

A Message From Your President Tom Richins

Dear Members,

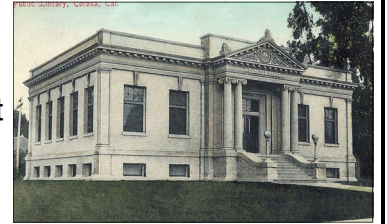
It was the great poet Maya Angelou who once said, “The more you know of your history, the more liberated you are.” I was pondering this quote as I was thinking about how many devoted members to the historical society there are. Oftentimes at historical society events I have had the honor to meet third, fourth, and a rare fifth generation Coronan. Every time I do meet an individual of such background, they are always proud to talk about their family from the first generation to their generation. Often times as I research Corona’s history, I find that it is these same family members who tend to be the best source of information as to Corona’s history, because of their ancestors’ accomplishments.

One other observance I have made in my short tenure as President of the Historic Society is that many in our membership are of an older age group. At first this bothered me, I always thought it would be more beneficial to see the younger generations be more receptive to our history; after all, they are next in line to write it. However, it wasn’t long before the answer became obvious. It is the older generation that holds the keys to the wisdom amongst our population. It is those of an older age that have learned that in order to go forward, we have to know from where we have been. For those of you who are part of this older generation, you have truly earned my respect. Thanks for staying true and supporting the Corona Historic Preservation Society.

I like to think that I will always be a member of the Historic Society. However, sadly my time as President of the Historic Society has come to an end. With a third child on the way and the founding of a new business, I just don’t have the time that is required to keep such a great organization going. Yet I am comforted that in our community there is a strong spirit of preserving Corona’s history. It is encouraging to know that as I step down, another will step up. It is even more encouraging to see that the path for the Corona Historic Preservation Society is bright.

To be personal for a moment, 14 years ago when I was dating my soon-to-be wife, we journeyed to St.

George, Utah to meet her grandfather. She told me before I met him that he knew everything about St. George. He knew where all the historic sites were. He knew where the most beautiful spots were, and basically the man was a wealth of knowledge about St. George. It would be my hope that we can all have that same love and knowledge about our hometown of Corona. For me it is special to drive



down Main Street and know where the Carnegie Library once stood. Or to drive by the Theatre on 6th Street and know that during its grand opening some of the biggest movie stars assembled from

miles around. It is special to know that Corona was home to the first tin mine in the United States which even prompted a visit from the President of the United States. When I find myself on Grand Blvd it is hard not to believe that road racing legend Barney Oldfield was competing on the same street 100 years ago.



In closing, thank you for allowing me to be a part of this beautiful Society. I am thankful for what I have learned and whom I have met. I hope your Christmas was merry and your New Years is better than the last.

Thank you one and all,

Sincerely,
TOM RICHINS



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*Editor’s note:* Tom will continue to serve as an Advisor to Corona Historic Preservation Society. The above photos are courtesy of the Corona Public Library.

# Recap of Our 2015 Holiday Party By Fred Parr

Our Quarterly Membership Meeting and Holiday Party was held on Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the historic Woman's Improvement Club of Corona. The Club has been of service to the citizens of Corona since 1899 and we are so appreciative that we were once again blessed to use their Clubhouse which was built in 1913 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

CHPS Vice President Tom Muñoz presented a beautiful wooden plaque to outgoing President Tom Richins in appreciation for his great contribution to the Society by serving as our president during 2014 and 2015.

Per our CHPS bylaws, the annual election of members of the CHPS Board of Directors and Advisors was held. Four Directors were elected to serve two-year terms and three Advisors were elected to serve terms of one year.

The meal was delicious, as usual, and thanks to all who made their favorite holiday dishes to share.

As has become a wonderful tradition for this event, the Corona High School Madrigal Choir, led by Director Amy Eden, entertained the crowd with traditional and non-traditional holiday songs which showcased their talent and took us into the Christmas spirit. Donations were gleaned to help fund the choir's upcoming trip to Seattle. A special thank you to Chairwoman Doris Osko for her remarkable enthusiasm and effort.



## Board of Directors Update

These Directors will be serving two-year terms: Trisha Henson-Cabrera, Doris Osko, Wes Speake and Richard Winn. As Advisors the following were elected for a one-year term: Marla Benson, Tom Richins and Ted Taylor.

We express our appreciation to Janette Neumann for her contributions and service as a member of the Board of Directors, as Vice President as well as an Advisor.

We thank Tom Richins for his recent contributions to the Society as a Board member, Home Preservation Grant Program Chairman and President over the last two years. We especially acknowledge his research skills and the many interesting articles he has shared in this CHPS newsletter. Tom says he will continue to submit articles of this nature for inclusion in this Newsletter.

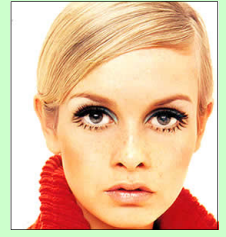
**Introduction of Wes Speake:** I've lived in Corona for 35 years. I'm divorced, I have four adult children and a grandson. I moved to Corona with my family in the summer of 1980 and attended Raney Junior High (I was lucky enough to have Doris Osko as a teacher), and graduated from Corona Senior High in 1986, earned an AA and an AS from Riverside Community College and a BS in Business from the University of Redlands. Later, I received a certificate in Land Use Planning from the University of California at Riverside. I manage several offices in Southern California for a large international consulting firm that specializes in environmental studies including surveys for endangered species, water studies and environmental impact reports.



I am so proud to be on the Board of Directors of CHPS. I have always loved Corona, especially its history. I've loved it from the first time I learned of the Road Races along Grand Boulevard. The beautiful homes on Grand Boulevard and Main Street have always fascinated me as did the acres and acres of citrus groves I used to play in as a kid. I look forward to serving on the Board and helping with the preservation of Corona, the city that I love.



# First Quarterly Meeting: "Growing Up in Corona - 1960s"



CHPS will host a panel discussion made up of men and women who graduated from Corona High School between 1960 and 1969. They will share stories and describe what it was like to be growing up in Corona during the 1960s era.

**WHEN:** Saturday, February 20 at 10:00 A.M.

**WHERE:** Community Room of the Historic Civic Center  
815 West Sixth Street

This meeting is free of charge and is open to the public.



## Moving a 1,000 Pound Monument Requires Teamwork!

For those who have wondered what happened to the Society's Historic Site Marker #15, planned for early 2012 and finally placed in August 2013 honoring Corona's Andrew Carnegie Public Library, located on the southeast corner of Main and Eighth streets, the following information is provided.



When the City's Department of Public Works advised CHPS that the Carnegie Library commemorative monument placed in the empty tree well in the public right-of-way sidewalk, posed a potential safety hazard in conjunction with the construction of a new drainage catch basin along Main Street, the marker plaque was removed and stored in the Society office. The contractor carefully lifted the concrete pillar out of the ground with a backhoe and stored it adjacent to the Carnegie Medical Plaza construction fence. A pick-up of the monument for storage could not be done while the construction of the curbing and sidewalk was in progress and couldn't be attempted from Main Street without creating traffic problems after the construction was complete.

After a couple of false starts, Fred Parr, Tom Richins and Richard Winn were able to use a borrowed pallet jack to move the HEAVY monument around onto Eighth Street where it could be picked up, for future use. CHPS has an agreement with building developer, Dr. Bruce Houman that the granite marker plaque will ultimately be placed in the front landscaped area of the finished Carnegie Medical Plaza, on the wall of the finished structure or in the lobby. Details of the final placement will be worked out with the developer, his architect and the Corona Historic Preservation Society.

The images to the right show various stages of the relocation of the monument. Fred Parr, Tom Richins and Richard Winn are pictured.



## Off the Beaten Historic Track By Doris Osko

Generally when a Coronan hears the term “historic homes,” he or she first envisions Grand Boulevard and its environs as the place where one would find original historic residences.

However, one of these homes off the beaten track actually belonged to none other than the “Father of South Riverside,”

R.B. Taylor. It is not easy to find, and the location itself has been the victim of a number of street name changes that at best are confusing. The present address would be a Cherokee Road address, but the area was once designated with both a State Street and a Compton Avenue name.

In 1893, Robert Taylor bought the land and christened it “El Cerrito” which in Spanish means “The Little Hill.” Diann Marsh, historian, writes, “Before the freeway was built, the hill named ‘El Cerrito’ could be seen from all directions. It was a landmark for travelers coming along the Old Temescal Road and starting to cross the bare alluvial plain along what is now Ontario Avenue.” Taylor planted 14,000 lemon trees, and the orchards could be seen up through the 1980s. His impressive Federal



style, two-story home still exists on the hill. Tall palm trees indicate a path of the road that Corona citizens used as they travelled up the hill to see the beautiful gardens that surrounded the home. It is a Corona home - not part of the area which came to be called El Cerrito Village in 1945. The present owners, the

Gaudeas, have been careful to retain most of the original features of the home and would like some day for it to be featured on the CHPS Vintage Home Tour.

Taylor sold the home to J.H. Flagler in 1896 for \$76,078. The Flagler name would come to be associated with the Grand Boulevard races; he was a wealthy oil and steel magnate and built a packing house for lemons, oranges, and grapefruit which he eventually sold to Sunkist. An interesting footnote relates to Flagler’s daughter, Anna, who married a man named Baron Hickey, who suggested the name “Corona” to replace the name “South Riverside” in 1896. Shortly thereafter, Baron Hickey committed suicide while staying in a hotel in El Paso, Texas. All in all, the home on the hill is a real part of Corona’s history.

## Home Preservation Grant Program Update, etc.



Photo courtesy of Barbara Becker

The Corona Historic Preservation Society was delighted to recently provide a grant to the owner of this fabulous Craftsman style residence, built over 100 years ago in 1911, at 1156 East Grand Boulevard. This Corona Landmark home was painted in the same reddish shade for which it has been known for decades. We compliment home owner John Nanfro for his exquisite taste and desire to maintain his home to high standards. In the future, John is planning to improve the landscaping surrounding his home as well as do repair work to the fencing damaged by a falling tree during recent Santa Ana high wind episode.

We at CHPS note with pleasure that homeowner David Macias recently submitted paperwork for the Mills Act for his historic home, named a Corona Landmark, located at 1036 East Grand Boulevard. The City Council subsequently approved the submittal for this home, which was built by W.H. Jameson, a pioneer in the citrus growing industry. Succeeding generations of the Jameson family resided here for many years.





# Grand Boulevard On and Off Ramps Closed Forever By Wes Speake

Many of you saw the flashing signs all over Corona starting at the end of November and into December that announced that the Grand Boulevard ramps would be closed FOR-EVER. The formal announcement below sealed the end of an era.



Everyone knows of the rich history of our grand Grand Boulevard. Just as the railroad brought the throngs of people to the road races in Corona and served as the connection to export lemons to the rest of the world in the past; State Route 91 or "The 91" brings 280,000+ vehicles per day through Corona on their ways east and west. The 91, as we know it, opened in 1961. Originally the route was known as US-91 and State Highway 18 but it became SR-91 in July 1964. The freeway had four ramps with access to our Grand Boulevard with on and off ramps at East Grand and West Grand Boulevard.

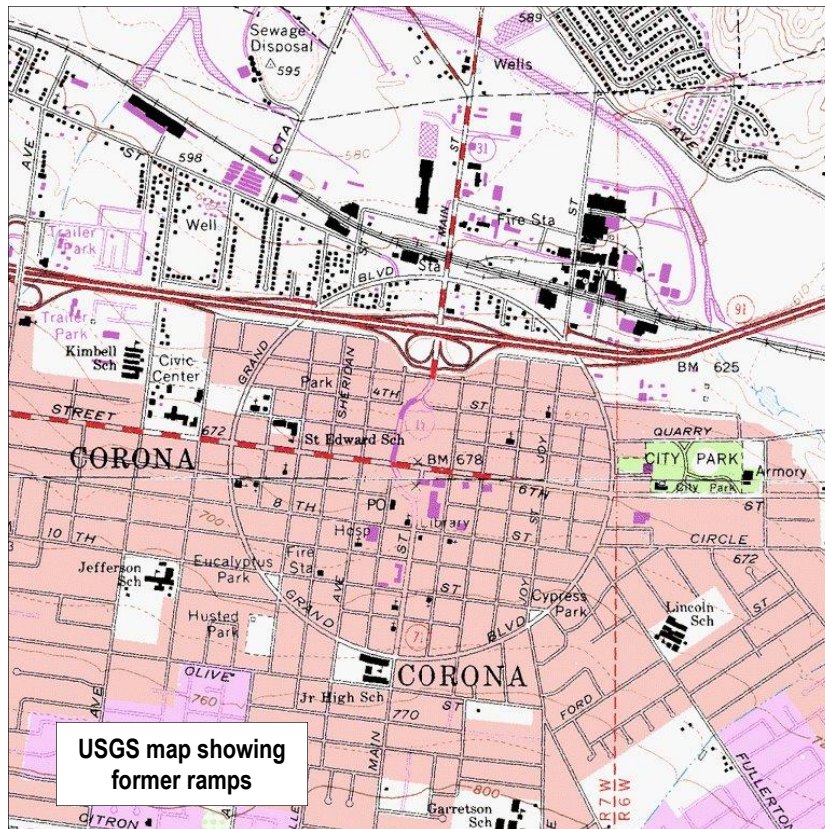
- Westbound 91 exited onto Joy Street to maximize the connection to the Sunkist (former Exchange Lemon Products) processing plant located on Joy Street and connected to Grand to the left. This off-ramp was closed in

the 1980s with realignments to the 91 and the westbound transition from I-15.

- Eastbound onramp to the SR-91 was accessed directly opposite East 2nd Street. This onramp was closed prior to 1994.
- Eastbound offramp exited onto West 2nd Street, connecting to West Grand. This exit was closed permanently on December 7, 2015.
- Westbound onramp from West Grand Boulevard was accessed from Frontage Road and was closed permanently on December 21, 2015.

"In 1961, Corona Mayor AJ 'Dutch' Velthoen said that the opening of SR-91 through Corona was one of the most important events in the city's growth because *'It opened the gates from Orange County'* resulting in the expansion of large industries and attractive, more affordable housing." This has certainly been true, looking at the exponential growth from 1961 to 2015.

Seeing the sign that we would be losing our beloved Grand Boulevard exits was crushing to me. Learning how to drive in Corona, the Grand on and off-ramps were Corona's best kept secrets.



They were "secret" ramps just for us. Out of town folks would always shy away from Grand. For some reason the circle seemed to confuse them. If you needed to go to Orange County, get to West Grand and jump on... alas not anymore. However there will be a new back door on to the 91 East that we didn't have before... Buena Vista to D Street to take advantage of the new Eastbound SR-91 onramp just east of Lincoln Avenue!



# New Video Featuring Photos by Barbara Becker

Once you're at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), do a search for "Corona Historic Preservation Society"

There are now **SIX** videos to view on the CHPS CHANNEL:

- "Corona: Then & Now" created by Mary Winn
- "Growing Up in Corona in the 1940s" panel discussion
- "Growing Up in Corona in the 1950s" panel discussion
- "Beautiful Corona: Through the lens of Barbara Becker (Video 1)"
- "Beautiful Corona: Through the lens of Barbara Becker (Video 2)"
- **"Beautiful Corona: Through the lens of Barbara Becker (Video 3)"** *This video was added in late November!*



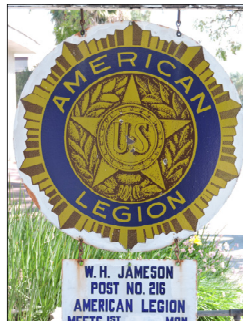
## CHPS Historic Site Marker Number 22 Dedicated By Richard Winn

On Saturday, November 7, 2015 the Corona Historic Preservation Society (CHPS) teamed up with members of Corona's first American Legion Post to dedicate CHPS Historic Site Marker No. 22 to honor the oldest American Legion Hall in Corona. We were pleased that four of five City Council members attended this event.

After an earlier attempt failed, Veterans of World War I and others founded Reveille Post 216 of the American Legion, in Corona in 1924. For a few years they met in a variety of locations throughout the city. In 1927 this same group of Corona World War I veterans supplied labor and materials and constructed the hall from the plans of architect Cuthbert Gully and under the supervision of Frank Pinkerton. Both were members of the Post. The structure was constructed of reinforced concrete, capped with a red-tiled roof in the Spanish Revival/Mission Revival architectural style popular at the time. The land was offered at reasonable terms to the veterans by one of their own members, W. H. Jameson Jr. It was dedicated March 23, 1929. Two and one half years later, When Mr. Jameson died unexpectedly, it was rededicated in his honor and known as W. H. Jameson Jr. Post 216. A decade later, when the Depression made paying off the mortgage difficult, Mr. Jameson's widow donated \$1,000. to help pay the mortgage. This gift and increased successful fundraising helped the Legionnaires pay off the debt by 1937.

Legionnaires became owners of their hall and celebrated with a ceremony involving the burning of the cancelled checks sent to the bank over the years.

In the early years, Civil War Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Veterans and Spanish American War Veterans held their meetings there. In later years, it served as a public and private meeting place. In addition to Legion-



naires meetings, Am Vets, the Odd Fellows and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) met and socialized in this revered building. In December 1949, movie "extras" ate at the Legion Hall during local filming of *Storm Warning* starring Ronald Reagan, Ginger Rogers and Doris Day. Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops met here over the years. It has been the scene of numerous wedding receptions, "pot-luck" dinners, anniversaries, birthday parties, dances, ballroom dance instruction and countless other events.

Nowadays, due to numerous other newer venues in which to hold large meetings and activities and declining membership enrollment in the Post, part of the building has been leased out to local businesses. The Post membership continues to meet in the northern portion of the building on the first Monday of each month, starting at 7:00 P.M.



Mayor Eugene Montanez and Post 216 Commander Glen Roosevelt were photographed flanking the granite plaque immediately after the unveiling. Glen is a veteran of military service in the Marine Corps.



Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Jim Mares provided remarks including gratitude for those who have preceded him in military service. Al Nixon, Post Chaplain and Immediate Past Commander, is seated on the left.

# Membership Information

**When joining or renewing your membership, please make your  
tax deductible check payable to "CHPS"**

|                   |          |                          |                               |                          |
|-------------------|----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Individual Member | \$20.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>I'd like to volunteer!</b> |                          |
| Family            | \$30.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hospitality refreshments      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student           | \$10.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Newsletter writing articles   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business          | \$50.00  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Vintage Home Tour             |                          |
| Patron            | \$100.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> | docent / volunteer            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Life              | \$500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Board of Directors            | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Gift from \_\_\_\_\_

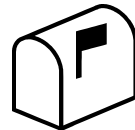


Membership Status: Renewal  New

**Please complete form and mail to:**

**CHPS**

**P.O. Box 2904  
Corona, CA 92878**



## We Welcome Our New & Continuing Members

Patricia Barker  
Barbara Becker  
Richard & Martha DeBlois (Patron Members)  
Tracy C. Lelevier-Taylor  
John & Barbara McCawley  
Deborah McCormick  
Jeff & Debora Miller  
Richard Polen

George & Carrie Pope  
Alan & Nancy Royce  
Sue Simmons  
Ted & Cindi Taylor  
Steven & Peggy Temple  
Mike & Maria Ugalde  
Andrew & Donna Vermette

## Our Home Preservation Grant Program

The CHPS Grant Committee along with the Board of Directors of the Corona Historic Preservation Society would love to assist local homeowners in making exterior improvements to their historic homes.

We will process any application within 60 days after submittal. Once a grant has been approved and reimbursement limits established, funds will be made available upon completion, inspection and onsite final approval.

Take this opportunity to do some fixing up and have part of the material cost covered by CHPS. Remember we are interested in helping people beautify their homes for others to see, so applications are primarily for curb appeal projects. If you



have a place that you feel needs help, either your own or a neighbor's, please feel free to contact CHPS Home Preservation Grant Program Chairman Tom Richins at [tom@alignarc.com](mailto:tom@alignarc.com) or 949.231.8596. We will assist you in any way possible to provide the information you need to complete the application process.

Grant applications are available at the Community Development Department at Corona City Hall at 400 South Vicentia, and at the Heritage Room of the Corona Public Library.

More information and grant applications may also be downloaded from our Website:  
<<http://corona-history.org/grants.html>>



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

## Board of Directors

President - To be determined in January

Vice President - Tom Muñoz

Secretary - Doris Osko

Treasurer - Richard Winn

### Directors

Trisha Henson-Cabrera

Paula Muñoz

Fred Parr

Wes Speake

Mary Winn

### Advisors

Marla Benson

Tom Richins

Ted Taylor



To contact us call  
**951.898.2044**

*Please leave a brief  
message*



## Our Mission Statement

The Corona Historic Preservation Society (CHPS) is a nonprofit tax-exempt organization dedicated to preservation and revitalization of Corona's historic buildings, neighborhoods and sites.

Through education, persuasion, legislation and organization, CHPS acts as an advocate for the preservation of Corona's historic resources.

## Monthly Meetings

CHPS Board meetings are held each month to transact Society business, discuss issues affecting the Society and preservation of local historic resources.

**All members are invited to attend.**

The next meetings will be:

**Thursday, Jan 21, 6:30 P.M. at CHPS office**

**Thursday, Feb 18, 6:30 P.M. at CHPS office**



Visit our Website at [www.Corona-History.org](http://www.Corona-History.org)



Corona  
Historic  
Preservation  
Society

P.O. Box 2904  
Corona, California 92878-2904



A Norman Rockwell classic



**May 2016 be a wonderful year for one and all!**