



EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall, 2023

Nightlife in Eagle Rock

A few months ago, Jim Hughes brought to us the fruits of research he had done into various nightclubs and bars in Eagle Rock. This piqued our interest and motivated us to look at our collection to find out what we knew about the subject. We found much to share with Jim, but we were reminded that there was much that we didn't know.

We decided to invite the public to share their memories and souvenirs at our next Meeting.

JOIN US VIA ZOOM
Tuesday, October 17th @ 7pm

The war years changed the attitude of Eagle Rockers and our neighbors toward entertainment. Alcohol and popular music became more accepted by the general populace in a hitherto conservative and prohibitionist community. Locations on the edges of town were available for new larger clubs which were easily accessible from surrounding areas. A larger population of young people with wider experience of the world came home after the hard times of the Depression and the war and wanted to celebrate postwar prosperity freely and with fewer inhibitions. Music with African American roots; jazz, swing, rhythm and blues and rock and roll came to dominate popular music.

Club owners and

developers scrambled to open and stay engaged with trends in nightlife. The various incarnations of the club initially named The Double H Club exemplify this struggle to survive and prosper. The size of the club motivated the owners to continually rebrand the club to attract a profitable audience.

Bars which principally catered to a drinking trade continued to exist in an environment where hard liquor licenses were difficult to obtain and community leaders generally disapproved.

At the same time the owners of longtime community institutions such as the Martha Washington restaurant found that serving alcohol with meals was necessary to survive.


This struggle continues as tastes continue to change and established businesses such as Colombo's seek to attract patrons after the contractions caused by COVID restrictions.

We hope that you will join us and share with us your experiences, and broaden our knowledge of these places of entertainment and social life.

Excited to see you on the 17th!

Look for our eblast with the Zoom meeting information! Not receiving our emails? Write webmaster@eaglerockhistory.org

**NIGHTLIFE IN
EAGLE ROCK
SHARE YOUR MEMORIES**



**TUESDAY
OCTOBER 17
7:00
EAGLE ROCK
VALLEY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG

Hello Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society member!

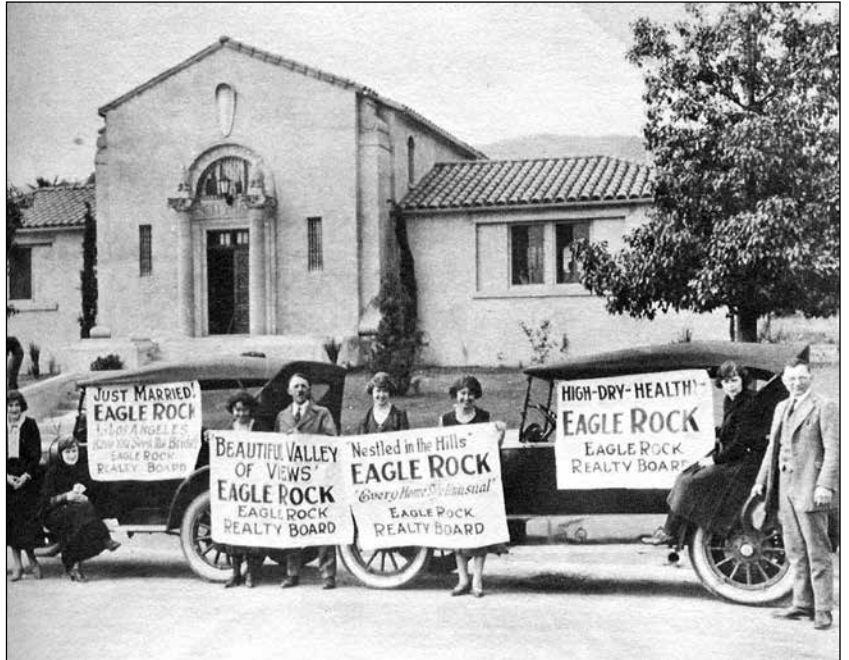
We truly appreciate your continued support. The year 2023 has special significance for Eagle Rock, as it is exactly 100 years since we voted to become part of the City of Los Angeles – see last issue's President's Message for more information about that. As it turns out, not only was 1923 a big year for Eagle Rock, according to an article in the New York Times (California Today, Aug 7, 2023), 1923 was also a special year for all of Los Angeles. San Francisco had been the most populous city in California until the 1920 census, when LA took over. Many large-scale civic projects were started in the early 1920s, and many of them were completed in 1923. Larger-than-life places like the Rose Bowl, the LA Memorial Coliseum (built by Eagle Rock contractor, Godfrey Edwards and dedicated to the memory of the fallen of World War I). Grauman's Egyptian Theater and the Hollywood(land) sign were from 1923. The latter was a part of a large thrust to promote Los Angeles as an attractive place for people to relocate.

Eagle Rock transitioned from a small-farm area to mostly residential, and grew considerably during the 1920s. Many of the houses and buildings on the flatter parts of Eagle Rock, and on some of the hills, were built in the 1920s. The Eagle Rock City Hall, which still stands and is a city-owned field office, was built in 1922 to consolidate the administration of a feverishly growing city.

-David Dellinger

QR CODE

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Real estate interests here express their enthusiasm for consolidation in their celebration of the "wedding" between Eagle Rock and Los Angeles in front of the newly constructed Eagle Rock City Hall. Consolidation removed serious obstacles to future real estate sales. Los Angeles would provide city water and sewers and would cope with the ever increasing demand for education by improving and expanding the elementary schools and building a community high school, with city wide financing. (Unknown-ERVHS)

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

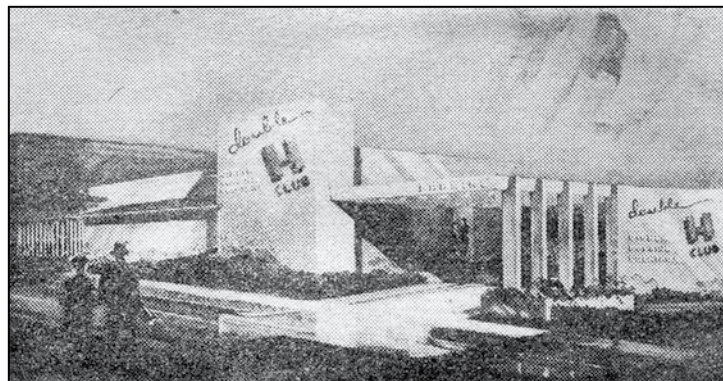
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Layout, David Mc Nutt
Contributors, Katie Taylor, David Dellinger

Visit our website at:
eaglerockhistory.org

The Club Formerly Known As...

The Double H Club was built by Harry Highsmith in partnership with David Snell. Designed by Wayne D. Mc Allister, it was an innovative open plan modernist building accommodating 400 patrons with a large dance floor, bar and dining area. The parking lot would accommodate 100 cars. Designed to accommodate the anticipated continuation of the big band era dining and dancing scene, it struggled to remain successful amidst the changing trends in entertainment in the postwar era. This list, compiled by Jim Hughes, documents the many changes in ownership and emphasis which the club went through before it was torn down in 1988 to allow construction of the CVS (formerly Rite Aid and Sav-On) store now on that corner.

- Double H (July 1946)
- Marabu Club (December 1955)
- Duffy's (Later 1956)
- The Roadhouse (Early 1960)
- Duffy's (Back Again in '63)
- The Aladdin Club (June 1963)
- The Roadhouse (Back Again, Later 1964)
- The Booby Patch (December 1964)
- The Bunny Patch (January 1965)
- Hi-De-Ho (January 1967)
- The Great Gatsby (1970)
- The Kabuki Restaurant (Early 1970s)
- The Over 30 Crowd (1977)
- The Riviera Club (Early 1980s – Razing)



The architect's rendering of the club published in April of 1946 (unknown-ERVHS)



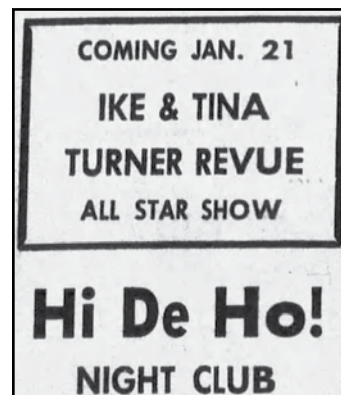
Eagle Rock business man, Jimmy Duffy and his wife Eleanor took over management of the then Marabu late in 1955, the first of two efforts of the couple to make the club a success. (Eagle Rock Sentinel-ERVHS)



John Miller took this photo of the club and the adjoining building shortly before they were torn down in April of 1987. (ERVHS)



Easily the most controversial effort to succeed was this topless bar incarnation which, although technically legal, was understandably very unpopular in Eagle Rock. (Highland Park News Herald and Journal-Newspapers.com)



For music fans, this appearance by Ike and Tina Turner in January of 1968 would have been a highlight.

Midtown Libations

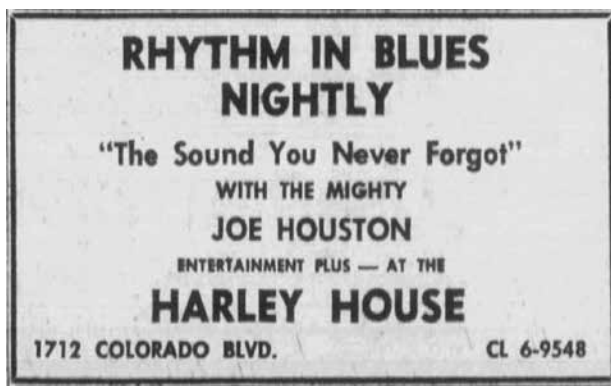
McGuire's Inn (not shown) and the Blue Fox beckoned at the east end of downtown. McGuire's began as an Irish bar and at the end of its life became a biker hangout. The Blue Fox was succeeded by several unsuccessful business ventures. It has sat vacant for many years as parking rules prevented reuse as a restaurant. (Blue Fox matchbook-Stargel collection)



Probably the oldest bar still serving in Eagle Rock, the Topper Café probably existed before World War II. This matchbook displays its wartime patriotism. It was succeeded by Topper's Tavern, The Chalet, The Black Boar, Old Chalet and now the Fable. (Topper matchbook-ERVHS)



This memorial, photographed at Colombo's Italian Steak House and Jazz Club celebrated the success of Linda Louise Schroeder who built the Lord Boss restaurant (called here Sir Boss) despite determined opposition from the historically prohibitionist Women's Twentieth Century Club, located across Hermosa Avenue. This struggle clearly illustrates the change in nightlife tastes happening in post war America. Lord Boss was succeeded by Jack Steele's Porterhouse and today's Columbo's, which moved here from their former downtown location. Until recently the restrooms were signed "Lords" and "Ladies" (Columbo's)



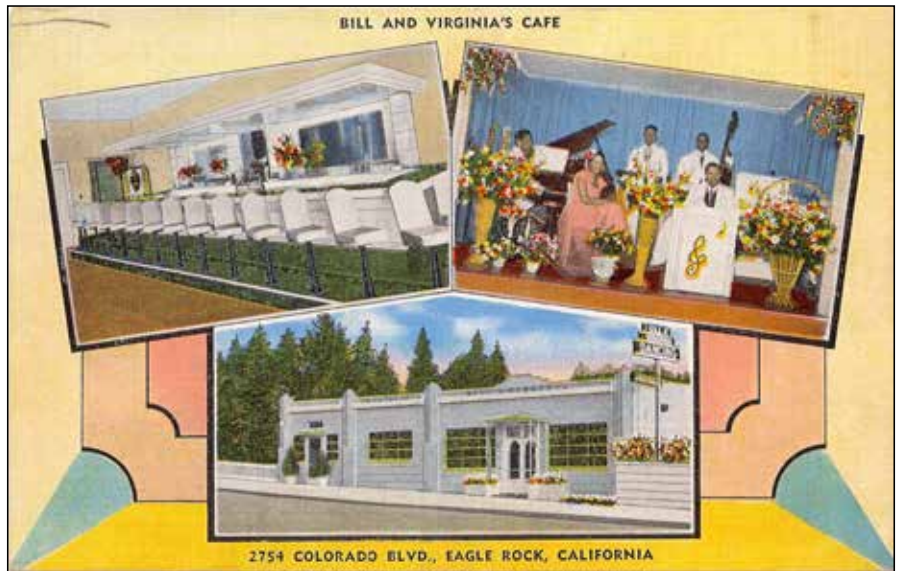
Harley House here presents "Mighty" Joe Houston, an innovative saxophone player who revolutionized sax styles and stage performance (playing on his back, on his knees, and while walking the bar). It was succeeded by Violet's, a Russian restaurant with music and, for the last few years, the Café Beaujolais. (Highland Park News Herald and Journal-newspapers.com)

At the West End—A Family Business

This postcard from December of 1939 shows an ambitious new club. This is the first known instance of Black entertainers working in a then rigidly segregated neighborhood. (Stargel collection)



This Christmas Card probably from 1945 features Bill and Virginia. (Stargel collection)



The card from 1946 shows the family, notably without Bill. (Stargel collection)



One of the successors in that location was Jonie's. The building was probably torn down in 1969 to clear the site for the Eagle Rock Plaza. (Stargel collection)



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

**NIGHTLIFE IN EAGLE ROCK
TELL US YOUR MEMORIES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 7:00**

**Live and in Person (Hopefully)
To Be Announced
Tuesday, February 20, 2024 7:00**

**Live and in Person (Hopefully)
To Be Announced
Tuesday, April 16, 2024 7:00**

Name(s) _____		
Address _____		
Phone # _____		
E-mail _____		
Membership Category:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Business \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> New
<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Life \$300	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS ?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
<input type="checkbox"/> Archives	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral history
<input type="checkbox"/> Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> E-mail me
<input type="checkbox"/> Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Displays	<input type="checkbox"/> to help
Other _____		
Clip and mail to : ERVHS		
c/o Center for the Arts		
2225 Colorado Blvd.		
Eagle Rock, CA 90041		
		Date _____

Member's Corner



Mary Melton

If our community had a single sports team, Mary Melton would be our mascot, dressed as an oversized animal performing flips and making the crowd go wild. I say this because Mary is possibly Eagle Rock's biggest fan. Mary has had an award-winning career in writing, editing, consulting, and podcasting about Los Angeles over the last 25 years (please visit www.marymeltonla.com). With all of that knowledge, she continues to choose Eagle Rock as her hometown. Why? "Geographic positioning," she told me. From here, she can enjoy the best L.A. has to offer. Of course, this isn't the only reason. Eagle Rock is a "lovely place to raise kids", is diverse, has "the feel of an independent city" with "a small liberal arts college at its core." Mary is officially in love!

Born in Panorama City and raised in the Valley, Mary maintains she was also raised in Hollywood as her father was the beloved drama teacher at Hollywood HS. She studied history at UCLA but chose journalism as a career. When she and her husband were looking in Los Feliz to buy their first home, a friend faxed them a listing in Eagle Rock. That was 25 years ago. The small oak trees in their backyard, now huge, block their original view but Mary finds this cool in its own right. We are SO thrilled to introduce Mary to our readership and to call her an ERVHS Member.

-Katie Taylor