

Model Colony News



Upcoming Heritage Events

Annual Golf Tournament—Friday, March 15, 2024 @ Whispering Lakes Golf Course

Quarterly Potluck— April 2024. Exact date & location TBD

Historic Home Tour—Saturday, May 4, 2024

Annual Cemetery Tour—Saturday, October 12, 2024

Inside This Issue

Upcoming Heritage Events	1
Contact Information	1
Heritage Corner	2
Historic Places	8
Board Members	12
Membership Form	13

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VOLUNTEERS WANTED

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volunteer your time at our
events, please contact us at:
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Heritage Corner

Euclid Avenue

Euclid Avenue was designed and laid out in 1882 by George and William Chaffey to be the backbone and centerpiece for the “Model Irrigation Colony”. The brothers designed the avenue to be both beautiful and functional. Euclid Avenue had provisions for an electric railway, water rights for each landowner, electric lights, long distance telephone lines, and a local educational institution (Chaffey College of Agriculture). All of these components were integral to the growth and development that occurred along the avenue.



The avenue was named for George Chaffey’s favorite mathematician, the Greek Eukleides who is known as the father of geometry. The avenue was designed to run from San Antonio Heights at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains at the north end of the colony to its southern edge at the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. Construction of the avenue began in 1882 under the Chaffey brothers’ direct supervision and by 1884, four miles of the avenue had been graded.

The 60-foot-wide median was landscaped with palm trees, faster growing pepper trees and deodar cedar trees. The curbs and streets were made of granite cobblestone. The cobblestone streets have been paved over with asphalt and are no longer visible; though in some areas the rocks are still visible in the curbs. The curbs are now considered an historic element and are being protected by the City of Ontario.

Construction of Euclid Avenue fulfilled a primary design goal of the Chaffey family for the Ontario Colony by providing a main thoroughfare from one end of the settlement to the other. Their intent was to lay out and landscape the boulevard in such a way that it would remain a beautiful enhancement to the community. The boulevard was thus a basic element in the original community plan.

The trolley line on Euclid Avenue served as a public transportation system for the colony which later became two communities: Ontario and Upland. Its rows of trees, a basic element of the street as designed by George Chaffey, have brought both communities national recognition. For years the boulevard was regarded as one of the most remarkable landscape architectural achievements of its era. Although the society that existed in the inland

(Continued on page 3)

Heritage Corner (continued from page 2)

citrus belt of San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Riverside Counties has largely been engulfed by urban growth and the large groves have been replaced by residential development. Euclid Avenue remains a testimony to the unique type of community that evolved with the citrus industry of San Bernardino County during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



In 1886, the Chaffey brothers sold their remaining land holdings in Ontario to Charles Frankish and departed for Australia. Frankish formed the Ontario Land and Improvement Company, purchased land south of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and continued construction of Euclid Avenue to conform with the Chaffey brothers plan.

By the 1930s, Euclid Avenue had received widespread recognition as an outstanding example of landscape architecture and was known as “one of the most beautiful boulevards in the world”. In 1979, the section of Euclid and the median from 24th Street in Upland to Philadelphia Street in Ontario was found to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Euclid Avenue is significant in three areas: community planning, landscape architecture, and transportation. Each area reflects the vision of the avenue’s designers, George and William Chaffey and the efforts by citizens of the communities of Upland and Ontario for the last 100 years. Euclid Avenue is the core entity from which these two distinct communities emerged, and it remains the primary link between them. It is the oldest landmark in Ontario and Upland.



(Continued on page 4)

Heritage Corner (continued from page 3)

Ontario's Euclid Avenue Historic District

Euclid Avenue is a 200 foot wide right of way with a 60 foot wide landscape median and 15 foot wide parkways. Given its size and grandeur, Euclid Avenue is the centerpiece of Ontario from when it was built to the present. The improvements within the right of way are part of what creates the character and framework for the district.

The Euclid Avenue Historic District is the area from the city's northern boundary at the I-10 freeway south to G Street with three lanes of travel in each direction. The District includes all property that fronts Euclid Avenue and was built between 1888 and 1965. Buildings within these boundaries differ depending on when they were developed.



There are six periods of development within the District:

- *Period of Settlement.* The first period of development, known as the Period of Settlement, was from 1888-1900. Victorian architecture was popular during this era and there are grand and modest examples of the style along Euclid Avenue.
- *Period of Solidification.* The years 1901-1920 is considered the Period of Solidification. Ontario became established and Craftsman architecture became popular during this period.
- *Progressive Era.* The years 1920 through 1930 are the Progressive Era. The Era was a boom time for Southern California as industries related to oil production, citrus, and tourism increased dramatically. Many middle-class homes constructed during this period were designed to conjure romantic times and faraway places including French Eclectic and Spanish Revival architectural styles.
- *Depression Era.* From 1930 to 1936, Depression Era homes were constructed more modestly with smaller scale vernacular bungalows absent of any particular architectural style. The late 1930s brought about new construction for Chaffey High School through Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding, as well as other civic buildings and infrastructure throughout the City. As population grew, a building surge of new homes occurred, despite a supply shortage and restriction on materials during the war.
- *Post-War Era.* The 1940s, known as the Post-War Era, saw a decline in new construction and remodeling until about 1944 when industry shifted from war production to post-war production. General Electric and Exchange

(Continued on page 5)

Heritage Corner (continued from page 4)

Orange Products expanded, constructing new buildings and adding new jobs. By 1946, 743 new homes were constructed in the Early Post War Tract, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch architectural styles.

· **1950s.** During the 1950s, Ontario's population swelled to 23,000. \$14 million of new construction was invested in the city with nearly \$11 million being allocated to new housing. During this period of development, zoning made its greatest impact on Euclid Avenue. The downtown began to expand from its center core north to I Street, displacing Victorian era single family homes. These homes were either converted to commercial uses, relocated to other parts of the city, or demolished and replaced with mid-century modern buildings and commercial uses.

It was during this period that architectural styles typically used on residential buildings were used on commercial buildings. Within the two-block segment of Euclid Avenue from G Street to I Street are two medical office buildings that have elements of the Ranch and the Early Post-War architectural styles. These single story buildings, which feature low pitch hipped roofs, large windows, and front yard setbacks, are compatible with the residential styles of the area.

Defining Features of the Euclid Avenue Historic District

Trees. The sixty foot (60') wide center landscape median in Euclid Avenue is heavily landscaped with California Pepper, Deodar Cedar, various Palm trees, turf and beds of Armstrong Roses. The median is edged with rock curb. There are periodic breaks in the median for cross traffic maneuvering. In the mid 2000's, the vehicular break in the median at Princeton Street was eliminated in order to improve safety in front of Chaffey High School.



(Continued on page 6)

Heritage Corner (continued from page 5)

The most prominent street tree along this portion of Euclid Avenue is the Silk Oak. Mature Silk Oaks line both the east and west sides of Euclid Avenue. Coast Live Oak (on West Fifth Street) and Camphor trees (on West Fourth Street) also have a significant presence within the district. In total, there are more than three dozen tree varieties within the district. These public trees reinforce the importance and grandeur of Euclid Avenue and the district as a whole. Given their maturity and number, special care is required to ensure these trees are protected.

Sidewalks. Within the historic district, most of the sidewalks along Euclid Avenue are scored with a square scoring pattern found in many of the older neighborhoods in Ontario. This sidewalk pattern is a unifying feature within the district.

In addition to historic buildings, the historic district includes public right of way improvements. The median, street lights, street trees, rock curbs, and streets are considered features which contribute to the significance of the historic district.



Curbs. The curb material found in early Ontario historic neighborhoods is indigenous rock. The curbs along Euclid Avenue were originally made of granite cobblestone and concrete and the gutters were made of cobblestone. The curb and gutter system were designed to act as channels for drainage coming from the local mountain which is a unique method of construction for its time. The majority of original rock curbs within the Euclid Avenue Historic District still exist today with minimal rock curb replacement. However, there are portions of rock curb along Euclid Avenue, predominately located south of G Street, that have been replaced over time.



(Continued on page 7)

Heritage Corner (continued from page 6)

Street lights. This historic district has a variety of street light styles. The original cast iron lampposts were replaced during the mid- 1920s with King Standard lampposts. Over time, these lights have been replaced by Cobra light fixtures by the City of Ontario and the California Department of Transportation to improve the safety for vehicular traffic along Euclid Avenue which is State Highway Route 83. While these later type of light fixtures may be necessary for safety, the preferred lighting is King Standard.

Front yard space. The front yard open space in the residential area of the historic district, while not within the right of way, is a character-defining feature of the neighborhood. Furthermore curb cuts, driveway widths, fencing (height, material, and location) and landscape features which interfere with open space may detract and alter this character-defining feature.



Example of rock curb with channel for water runoff

Historic Places

Banking in Ontario

The Ontario State Bank was the first bank in Ontario. It was organized by the Ontario Land and Improvement board members in 1887. (The Ontario Land and Improvement was the business started by Charles Frankish when he bought out the land holdings of George and William Chaffey who were moving to Australia.) Godfrey Stamm, a director of the Ontario Land and Improvement Company and later president of the Ontario State Bank, worked with Frankish to build a building to house the bank and other business. The building was located south of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks on the corner of Euclid Avenue and Main Street in a building that eventually covered the entire block (known as the Stamm bank block). The Stamm family lived in an apartment above the bank.

In 1895 the bank was robbed and Fred Stamm, son of Godfrey Stamm and a bank employee, was locked in the vault. Fred's brother George was summoned from 24th Street to get Fred out, traveling to the site on the Euclid Avenue mule car.

Besides the Ontario State Bank, the Stamm building housed E.H. Richardson's Pacific Electric Heating Company, the Ontario Record newspaper, Mr. Gazzola's barbershop (the first one in Ontario) and a bakery. Many years later, L. William Howell opened his store, "The House of a Million Items" in the space that had been occupied by Ontario State Bank. In 1974, Howell changed the name of his business to the Grand Palace and provided a location for antique stores.

Ontario's second bank, the Citizens Bank, was organized in 1890. In 1911, it was consolidated with its competitor, First National Bank, changed from a commercial bank to a savings bank and renamed Euclid Savings Bank. The following year (1912) it moved to the First National Bank of Ontario building where it stayed until 1919 when it relocated to the northwest corner of Euclid and Holt, remaining there until 1931.

In 1902, George Chaffey (who had returned to Ontario from Australia) and his son Andrew purchased the Ontario State Bank. They changed the name to the First National Bank of Ontario and relocated it to the southwest corner of Holt and Euclid (the Ohio Block) in early May. In 1931, the building was demolished and replaced with an Art Deco building designed by the Los Angeles architectural firm of Morgan, Walls and Clement. That building stands today.

Ontario National Bank was formed in 1911 and occupied the first floor of the Sweet Building (later known as Gemmel's Pharmacy) on the southwest corner of Euclid and B Street. Ontario National Bank was purchased by Liberty Bank in 1927. Liberty later became Bank of America.

(Continued on page 9)

Historic Places (continued from page 8)

Security State Bank, located on the northeast corner of Euclid and B St., was formed in 1923 and taken over two months after it opened by the Bank of Italy, which merged with Bank of America in 1928.

Citizens National Bank (not to be confused with Citizens Bank) was organized May 16, 1927, when Howard R. Berg, a longtime resident of Ontario and former director of the Ontario National Bank, was elected president. C.M. Huston, a fruit grower and packer, as well as banker in Rialto, was the manager. Reed C. Williams, cashier, had been with the First National Bank of Ontario. The assistant cashier was Wilmer White, formerly with the Ontario National Bank. Prominent local businessmen made up the Board of Directors. The bank was located on the northwest corner of Holt and Euclid in the Citizens Bank Building.

The bank grew from assets at the end of the first day of \$308,000 to \$1,430,000 in the twelve years, and the staff doubled from five to ten.

Initially, Citizens National Bank occupied the old 1903 Ferdinand building (also called Elks building) on the northeast corner of Euclid and Holt. The bank did extensive remodeling before moving into it, and at least twice during its 12 years of occupancy the bank improved its quarters.



(Continued on page 10)

Historic Places (continued from page 9)

By 1939 it was evident that Citizens National Bank needed entirely new facilities. It moved to the Walker building at 114 N. Euclid Avenue (just north of the Elks building) in the fall of 1939 after completing extensive remodeling. Originally built in 1914, the Walker Building in 1939 housed the Ontario Feed and Fuel Company. DeWitt Mitcham and Jay Dewey Harnish were the architects who planned the reconstruction. Only the old floor, which had been a skating rink at one time, was left of the original building. The Campbell Construction Company erected the new superstructure.

The building was two stories in height, with a ceramic veneer exterior of rich cream color, and the central main entrance was of dark green shading into black, also in ceramic finish. There were wrought iron gates and bronze lettering on the exterior wall and marquee over the main entrance.

Celotex panels (a type of insulating board) and acoustical ceiling were new features in the interior. Floors were of rubber tile in the main lobby and those in the private offices were carpeted. The fixtures were of Philippine mahogany with counters of micarta (a kind of resin material). Seats in the lobby were upholstered in leather. Tall windows on the north and a large central skylight aided the lighting. Provision was made to add a cooling system later. Space was provided on the ground floor and the second floor for four other firms.

Just three years later, on April 27, 1942, Citizens National Bank was acquired by Bank of America. The officers and employees remained in the new organization. Williams, then president of Citizens National Bank, became vice president in charge of Ontario activities for Bank of America. White became assistant manager and Mayor Taylor M. Peterson was in charge of new business promotion.

The united banks occupied the Citizen's building until moving into their present quarters at D Street and Euclid. Occupants for several years after that were a cafeteria and a smorgasbord restaurant.



Citizens National Bank of Ontario Twenty Dollar Image from 1929

(Continued on page 11)

Historic Places (continued from page 10)

It is interesting to note that of the four local banks from this time period

- Ontario State Bank (1887-1902) located on the southwest corner of Euclid and Main
 - First National Bank (1903-1967) located on the southwest corner of Euclid and Holt
 - Citizens Bank (1895-1911 and 1919-1931) located on the northwest corner of Euclid and Holt
 - Citizens National Bank (1927-1942) located on the northeast corner of Euclid and Holt
- all but the First National Bank of Ontario were eventually absorbed by the Bank of America.

Sources: Dreamers and Dwells: Ontario and Neighbors by Bernice Bedford Conley, April 1982; Diane Ayala, City of Ontario Planning Department.



Board Members

Board Members

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Model Colony News

Page 13

1st Quarter 2024

2024 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 (one year renewal)

*Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City: _____ State: _____

*Zip Code: _____

*Phone: _____

*Mobile Phone: _____

*E-Mail: _____

* Required Information

Membership Categories (For the 2024 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) _____

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