

Model Colony News



Heritage Events

1st Quarter Dinner Potluck Meeting



Date: Sunday, January 30, 2022

Time: 4:00 PM—6:30 PM

Location: The historic Captain John P. Robertson House

Address: 907 N. Euclid Ave Ontario CA 91762

Guest Speakers: John & Dianne Aylyng, current owners

Please bring a main dish or side dish and you may bring a bottle of wine to share if you so desire. Water bottles will be provided.

As this is a private residence and to ensure sufficient seating, please RSVP by calling 909.984.6558 or email: prdelman@msn.com

Ontario Heritage P. O. Box 1 Ontario CA 91762 Phone: 909.984.6558
ontarioheritage.org
facebook.com/ontario.heritage

Ontario Heritage is a 501(c)3 organization under the Internal Revenue Code

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Heritage Corner

Chaffey Garcia House

The Chaffey brothers, George Jr. and William Benjamin, were born in Brockville, Ontario, Canada, a town on the St. Lawrence River across from New York. Their father, George Sr., owned a shipbuilding business that served Great Lakes steamers.

George Sr. struggled with tuberculosis, causing the Chaffey family to immigrate to California in 1878. They settled with other Canadians in Riverside in what was known as an "irrigation settlement". William accompanied his parents while George Jr. remained in Brockville to manage the family shipbuilding business.

In 1881, the Chaffey brothers acquired 560 acres of land and a home on the Rancho Cucamonga from a retired Portuguese ship captain named Joseph Garcia. (The home, now known as the Chaffey Garcia house, was built in 1874 and is said to be the first home built in Etiwanda.) Noting the broad alluvial fan emanating from the foothills, the Chaffey brothers realized the area could be developed into 10-acre agricultural plots with irrigated water from San Antonio Canyon.



Photo courtesy of Chaffey College Historical Collection

Heritage Corner (continued from page 2)

After acquiring additional land to equal 2500 acres, the brothers began developing a community they named Etiwanda for an Algonquin Indian chief and set about employing their engineering talents to create a reliable water system for the area. In a letter dated September 6, 1882 addressed to W.E. Putnam of Boston, the brothers announce that they hold undisputed claim to one-half of all the water in San Antonio Canyon through the establishment of the San Antonio Water Company. A surveyor was hired to map Etiwanda, Cucamonga and the new tract. George Jr.'s engineering prowess in building his water delivery system included using cement pipes for the main channels.



George and William also established ties with Los Angeles capitalists. One project was the Los Angeles Electric Company, just as the use of electricity was gaining momentum in the region. Others included trunk line telephone systems and an ice company.

The Chaffey Garcia house was also electrified. George Chaffey erected a 70-foot tall pole with an electric bulb at the top that could be seen all the way to Riverside. Inside the house, lighting is provided by fixtures that accommodate both gas and electricity. The bulbs pointing down are for electricity; pointing up are for gas.

The Chaffey Garcia house is no longer in its original location. The Etiwanda Historical Society undertook a significant project to acquire land to relocate and protect the house. That was accomplished in 1984 and the house is now located at 7150 Etiwanda Avenue, Rancho Cucamonga. It is open one day a month (the second Saturday) except for November from 9 am to 1 pm.



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Heritage Corner (continued from page 3)

Restoration of the Chaffey Garcia house took ten years. It was dedicated in July 1994. Work then turned to reconstruction of the Chaffey Barn which was completed in 1994. The barn now houses historical displays from the Chaffey family and a reproduction of what the Etiwanda General Store looked like. The Historical Society is now working on restoration of the Chaffey Isle House, built by George Chaffey Jr. for his mother and sister in 1884 and relocated to the property in 2003.

Source: Inland Valley Daily Bulletin: Trevor Summons, December 9, 2018; Etiwanda Historical Society; Los Angeles Herald, January 16, 1884, City of Ontario Facebook page July 24, 2013; Homestead Museum (Paul Spitzzeri), September 6, 2019.



Annual Historic Cemetery Tour

Ontario Heritage 2021 Cemetery Tour

Following the forced cancellation of the 2020 Ontario Heritage Cemetery Tour due to COVID-19, the newly-renamed Richard Delman Memorial Cemetery tour took place on October 9, 2021. Now in its 11th year, the tour had a good turnaround of over 85 people to visit historic gravesites and hear from five historic Ontario residents – some familiar, some new.

All historic figures are portrayed by the Ontario Heritage Acting Troupe – all volunteers and each an excellent actor. Appropriately costumed and with props to further enhance their stories, the actors bring the historic figures to life.

Behind the scenes, extensive research is done and the volunteer actors are provided with scripts for their use. Veteran actors often add to the scripts. On cemetery tour day, volunteer tour guides escort groups of about 20 visitors to each gravesite, providing background material about each historic person.

More support comes from Ontario Heritage members who provide coffee and snacks to be enjoyed while waiting for the tours to begin. Additional participation by City of Ontario Model Colony Room staff and the Pomona Valley Model A Club adds to the enjoyment of cemetery tour visitors.

Bellevue Memorial Park provides logistics support by erecting canopies and providing chairs, as well as allowing Ontario Heritage access to the gravesites.

Here are the historical figures portrayed during the 2021 cemetery tour.

Ruth Middaugh Danforth

1825 to 1911

Civil War Diet Nurse

Portrayed by Margot Cardona

Ruth Middaugh was born in 1825 in New York to Peter and Catherine Middaugh. When she was 15, her father died at the age of 48. The following year Ruth married Jarvis Smith Danforth in Kane County, Illinois. Ruth and Jarvis had two children, Frank and Lily, before moving to Linn County, Kansas with Ruth's mother and two sisters.



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 5)

When the Civil War began in 1861, Ruth was 36 years old. Three years later, in July 1864, she joined the war effort on the Union side as a volunteer diet nurse. (Today we would call her a nutritionist or nutrition nurse.) More than 20,000 women – both Union and Confederate – worked in military hospitals, half of them as nurses.

Ruth was first assigned to Louisville, Kentucky's Trotter Field Hospital, then transferred to Brown General Hospital, also in Louisville, after Trotter closed. Established by the Union Army, Brown General Hospital was the largest of six general military hospitals scattered throughout the city. Ruth worked here until the hospital closed in May 1865, one month after the Civil War ended. At times, especially from late 1864 through the end of the war, Brown housed more than 1,000 patients. Conditions were often crowded, with insufficient medical staff to fully treat the sick and wounded.

Ruth's supervisor at Brown was Mrs. Annie Wittenmeyer. When the Civil War began, Annie was the State Sanitary Agent of Iowa and the originator of "diet kitchens" in response to the suffering of patients who lacked suitably prepared, nutritious food. Many times Annie's patients had little to eat; meat was often rotten, bread was worm-infested, and lack of fresh fruit and vegetables caused much illness. Food preparation was completely lacking in the most basic principles of nutrition and balanced diet. Three out of five Union soldiers died from disease or other illness, while two out of three Confederate soldiers suffered the same fate. Hospitals were dirty and often rat-infested. Sanitary regulations were non-existent.

Until Annie's criticisms were heard and new policies put into place, most surgeons and military cooks made poor or indifferent food decisions in the hospitals. Hospital food was mostly inadequate, unhealthy, and poorly cooked, doing little to get the wounded back on their feet. Because of Annie, the diet nurses understood that food improvements saved thousands of hospitalized men during the war.

A diet nurse's workday began at 6 am and ended at midnight. The nurses dressed plainly in brown, gray or black garments. Diet nurses kept the kitchen informed of their patient's nutritional needs, served food bedside and fed the sick while providing words of encouragement and sympathy. The nurses also did housekeeping, changed bandages and wrote letters to wives and friends back home. The patients were grateful and courteous to the nurses and appreciative of gifts they would receive from their family and friends at home.

Following her mother's example, Ruth's teenaged daughter Lily became a Civil War nurse. She later married George W. Bothwell who owned a fruit farm in Ontario. After the Civil War ended, Ruth moved to California and lived in several different cities before settling in Ontario to be near Lily and George.

In 1892 Ruth applied for a Civil War veteran's pension. But because she was a volunteer, there were no payroll records for her or any of the other volunteer nurses. Ruth found a soldier who remembered being cared for by her, but his affidavit wasn't enough for the federal officials who didn't understand the role of "diet nurses" in the war effort. Later, Annie Wittenmeyer took on the bureaucracy again and secured a small government pension for Ruth.

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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 6)

On May 30, 1909 when Ruth was 84 years old, there was a very large Decoration Day (now called Memorial Day) parade that included Civil War veterans. Ruth and several other women rode in two carriages at the rear of the parade. Following that, the women went to an auditorium in Los Angeles where an estimated 3000 people were in attendance. Before the start of the program, the women were introduced and greeted with cheers from the audience in recognition of their work as nurses during the Civil War. Many in the audience remembered the nurses as being among those who ministered to them on the battlefield.

Ruth Danford died on February 26, 1911 at the age of 85 – just one year after the memorable Decoration Day parade and gathering. Her funeral was held at the home of Lily and George Bothwell, 140 West “A” Street in Ontario. Four of her pallbearers were Civil War veterans. Her gravestone at Bellevue says simply, “Army Nurse 1961-65. Not much is known about Ruth’s husband Jarvis Danford. It is likely she divorced Jarvis and changed the spelling of her last name from Danford to Danforth sometimes prior to 1970.

Henry Albert

1853 – 1937

Citrus Rancher

Portrayed by Shawn Thresher

Henry Albert was born on a farm in Perry County, Pennsylvania on November 11, 1853. His parents, George W. Albert and Elizabeth Foose Albert, were also born in Perry County, Pennsylvania in the town of Elliottsburg. The Albert family lineage can be traced back to staunch German origin and the name has been identified with American history since the early colonial epoch.



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 7)

Henry's father, a Union soldier in the Civil War, was incapacitated by illness and subsequently honorably discharged. He began a voyage home via steamship but died onboard. Henry was placed in a soldiers' orphan school where he lived and was educated.

After earning some money, in 1871 then 17-year-old Henry bought a third class ticket for California on a car hitched to a freight train. It took 14 days to reach San Francisco. With only \$5 left, Henry tramped the highways for a week before finding a job on a ranch. He roughed it for five years without a home and with ups and down, while accumulating \$600 in gold.

With this stake, Henry developed a dairy farm at the mouth of the Klamath River. He rented ten two-year-old heifers and three old cows. At the end of four years he had a dairy herd of 40 cows and a farm worth \$4500. He sent back to Pennsylvania for his sweetheart Mary L. Nesbit, and they married in San Francisco. Mary had never been on a horse before when Henry put her on one and led it for 22 miles on a trail to his farm. A year later, their daughter Eleanor was born.

Henry and Mary worked on the dairy business for ten years and had three more children. During this time he invented and patented a can labeling machine with a capacity of 30 cans a minute. Despite the fact that it worked perfectly, the machine was never a best seller as the speed was too slow.

Over his lifetime, Henry was granted ten U.S. patents for inventions as diverse as elevator safety devices and the can-labeling machine. Though he never made any money from the patents, they did provide him with a great deal of experience.

In 1895 Henry and Mary moved to a 30-acre fig orchard. He removed the fig trees and planted orange trees. The orchard grew to 400 naval orange trees, making Henry a prominent prior rancher in the area.

For community service, Henry joined the Independent Order of Foresters (IOF), whose main function was to provide affordable insurance to members. IOF also built senior housing and supported dental services and youth activities for its member families.

Henry was elected president of the Cucamonga Citrus Fruit Growers' Association in 1909 and remained a member for many years. He was a guest speaker at various local clubs, speaking on raising oranges and other citrus; the importance of harvest; and shipping to markets throughout the country. The California Orange Exchange, a part of the California Fruit Growers Association, handled more than 75% of all citrus fruits grown in California.

In the early days, citrus growers frequently suffered losses when the fruit was spoiled during shipment. Efforts turned to promoting the Sunkist brand, the leader in California oranges. Sunkist oranges were removed from trees with clippers. Each tree yielded an average of 10-12 boxes of oranges with some trees yielding as much as 16 boxes. From the orange grove, the fruit was moved to a packing house and submerged in water heated to 120 degrees. Then the fruit was carefully run through circular brushes and a blower which thoroughly dried the oranges before they went to the sorting table to be graded. Back then the Sunkist brand was the only one that was marked and was looked upon as a guaranteed for the quality of the fruit.

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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 8)

Henry was a member and treasurer of the Citizens League of Alta Loma. Formed in 1913, its purpose was the general improvement of this area; its success depended on all of the hardworking League officers. The League acquired a right-of-way for the Pacific Electric Railway and got the Santa Fe Railroad to build a spur (a short secondary railway line) to the Alta Loma District. The spur allowed railroad customers to load and unload railcars without interfering with other railroad operations.

Before the Great Depression of 1929, Henry's net worth was \$100,000 and he was debt-free. He owned a drug store block in Alta Loma and three houses. In 1931 his wife Mary died. Six years later, on December 8, 1937, Henry died at the age of 84 at his home in Alta Loma after a two-month illness. He was an intelligent, upright citizen, a man of most generous hospitality, who never forgot his old home and old friends in Perry County, Pennsylvania and often visited there. Funeral Services were held in the Upland Presbyterian Church where he was a member. Henry was survived by two daughters and one son. Several of his patents are on file at the Cooper Regional History Museum in Upland.

Edgar C. Greene

1849 - 1937

Businessman

Portrayed by Joe Blackstock

In a manner of speaking, Edgar C. Greene was one of the military's first information technology specialists when he served during the Civil War. And despite him and others like him risking life and limb in the war, it would be decades before they were recognized for their contribution to the Union cause.



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 9)

Greene, who spent his last years as an Ontario resident, was a Union Army telegrapher, operating the telegraph equipment that enabled military commanders for the first time to quickly transmit information over long distances. The military became very much dependent on the skills of these telegraphers who inexplicably were always civilians. They might be wounded, captured or killed while serving with armies during the war, but they were never in uniform or, later, got much in the way of pensions or other benefits.

But it must have been an adventure for Edgar, who was not quite 15 years old when he was hired as a telegrapher at Sturgis, Michigan, in 1863. He quickly mastered Morse Code and the ins and outs of operating a telegraph under all sorts of conditions, according to his obituary April 20, 1937, in the Ontario Daily Report.

The Telegraph Corps was composed of several thousand civilian telegraphers in charge of putting up poles and stringing lines as well as relaying messages. Corps members such as Greene were often used to translate and receive messages in code, while others were assigned to break the cyphers used by their counterparts on the Confederate side.

Greene served with the Union's Army of the Cumberland that mostly fought in Alabama and Tennessee in the latter part of the war, according to an article in the Daily Report of May 29, 1925. And usually it wasn't merely tapping out messages from a warm room, far away from the perils of the fighting. "The military operators were all expert enough to take (Morse Code) by ear," explained a Chicago Tribune article on June 12, 1898. "They could tap wires at any point and send by means of pocket instruments, and instances were known of operators taking messages by simply cutting the wires and placing the ends against their tongues." During one Kentucky battle, a Union telegrapher transmitted a message by grounding a crowbar into the soil and tapping it with a cut wire. "He received the reply by placing one hand on the bar and the end of the line in his mouth," wrote the Tribune.

And in the months after the war's end, Edgar was hired by Gen. George A. Custer, whose troops were sent to occupy Houston, Texas, where many Southern soldiers had refused to lay down their arms. At this same time, the U.S. had serious diplomatic concerns over France's occupation of Mexico and the installation of Maximilian I as emperor. While talks continued between the U.S. and France, the Mexican forces loyal to Benito Juarez captured and executed Maximilian in 1867, ending the possibility of military intervention by U.S. troops. Edgar said "he was at the clicking key" sending word to Washington, D.C. about the death of Maximilian after it was received in Houston.

Fortunately, Edgar did not later accompany Custer to the disastrous battle at the Little Bighorn River in Montana. He worked for Western Union in Chicago for many years, then began serving as managers of hotels in Montana, Idaho and Washington. Edgar arrived in California about 1904. He came to Ontario around 1922 and for years managed the city's Postal Telegraph Co. office. He died in 1937 at age 87.

Edgar and other civilian telegraphers spent years asking the government to give them recognition of their war-time service. But it wasn't until 1898 that Congress authorized issuing certificates of honorable service to these men, enabling those who had been wounded or disabled to receive pensions.

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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 10)

Andrew Carnegie, who died in 1919, provided a \$12 a month private pension in his will for any Union telegrapher still alive. Carnegie had been a telegraph operator just before the Civil War.

Nathaniel L. "N.L." Mitchell

1852 – 1942

Businessman

Portrayed by Rick Gage

Nathaniel Mitchell, known as "N.L.", was an early Ontario pioneer and businessman. Born in Elkhart, Indiana in 1852, he lived in various Midwestern states including Kansas and Iowa before arriving in California in 1890 with his family – wife Jessie Bell Shepard Mitchell (born 1857) and two children: 8 year old Martha Jane (called Marjorie) and 6 year old John Shepard Mitchell. A third child, Ruth, was born in 1894.

Early records indicated N.L. built the first citrus packing house in the area. It was located east of the Southern Pacific Railroad depot. In the 1900 harvest season, he shipped 46,000 pounds of fine quality grapes to Arizona, and in 1903 shipped over half a carload of Valencia oranges.

In May 1902, the Southern California Fertilizer Company was formed to manufacture and sell all kinds of fertilizer. Incorporated with capital stock of \$10,000, the company's 4000 square foot building was located east N.L.'s packing house. N.L. was one of five company directors.

Eight years later, in 1910, Southern California Fertilizer Company was sold to the Braun Chemical Company of Los Angeles – one of six businesses involved in a roll up. The other companies were San Bernardino Fertilizer Works, Redlands Fertilizer Works, Bollinger & Crane Fertilizer Works of Riverside and Braun Chemical Works of



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 11)

Los Angeles. N.L. was retained as the local plant manager with a territory that included Ontario, Upland, Cucamonga, Claremont and San Dimas. A contemporaneous Los Angeles Times news article reported that “the new factory will give steady employment to a goodly number of men.” Shortly thereafter, N.L. traveled to Mexico to inspect deposits of guano that had been purchased by the new company, and in March 1911, it was reported that N.L. had erected a “neat house for the storage of fertilizer on a lot a short distance east of the Santa Fe station.”

In August of 1909, N.L. purchased a lot at 715 N. Euclid Avenue (near the northwest corner of Euclid and G St.) to build a residence, to be nestled among the orange trees on the lot. The two-story structure was designed by Arthur I. Acker of Los Angeles in the Craftsman style; F.S. Willis was the contractor. The residence was expected to cost \$7500 to build.

The home was built on a concrete foundation with columns on the porch, chimneys of split field stone, and exterior of split cedar shake. The home had seven rooms and a screened sleeping balcony. The living room, dining room, stairway and vestibule were finished in quarter-sawn white oak. A prominent feature of the living room was an 18-foot terra vitrae tile mantel.

The house included many modern features including an “electric cooking apparatus”. The bathroom had a tile floor and vitrolite wainscoting and a separate shower. The home also had a telephone whose number was Pacific 2201.

The Mitchell family lived in the home until 1922 when it was sold to H.I. Ross for \$25,000 – the largest transaction of its kind in Ontario at the time. At the time of sale, the house had nine rooms, three baths and a basement and was said to be one of the most attractive homes in Ontario. The number of bedrooms now totaled four, each with an individual sleeping porch. The Ross family purchased the home so they could move into town from their ranch on West A Street.

Sadly, the home no longer exists. It was razed in 1963 for construction of the Bank of America building near the strip mall shopping center at G and Euclid.



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 12)

N.L. was a prominent member of the First Methodist Church of Ontario, including serving as steward. So it was unusual when he failed to attend church services on March 20, 1917 – said to be the first time in 20 years he was not in Sunday service. When friends and fellow church members stopped by the Mitchell residence, they learned that while N.L. was preparing for church, he discovered a flock of chickens in his prize flower garden. In his haste to shoo the chickens out of his yard, he tripped on a root the chickens had unearthed and fractured his left arm. It was discovered later that the errant chickens belonged to Rev. Charles H. Scott, pastor of the First Methodist Church.

Although he was a successful businessman, in January 1919, N.L. was moved to sue 120 city officials, businessmen and ranchers for \$3.09 each for total damages of \$400. All were members of the Farmer's Society of Equity, a recently-formed co-op to market ranch products from the Ontario district. When the co-op failed, N.L. alleged he was "left to hold the sack" and sued to recover his losses.

Having sold his residence on Euclid Avenue in 1922, N.L. immediately made plans to construct a new home on East Princeton Street, in what is now the College Park historic district. The building permit that was issued in November 1922 called for "erection of a seven-room, two-story residence in Princeton Street by day labor at a cost of \$8000". The home, now designated as historic, was completed in 1923. It is in the Mediterranean Revival style.

N.L. owned other property in Ontario – an orange ranch at Campus Avenue and I Street as well as the packing plant on East A Street. In 1926 he was granted permission to remodel the A Street building at an estimated cost of \$1000.

1929 was a tragic year for N.L. In July he became seriously ill and was treated by Dr. Stephen A. Craig, a prominent physician with offices in downtown Ontario. On October 7, his wife Jessie passed away at the age of 72 in their East Princeton Street home. Mrs. Mitchell had been in failing health for a number of years. She was survived by N.L., her two daughters (Mrs. Marjorie Colburn and Mrs. Veeder South) and her son, John Shepard Mitchell. Funeral services were held at Draper Chapel on the corner of Laurel Avenue and C Street.

Continuing his business activities, in January of 1939 N.L. was re-elected as a director of the San Bernardino County Mutual Fire Insurance Company. His long-time friend and business associate Grant McCarthy was elected president of the company.

In May, 1942, N.L. celebrated his 90th birthday a few months late when he hosted a dinner at the First Methodist Church. Grant McCarthy, a member of the church, recalled when he and N.L. lived in the farming section of Iowa, not far from the The Little Church in the Wildwood, made famous by a song composed by Dr. William S. Pitts in 1857 following a coach ride that stopped in Bradford, Iowa. The song is about a church in a valley near the town, though the church was not built until several years later.

N.L. Mitchell died July 8, 1942 at his home at 206 East Princeton Street. J.B. Draper Company was in charge of funeral arrangements; N.L. is buried at Bellevue Memorial Park in Ontario.

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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued on page 13)

George W. Chaffey, Jr.

1848 – 1932

Founder of Ontario

Portrayed by Joe Caskey

William B. "W.B." Chaffey

1956 – 1926

Founder of Ontario

Portrayed by Dave Coote

Brothers George and William "W.B." Chaffey to California from Ontario Province, Canada looking for new opportunities. Purchasing large tracts of land that now encompass parts of Etiwanda, Alta Loma, Rancho Cucamonga, Upland and Ontario, they built a modern irrigation system and created an 8,000-acre fruit-farming community they called the Model Colony. Upon receiving an invitation from Australian authorities to develop 250,000 acres near Mildura, they sold their interests in California and moved to Australia. After their projects went bankrupt, George returned to California where he brought water to the Imperial Valley which led to the development of several cities. W.B. remained in Mildura for the rest of his life, helping to develop the area with irrigated horticulture and processes for getting fruit to market.



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Annual Historic Cemetery Tour (continued from page 14)

For the 2021 cemetery tour, Joe Caskey and Dave Coote devised a fictional account of W.B. returning to Ontario at the request of his older brother George to collaborate on a history of Ontario.



Ontario Arts District

Ontario Arts District

Did you know that Ontario has an Arts District? Located just below Holt Avenue on either side of Euclid Avenue, the Arts District is made up of three entities: the artist work-live lofts on Emporia west of Euclid Avenue; the Chaffey Community Museum of Art (CCMA) at 217 S. Lemon Avenue on the east side of Euclid; and the Ontario Museum of History & Art (OMHA) directly across Lemon Avenue from CCMA. .

OMHA is the public city museum featuring permanent exhibits on the history of Ontario as well as temporary fine art exhibits. CCMA is a private fine arts museum with four art galleries. The Line Gallery displays works of art from the museum's collection, while the Main, South and Spotlight galleries feature works of art from local and regional artists. Both museums are open Thursday – Sunday from noon to 4 pm. Admission and parking are free for both.

The three Arts District organizations –Emporia lofts, OMHA and CCMA – as well as other arts-related organizations, jointly participate in a quarterly Ontario Art Walk. During the Art Walk, both museums, the Emporia lofts and the arts-related organizations are open to visitors for exhibits, artist demonstrations, and other activities. The first Art Walk of 2022 will be held on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 6 pm to 9 pm.

Ontario Museum of History & Art

The Ontario Museum of History & Art is housed in Ontario's second City Hall, which was designated Historic Landmark #2 in 1993. The original city hall was the Ontario Country Club, purchased in 1910 for \$10,000 and used until 1934. In 1936, the building was leveled and construction, funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), was begun. The building is in the Mediterranean Revival style and designed by San Bernardino architect Dewitt Mitcham.

The building is U-shaped in plan with a Spanish tile hip roof, arched entries and two porticos supported by double Corinthian columns facing an informal garden. The total construction cost was \$100,000 and was completed in 1937. The building served as Ontario's City Hall until 1979 when a larger facility was built on C Street.

Due to the efforts of both citizen groups and city government, the former city hall was repurposed to house a history museum, which was established by the Ontario City Council in 1979. Following extensive renovations, the OMHA opened in July 1981. The Chaffey Community Museum of Art, then known as the Chaffey Community Art Association, provided the art programming for OMHA. This partnership continued through 2000, when CCAA left Ontario, relocating to the J. Filippi Winery in Rancho Cucamonga.

An important historical element of the OMHA grounds is the Frankish Fountain. Commissioned in 1886 as a symbol of prosperity, the fountain was initially located in the Euclid Avenue median near what is now Holt Boulevard. The Frankish Fountain was the second fountain placed on Euclid Avenue. The first fountain, built by the Chaffey brothers, was turned on when the trains came to town to show potential land buyers that Ontario had an adequate water supply.

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Ontario Arts District (Continued from page 16)

In 1952, the Frankish Fountain was threatened with demolition due to decades of disrepair. The community rallied for its preservation and restoration, and in 1983 it was relocated to the front of the historic old City Hall building during the Euclid Avenue underpass construction project. During construction, remnants of the original Chaffey Fountain were discovered and are now archived at OMHA. In 2015, Ontario artist Rick Caughman incorporated a stylized image of the Frankish Fountain as the dominant visual element of a redesigned logo for OMHA.

In 1996, OMHA renovated the historic City Council chambers with funds from private donations and a \$10,000 grant from the Ontario Community Foundation. The original council table and audience seating were restored and the room renamed the Faye Dastrup-Hammill Historic Council Chambers. The chambers are now used for OMHA program presentations and public meetings.

In 1997 the museum received a \$125,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop a permanent exhibit featuring Route 66. Called the *Road Ways* exhibit, it was opened to the public in 2003 and subsequently joined by a second historic exhibit, *Gem of the Foothills*, in 2006. In 2018, OMHA begins work on a new permanent exhibit, *Built on Water: Ontario and Inland Southern California*, to replace *Road Ways*. The new exhibit focuses on the history and future of water in the Ontario region and is expected to open in 2022.

Following the departure of the Chaffey Community Art Association in 2000, OMHA began art programming to augment its historical exhibits. In April 2002, the museum hosted the first *Ontario Invitational Art Exhibition* which continues today. The Invitational is held every other year, alternating with the *Ontario Open Art Exhibition*.



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Ontario Arts District (continued from page 17)

In 2013, OMHA replanted the Historic Rose Garden on the south side of the building. The Rose Garden features the Charlotte Armstrong rose, the official flower of the City of Ontario, along with other roses developed by Armstrong Nursery in Ontario.

In 2014, OMHA was awarded \$999,000 from the California National Resource Agency as an urban greening grant. The museum used the funds to transform the museum grounds into gardens with native and drought-tolerant/water efficient plantings and other water conservation features.

Today OMHA is part of a City of Ontario agency named Community Life & Culture. Established in 2018, CL&C brings together OMHA, the Ontario City Library and Recreation Department to provide a full range of cultural and recreational activities to residents and visitors.

The Chaffey Community Museum of Art

In 2021, the Chaffey Community Museum of Art celebrated its 80th anniversary. Established in 1941 by Ontario residents Francis and Helen Line, CCMA today is a full partner with OMHA in bringing arts and culture to Ontario and the surrounding area.

CCMA's art collection includes outstanding examples of art created by artists living and working in the Pomona Valley in the 1930s, 40s and 50s. Begun by the Lines and supported by Millard Sheets, the collection was the first regional effort to preserve works of art by major contemporary artists from the 1940s into the present. Its historical significance is self-evident: there is no other institution like this in the Pomona Valley.



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Model Colony News

Ontario Arts District (continued from page 18)

Originally known as the Chaffey Community Art Association (CCAA), the organization's bylaws set out its purpose: *to stimulate and foster art interest, education and enjoyment in the Chaffey Community*. True to the philosophy of "provincialism" – a fostering of community on a human scale, to include enlivened arts and literature and loyalty to moral significant of local life – an art association would serve the needs of prosperous Ontario residents including "gentlemen farmers" and businessmen.

Forming an art association was a recognized method to bring culture to regional communities, to serve lay people who wanted a museum or artists who wanted to place to exhibit art for sale. CCMA's founders, Francis (1904 – 1999) and Helen (1907 – 1993) Line, were lifelong adventurers, travelers, authors and documentarians. Married in 1928, they moved to Ontario in 1929 to be close to Helen's family, then living in Chino. In the 1930s they formed a successful company producing travel and educational films. In May 1941, shortly after the tragic loss of their young daughter Barbara to leukemia, the Lines proposed a living memorial in a presentation to the Chaffey Union High School Board of Trustees. The Lines would purchase water color and oil paintings which would be donated to CUHS as the nucleus and beginning of an art collection. In addition, the Lines would organize an annual Purchase Prize exhibition to be held each fall for the purpose of adding to the collection.

The proposal was accepted by the Board of Trustees, and the Lines began the process of visiting artists to "gather together and purchase" nine paintings to be the Barbara Line Memorial Art Collection. The first Purchase Prize exhibition was held in October 1941, resulting in the addition of four more paintings to the collection – two purchased and two donated by the artists. The exhibition lasted one week, and was attended by over 5000 visitors.

Over the years, the Lines became lifelong friends with prominent Pomona Valley artists: Millard Sheets, Philip Dike, Conrad Buff, Phil Paradise, Rex Brandt, Emil Kosa, Jr., Jean Goodwin Ames and Anders Aldrin. The annual Purchase Prize exhibitions continued until 1963, when the increasing student population of both Chaffey High School and Chaffey Junior College forced discontinuance of the shows. One final exhibit was held on the campus in 1979 in the Chaffey Memorial Library to celebrate CCMA's 35th anniversary.

From its founding in 1941 until 1979, CCMA did not have a permanent home to exhibit its collection. From 1941 to 1950, the collection was displayed at the Chaffey Memorial Library and circulated to other schools, public libraries and social service agencies and to banks, law offices and retailers. Deemed a "living art gallery", the goal was to educate and develop art appreciation in the broadest possible regional population. However, circulation of the collection demanded considerable effort from the volunteer membership as well as causing wear and tear on the artwork.

In 1943, as World War II raged, the annual exhibit had to be moved from the Chaffey campus, which had become an army training facility. The exhibit advertisement stated "In this year of war, it seems doubly important to keep alive the aesthetic forces." There was no purchase prize that year; instead, over 40 original paintings by leading Southern California artists were privately purchased from the exhibit by CCAA members and other patrons of the arts.

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Ontario Arts District (continued from page 19)

During the 1950s, there were monthly exhibits at the First National Bank of Ontario with 10% of sale proceeds going to CCAA. In 1963 when Chaffey High School was no longer a venue for the annual Purchase Prize exhibition, CCAA switched to “Art in Public Places” in locations such as banks and public libraries. This continued until 1981, when CCAA joined with the Ontario Museum of History and Art to present the art programming in the newly-renovated historic City Hall building. This was the first time in its 40 year history that CCAA had a permanent home.

In 1984, at the request of Francis Line, the Chaffey Union High School District transferred ownership of the Barbara Line Memorial Collection to CCAA. In 1985, the Harriet White collection, divided between her works of art and those of other artists she had collected, became the official property of CCAA.

By 2000, the success of both CCAA and OMHA meant that the space in the historic city hall building was too small for both organizations. The J. Filippi Winery, originally established in 1906 as the Regina Winery, offered gallery space to CCAA. Lou Ann Svenson, then the CCAA board president (and wife of sculptor John Svenson), oversaw the move. She insisted on designating CCAA as a museum, and had the word *Museum of Art* added after CCAA. Her husband designed the organization’s logo.

The move had its challenges. A flood in the gallery space damaged several works of art, and CCAA lost control of its hours of operation. Nevertheless, CCAA continued with many important exhibitions during its tenure at the winery. Its *Artist of the Year* program was initiated in 2005.

After 12 years at the winery, in 2013 CCAA moved back to Ontario as the sole tenant of its own building, the historic 1919 Ontario Power Company. The building had become the property of the City of Ontario in 1989 and had housed a series of city departments – including the Ontario Museum of History & Art during the renovation of its building.

The move back to Ontario was championed by Ontario City Council Member Debra Dorst Porada, who strongly advocated for the integration of art in civic life. The move also brought a final name change, to the present Chaffey Community Museum of Art.

To celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2016, CCMA held a dinner and art auction dubbed the Fete Musee. The evening featured a presentation by Adrienne Line Knute, the younger daughter of CCMA’s founders Francis and Helen Line. As part of the anniversary celebrations, actors from Ontario Heritage portrayed Francis and Helen Line planning the establishment of CCAA.

The return to Ontario and the advantageous location across Lemon Avenue from OMHA has provided the springboard for new collaborations between the two museums. In 2018, the two organizations presented a joint exhibition – one exhibit in two locations – entitled *Sheets, Sheets and Caughman: Art for Living and Living for Art* featuring the art of Millard Sheets, his son Tony Sheets, and Ontario artist Rick Caughman (the designer of OMHA’s updated logo). In 2020, the two museums presented *Shaping Wood, Shaping Artists: Sam Maloof* featuring Sam Maloof and his protégés and intellectual heirs Larry White, Mike Johnson, Stephen Johnson and

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Ontario Arts District (continued from page 20)

Lauren Verdugo. In 2022, the two museums will be presenting its third collaborative exhibition, whose working title is *Women Artists of the Pomona Valley*.

2018 also brought the first Ontario Festival of the Arts as a joint project of Ontario's Community Life & Culture agency, OMHA and CCMA. The festival was continued in 2019 and 2021, after COVID-19 forced cancellation in 2020.

To commemorate its 80th anniversary and document the importance of the collection, CCMA in November 2021 released *Portrait of a Community: the Collection of the Chaffey Community Museum of Art*. Written by Dr. Wendy Slatkin, retired professor of art history at Cal Poly Pomona and author of *Women Artists in History* and published by Inlandia Institute in Riverside, California, whose purpose is to "deepen the public's understanding, awareness and appreciation of this unique, complex and creatively vibrant region", the book strives to illuminate the artists and their works and to place them in a scholarly context.

- Part I of the book provides brief articles which bring together a number of sources to position the CCMA in the history of the Pomona Valley. Adam Arenson, author of the definitive volume *Banking on Beauty: Millard Sheets and Midcentury Commercial Architecture in California* (Austin TX, University of Texas Press, 2018) has contributed an essay in Part I.
- Part II focuses on the individual artists whose works form the core of the CCMA's collection. Each artist's biography is accompanied by a work from the collection and an interpretive essay for the artist's work. These selected creators and their paintings or sculpture represent the highlights of the collection.
- Part III looks at two local artists, Robert George and Harriet White, whose *oeuvres* are represented by a relatively large number of pieces and which were acquired in a different manner than the bulk of the collection.
- Part IV includes important regional artist who have been singled out for *Artist of the Year* recognition. These awards began in 2005 and continued to 2020. By placing these exceptional artists in a chronological group, the continued vitality of the Pomona Valley is documented. The book concludes with a brief discussion of the *Art at the Airport* program, indicating the outreach of CCMA into for the community.

Source: City of Ontario Planning Department Historic Preservation Information; *Portrait of a Community: the Chaffey Community Museum of Art Collection*.



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Board Members

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2021 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



Ontario Heritage Membership Form (December 31, 2021 to December 31, 2022)

*Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City: _____ State: _____

*Zip Code: _____

*Phone: _____

*Mobile Phone: _____

*E-Mail: _____

* Required Information

Membership Categories (For the 2021 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

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