

2 Steelworkers Hurt in Slag Blast

PUBLISHED EVERY SUNDAY AND THURSDAY MORNING
—the ONLY Newspaper Published AND PRINTED in Torrance. Established 1914.

TORRANCE HERALD

—and Torrance Herald Shoppers Reach 100,000 Buyers

39th Year—No. 50 TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 1953 PHONE FAIRfax 8-4000 12 PAGES



SHAMBLES . . . Wednesday afternoon's big fire left this pile of rubble marking the spot of the United Sulphur Co. Chalm shell crane was called to scene of the fire to rip up flooring (splintery mass in background) to enable firemen to extinguish

gush flame-producing burning sulphur which had sifted into basement. Twenty-six hours after first blast, fire finally was declared out.

Final Fire Toll; 10 Hurt; \$90,000 Loss

Damage resulting from Wednesday's fire which injured 10 persons and completely destroyed the United Sulphur Co. at 1811 W. 213th St. was estimated yesterday to be between \$80,000 and \$90,000, or considerably less than the half-million-dollar loss broadcast in many reports immediately following the fire.

A recapitulation by Fire Chief J. J. Benner showed that nine firemen were taken to the Harbor General Hospital for treatment ranging from third degree burns to dry sulphur in the eyes.

Potentially the Worst

The fire, described by Chief Benner as potentially the city's worst fire disaster, left only the brick walls of the 42-year-old building standing waving in the breeze. More than 700 tons of sulphur were destroyed. Investigators were still attempting to determine yesterday the cause of the fire, which started with explosive force, and according to one employee "started everywhere at once." Only four persons were working within the plant at the time of the blast, according to Harry Medley, 63 Fremont Pl., Los Angeles, owner of the building. None was injured.

Potentially more dangerous than the blaze itself were the dense fumes and smoke which prompted the evacuation of 200 occupants of a trailer court and apartment buildings across the street from the blaze. Chief Benner ordered the evacuation of the homes as police and civilian volunteers carried children to safety. One resident of the trailer court, George Toohill, 69, was revived by a resuscitator after making several trips into the area to rescue frightened children covering in their trailer court homes.

Dike Built

Streams of liquid sulphur poured out of the burning building and down gutters. City Manager George W. Stevens ordered city-owned dump trucks and a bulldozer into the area to build a dam to halt the flow of sulphur as it rolled down the gutters like molten lava. Yesterday the sulphur cooled and solidified leaving deposits of rock-hard sulphur, dirt, and debris clogging gutters along 213th St.

Nine of the 13 firemen summoned to fight the blaze received medical attention. Most seriously injured were Fireman Donald Lamb, who sustained third degree burns on the hand and first and second degree burns on the arm and both shoulders, and Battalion Chief Eugene Walker, nursing a bad sunburn on his abdomen and forehead, received additional burns which were further irritated by the sulphur fumes.

Injured also were:
Battalion Chief Neil Whitney, sulphur in eyes.
Engineer John Agapito, overcome by fumes.
Capt. Walter West, dry sulphur in eyes.
Engineer Harry Drake, overcome by fumes.
Fireman Charlie Robinson,

Keystone Area Unaffected by Annexation Vote

The area known as Keystone is not involved in the annexation vote scheduled for July 21 by residents of Lomita Square, it was pointed out this week by Mrs. W. E. Roller, secretary of the Keystone Civic Improvement Assn.

"Recent news stories have led to some confusion among residents of this area who are under the impression that the Keystone area is about to be annexed to the City of Los Angeles," Mrs. Roller said.

"We hope that a survey of the residents of the area will reveal the feelings of the homeowners toward incorporation remaining as unincorporated county territory," Mrs. Roller continued.

All residents of Keystone are invited to attend the meeting to learn more about the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation. The interest in incorporation has been fostered by the recent passage of the fringe area tax law, according to Mrs. Roller.

Witness Badge Rites

Parents crowded to Baptist Church annex last Tuesday to witness the awarding of badges to 12 tenderfoot scouts and 12 second class scouts, according to Scoutmaster James McMillen of Troop 721.

Bail for Youth In Murder Try Set at \$10,000

Bail for a 21-year-old Wilmington youth charged with attempted murder was raised from \$2500 to \$10,000 in the South Bay Municipal Court of Judge John A. Shidler Thursday as the youth was held for preliminary hearings on the charge.

Ordered held for a preliminary next Tuesday morning was Melvin Richard Moore, who was charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to commit murder following an alleged attack on John B. Russell, of 2445 W. 239th St.

Police investigators say Moore admitted hiding out at Russell's home for several hours last Monday waiting for him, and then attacking Russell with an empty beer bottle in his hand.

A neighbor, Norman McQuire, of 2443 W. 239th St., separated the pair just before police arrived on the scene.

Pfc. Stripes Awarded to Local Soldier, in Korea

Sanchez Salvador Delgado, son of Mrs. Angelita Delgado of Torrance, was recently promoted to private first class while serving with the Army in Korea.

Delgado entered the Army in August, 1952, and received his basic training at San Luis Obispo. He is assigned to 101st Signal Battalion.



BASEBALLERS PARADE . . . Scores of Little League baseballers between the ages of 8 and 12 paraded through Torrance yesterday noon to whip up a little enthusiasm for the triple-header opening of the league at "Little Shaver" park in the afternoon. This photo shows the trucks loaded with young ball players wending down through the traffic on Sartori Ave. shortly after noon. (Story on Page 4).

"Twice Weekly is Twice As Well Read"

10¢

Per Copy

Every Sunday and Thursday Home Delivered by Carrier 30 Cents Per Month (Average 9 Issues Per Month)

Chunks of Slag Hurlled 300 Yds. Land on Roofs

Exploding slag at Columbia Steel Co. yesterday morning severely injured two men as the meteor-like missiles for 300 yards burning the roofs of three houses and starting a fire in a filling station.

Injured in the explosion were: John W. Armstrong, 46, open hearth crane man who suffered severe burns and lacerations about the face.
Espiridon Pina, 57, second and third degree burns and lacerations on the face and chest.

The explosion occurred as Armstrong was operating his crane attempting to break up a "slag button." A company spokesman said the hot slag apparently came in contact with water which in turn caused the explosion.

Shortly after the initial blast, Captain Bob Lucas and Torrance Fire Department Engine #7 responded to a fire in a filling station at Arlington and Border Ave. Large chunks of the slag were in the station parking area some 300 yards from the scene of the explosion. The fire was extinguished quickly with little damage to the station.

Three residents of Border Ave. turned garden hoses on their roofs to extinguish burning shingles set afire by the hot pieces of slag.

The two injured men were taken to the Torrance Memorial Hospital.

Armstrong was injured as pieces of the exploding slag ripped through the cab of his crane setting fire to the wiring. He opened the door, hung by his hands and dropped approximately 10 feet to the ground. He was not injured in the drop.

Black lava-like pieces of slag were thrown in all directions from the blast resulting in 40 or 50 broken windows of a nearby company building.

3 Possible Wetbacks Held in 2-Car Crash

Three suspected wetbacks were being held for immigration authorities by the Torrance police yesterday following an accident in which their car struck another and flipped over onto its top.

Mrs. Dorothy James, 35, of 1479 W. 186th St., Gardena, the driver of the second car, was taken to Harbor General Hospital and later released as she was uninjured.

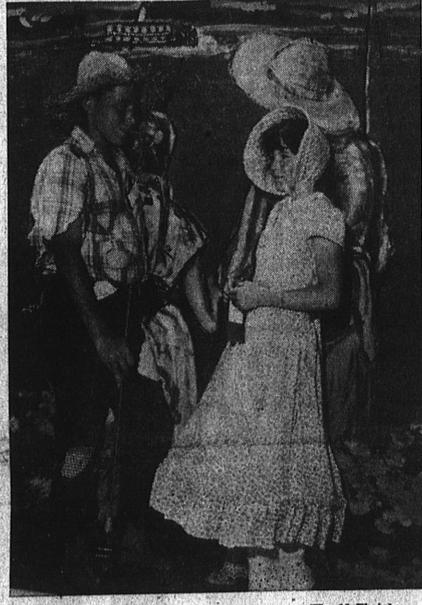
Police said that the first car, a yellow convertible registered to Rudy Duarte of Lomita, apparently pulled out from 233rd St. in front of the car driven by Mrs. James, which was traveling south on Narbonne Ave. Mrs. James said she swerved to avoid the car but that it swerved back in front of her and she hit it. The convertible then bounced off a curb and overturned, pinning the driver's hand beneath the edge of the windshield.

Witnesses to the accident said they lifted the car from the man's hand, and when free of the wreckage, he grabbed a child from the car and ran. The driver was still being sought by police yesterday afternoon on a hit-and-run misdemeanor charge. The other two occupants of the convertible also fled the scene, according to police.

Three Mexicans were later located by police and taken to the station for questioning. Two of them were identified as occupants of the car. Although they said they were born in Huntington Beach, their inability to speak English led police to believe they might have entered this country illegally.

Police said they discovered one of the suspected wetbacks hiding beneath a pile of clothing in the closet of a small Lomita house near the scene of the wreck. He said he was not one of the occupants of the car. The other two men were apprehended later.

Harvey Hits Air Force Cut Back



ON THE MISSISSIPPI . . . Huck Finn and Becky Thatcher, winners at Alondra Park yesterday, turned out to be Jim Miller, 13, of Lawndale, and Jacqueline Ferguson, 12, of 3745 W. 171st St. Nine-month-old Linda Kay Ferguson was the blue-ribbon winner for being the youngest Becky Thatcher at the annual affair.

Weatherman Sees Sunny Skies Prevailing Today

Torrance area picnickers will have a sunny day for it today, the weatherman predicted yesterday.

His official forecast reads: High thin clouds at times and night, and morning low clouds and local fog near the coast becoming sunny most of Sunday. Little change in temperature.

Day	High	Low
Thursday	69	57
Friday	65	54
Saturday	73	51

Torrance Banks To Be Closed On Saturdays

Saturday banking hours are just about a thing of the past in Torrance.

Both the Bank of America and the Torrance National Bank will go on a Monday through Friday schedule of operation sometime in the next few weeks, officials of the banks announced yesterday.

The Saturday closing is the result of a new bill passed this session by the California Legislature and signed last week by Gov. Earl Warren. Banks may remain open under the provisions of the bill, but certain banking procedures would not be valid.

A spokesman at the Torrance National Bank said that the possibility of remaining open Friday evenings was being studied.

President Carl F. Wentz of the Bank of America said study "is being given to the bank's schedule of hours on Monday through Friday, with special consideration to unusual conditions in any community," indicating that the B of A probably would consider remaining open some evening.

Officials indicated that both banks would probably follow the same schedule.

Actual date of the Saturday closing will be announced within a few days.

Local Student Gets Office At Santa Barbara College

Duane Mittan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Mittan, 719 Cota Ave., has been elected Men's Representative at Large for the 1953-54 school year at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the college announced this week.

Mittan, a sophomore, will represent the men students of the college on the Legislative Council in his new office.

A physical education major, Mittan has been a member of the Freshman Council, vice president of the Freshman class, and has played varsity baseball for two years at the school.

Air Force Cancels 3 Presses

Sharp criticism of the Air Force's recent cut back of its expansion plans came yesterday from Leo Harvey, president of the Harvey Machine Co. who said it was hard hit by the governmental expenditure slash.

The Air Force announced Thursday it was dropping its plan, at least for the present, to erect at Torrance three high-wing presses used to form single wing panels and other parts for military aircraft. The program formerly called for the erection of a 10-story building to house multi-million dollar presses and would have been a welcome addition to Torrance's industrial skyline—and payroll.

No instructions . . . Harvey told reporters yesterday his company had received no official instructions regarding the cut back and that all he knew was "what I read in the papers."

"Forty per cent of the nation's aircraft output comes from this area. Southern California's airplane manufacturers need those presses," said Harvey. He indicated he considered it an unwise move on the part of the Air Force to cancel its plan to erect the three huge presses at the Harvey plant at 190th St. and Western Ave.

The Air Force stated it was cancelling the plan to erect three presses, one of 35,000 ton capacity, a 25,000 ton press, and another of 20,000 ton capacity.

Much Confusion . . . The announcement left the company officials and the public in considerable confusion. Original plans announced by the Air Force stated that four massive presses would be erected here. Friday's announcement mentioned only three presses. Questioned about this Harvey could only state that he was in the dark as much as anyone since he obtained what information he has about the cut back from a Washington dateline newspaper story.

The presses were to have been erected in a huge building which was to have been constructed directly south of the present plant on the east side of Western Ave. Harvey stated that the Air Force announcement did not concern plans of the company for additional construction planned to be located on the west side of Western Ave. at 190th St. and which is to be erected with private capital. He stated, however, that those construction plans were still very indefinite.

Announced in 1951 . . . The \$389,000,000 program, first laid down in 1951, called for construction of 17 of the massive presses, which exert from 5000 to 80,000 tons of pressure. Under the revised program, the number to be completed will be reduced to 10.

In announcing the cutback Thursday, Air Force Secy. Harold E. Talbott emphasized that the decision does not reflect a change in the Air Force's estimate of the value of the presses. Rather, he said, the decision stemmed from "a belief that the number of presses is in excess of requirements."

Accident Victim Still 'Critical'

In critical condition at Harbor General Hospital yesterday was Ronald Horne, 19, of Inglewood, who failed to make the curve at 190th St. and Hawthorne Ave. Wednesday morning in his car, hauled an embankment and overturned.

Horne was returning from work at the Harvey Machine Co. when the accident happened. He is employed there as a machinist. Doctors at the Harbor hospital said he was suffering from severe head injuries and was in a "dangerous" condition. He was the only occupant of the car.