. But the growth in the prosperous Twenties would be nothing compared to the growth in the early Thirties when the country would be in the iron grip of the Depression.

The Land Chose the People

Hawaiian Gardens grows as inexpensive land offers a cure for The Depression

When the stock market shattered to bits in October, 1929, many people found their hopes and dreams shattered with it. Financial security became a thing of the past for many — and millions pulled up stakes to begin looking for it. California, a land of promise since the gold rush, became the destination for thousands of rootless people. They headed for the Coast to find the jobs, the money ... even the way of life that seemed to have disappeared overnight.

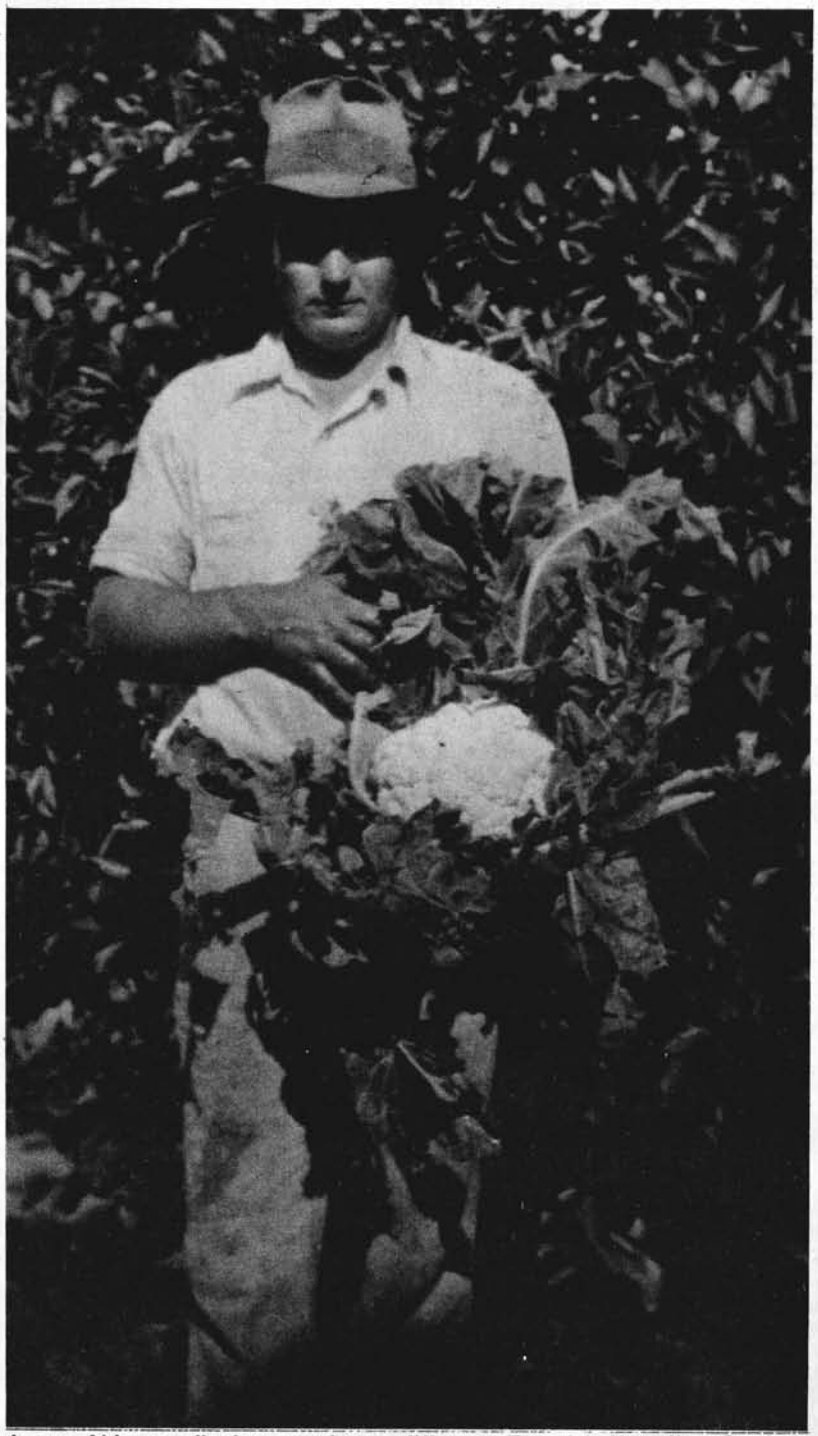
Hawaiian Gardens was a small, rural community of dairy and truck farms at the time. Roads were poor and electricity was rare. But land was inexpensive and crops could be grown on it.

Jack Myers and his family came to Hawaiian Gardens in 1936 when he was a small boy. "I can remember when there weren't too many streets," he said, "not even dirt ones. The biggest reason that the area grew like it did, though, was because property was so cheap. I don't think the people really chose the area as much as the area chose the people. Lots sold for $10.00 and there was a large flux of people trying to get over the Depression. They moved out here because they did not have any money to speak of and they could buy cheap. They were looking for a place to go. I think it was a matter of circumstance."

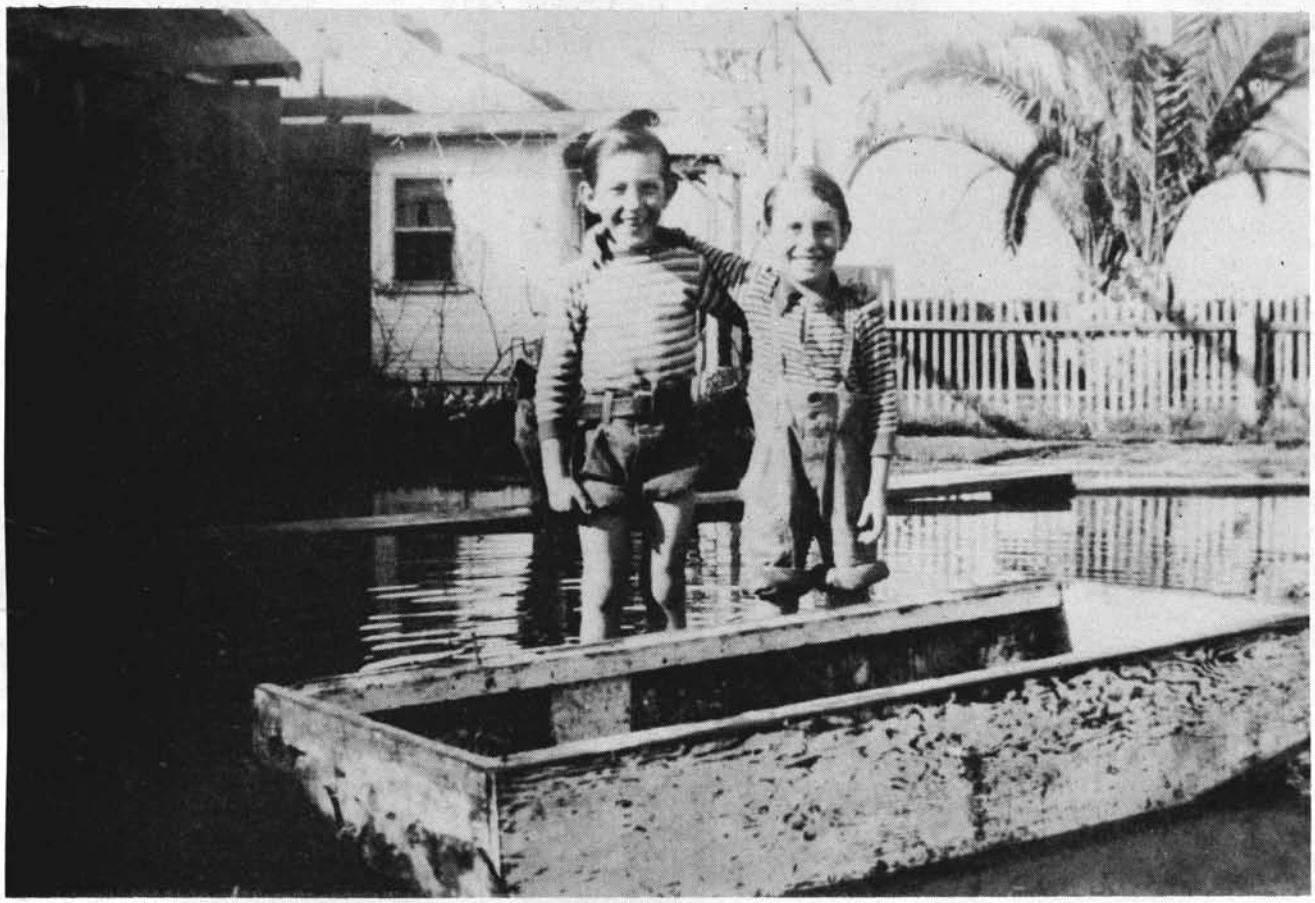
The circumstance looked pretty grim to some people, but Hawaiian Gardens was attracting a brand of new-comer with the same spirit that pioneered the West a century before. "We moved here in October, 1937," Evelyn Rodgers remembers. "I'll never forget it. We were here about two weeks and we had a flood. The water ran in one door and out the other. We moved into an 18'x26' house and we had five rooms of furniture and a piano. You have to know how crowded we were! We had electricity, but no gas. I had to boil water out on an open fire to do my washing. I can tell you we really pioneered."

Bea Harder, another long-time resident, also remembers the early days of Hawaiian Gardens. "I guess we came here for the same reason everyone else did," she said. "We were broke. We found a piece of property out here that was advertised and came out and looked at it. My husband said, 'You don't want that!' I said, 'Yes, I think I do.' He thought I was crazy because it looked like a wilderness, but I felt that with a little hard work, we might accidentally make something out of it!"

Long days of hard work were like the reoccurring floods ... you just had to get used to them. There were few jobs and



James Alderson displays a prize cauliflower. The rich Hawaiian Gardens soil grew record crops.



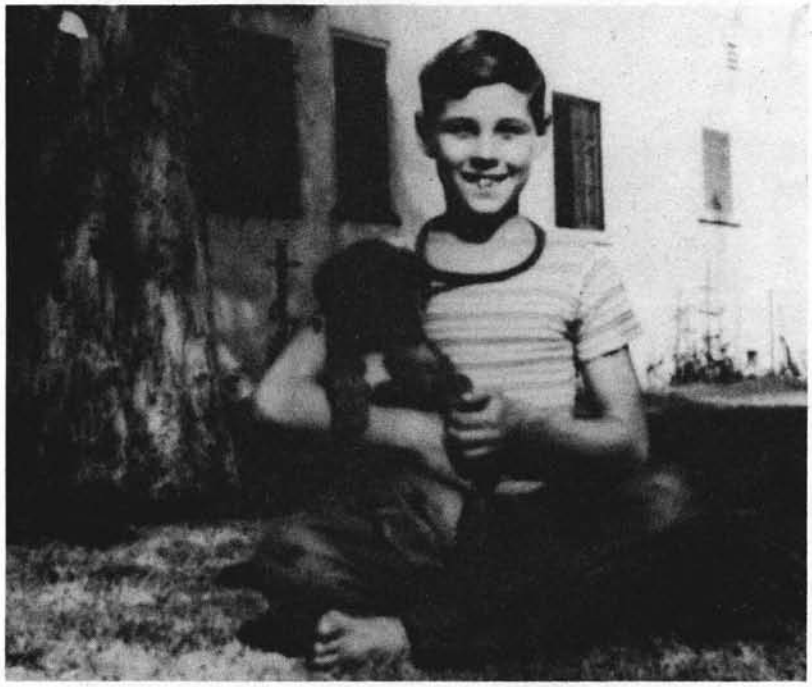
Horses were valuable work animals (top) but they were great to play with too. In fact, even the reoccuring floods couldn't keep Hawaiian Gardens residents down for long. It was a perfect chance to posewith your boat (above.)

even less money. But there were good times too. Hawaiian Gardens had the close, friendly atmosphere of a small community, with plenty of space in which to play.

"We really had a closeness in this area," Mrs. Rodgers said. "Everyone was neighborly where we lived. We made layettes for needy families. A mother could start brand new with her baby from what the neighbors did. If you needed anything, all you had to do was call on your neighbors."

Jack Burson, who came to Hawaiian Gardens in the Thirties, still remembers the joys of country living. "We had a lot of fun in these big fields," he said. "We played with horses and raced horses. There wasn't as much crime then, and our girls used to catch the bus in Lakewood to downtown Long Beach and go roller skating. We had a lot of fun as a family."

Edmond Roah, who also moved here with his family in the late Thirties, remembers the fun he had as a boy playing with the cows and horses. But he also remembers his family not having a handy water supply. "We used to have to carry water for about a block," he said, "from 223rd Street all the way down to 221st Street." Hawaiian Gardens during the



When Hawaiian Gardens Mayor Jack Myers was just a lad (above) in 1942, Hawaiian Gardens was still a rich agricultural area.

Depression may have been fun, but it was still a struggle.

Not only did the people of Hawaiian Gardens have to struggle to put food on the table, they sometimes had to struggle to find a place to put the table! Venn Furgeson and his wife, Gladys, put their table down in Hawaiian Gardens — under precarious circumstances — in 1939. "We were living in Bellflower," Venn said, "and my Dad was the kind of guy that was always out hustling, trying to make a dollar. He and Gladys went out day after day and finally came back with what they said was a bargain. I asked them where it was and they told me they didn't know! There were no streets and no signs ... but it was in the country and they were sure I'd like it. And they said we could buy it for practically no money down!"

"That was $35.00 down," Gladys recalled. "It had no bathroom and we had to paint and plaster the walls. It didn't have a water heater either, so I bought one for 35 cents. We built on a bathroom and fixed it up. The water heater was still working when they tore down our house to build the Furgeson School in about 1966."

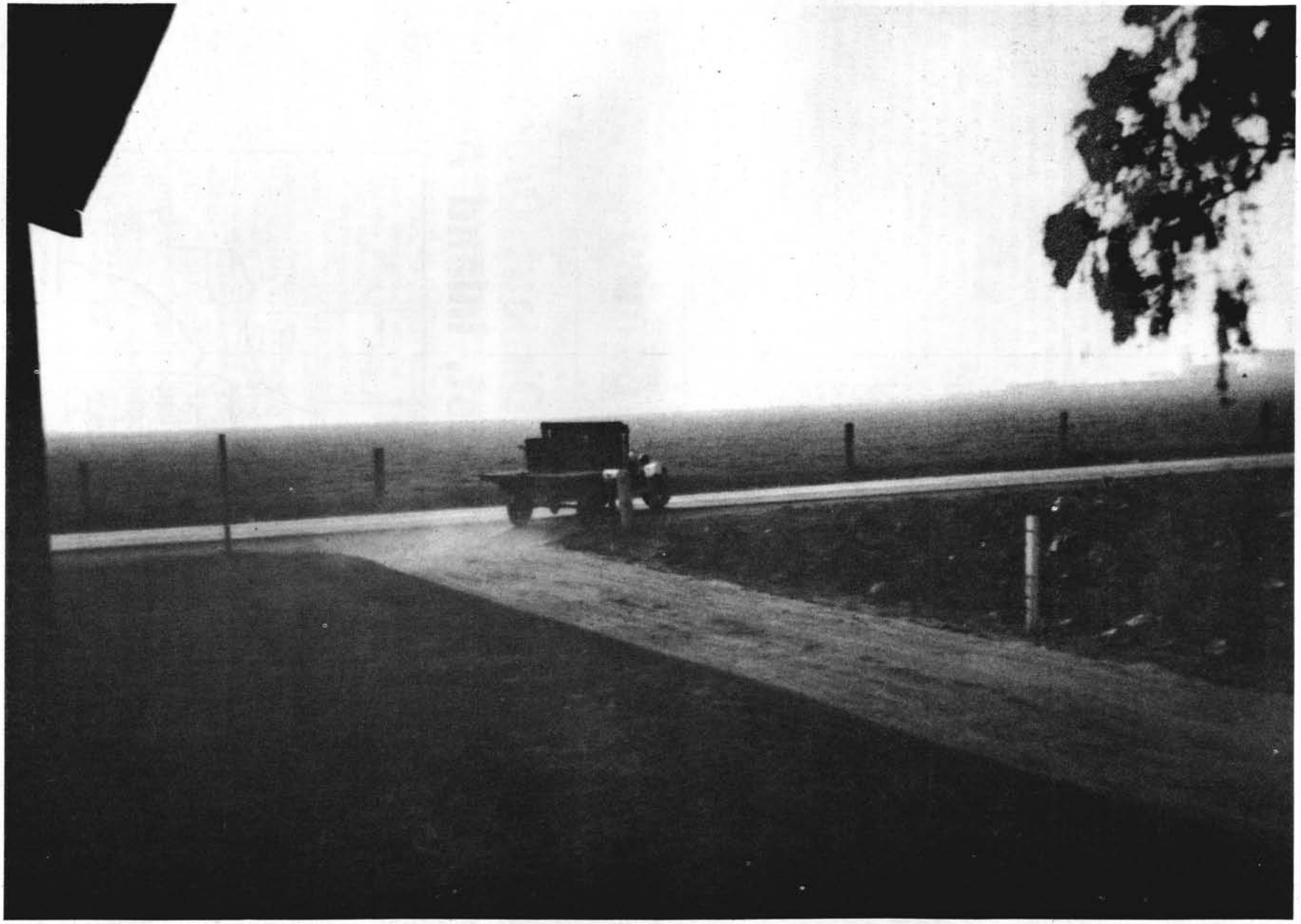
People came to the Hawaiian Gardens area during the time of unrest the Depression caused. But other forces were causing unrest at that time ... and not just for people. It happened on Friday, March 10, 1933. It was a stagnant, overcast day just turning into evening. All of a sudden the earth moved!

"My sister and I were living together then," John Smith said. "We were eating and all at once everything moved. It was just as if someone had gotten hold of the table cloth and shook it and pulled it off!"

It was a grinding, ripping 13-second jolt that measured 6.3 on the Richter scale. One of California's major natural disasters of the century, it killed 59 people in Long Beach, the city hit hardest. The injured numbered in the hundreds. Because of Hawaiian Gardens' fewer buildings and further distance from the epicenter, the damage was considerably less. But panic ran high anyway. Few people slept in their houses for nights to come, fearing another trembler. Several families from the area even packed up and fled to the mountains.

By the beginning of the following week, order was restored, reconstruction had begun, and Hawaiian Gardens residents were getting back to their daily routines. There were jobs to do or jobs to seek. There were crops and animals that had to be raised to eat or sell. And you could always make some extra money by hauling out a hapless motorist stuck in the muddy roads.

As the year 1940 approached, Hawaiian Gardens' spurt of growth due to the Depression leveled off. But there was change in the wind again. Before long, the United States Navy would all but be destroyed in a sneak attack across a stretch of ocean to the west of Hawaiian Gardens. The United States — and Hawaiian Gardens — would be thrust into a spiral of economic growth as a result of Uncle Sam going to war!



This picture of a farm truck turning north on Pioneer Boulevard from 215th Street shows how undeveloped the Hawaiian Gardens area was in the late 1930's.

War!

The population booms and Hawaiian Gardens establishes an identity

It was a quiet winter Sunday in Hawaiian Gardens when the radio interrupted programing and blurted the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. It was only 18 days before the Christmas of 1941, but thoughts of celebration were pushed far from the minds of virtually all Americans.

Within days, Hawaiian Gardens residents were draping windows with dark cloth to prevent enemy aircraft from zeroing in on light at night. A Japanese attack on the California coast was thought to be a certainty. When a Japanese submarine surfaced off Santa Barbara a few months later and began shelling the town, the whole state was ordered to observe radio silence. The order lasted for less than a day, but the fear of invasion stayed with us.

A few days after the Santa Barbara shelling, Hawaiian Gardens residents awoke during the night to the sound of anti-aircraft batteries firing on unidentified aircraft over Los Angeles County. The aircraft were never identified, and the results were inconclusive. Japanese-American families were taken from their homes, moved inland and kept like prisoners in concentration camps. Long lines formed outside Armed Forces recruiting offices. Our country was at war!

What years of federal and state programs couldn't do, the Japanese accomplished in just a few minutes: the Depression was over. As more and more men and women donned uniforms, workers became as scarce as jobs were a few years prior. People swarmed into the Hawaiian Gardens area to work in nearby aircraft assembly plants. Tents sprang up south of Carson Street when the number of families surpassed the number of houses available. Hawaiian Gardens was growing again!

Along with the war came rationing. You needed coupons, or "points," to buy gas, meat, butter, sugar ... almost anything our Armed Services used. People were encouraged to save cans, rubber articles, metal foil and paper. People studied silhouettes of enemy aircraft ... just in case!

Hawaiian Gardens was better off than a lot of communities during the war because many items in short supply were being produced right here. "I remember I used to raise a lot of rabbits, with the meat shortage," Edmond Roah said. "We never needed any meat because we had lots of rabbits and chickens to eat." The local dairies were struggling to increase their butterfat output, and everybody had at least a "victory" garden.

Rationing caused some unique problems too. When an Artesia grocer advertised in the **Artesia News** in 1944 that

ALL THE NEWS ALL THE TIME

MAdison 2345
The Times Telephone Number

Los Angeles Times

IN THREE PARTS — 36 PAGES
Part I — GENERAL NEWS — 22 Pages

TIMES OFFICE
202 West First Street

VOL. LXI — WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 5, 1942. — DAILY, FIVE CENTS

Germans Surge On in Caucasus

Nazis Advance Another 50 Miles and Also Gain in Don Elbow North of Stalingrad, Reds Admit; Hitler Hordes Drawing Nearer to Maikop Oil

MOSCOW, Aug. 5 (Wednesday.) (AP)—German troops have made another 50-mile advance in the Caucasus to threaten Tikhoretsk, an important junction on the Soviet railway system, and also have gained in the Don River elbow northwest of Stalingrad, the Russians announced early today.

Driving southwest of Salsk along the severed Stalingrad-Krasnodar railway, the Nazis have reached Belaya Glina, and their apparent goal is Tikhoretsk, another 50 miles away.

Seizure of Tikhoretsk would outflank the Russian army still fighting the Nazis at Kushchevka, 50 miles to the north, and enable the Germans to control large segments of Russian railways in the Western Caucasus.

PAY HIGH FOR GAIN

German reserves succeeded in punching a hole in Soviet positions in the Don River elbow some 30 miles northwest of Stalingrad.

"In the Kletskaya area and south of it," the midnight communique said, "our troops repulsed many enemy attacks and inflicted many blows on the enemy.

"The Germans threw in many reserves and only at the cost of heavy losses pressed back somewhat our troops."

PUSH OF 125 MILES

The push to Belaya Glina represents a 125-mile thrust into the Caucasus by the Nazi salient which crossed the Don near Nikolayevsk, bridged the Manych River to reach Salsk, then turned southward toward Tikhoretsk.

"In the area of Belaya Glina," the communique related, "our

Gandhi Seeks Japan Pact

Indian Leader Admits British Accusation and Tells Bargaining Aims

NEW DELHI, Aug. 4. (AP)—The British government today charged that the great majority of the All-India Congress Working Committee are appeasers of Japan and that the Nationalist leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi, favors prompt negotiations with Japan for the independent India he seeks to establish now.

The government cited documents seized in a raid on the All-India Congress party's headquarters at Allahabad, in particular the original draft of a resolution put forward by Gandhi advocating that Indians wage a campaign of civil disobedience to win immediate freedom from

One Naval Air Unit Downs 54 Jap Planes

American Attacking Squadron Loses Four Craft in Four Actions

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4. (AP)—A single squadron of Navy fighter pilots was credited officially today with having shot down 54 Japanese planes and probably shot down 18 others to help win the great air-sea battles of Coral Sea and Midway. The squadron lost only four planes, two to enemy fighters and two which ran out of gas.

In reporting the squadron's score the Navy said that it was made in four actions—one in the Coral Sea and three at Midway—and called these "the most decisive series of individual aircraft actions in the war to date."

ZERO PLANES DOWNED

Among the enemy planes reported as certainly shot down were at least 22 Japanese Zero planes, long regarded by American military and naval authorities as the enemy's best fighter. The Zero is lighter, more maneuverable and has a faster climb than the American planes brought against it, but the American planes have more armor protection and fire power.

In a sense, therefore, the single squadron's fighting record was regarded in naval circles here as one measure of the relative merits of the Japanese craft and its Grumman Wildcat opposition as well as of the combat

Jap Sub Sinks Pacific Vessel

Raider Machine-guns Survivors in Lifeboats; Eight Men Killed

SEATTLE, Aug. 4. (AP)—A Japanese submarine crew machine-gunned survivors of an American freighter which was sinking in flames after severe shelling in the North Pacific, members of the crew related today. They were interviewed with approval of the 13th Naval District staff headquarters after being evacuated recently from a

Debt Aid Urged in Tax Program

Deductions Proposed; Senate Committee Head Approves Plan as Sound

WASHINGTON, Aug. 4. (AP)—The Senate Finance Committee today received with the outpoking approval of some members proposals to allow individuals and business concerns to make

Drastic Dimout Ordered for Coast, Inland Areas

NEW DIMOUT ZONE—Shaded area on this Southland map shows far-reaching extent of new Army decree. In

Night Baseball and Ad Signs Hit in Decree

Army Ruling, Effective Aug. 20, Cuts Lighting From Canada to Mexico

Rigid control of all types of lighting along the Pacific Coast from Canada to Mexico, including all of Los Angeles and neighboring cities and as far inland as 150 miles in some areas, with a ban on night baseball, football and other nocturnal sports, theater marquees and illuminated signs will become effective Aug. 20 by order of the Army.

Lieut. Gen. J. L. DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command and the 4th Army, said the order will be effected by the Civilian Defense Board of the Ninth Regional Office of Civilian Defense as primary enforcement agency, assisted by civil law enforcement bodies of the affected areas.

PENALTIES HEAVY

Penalties for violation of the Army's decree, which is declared

Hawaiian Gardens residents dimmed their lights during World War II in anticipation of a Japanese attack.

Despite reoccuring floods, business went on ... though not necessarily as usual!

certain items had been taken off the ration list, "peas" was inadvertantly printed as "pears." According to newspaper reports, scores of people descended on the market, "smacking their lips." One lady drove from Long Beach at the prospect of buying pears without "points."

Also in 1944, a minor mystery was solved and Hawaiian Gardens gained a celebrity. Martha Godfrey wrote a song called "And Just to Think" and submitted it that summer to a radio program for amateur song writers called "A Song is Born." She was living in Long Beach at the time, and soon moved to a small farm in Hawaiian Gardens. Her song won the weekly contest, but the radio station was unable to contact the winner! And for the first time since the program began, Mrs. Godfrey didn't listen to the program the night she won. It took a while, but through newspaper stories and an alert neighbor, Mrs. Godfrey finally received her glory and a $25 War Bond prize!

1944 was also a year for floods. Coyote Creek left its banks in February and inundated the Hawaiian Gardens area. By July of that year, Hawaiian Gardens residents were doing something about it.

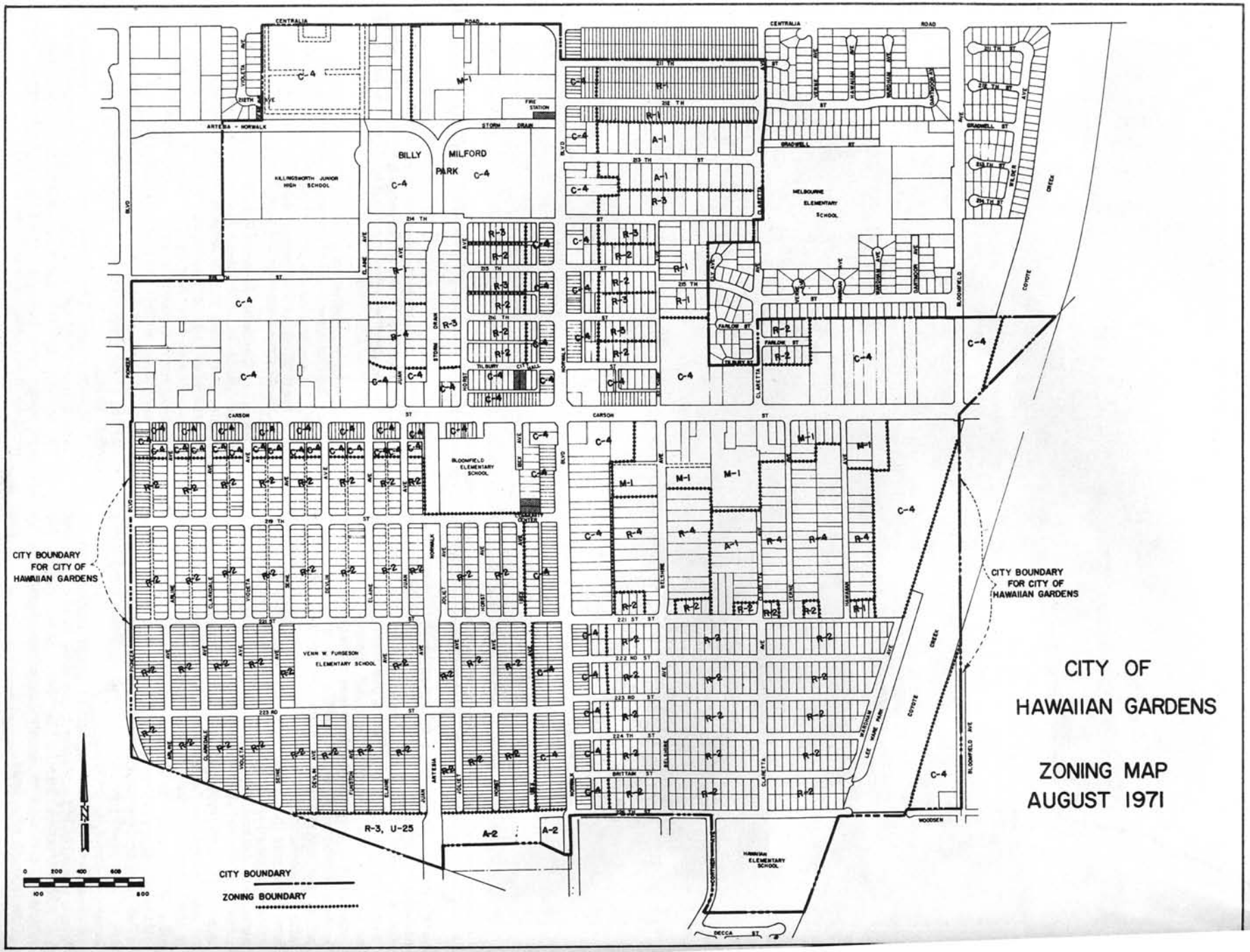
A delegation from the area met in special session with the Artesia Chamber of Commerce to plead for flood control and bus transportation. Headed by Mrs. M.H. Zeller, the delegation outlined the special problems faced by the residents south of Artesia.

"We're virtually isolated," Mrs. Zeller said, "as we're nearly two miles from nearest transportation." She explained that most men in the area were engaged in war work and needed the family car. That left the wives limited to as far as they could walk.

Mrs. Zeller also called for a special effort to control Coyote Creek. The Chamber assured her the proposal was before the County Supervisors and a project would be incorporated to solve the problem completely. It wasn't until 1964, however, that Coyote Creek was tamed completely.

Hawaiian Gardens residents went to Artesia to solve their problems because, at the time, they were considered part of Artesia. They even had an Artesia mailing address. But as the area grew, so did the residents' awareness of being a separate community. And on December 15, 1944, a contract was awarded to Scherrer's Market in Hawaiian Gardens for the community's first post office. Letters would still be delivered through Artesia, but Hawaiian Gardens was starting to be recognized as a special area separate from other towns.

That recognition of Hawaiian Gardens as a community in its own right would continue to grow as the community grew. The post-war building boom would add to the population ... and before long, Hawaiian Gardens residents would begin thinking of Hawaiian Gardens as a city!


CITY OF
HAWAIIAN GARDENS
ZONING MAP
AUGUST 1971
CITY BOUNDARY
FOR CITY OF
HAWAIIAN GARDENS
CITY BOUNDARY
FOR CITY OF
HAWAIIAN GARDENS
CITY BOUNDARY
ZONING BOUNDARY
R-3, U-25
A-2
A-2
BILLY MILFORD PARK
KILLINGSWORTH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
MELBOURNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BLOOMFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
VENN W. FURGESON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
HAWAIIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CENTRALIA ROAD
ARTESIA - NORWALK BLVD
CARSON ST
221 ST
222 ND ST
223 RD ST
224 TH ST
COYOTE CREEK
0 200 400 600
100 800

PART TWO

Sculpting a City

Hawaiian Gardens, Inc.

The battle to become a city is won ... and the work begins

A mushroom cloud at White Sands, New Mexico — and then two more in Japan — put a sudden end to World War II. But the drive and energy needed to wage war on a global scale couldn't be turned off so quickly. American men and women returned from Europe and the Pacific, donned civilian clothes, and led our war-time economy into a post-war boom!

Hawaiian Gardens kept pace with the boom as tract homes sprang up south of Carson Street. The real estate developer who built the homes named the tract "Hawaiian Gardens." People began thinking of Hawaiian Gardens as a place in its own right. Not Artesia South or Lakewood East or a fringe area of Long Beach, but Hawaiian Gardens — a separate community.

Not everyone, however, wanted Hawaiian Gardens to be a separate community. In the early 1950's, Artesia made a move to annex Hawaiian Gardens. A number of Hawaiian Gardens residents met at Bloomfield School to discuss the proposition.

"There was quite a go-around," Lee Ware recalled, "and everybody was standing up and saying should we go and become a part of Artesia or not. That was a heck of a long time ago, but even then it was decided that we would go it alone."

Hawaiian Gardens residents countered Artesia's proposition by launching a drive to incorporate as a city. "The first incorporation movement took in everything including El Dorado Park, off as far as Del Amo Boulevard and the Orange County line, and to the river or about that area," Ware said. "We had the petitions all taken care of and plenty of people signed up. Everything was all set."

At the last moment, though, everything became upset! The owners of the land where El Dorado Park is now withdrew

(This number shall be torn off by inspector and handed to the voter)

No. 33164

PERFORATED LINE

SAMPLE BALLOT

MARK CROSS (+) ON BALLOT ONLY WITH RUBBER STAMP; NEVER WITH PEN OR PENCIL.

(ABSENTEE BALLOTS MAY BE MARKED WITH PEN AND INK OR PENCIL.)

(Fold ballot to this perforated line, leaving top margin exposed)

PERFORATED LINE

GENERAL BALLOT — COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES — MARCH 31, 1964

PROPOSED INCORPORATION OF THE CITY OF HAWAIIAN GARDENS OR CITY OF EL DORADO PARK ELECTION

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS: To vote on the measure for incorporation or against incorporation, stamp a cross (+) in the voting square after the words "For Incorporation" or after the words "Against Incorporation". To vote on the name for the proposed city, stamp a cross (+) in the voting square after the name of your choice. To vote for a candidate of your selection, stamp a cross (+) in the voting square to the right of the name of the candidate. Where two or more candidates for the same office are to be elected, stamp a cross (+) after the names of all the candidates for that office for whom you desire to vote, not to exceed, however, the number of candidates who are to be elected. To vote for a person not on the ballot, write his name under the title of the office in the blank space left for that purpose. All marks, except the cross (+) are forbidden. All distinguishing marks or erasures are forbidden and make the ballot void. If you wrongly stamp, tear or deface this ballot, return it to the inspector of election and obtain another. On absent voter ballots mark a cross (+) with pen or pencil.

FOR INCORPORATION	
AGAINST INCORPORATION	

FOR NAME OF CITY — Vote for One	
IF THE PROPOSED CITY IS INCORPORATED, SHALL IT BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF HAWAIIAN GARDENS?	
IF THE PROPOSED CITY IS INCORPORATED, SHALL IT BE KNOWN AS THE CITY OF EL DORADO PARK?	

FOR CITY COUNCIL — Vote for Five	
ANN ANDERSON DAVIS Real Estate Broker	
VENN W. FURGESON Plastering Contractor	
ROBERT G. LEACH Merchant	
ROBERT (BOB) LEE Paint Hardware Merchant	
KENNETH L. McBRIDE Purchasing Agent	
LOIS E. RYDALCH Homemaker	
GLEN O. TURNER Mechanic	
LEE WARE Real Estate Broker	

Supervisor Frank Bonelli (photo above) presents incorporation election papers to Lee Ware, one of the chief promotors of the drive to make Hawaiian Gardens a city. At left is a sample of the ballot area residents marked to decide if Hawaiian Gardens should be a city, if it should retain the name Hawaiian Gardens and who should be the new city council.

Supervisor Frank G. Boneli presented certificates of election to Hawaiian Gardens' first city council in 1964. Pictured (left to right) are Venn Furgeson, Robert Leach, C. Robert Lee, Glen Turner and Lee Ware.

their signatures and signed against incorporation. The first try at making Hawaiian Gardens a city was blocked, and before a second one could be organized, Hawaiian Gardens residents had to fend off an attempt by Long Beach to loop the area with its boundaries ... supposedly to establish a dump here.

About a year later, another try at incorporation was launched — taking in a smaller area than the first try — but that was blocked by a group of residents north of Carson Street. "We never could figure out exactly why they stopped it," Ware said, "but when Lakewood tried to annex the area later, the people that stopped incorporation the second time turned right around and helped us with Lakewood."

"The city manager of Lakewood," Ware said, "came out flat and told us that if Lakewood annexed the area, it would be a minimum of 12 years before Hawaiian Gardens got a complete set of streets. We had determined in talking to the people in Long Beach that it would probably be 50 years if we waited for them to do it." That's what the drive to incorporate Hawaiian Gardens as a city was all about: home rule and a belief that things could be done more quickly.

"You'd have to give credit to the Lion's Club for what triggered the whole thing," Ware said. As Ware remembers it, the Lion's Club owned a piece of property on which they wished to build a clubhouse. The property was zoned for agriculture, and because Hawaiian Gardens was an unincorporated area, the club members had to go to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to apply for re-zoning.

"The property had three or four sheep on it to keep the weeds down," Ware said, "and after we went through all the regamaroe L.A. County demands for a re-zoning, we were told that sheep on the land was good and they wouldn't change the zone for us."

The next day, Lee Ware and Jack Leaf— on the advice of a well-known local lawyer — began recruiting signatures to help pass the petition. This time it worked. On March 31, 1964, Hawaiian Gardens residents went to the polls to decide the issue. They had to choose between incorporating as a city or remaining a county area; if incorporated, between the proposed city names of "El Dorado Park" or "Hawaiian Gardens;" and, if incorporated, from a field of eight candidates for the five city council seats.

By the first week in April the results were known. The 75th city in California was Hawaiian Gardens — by a 182-80 margin. The city name, borrowed from that palm-thatched fruit stand long ago, won out by a narrow 164-128 vote. Less than a half square mile in area, and with an estimated 3,300 population, it was the smallest city in the state. Lee Ware, Robert Leach, Venn Furgeson, C. Robert Lee and Glen Turner were the top five candidates and became Hawaiian Gardens' first city council.

The battle to incorporate was won. Hawaiian Gardens was finally a city, officially sanctioned to determine its own destiny. But with that freedom came responsibility. There was now no far-off county office that could be blamed for poor streets or inadequate sewers or a lack of public services. It was up to the people of Hawaiian Gardens to get the jobs done. And there was a lot of work to do.

To Work with a Vengence...

The new city council gets down to the business of running a city

Hawaiian Gardens' new city council wasted no time getting to work. On April 14, 1964, with the ink from the city's charter barely dry, the council held its first meeting in a small building on Norwalk Boulevard. Lee Ware was selected as mayor, with Robert Leach as mayor pro tem. The council appointed a city treasurer, clerk and attorney. They named the County Engineer as city engineer, the County Sheriff as chief of police and the County Forester as city fire chief. They permitted the sale of "safe and sane" fireworks and outlawed palmistry!

In the following months, the thousands of tiny cogs and wheels needed to run a city machine were set in motion. A business license was established for the city. The Southern California Gas Company received the city gas franchise. A local bank was chosen as a fund depository and the city entered into an agreement with the Los Angeles County Recreation and Parks Department for recreational services.

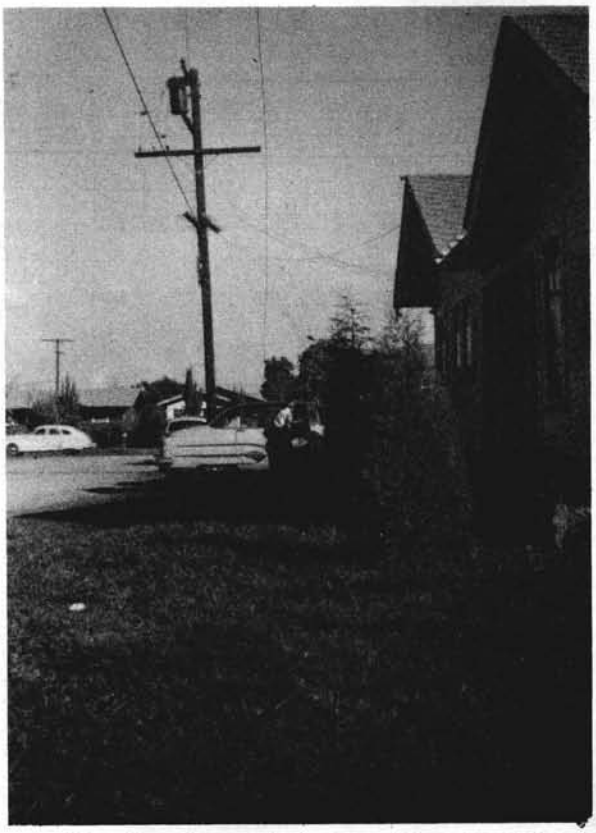
By the end of the year, the business district had 54 new street lights to provide safety and convenience to evening shoppers. With the help of the council, the Artesia, Bloomfield and Carmenita school districts joined to form the ABC School District. Those cogs and wheels, though, just keep the city machine in motion. The machine is there to solve the problems of residents. And Hawaiian Gardens residents had a few problems to be solved!

At the time of city incorporation, virtually all of Hawaiian Gardens' streets were dirt. Not only did the rain bring floods, it brought mud that made streets often unusable. Carson Street and Norwalk and Pioneer Boulevards were the only paved roads. The council got busy.

In August of 1964, the council passed a special gas tax, the revenue from which was earmarked for street improvement. Plans immediately began for the pavement of Verne Street. In September of 1964, the council promised to pave Belshire Street if the street's residents could cooperate in installing curbs and gutters. One by one, the council singled out the dirt streets and moved in. Virtually all streets south of Carson Street between Norwalk and Pioneer Boulevards were paved within the first few years after incorporation. Before the city was five years old, nearly all streets in Hawaiian Gardens were paved. That beat the timetables projected by Lakewood and Long Beach if Hawaiian Gardens joined their cities ... by decades!

Although today we may take smooth, paved roads for granted, Hawaiian Gardens residents then didn't. Lupe Cabrera vividly recalls when the streets were finally finished. "We didn't have a reason to go out in the car," he

Ibex Street before it was paved.



223rd Street and Norwalk Boulevard from Ibex Street.

An aerial view of a farm on Pioneer Boulevard. When Hawaiian Gardens incorporated, Pioneer Boulevard was one of the few streets that were paved. Bloom - field Park is now located on the site of this farm.

Solving the drainage problems on 223rd Street (top) was just one of the accomplishments of Hawaiian Gardens after becoming a city. Paving residential streets (above) was another!

said, "but we'd get out there and get in the car and try it on for size; see if it worked! Everybody was getting in their cars and driving up and down the block, trying out the street. It was really something. It was just like somebody that hasn't had a pair of shoes, and put their new shoes on to see if they fit."

The work wasn't done once the streets were paved, though. Maintaining and improving the streets was a constant project that continues even today. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks had to be installed. Major streets have to be widened to handle increased traffic flow, and old streets have to be re-paved.

One current project is the improvement of Carson Street. Center dividers are being installed on the heavily traveled street to improve safety, and it is also being landscaped to provide a more pleasing view. Traffic signals on Carson Street are in the process of being interconnected to allow for smoother traffic flow.

The problem of muddy roads following winter rains was solved! But winter rains brought more than muddy roads to Hawaiian Gardens in the early years. They brought floods.

Living in Hawaiian Gardens had always meant living with floods. According to George Wright, former owner of the Artesia News, "At best, even during the 'dry' season, the water table was so high that postholes dug one day would fill with water overnight."

The city began planning reconstruction of sewer systems in October of 1964, and in March of 1965, work began on the $142,000 Belshire Storm Drain project. County financed, the storm drain was planned to drain the southeast and south central portions of the city. And just a few days after the Belshire Storm Drain project began, the Coyote Creek storm drain stood its first test. According to the Community Advocate, the city-county financed storm drain was in "silent control" after 1.15 inches of rain fell on Hawaiian Gardens within two days. Coyote Creek was finally tamed!

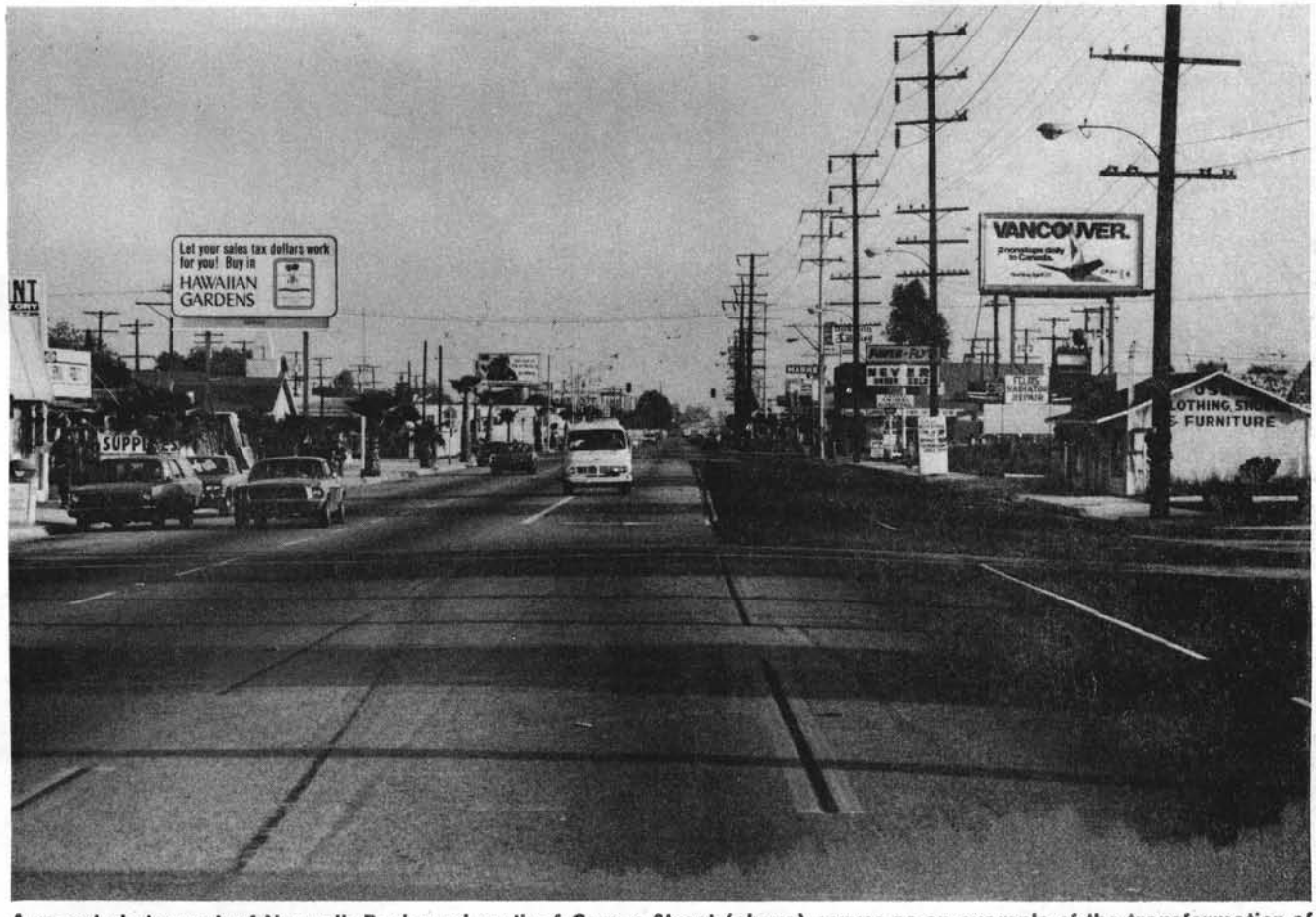
Further insurance against floods was taken out in January of 1971 when the city received approval for projects to relieve drain problems at 215th and 223rd Streets. Under a 1970 storm drain bond, Hawaiian Gardens was reimbursed for the cost of the construction.

With Hawaiian Gardens finally placed on "dry land," further commercial and residential development was unquestionable. But there were other problems to overcome. With increased construction came more waterlines ... and a need for more fire hydrants.

In the city's early years, a majority of the water systems were private. They were constructed of various sizes of pipe, with an assortment of fittings. It was almost impossible to expand or repair the lines. It was necessary for Hawaiian Gardens to establish regulations for the construction of new lines so, as the city grew, so could its water system.

Hawaiian Gardens, again due to the private water systems, always had a lack of fire hydrants. The city joined forces with the Los Angeles County Fire Protection District and the Southern California Water Company to establish an adequate number of hydrants throughout the city. And in addition, there were street lights to install, stop signs to be placed at needed corners, and even palm trees to plant in an effort towards city beautification.

There was plenty of work for the Hawaiian Gardens City Council to do. Taking an area from a collection of buildings to an organized city is a monumental task. Although the names in front of the microphones in the Council Chambers have changed through the years, the will to build Hawaiian Gardens into a proud, modern city has not.



A recent photograph of Norwalk Boulevard south of Carson Street (above) serves as an example of the transformation of Hawaiian Gardens from a dirt road waystop to a modern community.

Laboring for Leisure

It takes hard work to make off-time facilities available to citizens

In the early days of the city of Hawaiian Gardens, energy and funds were directed to building a strong, stable base for a more sophistocated community. The business district had to be improved. Streets had to be paved, sewers constructed and plans formulated for city growth. All this in an effort to make and keep Hawaiian Gardens a strong, vital city where people would want to live and work.

But people play too. Even in its adolescence, Hawaiian Gardens was well aware of that fact. In September of 1965, the city council appointed George La Croix, Ralph Cesena, Harold Graves, AxelWanson and Hazel Graham as Hawaiian Gardens' first Recreation Commission. They were charged with bringing together several non-city recreational services and developing new programs to meet the community's leisure needs.

The commission immediately launched a three-pronged attack on the problem. They began organizing a Hawaiian Gardens Junior Athletic Association, initiating a Teen Post youth program and began development of Lee Ware Park.

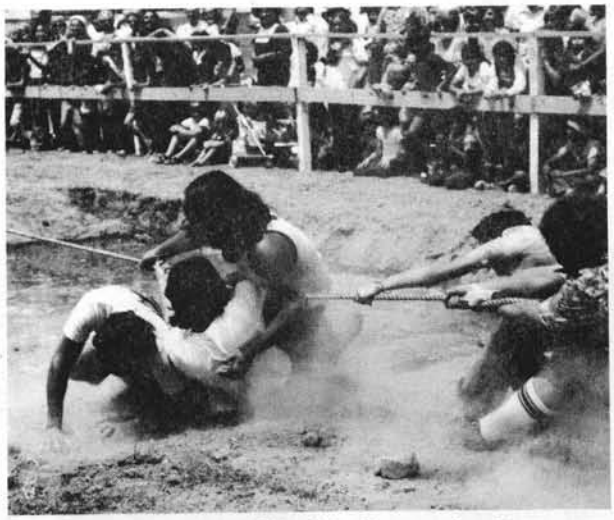
An undeveloped parcel of excess Flood Control District land located on Wardham Street became the future site of Lee Ware Park. Landscaping began in April, 1966 and was soon followed by a building donated by Robert Leach. B summer, the park was open to Hawaiian Gardens citizen and a Parent Participation Nursery School program was i operation. A gala community barbecue on October 2, 196 officially christened the park "Lee Ware Park" in honor o Hawaiian Gardens' first mayor.

The Teen Post program began in February, 1966. Locate at 12440 Carson Street, it gave Hawaiian Gardens youth place to socialize and hold dances. Under the direction of Jo Barrios, and with the assistance of Jake Horn, a youth boxing program was initiated. By September, 1966, Teen Pos boxers were competing in Golden Gloves tournaments.

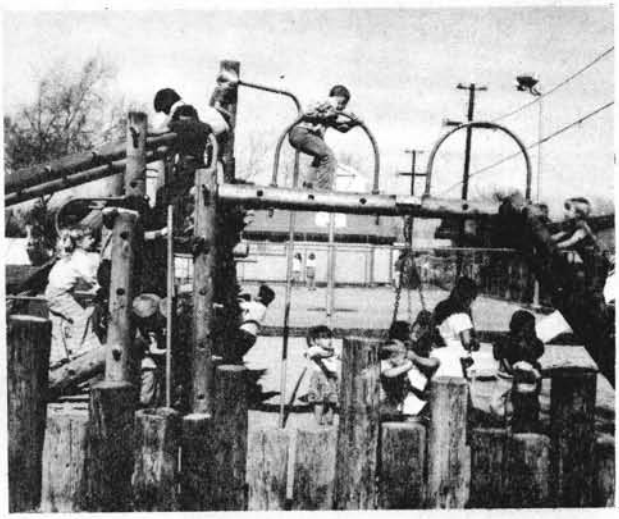
Near that same time officers for the Hawaiian Gardens Junior Athletic Association were elected and sports specialists George Kelley and Phil Houseman were hired Guided by their capable hands, flag football and winter basketball programs were launched. By November, 1966 Hawaiian Gardens earned sponsorship in the Pony-Colt an Connie Mack baseball leagues. Youth activities were on the upswing in Hawaiian Gardens!

But adults have leisure time too. Keeping that in mind, the city acquired a pre-fabricated building in March, 1967 and —

The Lions Club was responsible for establishing Bloomfield Park. At the park's ground-breaking were (from left to right) L.A. County Parks and Recreation Director Norm Johnson, Lions Club President Glen Turner, County Supervisor Frank Bonelli, Leland S. Johnson, Jack Leaf and James Alderson.



The annual Tug-off at Milford Park can get wet!



Local children take advantage of Clarkdale Park.

with the help of community volunteers — erected it on the southwest corner of Bloomfield School. It was called the Community Center, and was the focus for activities such as the ABC Adult School, the Artesia Dental Clinic, Headstart and Teen Post ... as well as being available for community group use.

At that same time, Hawaiian Gardens was developing a park on Norwalk Boulevard, known as "Catholic Church Park." By June, 1967, two baseball diamonds at the west end of the park were in place and in full use by Pony-Colt and Little League teams. The response to the game fields was so overwhelming, Hawaiian Gardens joined with the ABC Unified School District and built additional fields near Killingsworth Junior High School. "Catholic Church Park" was officially designated "Billy Milford Park" on October 22, 1967 at a five-day Luau and carnival. Profits from the festivities went to various youth organizations.

As the city of Hawaiian Gardens grew, so did its recreational programs. Teen Post programs were expanded, trees were planted in several locations and six mercury vapor lamps were installed at Lee Ware Park. The King Conference of Pop Warner Football was formed in December, 1968 for the city's youth.

By March, 1969, Hawaiian Gardens had joined with the YMCA and Lakewood to provide recreational swimming at Artesia High School. A section of Billy Milford Park was being used by the Golden West Football for Youth program and recreational services were available at Furgeson School, Artesia High School and Lee Ware Park.

Two classrooms and a play area in Lee Ware Park were dedicated to the Headstart program in January, 1970 — and Girl Scout Troop 105 planted a tree in the park in honor of William "Pop" Furgeson. Recreational opportunities were growing for Hawaiian Gardens citizens and their children, thanks in part to a growing cooperation between the city and the YMCA.

In the summer of 1970, 55 Hawaiian Gardens children were able to attend Camp Oaks under the YMCA's summer program. That same summer, Bloomfield School was added to the city's list of summer recreational sites and community volunteers installed lighting on the newly established Billy Milford Park football field.

A candy easter egg hunt was held in the spring of 1971 — Hawaiian Gardens' first community event! Another first that year was an all-city girls track and field event which sent winners to an AAU-sanctioned meet later in the year.

The Teen Post lost funding in 1972, but recreational expansion continued. Hawaiian Gardens entered into a lease agreement with the California Division of Highways to acquire the land at 223rd Street and Pioneer Boulevard. Developed under the Housing and Urban Development "Legacy of Parks" program, the land became Pioneer Park in November, 1972. Those same government funds also purchased land at the corner of 221st Street and Clarkdale Avenue, developed into Clarkdale Park and dedicated to the memory of Joyce Ann Huff on November 19, 1973.

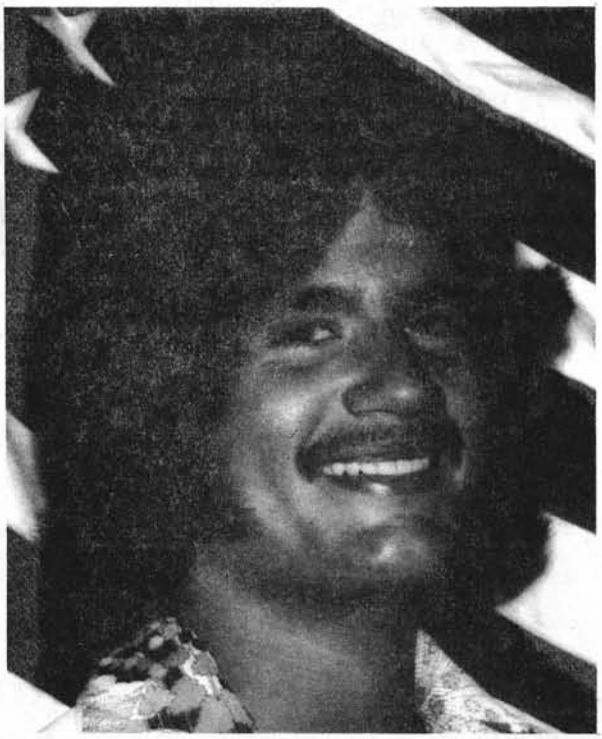
Hawaiian Gardens completed renovations on the Community Center in the summer of 1972 and offered a full range of summer activities including excursions, weight training, tumbling, basketball and complete dancing instruction. Services provided by the city were growing so rapidly, by the following summer Hawaiian Gardens printed its first recreational program brochure and mailed it to all city residents. It also became necessary to hire a full time employee to make sure all the city programs remained organized.

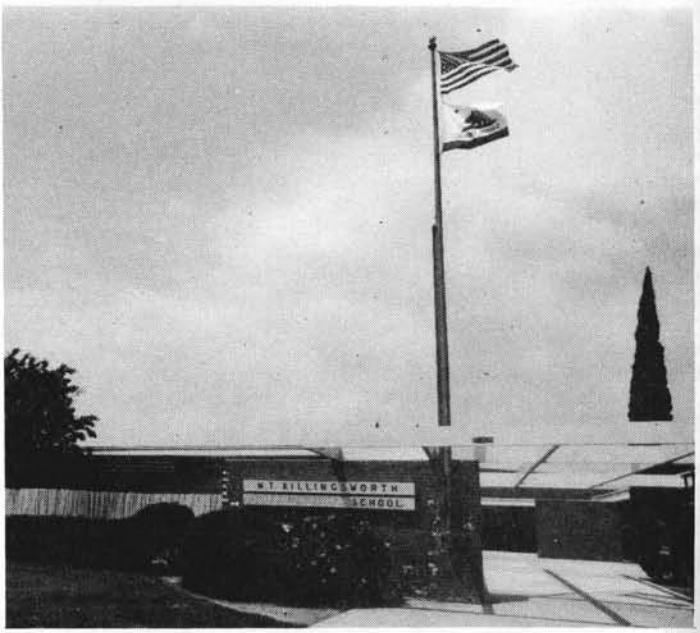
In September, 1973, Valli Shumard became Hawaiian Gardens' first full-time Recreation Director — and winter activities programs were immediately launched at Hawaiian School, Furgeson School and the Community Center. By December the city had developed a master calendar of sports programs which included track, cross country, softball, baseball and soccer — as well as the established flag football and basketball leagues! In order to assure participation in quality sports competitions the Hawaiian Gardens Recreation Department became a member of the South East Municipal Athletic Association.

The next year saw the Recreational Department making purchases of major programming equipment to improve tumbling, dance and other programs. The first Community Picnic and Tug-Off made a big hit that year. Other new activities were gymnastics instruction, summer bus transportation to the beach, a Halloween Carnival, a Teen Christmas Dance and Caroling programs. A mural project at 22017 Norwalk Boulevard was also started.

1975 was yet another year of recreational growth. A landmark for that year was when Hawaiian Gardens took advantage of the 1974 California State Park Bond Act, which supplied a lion's share of the $42,000 improvements at Clarkdale Park.

Hawaiian Gardens recreational facilities and services are continuing to grow, thanks to the citizens and organizations who consistantly contribute time and money to help the city's leisure services fit the people's needs. By 1977, Hawaiian Gardens should be operating its programs and services from a $2.5 million recreation and administration community center complex on Pioneer Boulevard. Such a complete and modern facility can only mean increased services to the citizens of Hawaiian Gardens.





The students at Bloomfield School in the early 1900's (top) had nothing compared to the modern facilities at Killingsworth School today (above, right). Pictured above, left is Hawaiian Gardens Mr. Bicentennial Gary Cesena.

A Human Art

Divine Nature gave the fields, human art built the cities—Varro

A city is more than just a place on a map; a collection of buildings and streets. What a city is and what it does comes from the people who live and work there. Hawaiian Gardens has been fortunate to have several groups of citizens that, even prior to incorporation, worked to advance Hawaiian Gardens as a community.

Long before Hawaiian Gardens was officially a city, the residents felt a community spirit. The fire station on Norwalk Boulevard and the Hawaiian Gardens Community Center were built entirely by volunteers. The Hawaiian Gardens Lions Club, chartered in 1954, worked closely with County officials in developing Bloomfield Park on Pioneer Boulevard.

In fact, the Lions Club has been an asset to the community since it began. Of the 50 businessmen that first started the club, Marvin Gunnufson, Jack Leaf, Robert Lee, Bill Sonneborn and Glen Turner are still active. Lee, Sonneborn and Turner were recently honored for 22 years of perfect attendance!

It is undeniable that the Lions Club has a place in the history of Hawaiian Gardens. Their prime objective is "sight conservation," and as a result have bought an average of 30 pairs of glasses a year for children — for 22 years. They have also provided vitamins for school children, aided the local Dental Clinic and Boy Scout Troop, and sponsored several youth sports teams.

In an effort to promote scholastic achievement, the Lions Club presents a trophy to the "Student of the Month" and the "Scholar of the Year" at Killingsworth School.

The Lions Club gets a helping hand in their projects from the Hawaiian Gardens Lionettes. Organized in 1955, the group of Lions Club wives still has three charter members on its rolls: Frances Leaf, Virginia Lee and Shirley Roberts. The main objective of the Lionettes is to support the Lions Club, but the "better halves" of the Lions Club have a few projects of their own. They accompany Santa Claus on a city tour each Christmas season, gifting children with fruit and candy. The "Lady Lions" also support needy families during the holiday season, and present a trophy to the "Outstanding Player of the Year" of the Cerritos Junior College football team.

Both the Lions Club and the Lionettes have consistantly donated their time and energy to better the Hawaiian Gardens community ... but they're not the only ones!

Another long-time promoter of community spirit is Hawaiian Gardens' Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7243.

Chartered in 1946, and one of the most active posts in the district, the 100-member organization boasts men who have fought for our country from World War I to Vietnam. They are located on Centralia Avenue, and both the post building and the land was donated to them by Billy Milford.

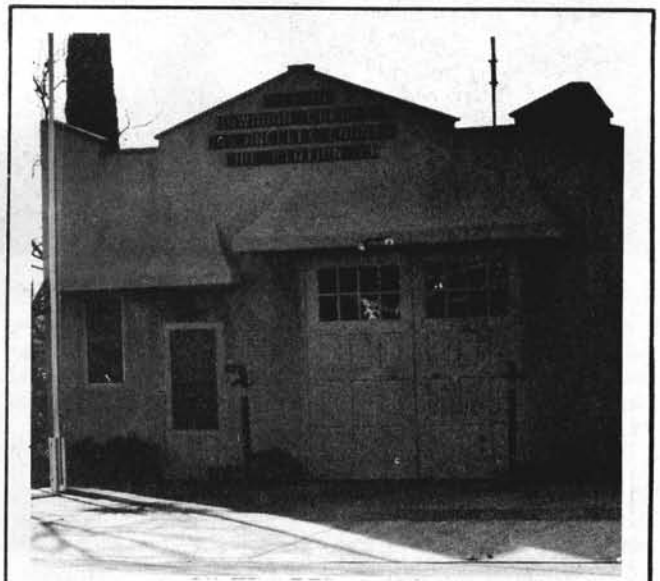
The VFW is involved in a number of local and national projects aiding veterans, from providing color guards at military funerals to distributing food and clothing to the poor.

Post 7243 also sponsors several Little League and softball teams, including several league champs! They consistantly aid the local Dental Clinic and sponsor a local Girl Scout troop.

The civic dedication displayed by the local VFW post has distinguished them ... but they have another claim to fame. Hanging on a wall in the post building is a painting of Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima. Facts about the painting are sketchy, but according to legend, the painting is on butcher paper and was done on the scene by a war correspondant. VFW member Lee Danials says the Marine Corps once tried to buy the painting, and if the local post ever folds, the painting is to be sent to Washington, D.C.

The raising of the flag is also the concern of a newer group of citizens: The Hawaiian Gardens Bicentennial Committee. Established by a City Council Resolution on March 26, 1974, their prime objective was the celebration plans for our nation's 200th birthday.

The Committee raised funds by holding dinners, operating concessions and sponsoring a dunking booth at the 1975 Hawaiian Gardens Community Tug-off! Those funds went to good use. They were used to paint house numbers on curbs to aid emergency vehicles. The Committee also donated money to the Artesia High School band, which enabled the students to travel to Sacramento to give a concert on the Capitol steps!



The local fire station was built with volunteer help.

A side-light to another Committee fund-raising project was the selection of Gary Cesena as Mr. Bicentennial. The contest, based on ticket sales, was sponsored by the Hawaiian Gardens Lionettes.

The energetic Committee was also deeply involved in the production of this history book. They held community teas, where long-time residents and interested citizens could pool their knowledge of the community. They sold business and personal ads to offset the cost of book production too! The Committee was dissolved on July 4, 1976.

That "Spirit of '76" the Bicentennial Committee displayed is a spirit Hawaiian Gardens individuals and groups have consistantly displayed throughout the area's history. They can be given credit for what Hawaiian Gardens is today ... and they will be responsible for what Hawaiian Gardens is in the future.

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Also, a special thanks to the citizens of Hawaiian Gardens who donated their time recalling past events — especially the Heritage Subcommittee of the Hawaiian Gardens Bicentennial Committee, who held several local teas expressly for that purpose.