

# Model Colony News



## Heritage Events

### Upcoming Events

**April 1**—Monthly Board meeting cancelled

**April 26**—2nd Quarter Dinner Potluck Meeting cancelled

**May 6th**—Monthly Board Meeting (TBD)

**May 13th**—Annual Ontario Culture Fest at Ontario Town Square postponed

**June 3rd**—Monthly Board Meeting

**June 13th**—Our historic walking tour. More information to come.

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Like us on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/  
ontario.heritage](http://www.facebook.com/ontario.heritage)

### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

If you would like to  
volunteer your time at our  
events, please contact us at:  
909.984.6558  
or email us at:  
[info@ontarioheritage.org](mailto:info@ontarioheritage.org)

## Heritage Corner

### Hotel Casa Blanca

By Diane Ayala, City of Ontario Planning Department

To evoke a sense of stability and create familiar surroundings for potential buyers, Ontario's town founders constructed hotels, commercial buildings (retail, banks, churches, and schools), and homes with eastern United States architectural designs. Hundreds of people flocked to the region by railroad and then by automobile to visit or settle in the region.

By 1915, five hotels had been erected in the area. One of them, the Hotel Casa Blanca, was located on the corner of Fern Avenue and Emporia Street. Ground was broken for construction on July 1, 1914. The builder was Butler Brothers of Los Angeles, who constructed a resort-type hotel intended to rival the Mission Inn in Riverside. The hotel was to be a stopover point between Los Angeles and Palm Springs for automobile travelers on the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway (Holt Boulevard) or traveling on the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad depot was roughly ¼ mile to the hotel's front door which faced south towards the railroad.



HOTEL CASA BLANCA "THE INN BEAUTIFUL" ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA



In April 1915, the Casa Blanca opened for business. The hotel was styled in Italian Renaissance Revival architecture and stood 2-stories high. It had a roofed portico supported by paired columns, which wrapped around the building corner. A balustrade roof deck faced south and the pediment main entrance was flanked by columns. There was an ornamental mansard band below the flat roof that was covered in painted metal curved shingles to resemble Spanish or Mission-styled clay tiles. Multi-paned French doors were perhaps the most distinctive feature found on the building. The doors opened to a prominently displayed dining room, courtyard, and entrance to the sun deck and roof garden.

In its heyday the hotel featured 42 guest rooms, all of which were accessible from the building exterior. Each room had multi-paned windows opening into narrow wrought iron balconies, mahogany furnishings, steam heat, telephone, a private bath and a view to the outside garden. At the time, the Casa Blanca was one of the few hotels that possessed its own garage and a large scale refrigeration room. The hotel featured other amenities such

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# Model Colony News

## Heritage Corner (continued from page 2)

as a large lobby, formal dining room, sun parlor, and roof garden.

Casa Blanca offered leisure activities such as tennis, golf, casino style gambling, and billiards. It served gourmet meals prepared by French-trained chefs. Breakfast and lunch cost around 75 cents and dinner was \$1. Casa Blanca was a favorite among early Hollywood movie stars such as English comic actor Charlie Chaplin and American filmmaker Cecil B. DeMille (who later had an honorary Golden Globe Award named after him). Many community groups and organizations such as Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions used the banquet and large meeting rooms to host their events.

The Hotel Casa Blanca continued operations until the 1970s. The building eventually fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1998.



### Hotel Casa Blanca

Ontario's Town House

Fern at Emporia  
Ontario 535

When entertaining your eastern friends, Hotel Casa Blanca has that California something so keenly desired.

The Casa Blanca is the rendezvous for whole families of all Pomona Valley. Join in the fun and visit this fine hotel.

Dinners (week days) 75c

Steak Dinners \$1.00

Sunday Dinners  
(full course \$1)

The ad above was in the Pomona Progress Bulletin newspaper dated June 19, 1930, page 11

## Archives of Ontario History

### The Charles Frankish Era & Developer's Row

By Diane Ayala, City of Ontario Planning Department

British immigrant Charles Frankish was a true pioneer in the development and promotion of the Ontario "Model Colony" after town founders, the Chaffey brothers, left for Australia in 1886. Frankish had traded his 10-acre citrus ranch in Riverside for 80-acres of undeveloped land along Euclid Avenue in the town of Ontario. He relocated and invested in Ontario because he firmly believed in the principles of the Chaffey's "Model Colony." He and a small group of developers organized the Ontario Land and Improvement Company which in 1912 became the Frankish Company.

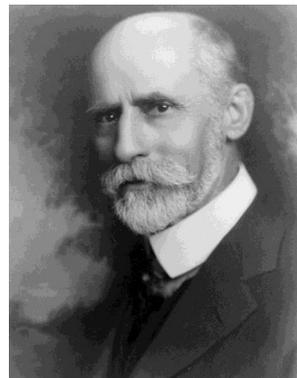
As general manager of the company, Frankish developed San Antonio Heights (now north Upland) and expanded Ontario south beyond the railroad tracks. The city's boundary became California Boulevard on the south; Sultana Avenue on the east and Vine Avenue to the west. This area was known as the South Side Tract.

Frankish also developed the Ontario and San Antonio Heights Railroad Company, linking Ontario to the head of Euclid Avenue in San Antonio Heights. Mules pulled a passenger car up Euclid Avenue; the return ride was solely by gravity. There was a pull-out platform for the mules to ride when south bound.

In order to attract settlers to Ontario, Frankish and his associates built large Victorian-era styled homes on Emporia Street facing the railway tracks to the south. This is known as Developer's Row. Frankish also commissioned a grandiose water fountain equipped with a compound sprayer with jets. It was placed on the Euclid Avenue median. The water fountain, symbolizing an abundance of water, was turned on when passenger trains stopped at the depot.

Frankish propelled the town of Ontario to a first class settlement. He was responsible for installation of the rock curbs along Euclid Avenue, organized grading, irrigation, and purchasing orange trees for out-of-town growers. He established the first bank in Ontario named the Ontario State Bank, and install the first electric lights in 1895.

The Frankish Fountain, now located at the Ontario Museum of History & Art, the Frankish Building, located at the southwest corner of Euclid Avenue and Holt Boulevard, and the rock curbs in historic neighborhoods are remnants of the Frankish era.



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## Archives of Ontario History (continued from page 4)

### Developer's Row

The **Kilpatrick House**, located on the northeast corner of Fern Avenue and Emporia Street, was constructed in 1888. David Kilpatrick was an architect of many buildings in southern California, particularly in Ontario. Kilpatrick sold his home to Jacob Jesson who resided there with his wife, Maria, and his children. Jesson owned the local drug store on Euclid Avenue just north of Holt Boulevard. Jesson was elected to serve as the City Clerk from 1898 until 1905, and was a director of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the People's Mutual Building and Loan association in Ontario. He also was a member of the County Board of Freeholders that formed the charter of San Bernardino County.

The **Hildreth House** was constructed in 1887 and was located on the northeast corner of Emporia Street and Palm Avenue. Samuel Hildreth was on the Board of Directors of the Ontario Land and Improvement Company and was president and manager of the Ontario State Bank. Hildreth sold his home and land company holdings to John V. Benson who owned and operated a boot and shoe store on Euclid Avenue.

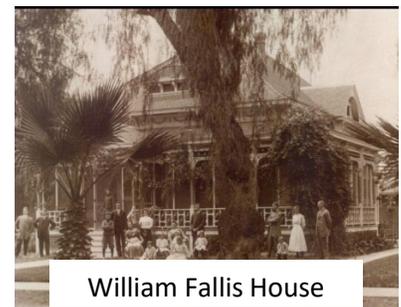
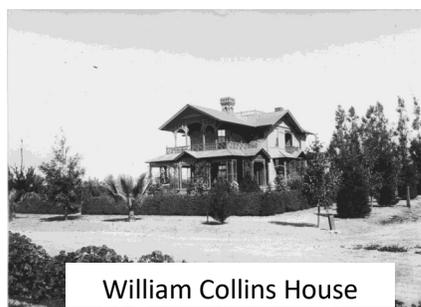
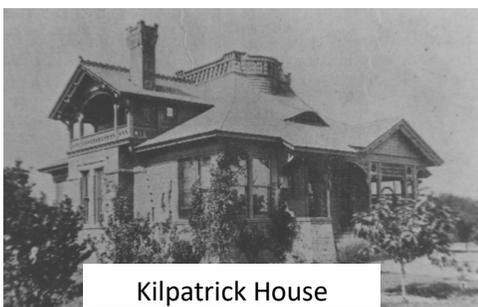
The **William Collins House** was constructed in 1888 and was located on the northwest corner of Fern Avenue and Emporia Street. Collins held the position of Secretary for the Board of the Ontario Land and Improvement Company. This house was relocated to Main Street to make way for the construction of the Hotel Casa Blanca. It is the last remaining home from Developer's Row in extant.

The **Charles Frankish House** was constructed in 1887 and stood at the northwest corner of Emporia Street and Laurel Avenue. The large two-story home was constructed in the Victorian-era Western Stick style of architecture. It had a front balcony, hand-carved wood ornamental details, large overhanging eaves, 2 brick fireplaces, and a large porch. Sleeping quarters for the help were located behind the house.

### Other Notable Homes Near Developer's Row

The **William Fallis House** was constructed in 1892 (est.) in the Queen Anne style of architecture. Fallis purchased the home in 1906. In 1914, the second story was altered with the addition of a new Mansard roof in the Second Empire style of architecture covered with red tile. Mr. Fallis and his brother Fred G. Fallis owned and operated the prominent Fallis Department store located in downtown Ontario from 1906 until it closed in 1988 after 82 years in business. The house remains today at the original location on Vine Avenue near Transit Street. On May 18, 1993, the City Council designated the Fallis House as Ontario's first local landmark.

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## Archives of Ontario History (continued from page 5)

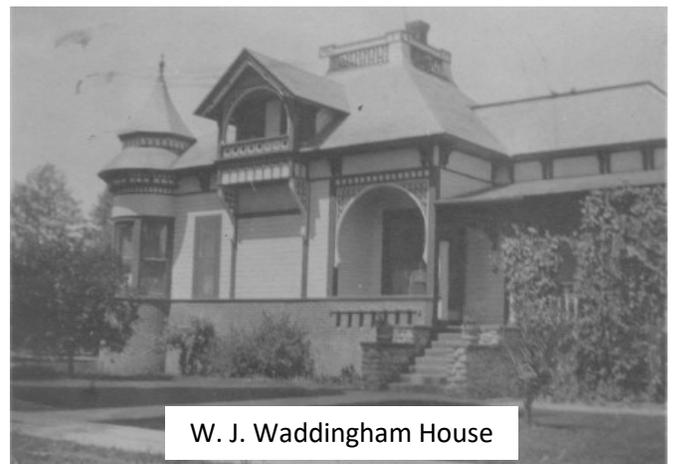
The **William Chaffey House** was one of the earliest homes built in Ontario for town founder William B. Chaffey. It was built in 1883 and stood at the northeast corner of Holt Boulevard and Vine Avenue. George Solon Russell of Golden State Canning Company purchased the property from Chaffey. He was a member of the First Christian Church of Ontario and when he returned home to Kenton, Ohio he sold his property to the church. In 1923, the First Christian Church built a large Classical Revival style building for their congregation that still stands today.

The **W. J. Waddingham House** was built in the late 1880s and located on Holt Boulevard just east of the William Chaffey House. Chaffey was Waddingham's brother-in-law. William Waddingham built and operated the local carpenter shop near the train depot where he made doors, blinds, sash and other hand-crafted wood building supplies. Waddingham was also the town architect and builder. His most notable body of work was the original Chaffey College building. His company grew and he relocated to Red Hill (Upland) where he ran six mills. Louis Hammel purchased the home in 1909. Hammel was a business partner in Walker's Feed and Fuel Company on Euclid Avenue. Walker's supplied poultry feed and seeds and operated the largest supply of fuel in the City. Hammel was noted as being the first in town to own a motor car.

The **Ontario Hotel** was built by the Chaffey Brothers in 1883 to house potential real estate buyers or new settlers to the area. The 18-room, 2-story Victorian style hotel was situated near Transit Street just west of Euclid Avenue. Each guest room was furnished with cold and hot baths and a telephone. Frankish added 24 more rooms to the east wing which was named after him.



William Chaffey House



W. J. Waddingham House

## An Ontario Historic Landmark

### Bank of Italy Building

In 1904, Amadeo Peter Giovannini, an Italian immigrant, and five former directors of the Columbus Bank, opened the Bank of Italy to serve the needs of the growing immigrant population. Its headquarters was in San Francisco and was instrumental in financing the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake.

Giovannini and the Bank of Italy pioneered an inter-branch system of banking throughout California that eventually revolutionized the face of banking. The inter-branch system meant greater ease in transferring funds, a critical step in developing an efficient branch banking system. The Bank of Italy's unorthodox practices included advertising to both borrowers and depositors, and attracted moderate- to lower income customers. Other banks catered to society's aristocrats with certain formalities, conservative policies, and high interest rates. The Bank of Italy's approach democratized and popularized the use of banks. By 1918, 24 branches had been established throughout California and had a total revenue source of more than \$93 million. The Bank of Italy was considered the first statewide branch-banking system in the United States.

On April 18, 1922, the Daily Report newspaper reported the issuance of a \$50,000 permit for the construction of the Security State Bank, located at northeast corner of Euclid Avenue and B Street. The article reported that the new bank would be a "handsome structure" and one of the most attractive banking buildings in all of San Bernardino County. The bank building was constructed by Campbell Construction in 1923 as the permanent office for the Security State Bank.

The bank opened to the public on March 24, 1923. The Daily Report covered the grand opening of the bank and stated that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever." The article went on to say that "the transformation of an ugly spot into one of the most beautiful business corners on the famous Euclid Avenue is an achievement in which the whole City may well take pride." Two months after its opening, on May 28, 1923, the Security State Bank was taken over by the Bank of Italy following word about some of the Security State Bank's questionable loan practices. Secondo Guasti, founder of the Italian Vineyard Company, became president of the bank and his son Secondo Guasti Jr. became Vice-President.



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## An Historic Landmark (continued from page 7)

On September 3, 1930, the Bank of Italy changed its name to Bank of America. In 1942, the Bank of America moved to the Citizen's Bank Building at 101 N. Euclid Avenue on the northwest corner of Euclid Avenue and Holt Boulevard. A salon and a ladies dress shop occupied the former Bank of Italy building until 1960 when Richard's Beauty College took it over. The Bumstead building on East B Street was connected to and made a part of Richard's Beauty College when Bumstead's Bicycles (which had opened in 1909) moved to its new location on Lemon Street in 1960.

Richard's Beauty College closed in 2005 and the building became vacant. The city of Ontario bought the building in 2008 for \$966,000 and in 2009, designated it as an historic landmark. Since 2005, the building has been unoccupied and fallen into disrepair.

In 2019, the city sold the building to Alex Baroian and Martin Hovsepien, developers, builders and restaurateurs from Glendale, with the stipulation that it would be saved and reused. The new owners will operate two restaurants and intend to restore and highlight the architectural features of the original building. For example, Baroian wants to restore all the chipped stone squares on the front of the building and remove the plaster that hides the original brick walls.

Crews will remove the second floor that was added by Richards Beauty College and expose high ceilings with latticed wood beams elongated by Romanesque pillars. "We want it to be very period specific," Baroian said, while pointing to the boarded up windows that will soon bring in light.

Baroian intends to expose the north wall's unique brick pattern. Originally, the end bricks were placed edges out in a different direction than the adjacent horizontal bricks, forming a "king's row" every fourth or fifth line along the 27-foot high building. This strengthened the unreinforced masonry structure. The wall is critical to Baroian because it will become his barbecue restaurant's focal point. Designs call for adding doors that reveal a double-sided bar, a barbecue pit and meats smoker and outdoor seating with prime views of Town Square

Park.

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Ontario Heritage photos—looking in through a south window—February 2020

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## An Historic Landmark (continued from page 8)

Using the concept of adaptive reuse, Baroian and Hovsepien are restoring the pressed brick walls, the fluted terra cotta columns, plaster frescoes and massive plate-glass windows. Instead of spraying concrete onto the inside walls, they've removed the stucco, restoring a glazed brick indicative of early 20th century architecture. They are even replacing a clock that hung off the south edge of the prominent bank building in its heyday.



Baroian is creating three restaurants at the bank and the adjacent Bumstead Bicycle building: the main barbecue restaurant, a second eatery in the back with service windows for coffee and smaller items, and a rooftop terrace eatery with views of the park and downtown. When completed, they will have created 15,000 square feet of restaurant space within the two historic buildings, Baroian said. He hopes to open the main restaurant by the fall of 2020. The total cost for renovation will most likely reach \$6 million.



Developers Alex Baroian, 37, and Martin Hovsepien, 32, both of Los Angeles, talk about their \$6 million renovation of the old Bank of Italy Building on the northeast corner of B Street and Euclid Avenue in Ontario.

## A New Development

### Emporia Place Apartments

Emporia Place is a new apartment community situated on the site of the historic Casa Blanca Hotel and Developers Row. During Ontario's early settlement period, several homes were constructed along Emporia Avenue for prominent city pioneers and dubbed Developers Row. Some historic structures remain, including the Fallis House on Vine Avenue near Transit Street; 201 through 215 South Fern Avenue; and 310 West Emporia Avenue (the American Legion Hall). The Ford-Collins House was moved to its current location at 227 West Main Street sometime after 1915 to enable the construction of the Casa Blanca Hotel. All other homes from the original development have been demolished.

Emporia Place is located on 2.95 acres of land in a two-block area bordered by Holt Boulevard to the north, Fern Avenue to the east, Emporia Street to the south and Vine Avenue to the west. Transit Street runs east and west through the community. It is part of the City of Ontario's Downtown Revitalization project and is intended to provide high quality, affordable rental housing for families with children.

The community consists of 75 apartments for low and very low income families. Besides ten apartment buildings with 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom apartments, the community includes a 4000 square foot community building complete with community room and kitchen, social activity space, splash pad and tot lot for children, and gathering spaces for teenagers. The community building also contains the management offices. The management company will offer adult education, health and wellness classes, after school programs, and art courses for children.



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## Upcoming Event Postponed!

**Ontario Heritage's 4th Annual**



**St. Paddy's**

**— Golf Tournament —**

**Early Registration**  
\$75 per person • \$300 per four person team  
Entry fee includes green fees, cart, golfer goody bag, banquet & awards ceremony

**To register online visit**  
[www.OntarioHeritage.org](http://www.OntarioHeritage.org)  
If registering by mail, please make check payable to Ontario Heritage and mail to Joe Caskey, Ontario Heritage

**Registration** – 7:00 AM to 7:30 AM  
**Tee Time** – 8:00 AM (Shotgun Start)

For questions or to RSVP, please contact Joe Caskey at (909) 732-6352 or [joecaskey@ontarioheritage.org](mailto:joecaskey@ontarioheritage.org)

**Friday • March 13, 2020**

**Whispering Lakes Golf Course**  
2525 E. Riverside Drive, Ontario, CA 91761  
Ontario Heritage is a 501 (c)3 Non Profit Organization.



## An Historic Tragedy

### 'Spanish flu' Epidemic Shut Down Inland Empire Cities a Century Ago

By Joe Blackstock

The medical records told the sobering story almost 100 years ago. Doctors in the Guasti medical clinic near Ontario recorded that they gave flu victim Pietro Neboloni quinine and later a mustard poultice early on November 29, 1918, in hopes of saving his life. At 2:45 p.m., he "ceased to breathe."

Neboloni was one of an estimated 20 million to 40 million people cut down worldwide in just two years in the pandemic nicknamed the Spanish flu. The 32-year-old Italian native's death came the same day as another family member, his 6-month-old son William.

The deadly strain of flu in 1918-19 killed more people than all the combat deaths of World War I. It was estimated it caused one-third of the 18 million military deaths in the war. In late 1918, as the fighting in Europe drew to a close, there was no armistice in the desperate battle against the epidemic in every hamlet and metropolis around the world.

It reached a point that cities such as San Bernardino, Ontario, Redlands and Riverside in October 1918 ordered their communities simply shut down. Virtually all public events, meetings and classes were banned. "The public is forbidden to congregate," explained Dr. F.H. Gardner, San Bernardino's health officer, told the San Bernardino Sun on Oct. 15, 1918. "Stay away from other people, especially people who have colds. Stay off the streets. Children will not be permitted by the police to go on the streets."

Schools were closed, church services canceled and many people, if they had to go out, wore masks.

The flu's arrival — first reported in Europe, then on the East Coast and finally in the West — had found a fertile breeding place in training camps jammed with American soldiers preparing for overseas duty.

The government said by October 17, 1918 there had been 262,000 cases of flu reported in the military camps, with more than 12,000 deaths. One victim in the camps was Native American Clyde Roosevelt of Needles, a member of the Mohave tribe, who died of the flu at Fort Harrison, Indiana, the Sun reported on November 4, 1918.

Daily newspaper articles detailing numbers of WWI casualties also listed those who were killed by disease. On October 29, Cpl. Glen D. Baird of Pomona was among those who died of the flu. That same day, the military reported 234 soldiers killed in action plus 218 dead of disease.

Back home, officials knew immediate measures had to be taken. Face masks were recommended and, in some areas, required. Ontario's Board of Health ordered that wakes could no longer be held for fear of spreading the disease. Relatives of 83-year-old Bartale Nebarro, who lived in the Guasti area, were barred from holding an all-night wake over his body following his death from the flu, reported the Sun on October 21, 1918.

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## An Historic Tragedy (continued from page 12)

On the weekend of October 26-27, 1918 the courthouse in San Bernardino was sealed and a “wholesale fumigation of all offices” was conducted after a large number of flu cases among county employees were reported. Hospitals were jammed with patients, and proper care was that much more difficult with so many doctors away serving the military. Those local medical people available were themselves often felled by the flu.

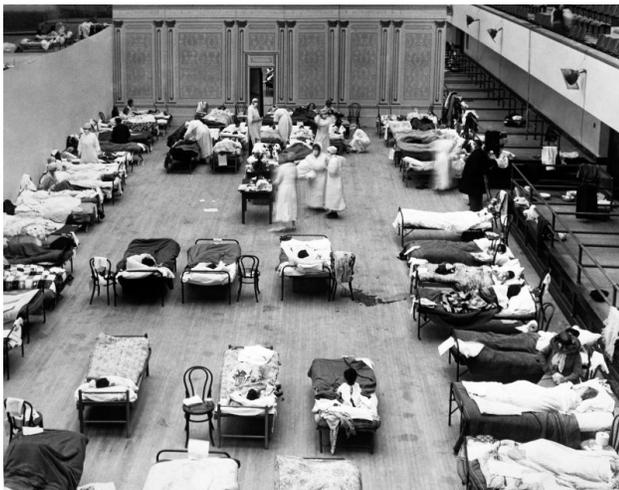
Local hospitals desperately asked for volunteers to assist patients. “We want trained nurses, of course, but just now we want women who can give a glass of water if nothing else,” said Dr. J.N. Baylis at San Bernardino’s Ramona Hospital, where four people died the day before, the Sun reported October 27, 1918.

All four hospitals in Riverside were still at full capacity on November 26, 1918, weeks after the city closure was called. People venturing outside could be cited if they failed to wear masks.

But help sometimes just wasn’t there. In remote Needles on October 9, 1918, there were 250 cases of the flu reported, but only two doctors, and no nurses, were available to treat them, the Sun reported. Carman Espinoza of Los Angeles was buried in Ontario after dying of the flu. Her husband had brought her to friends in Cucamonga in hopes of saving her, “because he could find no one to care for her” in Los Angeles, said the Ontario Daily Report on October 21, 1918.

It took a while but the disease did eventually subside in 1919, mostly due to the disease running out of victims. Most everyone had gotten the disease and either survived or died from its effects. And as sobering is the memory of the Spanish flu 100 years ago, you wonder if it could return someday and inflict such a monumental toll?

Source: Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, March 5, 2018



The Oakland Municipal Auditorium being used as a temporary hospital during the influenza pandemic of 1918, in Oakland, California. Underwood Archives—Getty Images



Photo credit: Unknown

# Model Colony News

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## **Board Members**

Petrina Delman, President

Dave Coote, Vice President

Randi Campbell, Treasurer

Charlene Wissing, Secretary

Gloria Jones, Membership Chair

Devela Bemowski, Historian

Joe Caskey

Rita Nelsen

Margot Cardona

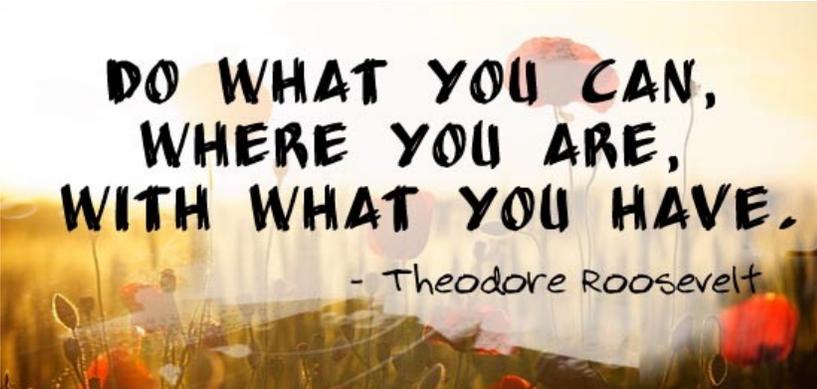
Wendy Roldan

## **Ex-Officio Member**

Diane Ayala, Ontario Planning Department

## **City Council Liaison**

Debra Porada



**DO WHAT YOU CAN,  
WHERE YOU ARE,  
WITH WHAT YOU HAVE.**

- Theodore Roosevelt

# Model Colony News

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## 2020 Ontario Heritage Membership

We are an all volunteer local non-profit organization and we need you! Is the ongoing process of preserving our historic downtown important to you? Or learning about the rich history of the Model Colony? Our Mission Statement is "Preserving, Protecting and Promoting Our Model Colony" not only for us but for our future generations. Having historic home tours, annual historic cemetery tours, being present at local events are all part of pursuing our mission and making the public more aware of our purpose. It's an important goal but who says we can't have fun pursuing it!

If you are already a member of Ontario Heritage, we sincerely thank you! If you're not yet a member, please consider joining us on this journey. Not only will you become more aware and knowledgeable of Ontario's past history, you will be inspired to walk with us as we go forward in "Preserving, Protecting and Promoting Our Model Colony."

### Benefits of Membership:

1. Participation in Ontario Heritage events such as Home Tours, Annual Historic Cemetery Tours, potlucks, local community events, historic and educational programs.
2. Discounts to events
3. E-mail Newsletters
4. Advocacy for preservation of our historical environment and cultural heritage.
5. Access to information concerning restoration and renovation.
6. The knowledge that you are part of the effort to protect, preserve and promote the Model Colony



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### Ontario Heritage Membership Form (December 31, 2019 to December 31, 2020)

\*Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\*City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

#### \* Required Information

#### Membership Categories (For the 2020 Calendar Year)

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual        | \$25.00  |
| <input type="radio"/> Senior (62 years) | \$15.00  |
| <input type="radio"/> Family            | \$40.00  |
| <input type="radio"/> Family-Senior     | \$30.00  |
| <input type="radio"/> Corporate         | \$250.00 |
| <input type="radio"/> Benefactor        | \$250.00 |

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### I am interested in:

- E-mail Alert Network  
 Volunteering at Events  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail with Your Check Payable To: Ontario Heritage

P.O.Box 1, Ontario, CA 91762

or sign up at: [ontarioheritage.org](http://ontarioheritage.org)

In an effort to keep dues low, most communication will be via email, so providing us your email address is vital.