

FOUR CRITICALLY BURNED IN GAS BLAST

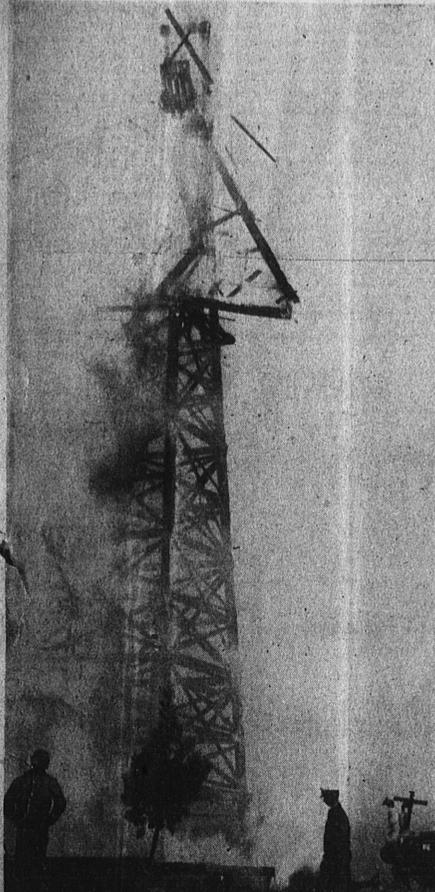
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AIDS SMUDGING—Ignited when a slipping drive belt became overheated, this crumbling oil well derrick of the Consolidated Petroleum Co., located at 2465 West 229th street, added to the dense pall of smoke that hung over the city Tuesday morning. The \$3000 fire accomplished little in warming up Torrance's coldest morning since 1877. No one was hurt although four persons were injured in another oil well blast that occurred practically at the same time in another part of the city. —Herald Photo.



INJURED IN BLAST—Burned severely in an early morning oil well gas explosion, Garth Worden is comforted by his wife while receiving plasma at the Torrance Memorial Hospital where he was rushed Tuesday morning by fellow workers. —Herald Photo.



SHE WAS THE ORCHID—Mrs. Earl Bird, 634 Sartori avenue, points to Jan. 1 to show her new daughter Earlene, the day she arrived to become the first Bird . . . oops, we mean, baby to be born in Torrance in 1949. Earlene Patricia weighed in at seven pounds six ounces at Torrance Memorial Hospital one hour and 26 minutes after the new year began. Orchid corsage was presented to mother by James Yeltama of the Torrance Flower Shop. —Herald Photo.

BENEFITS OF CITY MANAGER SYSTEM NEAR REALIZATION

The legal road will be cleared within a few days for the appointment of City Engineer George W. Stevens to the post of city manager, according to reports from Sacramento and the Torrance City Hall. The State Legislature, which convened Jan. 3, is scheduled to ratify the city charter amendment setting up the office of city manager as one of its first legislative acts, according to Assemblyman Vincent Thomas from this district, who is handling the matter at Sacramento.

Amendments to Charter Pass House

Amendments outlawing draw poker, establishing a city manager type of government and the changing of school board election dates was approved by the State Assembly early this week, and it was expected that the amendments to the Torrance City Charter would be oked by the Senate before the week's end, the Herald learned late yesterday.

Sponsored by Vincent Thomas, assemblyman from the 68th district, the amendments were first approved by the rules committee of the assembly and later by the full house.

Senator Jack B. Tenney was scheduled to bring the action before the Senate this week.

The amendments would become effective immediately upon the ratification by the legislature and upon the recording of the action by Secretary of State Frank Jordan. The proposed amendments would outlaw draw poker houses similar to those now in operation in Gardena, establish a city manager's post and, separate from the political elections, the election of members of the Board of Education and other matters pertaining to the management of school district affairs.

WM Shivers, Wires East for Charts

We walked into the shivering Weather Man's office just in time to catch him finishing the following telegram to Chicago:

"Please rush immediately eastern-type weather charts that will show low temperature of 25 degrees. Torrance charts are not that low."

We were told that on Tuesday morning the mercury slid down to a record-smashing low of 25 degrees—the coldest recorded temperature listed with the U. S. Weather Bureau in Los Angeles since 1877.

Official recordings for the week were:

Day	Maximum	Minimum
Dec. 29	67	35
30	68	45
31	67	45
Jan. 1	61	35
2	59	40
3	54	31
4	65	35

It may be possible for the Legislature to act on the matter this week, and as the Secretary of State usually affixes his signature and seal to such documents immediately, the Torrance City Council will be in position to appoint Stevens at its regular meeting next Tuesday, Jan. 11.

While under the law it was not possible for Stevens to have the title of City Manager until the charter amendment could be ratified, as City Engineer he has done much of the chief administrative work of the city in cooperation with the City Council.

When the task of overseeing the city affairs became too burdensome for individual councilmen to handle efficiently on their hours away from their private work, the City Council last January persuaded Stevens to resign his post as City Man-

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Injuries Few in City's New Year's Traffic

Perhaps the number of accidents during the Christmas week-end threw a safe-driving scare into motorists during the three-day New Year holiday.

Whatever it was it was rather effective as only one injury accident occurred in Torrance during the New Year ushering-in festivities, according to police records.

However, accident reports filed by the Los Angeles Sheriffs indicated that five Torrance residents were injured in two New Year's crashes on the outskirts of the city.

Reported yesterday to be in serious condition at Harbor General Hospital, was Mrs. Velma Simmons, co-owner of Doc's Fountain, Torrance's unofficial teenage ice cream night club at Torrance boulevard and Portola avenue.

Mrs. Simmons received internal injuries and cuts in a head-on crash on Carson street near Wilmington boulevard at 1:30 a.m. on New Year's morning.

Occupants of the other car, Francis Tapla, 19; Louis Rosales, 21 and Manuel Rosales, 19, also were treated at the Harbor General Hospital.

In another crash, deputies reported that three Torrance residents were injured in a New Year's Eve auto accident at the intersection of Narbonne avenue and Pacific Coast highway.

Deputies reported the injured persons to be Harry Snyder, 65, of 623 Sartori avenue, head abrasion; Mame Snyder, 53, of the same address, shock; and Ruth McClung, 53, same address, shock.

Drivers of the cars involved were Carl M. McClung, 53, of the Torrance address, and Julius E. Crow, 28, San Pedro, deputies reported.

The only accident actually in the Torrance city limits occurred at 190th street and Crenshaw boulevard at 4 a.m. New Year's morning and brought injuries to Martha A. Hamble, 30 years, of Long Beach and Lela May Richardson, 23, of Gardena.

The women were passengers in two cars, one of which rammed the other in the rear during an early morning fog. Police accident reports indicate that the auto being driven by Don Davis Brown of Wilmington struck the rear of the car being driven by Earl LeRoy Richardson of Gardena.

A number of minor accidents were reported to the Torrance Police Department but there were no injuries involved, according to the reports.



NEW DIRECTORATE—These are the newly-elected officers and directors of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, who began their terms of office this week. They are, left to right, seated: W. T. Tillotson, vice president; Charles Ver Jones, new president, and Reed Parkin, vice president. Standing: Charles T. Rippey, retiring president; Bob Haggard, Grover C. Whyte, Robert Plomer, Dean L. Sears, treasurer; J. H. Hull, superintendent of schools, and Blaine Walker, executive secretary. Another new director, Henry Creeger, was ill and unable to attend. (Story on Page 2)

New Building in 1948 Hits All-Time Peak

Clanging of hammer heads against nails rang louder in 1948 than at any other time in the history of Torrance, a recent survey of building permit records revealed.

A scant \$31,000 kept the mark from topping the \$8,000,000 figure, but still topped 1947, the previous record year, by more than \$300,000, according to figures compiled in the office of John Patrick, building inspector.

Actual value of the permits granted during last year totaled \$7,979,825. The year started slowly with February hitting the low mark with only \$190,650 but climbed steadily and toward the end of the year, September broke records with the figure of \$1,379,400 being granted for new and remodeling construction work.

Nearly three-fourths the value of permits granted were for the construction of new homes by private builders and by Pallasades Builders, Biltmore Homes and Palos Verdes Apartments. New home construction reached the \$5,697,388 mark by the end of the year and topped all previous residential records.

The high mark set in 1942 of \$7,679,690 was attributed largely to a number of industries who were building in the city during the war years.

Inspector Patrick was aided in compiling the 1948 figures and in the issuing of building permits by Kenneth Bradford and Ladene Hamman.

Have You Been Counted? New Total Nearing

Have you been counted? The U. S. Bureau of the Census is completing its special census of the city, and it is important that this census include all the people who were residing in the city on Dec. 29, the official date of the census.

If you were living here and believe that you were not enumerated for the census, you may call at the census supervisor's office in the City Hall before Jan. 8 and fill out an official card.

If you cannot get to his office a standard form will be provided for you to fill out. Be sure you are counted!

INSTALL WATER LINE

Installation of 1700 feet of new water line for Harbor General Hospital is under way this week by the Hood Construction company, at a cost of \$199,



WORKING GAVEL—Retiring President Charles T. Rippey presents the Chamber's "working gavel" to Charles Ver Jones, incoming president. (Upper and Lower Photos by Lee Weinstein)

Time for Decision Critical Situation Confronts Community Chest in Torrance

We who make our homes here have reached the crossroads.

We have failed to meet our Community Chest goal in both Torrance and Lomita. The entire Community Chest in the Los Angeles area is short by at least \$1,500,000.

Torrance has raised approximately 60 per cent of its quota of \$10,677, according to Chairman B. T. Whitney, while Lomita has reported about 25 per cent of the \$1860 goal there, according to Ronald Coll, leader for Lomita.

Are we going to permit breakdown of social services which we have built up during the last 100 years to meet our essential human needs, and so weaken the health, welfare and morale on which our community and our national life depend?

The situation is that serious.

From Jan 10 to 13 we must make up the difference. If we don't, our 159 hospitals, clinics, children's homes, youth organizations, services which help prevent broken homes, those which help people in trouble, and scores of others will have to curtail their work.

Curtalement of services will bring about an ugly condition of human neglect which affects children more than anyone else, but from which the entire community will suffer.

Here is a small part of what can happen if we do not finish our job for our Community Chest agencies:

588 children might remain crippled for life;

158 very sick children might have to be refused by Children's Hospital;

33,217 fewer clinic visits next year for ailing children.

Will you help prevent this suffering by making an additional contribution? Send whatever you can to district headquarters at 1339 Post avenue, Torrance, or to headquarters, 729 South Figueroa street, Los Angeles.

Fire Hydrant for Walteria

Installation of a fire hydrant at the corner of Ocean avenue and Newton street, Walteria, has been authorized by the Torrance City Council on recommendation of Fire Chief John E. McMaster.

Torrance Man Is Low Bidder

C. B. Bagnall, Torrance contractor, submitted the low bid at \$310,450 for the construction of the University of California Elementary school at the UCLA campus.

BLAZE SEARS WORKMEN ON OIL WELL JOB

This week's record cold snap was declared responsible for an oil well gas explosion that caused serious burns to four Torrance residents early Tuesday morning.

The injured men are: Paul T. Smith, 38 years, of 2204 Torrance boulevard; Garth Worden, 36, of 1635 West 214th street; Fred Eyraud, 46, of 1604 Greenwood avenue.

Russell Jackson, 30, of 5700 Beryl street.

The blast is believed to have been caused when sparks from a bonfire ignited the gas saturated clothing of the men who were working on an oil well on the property of the Wood-

Mercury's Low Mark Here 25

Torrance's official low temperature for Tuesday morning was recorded at 25 degrees.

Callihan Oil Company at 190th and Beryl streets. The men had built the fire to free the moving parts of tools which had become frozen stiff in the below freezing temperature that gripped the Southland this week.

Worden was taken to the Torrance Memorial Hospital where he was given plasma for first and second degree burns of the face, hands, arms and legs, according to Dr. C. E. Easley, attending physician.

Smith and Jackson were treated by Dr. W. I. Laughon at the Torrance Medical Group. Smith received first and second degree burns on the face and neck with possible third degree burns on the legs. He was later admitted to Torrance Memorial Hospital for observation.

Jackson suffered second degree burns of the face and hands. Dr. Laughon said.

Eyraud, production superintendent of the oil company, received second and third degree burns on both arms, hands and on his face, according to Dr. W. J. Harrison.

'Y' Campaign Ready to Open on Wednesday

To meet operating expenses for the coming year the YMCA will launch their 1949 Current Support Fund Campaign next Wednesday, Jan. 12, according to L. Milton Isbell, secretary of the local branch.

Isbell stated that the current campaign will be conducted solely for the purpose of raising funds to maintain clubs, movies, athletic leagues, camping, sightseeing trips and social recreation activities of the YMCA in which more than 350 Torrance children participate.

Committees and chairmen appointed to handle the Initial Gift Division include:

Stanley Briggs, general chairman; Initial Gifts, W. T. Tillotson, chairman; Industrial Division, R. I. Plomer, and A. L. Jackson, co-chairmen; Don Hyle, chairman; Professional Division, Dr. John Beeman, chairman, J. Hugh Shertey Jr., William Tolson, Russell Lund and Dr. Rollin Smith; Commercial, sightseeing trips chairman, John Ott, John Melville and J. H. Paget.

The General Campaign, to begin Feb. 1, will be headed by Gil Derouin and A. C. Turner, co-chairmen.

ADOPT MANAGER PLAN

The city of Redondo Beach, following the lead set by Torrance and other progressive cities, voted two-to-one for a city manager form of government at a special election Tuesday.