

Hannah's Harpoons

BY HANNAH SAMPSON

The combination of vacation, good health, good spirits, and some catalyst that makes all of these a magic potion have produced a series of completed jobs around this house that have been waiting hungrily to be done since last summer.



HANNAH

Make a list, he says. I'll GET to it. Well, when I'm feeling low making a list seems the most futile of all actions. On the other hand, in the normal course of events I am a terrific list-maker. (Sometimes I make the list after I have done the work, just to pat myself on the back for my accomplishments. Sometimes, I confess, I make the lists post-facto, to leave carelessly around for my alter-ego to "accidentally find," and so to bask in his approval for my amazing productivity. (It is no fun to work like a dog in secret, and not have it found out, at least by accident.)

He's Off The Hook

What is noteworthy is that few of the jobs that were listed took more than just a few minutes to do. (A "mollie" screw in the towel bar that had been hanging by a thread for months; a window screen to replace in the kitchen window; a can opener to hang up—such tiny things that keep a modern household limping along for their lack.)

So, now he's off the hook for at least another year (he thinks!) and he smiles benignly, certain in his innocence that the end of that list really means "THE END." But where is the curtain rod that will stay permanently launched? Where the TV tube that needs no removing to be checked for imperfections? And how about that oil water heater that is going to blow up just as he sits back to enjoy his completed handiwork?

There are a lot of old proverbs that are still a basis for ethical behavior, and/or for simply making life easier to live. The one, however, that goes: "If you would end with the best, START with the best," is nonsense. The whole trick is to start with something that is inferior and make it into the best. Then you have accomplished something. The standard for too many people is only this: that the price be higher.

Great Success

My Aunt Millie always shopped that way. When she asked the grocer for a dozen eggs, she always added—with extreme pride—"The Best." To some, the best in eggs has to be the kind that are so fresh, the hen lays them right in your hand. What should determine the best eggs is the purpose for which they are intended. (Twelve-egg sponge cake may be made with the greatest success with a dozen grade B eggs.)

You can buy the cheapest flour on the market, and use it as it comes from the sack for bread and rolls and other not-so-delicate baked goods; for fancy cakes, just sift the flour several times and then measure, deducting 2 level tablespoons from each cup indicated in the cake recipe. The result is indistinguishable from that using cake flour.

Rots Your Hands

You can use the cheapest detergent for dishwashing—that is, the one that happens to be on sale—no matter how it rots the skin on your hand, IF you first put on a pair of household gloves. Then it matters not what the ridiculous claims of the detergent-makers. You can truly have hands like your daughter's if you never permit that strong soap to get in contact with your hands. (It takes an iron will and a great determination to learn to wear gloves while dishwashing, but the benefits are many. One added bonus is that it permits you to use the hottest water available both for washing and rinsing. This done, the dishes dry themselves, and you never need to touch a towel to them. Also very sanitary!)

Take aspirin: My Aunt Millie would not consider the 17 cent bottle of a hundred, if she could pay 25c for the tin of twelve. Yet, to be labelled "Aspirin" the product must contain certain ingredients, no more and no less. On the other hand, one must allow extravagance occasionally, it is balm to the soul and heart.

There are days when I would rather buy a handkerchief at Magnin's than a bedspread—for the same price!—at a bargain basement. I would rather have a pot of tea at Perino's than a turkey dinner at Woolworth's; a week-end spent at a plush resort is more satisfying, sometimes, than a month camping in the rough.

There is, I suppose, a time for all things. Perhaps this is how the middle course in life is determined. Not by always sitting on the fence, but by averaging the very high with the very low.

Palos Verdes Players Ready for New Season

Rehearsals are now on full-time schedule for Palos Verdes Players' initial production of the new season which will take place on the nights of Oct. 25-26 and Nov. 1-2. The play to be presented is "Picnic," under the direction of Rosemary Buell. Montemalage Auditorium can be reached by turning right just beyond the first stop sign off del Monte Drive at via Nogales, which is above the Palos Verdes Plaza.

Members of the cast are Penny Ransom as Madge, the ingenue, who appears with the Players for the first time. She majored in drama at University of Southern California and has appeared in a number of musical productions, including Long Beach Civic Light Opera.

Another young actress, Linda McNeill, has appeared with the Players in "Dark at the Top of the Stairs," and with Chapel Theater.

Ruth Ayres, a fine character actress with many past performances with the Players to her credit, plays now in the role of Helen Potts, friend of Flo Owens, mother of the two young girls. Marcia Graves, as Flo, veteran performer also, has long been a strong supporter of the group and served on many committees. Her last role for the Players was in "A Palm Tree in a Rose

Garden." Corinne Neumann, Rosemary, is a comparative newcomer, but she worked with many theater groups in northern California and appeared in performances of the Oakland Civic Light Opera Company.

John Goff, as Hal, has an extensive background, such as two seasons of summer stock. The Bishops Company and American Touring Repertoire Company.

Pat Riley, Alan Seymour, began his acting career during high school and continued on at Duquesne University and later organized and directed acting under Special Services for the United States Army. He is an enthusiastic performer who enjoys all aspects of the theater, including set designing and handling of the lights.

Nancy Heckmann, as Irma, not only has performed before with this group, but has also worked backstage and as assistant director. She is a former vice-president of the group.

Bruce Hoard, as Bomber, is a senior at Palos Verdes High School. He has been active in their theater group also, as well as for Children's Theater, where he took the part of Sid in "Tom Sawyer."

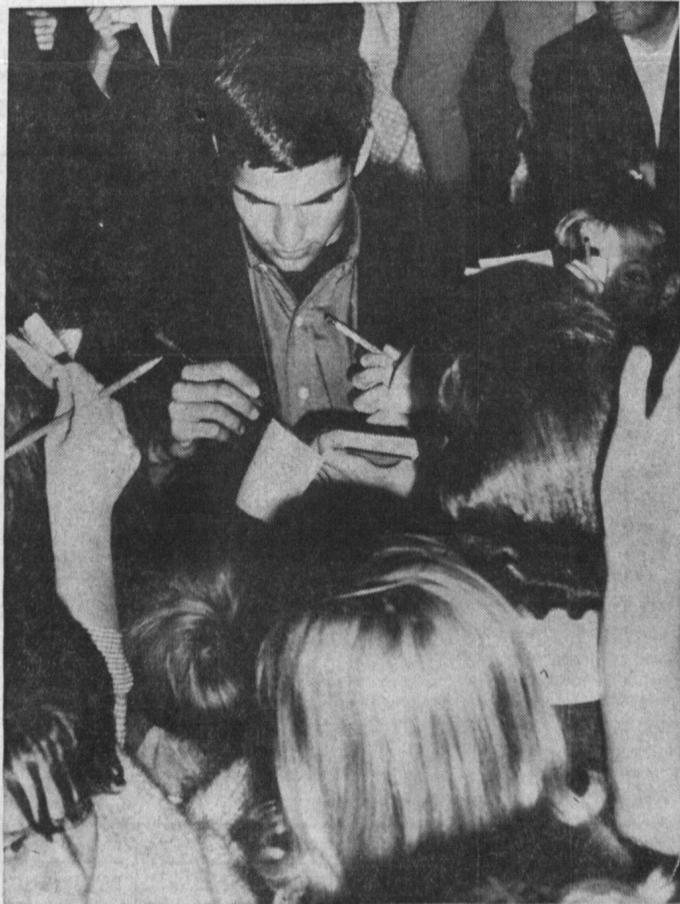
Helen Borst, president of Palos Verdes Players, moved here two years ago from the east.



SKELETONS OF THE PAST are these wooden oil derricks which, along with their more modern steel brothers, have passed from the Torrance scene. The wooden derricks vanished in 1959 and the last of the steel towers disappeared last month.

The total volume of oil being pumped in Torrance has been reduced from a flood of 900 barrels daily in 1921 to a trickle of five barrels today.

—PRESS Photo by William Schell Jr.



TONY BILL, young actor, recently appearing in a movie with Frank Sinatra, is mobbed by screaming autograph seekers at Wednesday night's premier and grand opening at the

new Torrance United Artists Theatre. Hundreds of people gathered around the front steps of the theatre to see their favorite movie stars.

—PRESS photo

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Towering Oil Derricks Fall to City Progress

Gone for ever from the Torrance skyline are the towering steel and wooden structures used in oil drilling operations, which have bowed one by one to city wide safety and beautification projects.

The first oil well was drilled in the city in December of 1921 and brought in a production of 900 barrels a day which compares dramatically to the five or so barrels that are being pumped presently each day.

In February of 1953 a check of oil fields in the Torrance areas showed more than 615 wells in operation, with 255 wooden derricks standing. Numerous steel derricks were also present but the exact number was not taken.

As the city grew and areas around the oil fields developed, numerous instances of injuries and near drownings from children and animals being caught in machinery or falling in sumps developed.

An ordinance was adopted in August of 1955 requiring the fencing of all moving equipment and oil sumps.

The cleanup campaign took its first step in June of 1959 when oil drilling was limited to certain sections of the city and all wooden der-

ricks were ordered removed. The steel derricks remained, but a survey in July indicated there were only four in the entire city.

Last of the giant steel towers was dropped by its owner Kenneth Mills in the middle of last month, bringing to a close the era of hustling and bustling oil industry in Torrance.

Oil fields are now in the process of being officially abandoned with the capping of the casings below ground level and removing all traces of the operation and are being converted to urbanized development.

Mayor Albert Isen of Torrance recently commented on the oil wells disappearing from the scene. He said the Torrance oil fields had played a major roll in the orderly development of the city but Torrance now must progress by transcending into a well balanced, healthy and beautiful city where industry, commerce and citizens can flourish.

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