

SPECTACULAR FIRE CAUSES SMALL LOSS

RETIREES

Refinery Blaze Laid to Carelessness



"CHARLIE" TABER
... adopts less exciting routine

A quarter of a century of duty as a law enforcement officer came to an end last week-end for Deputy Sheriff Charlie R. Taber of Lomita.

He retired to enjoy a routine somewhat less exciting than patrolling the county area adjacent to Torrance and will continue to live with his wife at 2128 Lomita boulevard, their home for many years.

"Charlie," as he is familiarly known to hundreds of residents in this district, resigned because of a weak heart condition which he said, "isn't very good for a man who has to carry a gun."

Taber served the county sheriff's office for 15 years. Prior to that he was deputy sheriff in Inyo county for a decade. Immediately on joining the Los Angeles county sheriff's department, the Lomita man was made constable for what was then Lomita township.

He served in that capacity for many years while the community had its own justice court. During the past two years he was on general assignment to a radio patrol car from the Vermont avenue sub-station. His district continued to include all the Lomita and adjoining county territory.

Wooldridge
Herald
Circulation Mgr. **Writes**

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Fear that the huge tanks of crude oil would explode—one did—kept a crowd of several hundred spectators at considerable distance from the fire which swept a portion of the Torrance Refinery at Lincoln and Border avenues early Tuesday morning.

The blaze, largest in appearance since the General Petroleum refinery plant \$10,000 fire last November 14, kept city firemen working more than six hours before it was extinguished.

Despite the fire's appearance of being a major conflagration, the actual damage appears to be well under \$1,000. It was learned yesterday. The boilers were not damaged and only one large tank of oil was destroyed.

The refinery, located east of the city park, and its tanks threw a haze into the sky that was visible for several miles during the peak of the fire.

Firemen summoned to the scene at 12:05 a. m., learned that the blaze started when a delivery of crude oil from a tanker accidentally allowed to overflow a reservoir tank and drain about 70 feet to run under a boiler.

Carelessness Blamed

John Stroh, fire and police chief, flatly declared the costly blaze was due to "pure carelessness—the same cause for 90 percent of all fires." He said investigation showed the truck driver was negligent in attending to his duty of supervising the unloading of the crude oil. Only one employee was working about the plant at the time.

The refinery had recently been taken over by Walter Parker of Los Angeles and had been in operation for the past three days. Parker had spent several weeks in getting the plant in shape to resume operations. He lost some valuable instruments, in addition to buildings and machinery, when a small shed that he used for an office was consumed by the flames.

Two Trucks Used

A tank containing about 1,500 barrels of high gravity crude oil exploded about 20 minutes after the firemen were summoned and, although several fire-fighters narrowly escaped being showered by the blazing fluid recently tapped from the underground pools in South Torrance, none were injured.

More than 1,800 feet of hose were laid during the night and early morning hours to direct streams of water and chemicals on the inferno. It was not until 6:30 Tuesday morning that all danger of further damage was at an end and the weary firemen began loading their oil-soaked equipment back into the two city trucks called to the blaze for the return trip to central fire station.

16 Men on Duty

The main water line was laid from the nearest hydrant, at the alley south of Plaza del Amo on California. In addition to the tank wrecked by exploding oil, the 250-barrel reserve tank that was receiving the load which caused the blaze, was destroyed. Two other tanks were also badly damaged.

Heat and concern that the blazing oil would explode and shower fiery waves down around

Alien Relievers Transferred from SRA to WPA Jobs

Employment will be given on WPA projects to persons drawn from the list of SRA clients, to replace those who are being removed from WPA rolls because they could not fulfill citizenship qualifications, according to Herbert C. Legg, WPA director for Southern California.

At the end of the week, some 51,000 affidavits of citizenship had been filed with Legg's office, out of some 54,000 on work relief on projects in virtually every community of the county, and in the eight Southern counties.

Approximately 1000 persons disclosed that they were unable to furnish affidavits of citizenship at the close of the week, and all persons in this predicament will be transferred over to the SRA, it was explained. Other able-bodied persons will be named to WPA rolls to take their places so that projects will not be extended beyond the scheduled completion date, it was stated.

Non-Partisan League Election Set for March 20

A second organization meeting of Labor's Non-Partisan League was held last Saturday at the Steelworkers' hall on Cravens avenue across from the central fire station. George Ryan, temporary chairman, presided over the gathering which was attended by a number of representative local workers and church leaders.

It was decided to hold election of officers at the same hall Monday night, March 20, at 7:30 o'clock. All interested are urged to attend.

The plant kept spectators more than 200 feet from the plant. Firemen were constantly warned by Stroh to be on alert for danger spots in various portions of the plant. Sixteen regular and volunteer members of the department turned out for duty when the first alarm was received.

Public Asked to Cooperate With Deputy Assessors

Field deputy assessors began their annual canvass Monday. In order that the work may be efficiently and expeditiously done, John R. Quinn, county assessor, asks the cooperation of all taxpayers.

War veterans may now make claims for exemption. The last day for this is June 30. Real estate tax bills will be mailed only to taxpayers who have filed a statement with the assessor each year during the assessing season. Statements may be made to the deputy when he calls at the home or place of business, or taxpayer may make his statement at any office of the assessor during the assessing season. Value placed upon statements made in any office of the county assessor will be subject to inspection and revision by the field deputies.

Students and Publisher Bid to News Day

Four student journalists and their instructors from Torrance high school, as well as Grover C. Whyte, publisher of The Herald, have been invited to attend the 17th annual Newspaper Day to be held at the U.S.C. campus March 25.

Included on the program will be a series of addresses by prominent newspaper editors and correspondents, awards of the Cronkitt Allen and Daily Trojan trophies to the best high school and junior college papers, afternoon conferences and a luncheon in the foyer of Town and Gowen.

The Cronkitt Allen trophy for the high school paper showing the greatest improvement in 1938 over the previous year will be presented at the luncheon by former Governor Frank F. Merriam. In addition to the meetings of editors and business managers, the California Newspaper Publishers' association will meet at 8 o'clock in the afternoon.

Speakers include: Robert H. Berkow, author of "Chiang Kai-Shek, The Strong Man of China," former correspondent in China; Paul Steierman, editor of the Berlin Tageblatt; Christy Fox, society editor of the Los Angeles Times; J. Boyd Stephens, managing editor of the San Diego Sun, and S. C. President R. B. von Kleinsmid.

For a young woman who learned to drive a car under parental compulsion, Miss Edna Mullin has done very well by Oldsmobile.

And Oldsmobile has retaliated by doing the right thing by Miss Mullin. She is the only woman sales agent for that popular car who won the coveted salesleader award this year—one of the 186 top-notch salesmen in the entire United States and one of the eight in the Southland to achieve this distinction.

When the actual prizes were distributed at a recent Southern California Oldsmobile festivity in Los Angeles, the donors had to vary their offerings of gold-plated electric razors when they came to the Torrance winner. She received a beautiful pet-point evening bag with compact to match in addition to the diamond-studded salesleader badges given all winners in the U. S.

Based on Friendship

That distinction is the highest in the Oldsmobile scale—but if they make any higher ones Miss Mullin's friends here are confident that she will take them, too. She received the salesmaker's club awards in 1936 and 1937, having sold the requisite number of cars in those years to qualify.

Altho her father, Arthur Mullin, has been in the automobile business here since 1925, she did not become interested in the game until 1936—and then she found the sales end most interesting. Miss Mullin cannot explain why, except that:

"I must have a lot of friends because most of my sales are based on friendship. Of course



MISS EDNA MULLIN
... one in only 186 in U. S.

I'm selling the best car on the market but I think that friendship has a lot to do with my sales record," she says.

Father Mullin practically had to force his daughter Edna into the driver's seat of a car and he spent an arduous month teaching her to drive much against her

Stamp Club Elects New Officers Here

At a meeting of the Torrance Philatelic club in the Public Library hall this week, George Moran was elected president, Walter C. Bradford became the secretary and gave an interesting talk on the history of the U. S. Airmail, illustrated with some of his fine collection of airmail stamps and covers. Fred Hopkins was chairman of the meeting.

The next session of the club in the library hall will be held Tuesday, March 21, at 7:30 o'clock. At that time Harold Andrus, who specializes in stamps of the Scandinavian countries will speak and have on display his collection of 210 of the 239 stamps issued in those countries. The club meets the first and third Tuesdays of every month in the library.

Dr. Knopf of U. S. C. Speaks Here Mar. 15

Dr. Carl Sumner Knopf, popular Dean of the School of Religion at the University of Southern California will open the third conference on wholesome living in the high school assembly hall next Wednesday, March 15, at 1:45 p. m. As in the two gatherings previously held, students will have first chance to ask questions in the afternoon conference.

Dr. Knopf will take as his topic: "Science and Religion." It is doubtful if another man in the country could be found who would excel him in this theme. He is a noted archaeologist and his books concerning the relation of archaeology and religion have become almost authority.

For the evening meeting at 7:30 o'clock on March 15 the speaker will be Rev. Hugh Noble, pastor of the Downey Community Presbyterian church. Rev. F. T. Porter has enlisted the service of Rev. Noble and he will bring the message from the point of view of a local minister. His church is equipped to do a good many things for a community in social and recreative activities. An invitation is given all citizens of Torrance to attend these meetings. Special music is being planned by Mrs. Marjorie Elschen Cooke of the high school music department.

STRESS RHYTHM

Rhythmic dancing is being taught a group of 40 Torrance high school girls by Miss D. Richardson. Later they will present an assembly program.

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