

Torrance Herald

NINTH YEAR

TORRANCE, CALIF., FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1924

NO. 51

1923 Sets Building Record Here

Fire Threatens Oil Field

Drenched Derricks, Roaring In Flames, Thunder To Ground

Wilkes-Titus Well Spouts Oil, Is Ignited by Spark and Threatens Entire Oil Field

HEROIC WORK OF TORRANCE FIREMEN

Volunteers Save Great Tanks From Blaze; Superior Well Blown In and Bursts Into Flames

Two oil-drenched derricks ignited by sparks while gas and oil gushed high, sent roaring flames to the clouds over the Torrance-Lomita field this week, burned fiercely for a few moments, and thundered blazing to the ground.

One of them, the Wilkes-Titus well on the old Redondo road near Arlington street, threatened for a time to spread flames over the entire oil field. Great tanks filled with crude oil flanked the flaming well. Coolly directed and heroic work on the part of Torrance firemen saved the whole oil field from destruction.

The other well, Superior's No. 4 on the old Redondo road (east) burned spectacularly last Friday afternoon, but did not endanger the rest of the field, there being no derricks immediately adjacent.

Both fires started when the wells drenched unexpectedly.

The Wilkes-Titus well fire broke out about 5:45 New Year's afternoon. The well had been on production, but sanded up. The crew was bailing out and the bailer was in the hole. A tremendous gas pressure accumulated under the bailer. Suddenly the gas blew the bailer out of the hole and hurried oil high over the crown block. A spark ignited the oil and gas. The great derrick burst spontaneously into flames, a spectacular blaze, roaring and hissing to the sky.

A hurried alarm was turned in. Chief Ben Hannebrink and his crew of volunteers answered the call. They ran a 700-foot line of hose from the nearest hydrant.

Hannebrink and Assistant Chief Fess saw at once that if the derrick fell to the north or the east the fire would spread over a wide area. A high wind was blowing.

Orders Cables Cut

Hannebrink ordered the cables cut on the north side of the derrick. By this time the flames, fanned by the high wind, roared and crackled over the oil-drenched derrick and shot great tongues of fire high above the crown block. The firemen cut the cables, under the intense heat of the blaze.

The hose was then directed upon two storage tanks filled with crude oil. The water hissed into steam when it struck the sides of these tanks, indicative of the danger narrowly averted.

So fierce was the fire, so menacing to the whole oil field, that Chief Hannebrink sent Chief Anderson of the police department to Redondo for another fire truck.

With the north-side cables cut the derrick, burning brilliantly and savagely, fell in a flaming arc to the south and west. Had it fallen in any other direction serious damage would have resulted—possibly the destruction of most of the derricks in the closely located area.

Gasoline Tank Explodes

When the Redondo department arrived the Torrance boys had the flames almost under control. And this despite the fact that a large gasoline tank exploded near the derrick.

Firemen, headed by Hannebrink and Fess, risked severe injury and death when they worked on the fallen derrick in the intense heat, tearing the burning wood apart.

All the time the well spouted oil by heads, adding to the difficulty encountered by the firemen.

Chief Hannebrink and Assistant Chief Fess were drenched with oil when the well spouted oil 200 feet in the air.

Oil and gas spouting out of the hole were affire. A stream of water was directed at this flame, cutting it off and quenching the blaze.

Credit to Firemen

Had the great storage tanks ignited, flaming oil would have spread over a wide area, touching off other derricks, exploding other tanks.

The firemen worked steadily and tirelessly until almost 10 o'clock at night.

To them goes the credit for checking a blaze that might have caused a loss running into the hundreds of thousands.

The Superior well fire was spectacular. The crew was bailing out when the well blew in. The column of oil ignited from a spark. The oil-soaked derrick burst into flames. In a few minutes it fell toward the north and burned itself out.

The Torrance fire department did splendid work. Water was pumped into a box, from which the truck pump drew it out. The small stream this obtained hurried the end of the blaze.

The Superior Oil company is erecting another derrick over the hole and will bring the well in.

The Wilkes and Titus well is producing by heads yet. Another derrick probably will be erected in order to lean out the sand.

Girl Speeds in Car; Man Owner Is Found Guilty

If you let your girl drive your car and she drives too fast and is arrested, you are guilty.

That's what a jury found in the trial of A. W. Krause last week. Krause allowed a feminine companion to drive. She drove so fast that police stopped the car and arrested Krause. Krause demanded a jury trial. He was found guilty. Sentence will be pronounced by Judge James King Friday.

The jury consisted of the following: H. R. Hutchins, George Parr, Loma Turner, Lovell Ott, Verda Hansen and Edith Lessing.

KETTLER WELL OF SANTA FE 1500 BARRELS

First Producer in Area Booms East Side District

Five wells were placed on production in the field during the past week, with Kettler No. 1 of the Chancellor-Canfield Midway Oil company leading the list, both in production and importance.

Drilled to 3890 feet, Kettler No. 1 is the first well to be placed on production east of Narbonne avenue and south of the old Redondo road. It is doing 1500 barrels a day, in a splendid steady flow.

Petroleum Midway brought in De Witt No. 1, at Fir and Pennsylvania, at 1200 barrels. The well was completed at 3780 feet.

Next in line in point of production is Chancellor-Canfield's Torrance No. 25 in the Carson street area, southeast of Iris street. Completed at 2700 feet, the well is producing 1000 barrels a day.

Offsetting Torrance No. 25, Petroleum Midway's Stock Community went on production at 555 barrels. It was drilled 25 feet shallower than the C.-C. M. O. producer.

Chancellor-Canfield was successful in making Torrance No. 22 flow through a bottom beam. Located near the corner of Arlington street and the old Redondo road, the well refused to flow. Gas pressure was insufficient. The bottom beam was used, and the well is flowing at a rate of 350 barrels a day.

Here Are Details Of School Stops

Trustees Wednesday night passed the school and boulevard stop ordinance. It provides motorists must come to a full stop on Arlington street at the intersection of 220th street on school days between the hours of 7 a. m. and 5 p. m. A similar provision is made on Carson street in front of the high school.

The corner of Carson and Arlington streets is made a boulevard stop. Motorists on Arlington must stop at the intersection of Carson street at all hours every day.

The pavements will be painted at once.

CORRECTION

Through a typographical error the prices of sport coats were omitted in the advertisement of Van Andler's Specialty Shop on page 5. The advertisement is reprinted correctly on page 11. Please disregard the prices in the announcement on page 5.

TO ADVERTISERS

Owing to the fact that solicitations for advertising in several new media are being made in Torrance, The Herald wishes to announce that it is in no way interested in or connected with any of them. Without condemning or endorsing any of them, we wish to make it clear that the use of the name of this paper in connection with any new advertising proposition is without our knowledge or consent. This announcement is made only for the information of the public. The advertising representatives of The Herald are Grover C. Whyte and Charles Ray. When additions are made to the staff the public will be informed.

New Mail Men And First Mail Delivered Here



Here's a picture of the first bags full of mail ever delivered by carrier in Torrance—the two men who delivered it, and Postmaster Alfred Gourdier, who worked so diligently to secure the new delivery system for this city. On the left is Dale Dean, who will carry on Route No. 1. In the center is Mr. Gourdier. On the right is C. W. Noyes, who is delivering Route No. 2. Both new carriers are Torrance men and both are experienced carriers. Mr. Dean was transferred from the carrier service of Los Angeles and Mr. Noyes formerly was a carrier on the Long Beach postal staff. The picture was taken by LaPlante Wednesday morning, just as the carriers were starting out on their first trip.

Permits for 1923 Nearly Six Times Greater than 1922

Business District Witnesses Great Boom During Year

A DWELLING A DAY Construction in 1923 Makes Room for 411 More Families

Nineteen twenty-three will go down in local history as the year when Torrance really tackled the task of building itself into a big city. Building permits during the year just past totaled \$1,873,395, or almost six times those of 1922, when the construction aggregate was only \$333,680.

Since January 1, 1923, the business district of the city has been built up with splendid new commercial blocks along Carson, Cabrillo, Sartori, Marcelina and El Prado streets. During the year eleven new business structures of the first order have been erected in a steady development that has changed the appearance of Torrance from that of a backward town into one of a flourishing city.

But business blocks, important as they most certainly are, do not make a city.

Build Homes, Too

And in the construction of homes Torrance during 1923 has not lagged behind—albeit there are still too few dwellings in the city. During 1923 311 dwellings were provided in the city of Torrance. This includes apart-

(Continued on Last Page)

JINX BIRD IS PERCHING ON JULIAN WELLS

But No. 1 and No. 6 Ought to Be Producing Soon

The tough luck bird perched on the two Julian derricks this week, and Splittstoesser No. 1 and Julian No. 6 are not yet on production.

Officials of the Julian Petroleum corporation and "Uncle" Tom Cannon, who drilled No. 6, however, declare that the trouble is mechanical and in no way discredits the areas in which the wells were drilled.

A pump is being rigged up on No. 6, where heavy mud in the hole has not yet been cleaned out. There is oil there, without question, and it is thought that agitation by the pump may start the well flowing.

Last Saturday and Sunday two swabs were lost in the hole on No. 6. Despite the two plugs in the liner, the well flowed Monday at a rate estimated variously between 300 and 1500 barrels a day. Then it sanded up. Thursday the crew was putting a packer on the tubing. If this fails to get results a pump will be rigged up in an effort to start the well flowing.

Considerable heavy mud was forced down the hole Saturday to prevent a blow-in of the well.

FEED AND FUN AT FORUM ON MONDAY NIGHT

Annual Reports, Capt. Dancy, Entertainment on Program

Complete reports of the accomplishments of the Chamber of Commerce during 1923 and the program of activities for 1924 will be outlined at the Forum dinner and installation of officers at Legion hall next Monday night.

Capt. Dancy, whose address was so enthusiastically received at the Central Evangelical church last Sunday night, will speak.

Special entertainment will be provided. The directors of the chamber appropriated \$25 for the dinner, so that tickets may be sold for 75 cents. The dinner will start at 8:30.

A REGULAR RESTAURANT

By THE MYSTERIOUS COWBOY

It was my first day in Torrance. The noon hour had arrived and I felt that void that comes when life makes another demand on us humans—to again appease the appetite. Now to the town, I turned to a passerby for the information that should guide me to a place where good food is uppermost. "Go to the Golden West, you can't make any mistake in that choice," said my informant. So to



the Golden West I went, and I'm here to tell you that said passerby knew what he was talking about.

Eating is no trifling matter. If you think so, try to forget it for a few days, and then learn something of the importance of staying on friendly terms with your stomach. The partaking of foods should be treated as more than a mere matter of feeding; we should be eternally concerned with the quality and preparation of those things we eat—to the wholesome restaurant should go our trade. Wholesome foods, correctly cooked and served without turmoil or untidiness—that is the key to good eating.

S. J. Kovacevich, twenty years in the restaurant business, is the man who is responsible for Torrance's handsome and pleasing cafe. Mr. Kovacevich has been to much expense

NEW YEAR EVE JOY LANDS 9 IN CALABOOSE

L. A. Officer Operates in Torrance-Lomita Oil Field

J. D. Wilmot, of the dry squad operating from the sheriff's office, made nine arrests in the oil fields New Year's eve. Four of the prisoners appeared before Judge Hunter Wednesday afternoon.

C. P. Walters, H. P. Johnson and W. D. Buchanan pleaded guilty to a charge of vagrancy. Walters and Johnson each were fined \$10 or 100 days. The sentence was suspended for as long a period as they keep away from gambling joints and keep off the streets at night. Buchanan got 150 days in jail.

Lumber Co. Here To Aid Builders

Having affiliated with the National Builders' Bureau, the Consolidated Lumber company announces that it now is able to offer material assistance to home builders in Torrance. Photographs and plans of varied types of dwellings will be furnished to the public. The company announces that the plans and designs are for buildings of all costs, giving the prospective builder a wide choice.

En route from his home in Flint, Mich., to Klamath Falls, Ore., S. R. Black, of the U. S. forestry service, is a guest of Grover C. Whyte.

His sentence was suspended for two years, provided he keeps out of pool halls, gambling dens, and blind pigs.

C. W. Hixson pleaded guilty to having liquor in his possession. He got 1400 or 400 days. Sentence was suspended until January 9. If Hixson is not out of the state by that time he must pay or serve his time.

CORRECTION

In Torrance Pharmacy Luncheon-ette advertisement plus are quoted at 15c. This is an error and should read 10c.