

MOORPARK MEMORIES

Winter 2020-21

Moorpark, Ventura County, California

President's Message

Happy New Year! Wow— what a year 2020 turned out to be! It is my sincere hope that this newsletter finds all of you safe and prosperous during this difficult time.

Although a global pandemic is something new to most of us, to me, it has kindled recollections of the 1918 influenza pandemic that infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide and ravaged the United States in 1918-1919. Research in local newspapers illustrates the many similarities between the influenza pandemic of 1918 and the COVID-19 pandemic we are facing today. Schools in Moorpark and all across Ventura County closed to keep students and teachers safe. The wearing of masks was strongly recommended and the city of Ventura enacted legislation mandating the wearing of a mask while in public with a fine of \$5 levied to those not obeying the order. In an effort to quell the spread of the disease, the city of Oxnard also closed saloons, pool and billiard halls, and soda fountains. The city's order stated that, "only places where the necessities of life are sold should be allowed to remain open." In mid-1919, the influenza pandemic had come to an end although occasional smaller outbreaks still occurred in the county.

We at the Historical Society know that the pandemic has affected so many families worldwide, as well as here in Moorpark. We send our deepest sympathies to all of you and your loved ones who have been affected by COVID-19 and look forward to the day when we can all return to some semblance of normalcy.

When restrictions are lifted, we look forward to again engaging with the public to continue our work of highlighting the history of our city and working to preserve its past. I thank you for your efforts to preserve our history and for your continued support of the Moorpark Historical Society!

Mike Winters, President



**Happy 100th Birthday,
Moorpark High**



Thank you to our Business and Corporate Sponsors!

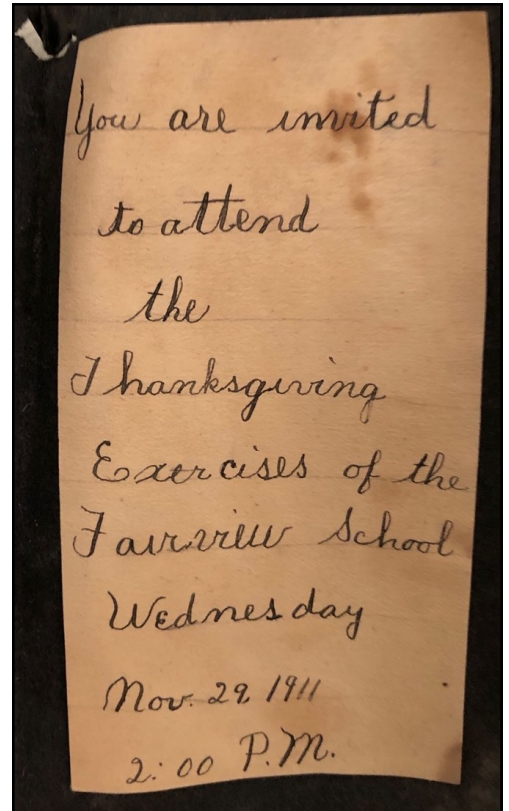


Recent Acquisition

1911 Invitation to Thanksgiving Exercises at Fairview School



Thank you to the Schwabauer family for their wonderful donation of this invitation to attend the Thanksgiving Exercises at the Fairview School on November 22, 1911. This 100+ year-old relic is a survivor that was found 20 years ago in the wall of the Freeman house located on Broadway Road, just north of Moorpark. The Fairview School was located at the west end of Broadway where it meets Stockton Road and served students who lived in this remote farming region. This area was also the home of the small community of Epworth, which was founded in 1892 and preceded the town of Moorpark.



In Memoriam— Mary Schwabauer

Mary Leavens Schwabauer, long-time educator, philanthropist, and founding member of the Moorpark Historical Society, passed away on September 19, 2020, at the age of 93.

In addition to her 35-year career as an educator, Mary devoted enormous time, energy and passion to Ventura County's civic, cultural and philanthropic institutions. She served on the Moorpark Memorial Union High School board; the Moorpark Chamber of Commerce as board member and president; the Los Robles Regional Medical Center board; the Moorpark Women's Fortnightly Club as board member and president; the California Federated Women's Club Tierra Adorada District as board member and president; the Ventura Master Chorale board; the New West Symphony board; the Moorpark Art Commission; the First Financial Federal Credit Union as board member and president; and the Ventura County Community Foundation board.



Mary and her late husband, Charlie, were charter members and past presidents of the Moorpark Historical Society. Mary was also a founding member and president of the Associated Historical Societies and Museums of Ventura County. She also served on the board and as president for the Rancho Camulos Museum, playing a key role in raising the funds necessary to restore it after the 1994 Northridge quake.

Mrs. Schwabauer was an ardent supporter of the Moorpark Historical Society and will greatly be missed.

History of Moorpark Schools– Part 2

As the population of the town grew, the schoolhouse was enlarged and extra buildings were added to accommodate the additional students. In 1928, it was decided that a new elementary school was needed and one was constructed on



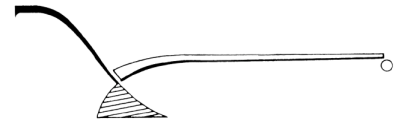
land purchased from the Flory family. The school, which originally served students in grades 1-8, was later named Flory School. The old schoolhouse on Charles Street was renamed Northside School and catered to Moorpark stu-

dents who were learning English. As the population of Moorpark continued to grow, new classrooms and an assembly hall were added. In the late 1950's, space was at a premium due to high enrollment and first grade



students were placed on a half-day schedule. The district decided that a second elementary school was needed and construction began on land purchased by the district on Poindexter Avenue. The new school opened on September 5, 1961 and was named Poindexter School. In the late 1980's, the name of the school was changed to Chaparral Middle School.

Since Moorpark's elementary school only served students through eighth grade, residents realized the importance of the town having its own high school. In 1909, townspeople petitioned the county to create a high school district in Moorpark. When their request was



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"Preserving the Past for the Future"

Board of Directors

Mike Winters	President
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Donations

We are working to preserve photographs, ephemera, and historical memorabilia that relate to the history of Moorpark, Epworth, and Fremontville. Donations are always welcome and we provide a mobile scanning service for those who would like us to come out to obtain copies from their collection. Please **Contact us** on our website if you have a donation or if you would like us to scan your historic Moorpark items!

History of Moorpark Schools– Part 2 (Cont.)

denied, the community created their own private high school in 1912. The school was housed in the Moorpark Women's Fortnightly Clubhouse on Charles Street and, although tuition was free, each student had to provide \$10 a year to cover the cost of the teacher. Finally, in February of 1920, Moorpark voters approved a school bond in the amount of \$85,000 to cover the cost of constructing a new public high school. On October 30, 1920, the cornerstone of the Moorpark Memorial Union High School was laid and construction began at a location just northwest of town (the present site of Walnut Canyon School.) This structure served the community of Moorpark until the late 1930's when it was demolished and



another school was built in approximately the same location. In the mid-1980's, work began on a new high school on 48 acres of land on Tierra Rejada Road. The new school, now officially renamed Moorpark High School, opened its doors in 1988.

In 1980, Moorpark voters approved the unification of Moorpark's elementary and high school districts and the new district was named the Moorpark Unified School District. At that time, the housing boom in Moorpark that had begun in the early 1980's made it necessary for the district to begin construction of many new schools to serve the town's growing population. A list of Moorpark schools is shown below.

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Year Established</u>
Arroyo West Active Learning Academy	1991
Campus Canyon College Preparatory Academy	1987
Chaparral Middle School	1961
Community High School	1982
Flory Academy of Sciences & Technology	1928
High School @ Moorpark College	2000
Mesa Verde Middle School	1994
Moorpark High School	1920
Mountain Meadows 21st Century Learning Academy	1987
Peach Hill Academy	1984
Walnut Canyon School	1998

March Madness Membership Drive

Keep an eye out in March for this year's annual membership drive! Due to the pandemic, 2020 membership fees were not collected so we are doubling our efforts this year to increase our number of members!

Membership



Matters!



Yearly Membership Options

Basic Memberships

Senior (55+)	\$15
Student	\$15
Individual	\$20
Family	\$25
Non-profit Organization	\$35

Business/Professional

Corporate	\$250
Professional	\$150
Retail/Commercial	\$100

Builder's Circle

Benefactor	\$1,000
Patron	\$500
Sponsor	\$250
Donor	\$125

One Hundred Years Ago in Moorpark

News from the Oxnard Press Courier

February 18, 1921

Moorpark Center of New Oil Activity- "Moorpark apparently is becoming the center of oil prospecting activity in Ventura County, and just now it is engaging the attention of some of the largest operators in the country, and some of the lesser ones— the "wild-catters" as well, and within another quarter of a year our landscape seems destined to be dotted with the drilling rigs of those who would seek fortune a la Rockefeller."

March 5, 1921

Strathearn County Park to be Improved- "The county is soon to begin the work of improving Strathearn Park, that beautiful oak grove about three miles east of Moorpark which last year was presented to the county by Robert P. Strathearn for the purpose of a public park." (*Editors Note: Strathearn Park is now known as Oak County Park*)

September 27, 1921

Ford Busses for Moorpark School- "The local Ford agents, Molen & Dingeman, have been given the order and have already filled it, for two Ford busses for the Moorpark Memorial High School. The busses are already in operation carrying the children to and from school."

September 19, 1921

Town of Moorpark to Have Water System- "There was a big crowd of people at Ventura from Moorpark at the last meeting of the board and in a tilt before the supervisors over the establishment of another water system for the town, to be known as Ventura County Water District No. 1."

History of Tanner's Corner

Where and what is Tanner's Corner?

Although you may not know the location by name, most Moorpark residents are familiar with the iconic brick building located on the northwest corner of Moorpark Avenue and High Street. Tanner's Corner, named after Moorpark resident Ira G. Tanner, has been a welcoming and historic part of High Street since the early days of our city. Tanner came to Moorpark in 1913 and opened his Mission Garage on the corner of Moorpark Avenue and High Street sometime around 1916. The brick facade was built circa 1917 and has become an iconic and recognizable landmark of downtown Moorpark, it represents one of the last of our city's historic commercial structures.



Tanner built up his business to include auto repair services, one of Moorpark's first gas stations, and eventually even an electronics store. When I.G. came to Moorpark, the town was, "...just dirt roads, a house or two and a few store buildings." In 1938, Tanner left his garage to become the superintendent of the water district in Moorpark, a position he held until 1953.

Mission Garage also served as Moorpark's first volunteer fire department starting in 1920. The department was organized by Mr. Tanner and he was the town's first fire chief. Early fire fighting equipment consisted of gunny sacks, shovels, and hoes. The department slowly raised enough money to purchase a modern chemical fire fighting rig and eventually a fire truck.



Moorpark's first and only courthouse was also located in one of the two small offices in the northern wing of Tanner's Corner. Judge Eugene Graham served as Justice of the Peace in Moorpark from 1930 to 1947.



The Historical Society is concerned that future development, such as Hitch Ranch and the construction of a new city hall and library, has put this historic structure in jeopardy of being torn down. **We urge you to join the Moorpark Historical Society in helping to raise awareness of the importance of this city landmark and to help prevent it from being lost forever!**

Visit our website to find out how you can help to preserve this Moorpark landmark!

www.preservetannerscorner.org

PRESERVE TANNER'S CORNER

Help to preserve Moorpark's historic past!