



EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring, 2016

Your Home's History and DNA

If you are interested in documenting the history of your home, join us on April 19, at 7:00 PM at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock. Tim Gregory, aka "The Building Biographer", will tell us how to research its' style and history. Mr. Gregory says, "I have found that every building has its' own story to tell: a unique "biography" that will bring it to life in the eyes of its' owner or potential buyer." As "The Building Biographer", he has completed over 2,500 property histories of houses and commercial structures for homeowners and leading real estate firms.

Tim is also a nationally certified archivist and a registered public historian. He has worked as an archivist for such organizations as the Pasadena Museum of History, the Lanterman House, the California State University system, and the Avery Dennison Company.

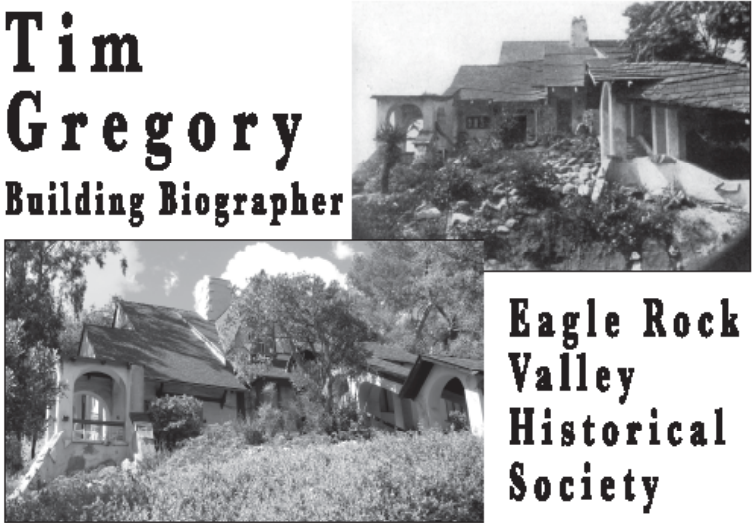
After a career in public library management in Newport Beach and Beverly Hills, Tim established "The Building Biographer" in 1992. Tim has also written historical significance studies for public agencies, private owners, environmental consulting firms, and real estate developers. He is experienced in preparing applications for local landmark and/or Mills Act status and for listings on the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources.

Tim was the founding chairman of Altadena Heritage and served on the board of directors of Pasadena Heritage as Vice-Chair for Education. He has also been active in the Pasadena Museum of History's Collections Committee and the Archives Committee of the Altadena Historical Society. In November of 2015, Tim received the Dr. Robert Winter Award from the Blinn House Foundation in recognition of his commitment and contribution to historic architectural preservation.

This public meeting of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society is, as always, free to all. Light refreshments will be served.


DOCUMENTING YOUR HOUSE

Tim Gregory
Building Biographer



Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado
Tuesday, April 19, 7:00
Free and Open to All
EAGLE ROCK HISTORY.ORG



President's Message

Members and Friends

Researching Your (our) House

When we moved into our home in Eagle Rock we found a short history of the house written by one of the previous owners. It said that a Mr. and Mrs. Wilson built the house in 1925. They moved into the home as newlyweds raised two children and passed away after living 50 years in the house. Curious to learn more, we asked neighbors who had lived here since the 1950s if they could tell us more about the Wilsons. My next door neighbor recalled an elderly gentleman who drove a Cadillac and had difficulty maneuvering the large vehicle out of the garage occasionally using parked vehicles to sense when he had driven too far. Another neighbor said that the man did not socialize much but that he may have been a banker in Pasadena.

Then a friend researching the building of Eagle Rock High School can across a newspaper article showing a drawing of our house. The article stated the house had been built by the Blackmers the developers of the Silverwood's "Happyland" subdivision "to establish a high level of construction for the hillside area" in the development. Still as a "spec-home" it was possible that the story of the Wilsons was mostly true. It was repeated for the Eagle Rock Home Tour of "Happyland" in 2006.

Looking for the Wilsons, I found our address in the 1940 U.S. census. Instead of Mr. Wilson the banker, I found a Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Hull who had two sons. It indicated that Mr. Hull and his oldest son worked for the phone company and that the younger son was a college student. Online I found a Jerome Hull Jr. who had been a distinguished alumnus of Occidental College in the 1960's then became President and C.E.O. of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph. On the "Find a Grave" web site I found that Jerome Sr. had died in the mid 1950's and his wife in the 1960's.

By trial, error and luck we learned a lot about the history of our home. Join us on April 19th to learn how you can do it more efficiently from our guest expert the "Building Biographer", Tim Gregory.

Eagle Rock Ramblers

Turn of the century Los Angeles' newspapers tell us about a group of people calling themselves the Ramblers that went on excursions, including hikes in the Verdugo Hills and visits to the Selig Zoo in Lincoln Heights. Following in that tradition, the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society last month began taking excursions, first to the Antelope Valley Indian Museum (see accompanying article) and later to the Research Center of the Autry Museum. We are currently planning future trips a guided tour of Rubel Castle in Glendora. Also for those of you who missed the Research Center tour a follow up tour is in the works. If you'd like to join that tour and/or the tour of Rubel Castle please let us know.

Frank Parrello

The objectives of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

- to preserve, clarify through research and to perpetuate the history of Eagle Rock Valley
- to make this history available to students, researchers, libraries and all interested persons
- to preserve and protect our local landmarks, especially the Eagle Rock

Membership is open to all who would further these objectives

Public Archive Hours 10 to 12 every Saturday
at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA 90041
for information call 323-257-1357

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Frank Parrello

Visit our website at:
eaglerockhistory.org

It's time to renew your membership. If you have already paid your 2016 dues, thank you. If not, please take a moment and mail your check now. If we have not heard from you, a dues form and envelope are included with this newsletter.

Thanks, we depend on you.

Visiting the Antelope Valley Indian Museum

The doorbell rang on the dot of 10 a.m., so I went downstairs to meet Karen at the front door, and join her and her husband Eric Warren for a field trip to Antelope Valley Indian Museum State Historical Park. On the way, Karen admitted she was not looking forward to the desert, as she grew up in Albuquerque, N.M. She remembers raking sand out of the lawn there, and today we find ourselves in a desert wind, too.

Eric wanted to go over the Angeles Crest route, but wasn't sure it would be re-opened from a recent mudslide, so we went by way of State Highway 14 – passing Vasquez Rocks on the way. We emerged onto the desert, got on Pear Blossom Highway east to 165th Street north, passing Lake Los Angeles at a bulge in 170th Street, then turned west, just short of Saddleback Butte State Park, on M street for a mile.

The museum stands out on this open land – a fantastic work of Tudor architecture backed by Piute Butte, showing rounded masses of granite separated by weathered fissures. We were greeted in the south-facing patio by Peggy Ronning, Curator, and Darrel Walters, who lives nearby and enthusiastically dedi-

cates his volunteer time every weekend as the museum is open. Together with other members of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society, we are given a special tour and explanation of the museum and its collections.

It started with H. Arden Edwards claim through the Homestead Act in 1928: he built the house then, and took a stab at farming to prove his intent under the claim, attached behind the main house added the California Room museum – which opened in 1932. His wife and son lived there full time to maintain the claim, while he commuted there for weekends, working as a theater arts teacher at Lincoln High School and maintaining their home “Happy Camp” in Eagle Rock.

Edwards was a multi-talented artist and craftsman, and an amateur anthropologist. He found collecting Indian artifacts more satisfying than coin and other collections he had when younger. He built everything himself, and decorated the house and museum with architectural details and paintings. His collections were made at a time when it was legal, before the Antiquities Act was passed. Edwards sold the property to Grace Oliver in 1938, then worked for her adding to the facility. She re-opened the museum in 1941. The property was acquired by the state in 1979 in recognition of the importance of the regional focus of the museum, and the historical significance of Edwards' interest. The styles of curation and maintenance have changed over the years: the collections were originally only that, but were later re-displayed in recognition of the cultures that moved through space and time here.

The buildings, too, have been valued differently by succeeding generations – first the builder, Edwards, then his client Grace Oliver, who had modifications made by Edwards. Maintenance by the state has had its lows, when decorations were painted over – later hopes for restoration depend on funding to uncover the lost art.

The museum has never been a money-maker. In Edwards' time he brought together the various talents to present theatric events that probably cost more than they brought in in this sparse, distant location. The museum now charges \$3 entry when it opens on weekends. We have to credit the tenacity of those who campaigned for the state acquisition as an



The Edwards' son Arden at their home studio in Eagle Rock, “Happy Camp”

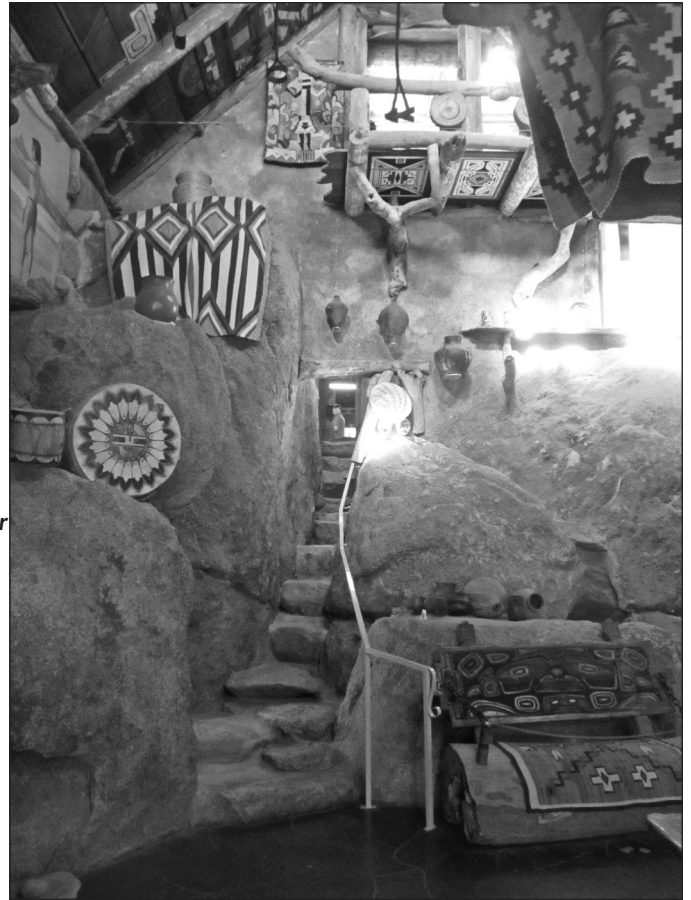
Our Town, Our History



Photograph by David Dellinger

historical park, and continue to care for and advocate for its maintenance and progressive restoration.

Antelopes roamed here
still they do
Indian trade routes
from the east,
up and down the coast
the wind blows
High desert beauty
Come visit...



Photograph by Don Krotser

Don Krotser

3 ii 2016



Photograph by David Dellinger

Eagle Rock's Freeway Revolt (Part 4)

Opening Day Freeway Protest

The 134 Freeway would not be completed until 1971. While welcomed by some, during its opening ceremony Eagle Rock's Councilmember, Art Snyder, was critical of the freeway. Declining his seat on the platform of dignitaries, he called the construction of the freeway "an ecological disaster."

"Eagle Rock would be just as well off without this freeway. The tragedy is that it was placed through the most beautiful portion of the community."

The freeway's opening ceremony was also disrupted by "Friends of the Earth," a student organization from Occidental College. The protestors carried signs reading "Freeways are Not the Answer," "Millions for Freeways, Pennies for Clean Air," and "LA Needs Mass Transit Now".

Reflecting on the Freeway Today

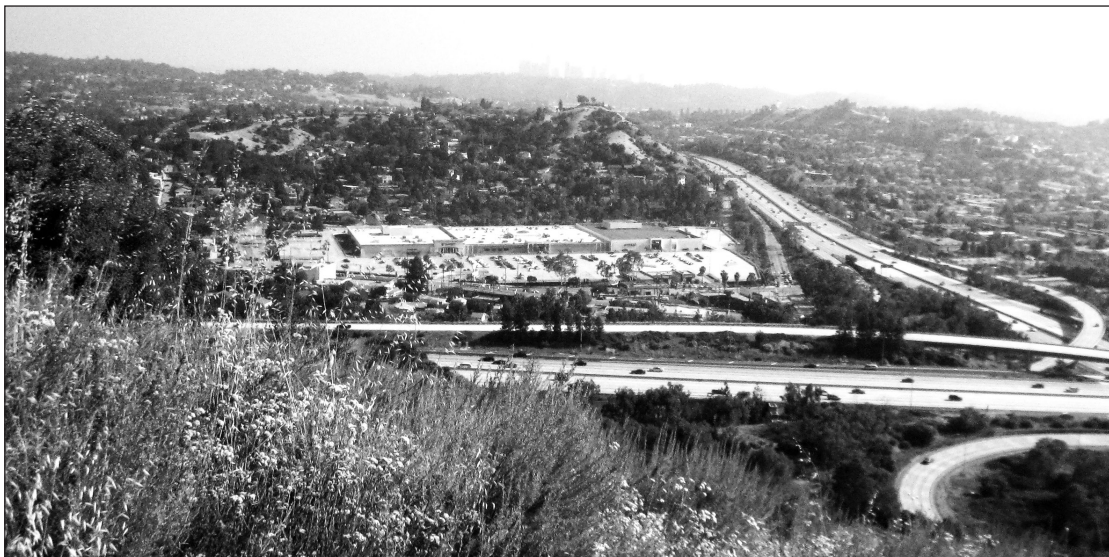
Unlike the 710 Freeway, which is still debated to this date, the 134 Freeway was built. Although some remember the neighborhood before it, today it is difficult to imagine what life would be like without the freeway. The most unfortunate by-product of the freeway's construction is that recreational hillside access was almost completely eliminated. Before the freeway, residents could hike into the hills and the

neighborhood was more connected with the Glenoaks Canyon neighborhood in Glendale. However, the freeway did present benefits as well. With the freeway completed, trash trucks from Glendale no longer used Colorado Boulevard to reach the Scholl Canyon Landfill (another contentious neighborhood issue). Perhaps without the freeway going through Eagle Rock, Colorado Boulevard would be like Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood and Beverly Hills, where a freeway was planned but never built. The two cities seem to be doing well but there is no denying they feel the squeeze on their streets during rush hour. In this sense, the freeway has allowed Eagle Rock's main street to be somewhat preserved for local traffic and created opportunities to have a more pedestrian-oriented boulevard.

For better or for worse, the freeway was a major force in changing the small-town character of Eagle Rock and shaping the neighborhood we know today. Additionally, regardless of one's opinion on the freeway, this chapter in Eagle Rock's history demonstrates that engaged advocacy from residents can impact decision-making.

The complete article by Severin Martinez can be viewed below.

<https://walkeaglerock.wordpress.com/2015/03/23/eagle-rocks-freeway-revolt/>



The 134 FWY, 2FWY, and Eagle Rock Plaza with double-decker parking lot surrounding it— a monument to the automobile-centric freeway era of Eagle Rock.



at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA, 90041

DOCUMENTING YOUR HOUSE
Tim Gregory-Building Biographer
Tuesday, April 19, 2016, 7:00

THE CHINA SOCIETY
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016
7:00 PM, AGORA, 2016, 1:00

SAVE THE DATE
AN UNTOLD HISTORY
TUESDAY, OCT. 18, 2016, 7:00

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

Membership Category:

Individual \$20 Business \$35 **New**

Family \$25 Life \$300 **Renewal**

Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS ?

Yes No

Archives Newsletter Oral history

Meetings Fundraising E-mail me

Publicity Displays to help

Other _____

Clip and mail to : **ERVHS**
c/o Center for the Arts
2225 Colorado Blvd.
Eagle Rock, CA 90041

Date _____

The Member's Corner



In Memoriam: Elmer John Lorenz
2/20/1914 - 1/17/2016

Earlier this year Eagle Rock lost a local icon. Elmer J. Lorenz was born on Eddy Street, now known as El Rio, 102 years ago. He was the eldest son of John Lorenz and Annetta De Young-Lorenz. Elmer graduated from ERHS in the Winter Class of 1932.

He served his country as a medic in WWII stationed in London where he witnessed DDay. He married Joyce W. Shaw in Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1946 and moved to Eagle Rock. They built their home on Monte Bonito Drive, moved in in 1950, and never left.

Although Elmer worked for the United States Post Office and later United States Civil Service, his true passion in life was plants. He had vast knowledge, with over 6000 different types thriving in his garden. Elmer was the last surviving founder and past President of the International Bromeliad Society, the past President of the Southern California Horticultural Society, and volunteered at The Huntington for over 35 years.

He was a man of great wisdom and quick wit, but didn't desire attention. He lived through the Great Depression and 9/11, seeing Model Ts and PCs, but didn't consider himself impressive. He was a humble, kind and caring man. And he will be missed.

Elmer J. Lorenz is survived by his son, David L. Lorenz, his daughter Carol M. Martin, and his grandson, Sean P. Martin. His wife Joyce passed away in 2006.

—Katy Taylor