



# OVERVIEW

FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE No. 18

WINTER 1999



An O-38 (O for Observation) plane like this took the 1932 photo. The pilot sat in front with the cameraman behind so the wing wouldn't get in the picture. This photo is from the Air National Guard website at: [www.ang.af.mil/](http://www.ang.af.mil/) for a better look at the large photo, see pages 12-13

## ANOTHER LOOK BACK...FROM ABOVE

By Bruce Carroll

There was a lot more open space, a lot fewer houses and almost no trees when this aerial view of John Marshall High School, with the Franklin Hills in the foreground was taken on June 26, 1932.

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Whether the California National Guard 40th Division, 115th Photo Squadron, was doing reconnaissance for defense of the strategic Shakespeare Bridge...or they were just on a routine training mission is a fact lost to history.

What luckily wasn't lost, is this very detailed high resolution photo donated to the FHRA by Sterling Weaver. In the early 50's he was a fighter pilot in the Air National Guard based at Van Nuys Airport when he recalls "a couple of guys I knew were just ditching pictures." Some of the other photos Weaver saved and thankfully donated to interested organizations showed "train wrecks around the area and the Griffith Park Observatory."

This photo, of then one year old Marshall High, also has a connection with Griffith Park. In 1932 the O-38 observation bi-plane that took this picture was based at the long gone Griffith Park Airport.

A careful analysis of the picture shows some things never change. Note the very cracked pavement on the streets in the lower half of the picture (l-r Sanborn, Melbourne, Prospect, Deloz, Hollyvista and Franklin). Also of interest is what looks a lot like a trash dump below the intersection of Sanborn and Melbourne (above the first "H" in "High") and what appears to be a stable at the end of Sanborn on land now occupied by the LILA School. The rest of the LILA property, south of the bridge, remained a ravine until filled in with dirt from the Hollywood Freeway excavation in 1949, 17 years after this photo was taken.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Ricardo Gomez

I recently assumed the presidency of the Franklin Hills Residence Association because I am interested in improving the quality of life for all residents of our neighborhood. Although most of Franklin Hills is quaint and beautiful, there are a few areas that are neglected and in dire need of attention. This neglect adversely impacts the entire neighborhood.

### Identifying the Problems

As president, I have pledged to address the infrastructure needs of all of Franklin Hills, and one of my paramount goals will be to improve these previously neglected areas. For example, we need to focus on the streets themselves - on street re-paving, improved street lighting and street sweeping, not to mention the removal of bulky items that are frequently dumped on our streets. Owners of blighted properties need to be encouraged, or required, to improve their own properties.

Another quality of life issue is excessive noise. Many residents are frustrated because their peace and quiet is disturbed by a continual bombardment of noise from loud and raucous parties and other gatherings in the area immediately bordering King Middle School. Public transportation is also a problem. We have a new subway system that can whisk passengers to Downtown or North Hollywood in a matter of minutes. Yet, the MTA and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation have prevented Franklin Hills residents from taking advantage of our local subway stop by refusing to provide a shuttle service from our neighborhood to the Vermont and Sunset station.

### My Own Background

When I attended Franklin Avenue elementary school, King Middle School and later graduated from John Marshall High School in 1973, most of these problems we are now facing did not exist in the Franklin Hills. After completing my undergraduate and legal education at U.C.L.A., I practiced law in Downtown L.A., lived in other parts of the City and spent a lot of time working on projects around the country. About ten years ago I moved back to the Franklin Hills area and was astonished at the blight that had crept in on a few streets and at the City's failure to provide basic services to the area. I had a tough time even getting the City to sweep the street in front of my house (this is still a problem around King Middle School). Ultimately I joined FHRA because it provides an excellent vehicle for getting involved and effectuating improvements in our neighborhood. Over the last several years, I have witnessed a lot of major improvements, and we achieved many of these by using the political structure afforded by FHRA.

### Our Accomplishments to Date

Unfortunately, the City of Los Angeles is no longer user friendly towards its residents. In many instances the City will fail to provide basic services and improvements. If you want something done, you have to fight for it or the tax dollars will wind up being spent elsewhere. For example, members of the FHRA spearheaded and monitored the restoration of the Shakespearean Bridge which was damaged by the Northridge quake. Without our activism, we may have ended up with an uninspiring utilitarian looking bridge. The median just west of the bridge was an ugly asphalt slope until members of the Association took it upon themselves to organize a landscaping project. It was the FHRA, not the City, that landscaped the area and to this day the FHRA maintains the median.

From the President

Several years ago the residents of Cumberland Avenue organized themselves and, after years of pushing, they got the City to repave Cumberland Avenue between Sanborn and Talmadge. Although we are still trying to induce the City to repave more streets in our neighborhood, at least we have gotten a start on addressing a major problem in Franklin Hills (if not City wide), that of crumbling

Continued on p.8

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The Franklin Hills OVERVIEW is published as often as possible. We invite your comments on matters relating to articles and the community and, space permitting, we will publish letters mailed to *Editor, OVERVIEW, Box 29122, Los Angeles, CA 90029*

# Sunset Drive Becomes Memory Lane

As told to Bruce Carroll

"It looks a lot different...everything has changed" That's what first struck Bud Young when he visited his old Franklin Hills neighborhood after being away for nearly 70 years. Bud, along with his older sister Ella and younger brother Francis moved away from the small house at 3914 Sunset Drive in 1930. "There used to be a lot of vacant lots...it was better for the kids," recalled Bud after his sentimental journey

The house, built by his father Harold and his uncle Paul in the 1920's, was according to Bud, "the first place I remember." As he recalls the neighborhood, "most of the people who lived nearby worked in the movie business, not actors, but people who built sets and the like." And he remembers being able to look down Hollywood Boulevard and "see the search lights at Grauman's Chinese Theatre."

But the bright lights faded quickly for the Young family when the depression came. Bud's father, who had "finally gotten an old Model T," eliminating the walk down the hill to climb aboard the Sunset street car for the ride downtown, had lost his job. The pharmaceutical company McKesson Robbins no longer needed men to mix chemicals. And soon the Youngs lost their house at 3914 Sunset Drive. The family was "forced to leave the furniture and everything," laments Bud, who was 9 years old at the time. His father eventually found work on gold dredges and sawmills in the foothills northeast of Merced. By 1935 the family had finally set down new roots in Chula Vista where Bud's father worked for the Customs Service and Bud worked as a route salesman in the overall supply business before retiring.

On Easter in 1995 Bud got to thinking, "gee, I'd like to see it again." So he decided to show his bride of over 50 years the house where he grew up. "it was a special trip," he reminisces. "I just got kinda curious...so we jumped in the car and took off early that morning...there wasn't much traffic...everything has changed from what was there." Well almost everything. The Franklin Hills hospitality was still there and the current owner of 3914 Sunset Drive, Brenda Kilbourne, welcomed the time travelers and showed them around the house. In exchange Bud sent a packet of vintage family photos showing the old neighborhood. What does he remember about his trip down memory lane?

"I didn't realize the streets were so narrow."



In a picture that could have come right out of "Our Gang" Bud Young (center) is flanked by his brother Francis (l), the next door neighbor girl Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified dog. The house in the background is 3917 Sunset Dr.



Looking east down Sunset Drive from in front of 3914...Bud Young (r) with sister Ella (c) neighbor Ethel Madgshon and an unidentified doll riding in brother Francis' carriage. The lack of trees makes it easy to see the nearly naked hillside across Hyperion



Standing in front of 3914 Sunset Drive mother Lucille Young reaches out to keep Bud's younger brother Francis from rolling down hill.

# Los Feliz Branch

Eight months after opening, the branch is very busy. We have become more than just a new warehouse of books, magazines and videos, we are also a community center where families of toddlers and parents come weekly, teens hang out after school & adults find needed community information.

We are a "link" on the web pages of Los Feliz On-Line: the LF Village Business Association Home Page, featured on Leonardo DiCaprio's web pages and along with Barton Phelps, the library was in the September issue of Architecture Magazine. In addition, many people come in looking for community referrals to banks, restaurants, day care and auto repairs.

In response to requests from people for "good places to eat" after their library visit, we are working with the business association to collect area menus into a reference collection call "A Taste of Los Feliz". So far it has been very popular and we have had a wonderful excuse to try out lots of great food.

Traditional library services continue with circulation continuing to grow. In the temporary building 21,000 books were borrowed from January to March. From April 8 to June 30, 51,000 items were borrowed and from July 1 to September 30, 53,000. The gate count shows 246,250 people passed into the building. The carpets have now been cleaned three times.

As promised there have been more adult interest programs. The Internet Resource Workshop and the Computer Comfort Clinics are offered twice a month and we look forward to offering more of them as the staff and the hours expand. The computers (both Internet and Word Processors) are in use constantly with people looking for library materials, writing resumes, checking their e-mail and learning how to search the Internet.

We launched an author series called Lounge Chair Literature (like Armchair Travel). The idea is a cross between an author reading and a book discussion group. Both author and patrons gather in a small circle with tea & cookies and just talk. The first of the series were very successful chats with local authors Paula Woods in September and Yolanda Alaniz in November.

The series will continue in 2000 with Eve Babitz on January 11 th.

The Los Feliz Library League raised & donated \$10,000 to establish a books-on-tape collection and arranged a donation from the Times Foundation Reading by 9 project for an additional \$10,000 for children's books and audio sets. The League also presented very successful Architecture Lectures that will continue next year. For information on joining the League and a schedule of lectures call (323) 644-9449.

The Friends of Los Feliz Library continued the 4th Saturday monthly Book Sales. \$950 supported children's & teen programs and supplement additional copies of best sellers and \$2,750 will be used to establish a Los Feliz in Literature collection.

In addition, the Los Angeles Dodgers donated incentives including team balls, caps, bats & game tickets to encourage children to read. The Buffy the Vampire Slayer Production Company contributed teen reading incentives and the Los Angeles Zoo once again provided a free family zoo pass. A new Children's year-round at home reading club, "2000

Reasons to Read" is in effect now. Sign-ups are at the library reference desk to get a reading log and after 2000 minutes each child receives a grade level dictionary as a prize.

The library will be closed from Dec. 23rd to Dec. 27th and again on Dec. 31st to Jan. 3rd.

The entire Los Feliz Library staff wishes our Franklin Hills neighbors an excellent holiday season and a safe new years. We look forward to seeing you all in 2000.

-submitted by Pearl Yonezawa Senior Librarian



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Dead Animal Pickup (323) 227-7179

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**BUILDING & SAFETY VIOLATIONS:** (213) 237-0685

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Adult/Women Abuse: (800) 978-3600

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LAPD Online: <http://www.lapd.org>

Main Desk: (213) 485-2563

Reports: (323) 485-4193

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Basic Car Coordinator: Sgt. Williams

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## New Officers at Northeast Division

by Carol Skinner

*Thanks to the Northeast staff and to the LAPD website (<http://lapdonline.org>) for supplying the information contained in this article. Ed.*

Northeast Division of the Los Angeles Police Department has two Captains who were assigned this summer after the retirement of Captain Tom . The Commanding Officer is Captain Kyle Jackson, who is a 22 year veteran of the LAPD and holds the rank of Captain Three. He has previously been assigned to a wide variety of duties ranging from patrol officer to his current assignment. In this capacity he oversees the efforts of the Detective Section, CRASH, Vice, Crime Analysis, and Patrol Operations. As part of his collateral duties he is responsible for developing liaisons and support within the business community to reduce crime and fear.

Captain Jackson has also been assigned as the Commanding Officer of the Devonshire Detective Division (when holding the rank of Lieutenant), and was Project Director of the Devonshire Area Volunteer Surveillance Team. This citizen group received national recognition as an effective community policing/problem solving program. It would be excellent if we were able to establish such a program here in Franklin Hills. Captain Jackson was part of the Department's Community Policing cadre and provided in-service training to officers and supervisors in community policing and problem solving.

Captain Jackson has received numerous awards of recognition. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University, Long Beach.

**Captain I Charles Roper** was born in Santa Monica, California in 1946. Although a California native, he was raised in western South Dakota and educated at the University of Wyoming, graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in History/Pre-Law. After serving in the US Navy as a helicopter pilot he joined the LAPD in January 1973.

He was promoted to sergeant in 1979, lieutenant in 1990 and to Captain in August 1999. He has been assigned to Wilshire and Central Patrol, as a SLO in Hollenbeck, 77th Street in Air Support Division, was a watch commander at Hollywood and for five years was Officer-in-Charge of Emergency Operations Section. In EOS he was responsible for developing Department response plans for natural and man-made disasters.

As the Northeast Operations Support Division Commander, Captain Roper directly supervises the activities of the Area's Detectives, CRASH, and Vice Sections. He also coordinates the Safe School program for the Arts.

## LILA School Update

Adam M. Weisman,  
FHRA Chairman and LILA Trustee

One of many wonderful organizations within our neighborhood is *Lycee International de Los Angeles*. Located at the end of Russell Avenue and set below the Shakespeare Bridge, this 6.5 acre campus has been in operation since 1991 providing students from Kindergarten to twelfth grade a unique bicultural and bilingual educational experience. With buildings designed by Architect John Lautner, the campus is classified as Historical Site #553 by the City of Los Angeles.

The school is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the French Ministry of Education, and the International Baccalaureate Organization. Although additional campuses are located in Tarzana, Fountain Valley, Monrovia, and Woodland Hills, the Franklin Hills campus is the largest and is considered the flagship of LILA. This year 328 students are enrolled on our neighborhood campus with a zoned capacity of 350.

Over the last year FHRA has worked hard to improve communication between the school and its neighbors. This became essential when residents raised concern about LILA's property management and student noise. Neigh-

bors pointed out the temporary trailer along Sanborn, trash and vegetation overgrowth in the same area, and recess noise drifting upward along the neighboring homes. Each of these issues impacted the quality of life among the hills.

As a trustee of LILA and FHRA board member, meetings were arranged with neighbors, city officials and school management. Following negotiations, the campus trailer and recess area was moved to a setting under the bridge. Fencing was constructed

around the recess field for safety. Tentative plans have the trailers being set on to permanent cement slabs. The soccer (football) field along Sanborn now remains in its original condition and neighbors enjoy an unobstructed natural view. These outstanding results provide another example of the positive and constructive spirit in our neighborhood!



Jeff Myers and J. Alan Jones, representatives from the area noise abatement group, voiced appreciation for the actions of LILA and FHRA. Both commented that noise has diminished and the property management has improved. No other complaints have been raised by the group.

Continued on page 9

# FRANKLIN HILLS



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*I list here. I sell here.*

*I play here.*

*I am here for you.*

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## King Middle School

*Editor's Note: Mrs. Rodriguez is a community activist, school chair for the Los Feliz Improvement Association, Los Feliz member of the Community Police Advisory Board, an always cooperative neighbor to FHRA, and the mother of two school age children. The two previous issues of the Overview have contained articles explaining how she decided to re-landscape and restore the King campus; how she applied for and won a Neighborhood Matching Grant of \$5000 and started to work a year ago. Trees were planted, ground mulched, pruning and planting begun. To continue:*

By Spring we realized that Proposition BB air conditioning construction was to take place at the front of the school so we moved our efforts to the back of the school on Sunset Drive where a community garden was to be planted. Community volunteers came from the Silver Lake Gardeners Club, the Los Angeles Gardeners Club, the Community Police Advisory Board - Northeast Division, and the Beautification Committee of the Los Feliz Improvement Association. Susan Martin president of the Silver Lake Gardeners Club guided our planting of Mexican Sage, Rosemary, Aloe Vera, Sweet Lantana, and other drought tolerant plants which are doing very well.

When the 1999 school session returned from Winter Break in January we found that several very large, ugly chain link cages had been installed to protect air conditioning transformers at the front of the school. These large cages would be impossible to hide. No landscaping could conceal LAUSD's answer to security for the AC transformers. So after much letter writing to Stephen Soboroff, Chair of the Proposition BB Oversight Committee, and John Ferraro President of the City Council, and endless phone calls and meetings, LAUSD promised to reduce the size of the cages and hire a landscape architect to help design a plan which would hide the cages. On October 18th the cages were reduced and in November the irrigation work began.

Mia Lehrer + Associates, which had already donated time to redesign the courtyard was hired to design both the irrigation and the landscaping, which includes a grove of Crape Myrtle trees, Italian Cypress, Lantana, Star Jasmine, Vinca Major, Birds of Paradise and Flax to name a few. It is sort of a drought tolerant tropical look which we think will be most attractive along Fountain

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FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MEMBER?:  YES  NO

## From the President Continued from p. 2

streets. Had the residents not organized themselves, the City would not have re-paved that stretch of Cumberland at any time in the foreseeable future. We need your help to keep up the pressure on the City so that we get a fair return on our tax dollars by getting our share of City services.

### On-going Projects

Currently, some of our residents and friends are trying to clean up Sunset Drive and Bates Avenue where they border King Middle School. As many of you know, parts of these streets are very blighted and a lot of trash is dumped around the school. Unfortunately, the Department of Transportation removed the street sweeping signs around the school during construction. Many residents have complained about this and we are working with the principal, Dr. Thelma Yoshi to rectify the situation. Mary Rodriguez has been working very hard to landscape and beautify the campus and deserves our thanks. Peter Bedard also deserves congratulations for his tireless efforts to clean up the area.

Finally, I would like to welcome Captain Kyle Jackson, the new Area Commanding Officer for LAPD Northeast. These are turbulent times for the LAPD in many respects. One controversy arose when Chief Parks relieved the Senior Lead Officers of certain community based policing responsibilities. Chief Parks' decision has been very unpopular with many members of our community. Captain Jackson now has the difficult task of developing and implementing a new plan for delivering police services to Franklin Hills. Although some of us may not be happy with this change, we should support his efforts and ensure that a successful plan ultimately evolves. Hopefully we will be able to deliver a progress report to all of you so that you will know how to contact the LAPD for non-emergency services such as getting a nuisance problem solved.

## In Conclusion

FHRA exists to serve our neighborhood and to prevent the City from ignoring the needs of our residents. You can help by getting involved and contributing as much or as little time as your schedule permits. One significant way of getting involved is simply to join the Franklin Hills Residence Association. When I am pushing City politicians to spend our tax dollars on providing services to Franklin Hills, often the first words out of their mouths are "So how many members are there in your organization?" The politicians gauge our strength by the size of our membership. The more members we have, the more attention we get from City Hall. If your availability for involvement is limited to only a few minutes out of the year, then take that time to fill out the membership form attached to this newsletter and write a check for \$10.00 in dues. That gesture alone is a significant act of involvement and it will benefit you a thousand fold. If, on the other hand, your taste for involvement is greater, if you would like to initiate a project for example, or solve a problem, then contact us and we will help you organize and find a solution. We welcome all residents and encourage them to participate.

## LILA Continued from page 6

Over the next year, LILA will be working on fund raising (a never-ending process for FHRA too!), capital improvements (e.g., ESL, computer supplies), and developing unique social events that celebrate the French culture and its international impact. The parents group is working on developing the school as one of many disaster safety sites within the Hills (including ABC studio and Thomas Starr King Junior High School). Pearl Yonezawa, our neighborhood librarian reported that our library stocks a small number of French-language books for young children (K-6th), but she is willing to stock up to 60 French-language books within their teen room for up to three months. If any FHRA resident would like more information about LILA (admission, volunteer work), you may call 66-LILA-6 or Adam Weisman (666-4630)

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Ave. from Bates Ave. to Manzanita St. We hope to implement this design the first Saturday in February and volunteers are welcome.

Many people and business have helped fund this project: the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) has pledged to help by purchasing the plants needed to fulfill the landscape design. John Aaroe & Associates Charitable Fund donated \$2,500.00, the Franklin Hills Residents Association donated \$1,250.00, the Los Feliz Improvement Association matched that amount for a total of \$5,000.00. I reapplied for the 1999 Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant and was awarded another \$5,000. I then applied for a grant to 'Save Outdoor Sculptures' (SOS) in Washington D.C. and I am hopeful that the answer will be positive. If I am awarded the SOS grant we will begin restoration on 'The Vanishing Race' the 1936 WPA statue in January. Then our energies will turn toward the heart of the school, the courtyard, which includes the restoration of the circa 1926 tiled fountain and a complete re-landscape design by Mia Lehrer.

Also in January 2000, an after school program will be implemented by Los Angeles Center for Education Research (L.A.C.E.R.), a landscape/horticultural class, a mural painting class, music, dance, and academics will be offered to all King students. The mural class was awarded \$1,700.00 from the 1999 Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant. The neighborhood contribution came from the Franklin Hills Residents Association, L.A.C.E.R., and volunteers, to hire muralist Ricardo Mendoza, to work with the students and create a work of art at the back of the a school on Sunset Drive. It will complement our garden in progress and enhance the school's back entrance and the neighborhood. We have also been informed by LAUSD that the school is scheduled for painting next year and I was asked to choose the colors. All in all, in the year 2000 Thomas Starr King Middle School will be off to a great start.

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