



**GAS THIEVES CAUSE BLAZE** . . . Here is William (Andy) Gascoigne, street superintendent, pointing to the charred hose still extending into the gas tank on a city truck and the cans that the gasoline was being siphoned into when fire broke out the thievery at the city yard last Friday night and caused \$1,000 damage.

## Clues Point to Cause of Fire at City Yard

Police and firemen had little trouble determining the cause of the fire early last Friday night which destroyed four pieces of city equipment and a shed at the city yard off Western avenue, a loss estimated at \$1,000.

They had these clues to work on: A half-burned rubber hose extending into the gas tank of a municipal asphalt tank and truck, three cans full of gasoline standing a few feet from the debris, clearly defined footprints leading from a bent section of a high wire fence surrounding the yard and a trail beaten thru weeds to El Prado beyond the Santa Fe viaduct.

From these they deduced that gasoline thieves had been siphoning gas from the truck into cans when a spark, possibly from a cigarette, suddenly caused the blaze and forced the thieves to beat a hasty retreat to their car parked on El Prado.

The fire badly damaged the asphalt tank and truck, a tar machine, a bituminous tank, and the city's first piece of fire fighting equipment—the old two-wheeled hand-pumped hose cart which was pulled to all fires by a dozen or so volunteers here in the years between 1912 and 1919.

The old hose cart and 600 feet of obsolete hose had been in storage at the city yard ever since it was retired from emergency service at the Hollywood Riviera substation. Although badly burned, it may be repaired.

In addition to damaging the mobile equipment, the fire destroyed a small workshop and storeroom and other city equipment.

**Grover C. Whyte**, national press supervisor reflecting the nation-wide recognition given The Torrance Herald's recent "Torrance-On-the-Air" edition, Grover C. Whyte, Herald publisher, has been asked to serve as a judge in the National Editorial Association's contest for "the most outstanding edition for daily newspapers in 1939 in the United States."

The invitation received by Whyte this week from the Chicago office of the National Editorial Association stated that Prof. Roy L. French, director of the school of Journalism at U.S.C., would also serve on the judge's committee.

The Herald was awarded the first prize trophy this year by the California Newspaper Publisher's Association for the best special edition published during the past year by both daily and weekly newspapers.

As the result of this honor, requests for copies of the "Torrance-on-the-Air" edition have been received from all parts of the nation and more than a dozen foreign countries.

## Governor's Wife Laid to Rest

Mrs. Kate Olson, 66-year-old wife of California's Governor, died Saturday morning at the executive mansion from a cerebral hemorrhage.

The Governor and her three sons were at her bedside when death came. Governor Olson, in San Francisco for the weekend, had rushed home immediately upon being notified of her illness and reached the mansion a short time before she died. One of her sons, Richard, private secretary to the Governor, was enroute by train from Los Angeles. He left the train at Bakersfield and sped to Sacramento under escort of the highway patrol. Her twin sons, John and Dean, students at the University of Southern California, came by plane.

Mrs. Olson had been in failing health since suffering two slight strokes during the general election campaign last fall. She was Kate Jeremy before she met and married Olson in Salt Lake City in 1906. Funeral services were held Monday at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Los Angeles.

## Girl Breaks Leg in Sidewalk Fall

While skating in front of the Dean Sears' residence on El Prado, Jane Scott, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Scott, 1438 El Prado, fell and broke her right leg in two places. Although the breaks were troublesome ones, the young lady is resting comfortably now but will have to put up with a cast for six weeks.

## LOMITA CO. PARK SALE DUE

Sale of the year-old county park site on Eschelman avenue in Lomita was authorized this week by the board of supervisors, and May 9 set for its auction in the board room on the fifth floor of the Hall of Records.

The property has become desirable for oil drilling activity, following the expansion of the Lomita oil fields. County officials believe the property will bring considerably more than the county paid for it a year ago.

## Schools Week Program Here Set for April 25

Next Tuesday night, April 25, the 20th annual Public Schools Week program will be given by the Torrance high school assembly. This event, sponsored by the Torrance Masonic lodge and other civic organizations of the city, will be introduced by Joss M. Reddington, master of the lodge.

The program will begin at 7:30 o'clock and is divided into four parts. The Torrance Elementary school, Merle R. Helbach, principal, will present orchestra selections followed by a combined orchestra and choral hymn, "God Bless America" by Irving Berlin, and chorus number, "Lena and Hans" by Van Norman. Mrs. Evelyn Simpson will direct the orchestra and Mrs. Juliet M. Young has charge of the chorus.

The Fern Avenue school, Mrs. Oda Vans, principal, will feature five harmonica band selections, directed by Mrs. Hazel Hansen, and the verse choir under Miss Lear's "Jumbled" under Mrs. M. Young. Mrs. M. Young will present the "Jumbled" under Mrs. M. Young. Mrs. M. Young will present the "Jumbled" under Mrs. M. Young.

Fourth part of the program will be devoted to the Torrance Evening school, Bertram L. Fitzgerald, principal. Two violin solos and vocal solos directed by Miss O'Connell will be given and the audience will sing "America" to close the observance.

## Rule Government Not Subject to Matton Costs

Any property acquired by the Federal government within an old Matton Act district is not subject to the special assessments levied for the improvement in that district, County Counsel J. H. Connor, today in an opinion affecting the Alondra Park and A. I. district.

The government now is negotiating for a postoffice site in the district, this parcel must be removed from the district, tax rolls when acquired, county attorneys stated. The old Matton Act specifically exempts government-owned property from special assessments.

Several years ago the California Supreme court passed on a related case, involving the city of Inglewood, where the question was raised as to whether government-owned property should be taxed for special improvements. Since the statutes were silent on the point, the high court held there was no specific authority to tax the property, and hence it could not be done.

Since then the government has acquired title to scores of parcels of property throughout the county for postoffice sites, and the ruling applies to all of them.

## Britain Places Three Classes in Draft Act

LONDON (U.P.)—The National Service register will form the background for a Conscription Act which will be introduced immediately in the event of war.

The act is in three classes. With the aid of the national register every man could be at his appointed post within a week. The first wave of mobilization would be for property every young man between 18 and 21 who would be called to the colors.

The second wave would take those men who, according to the national register and the list of exempted occupations, are under the age of 25 and are not regarded as being on essential national service.

The third wave would take men up to 30 in the same categories. It is not expected that it will be necessary to conscript men past 30, though in the event of a prolonged or extensive war, that step would be considered, again with reference to exempted occupations under the national register as a guide.

## Six Decades Together



MR. and MRS. A. W. ADAMS . . . their family tree is 512 years old

Last Sunday was more than a beautiful spring Sabbath to Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Adams who live in a comfortable second floor flat at 1814-C Cabrillo avenue. And their visit with their son in Pasadena was of far more significance than a customary family gathering.

The Adamses were celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary and they enjoyed it immensely. As far as The Herald knows they hold the distinction of holding the longest marriage record in this city. Adams, now a spry 80-year-old, followed his trade as a cobbler until three years ago when he retired after selling his two shoe repair shops here.

Have Great-Grandchild Mrs. Adams, a charming, motherly person, is 75 and, like her husband, she is now enjoying fairly good health. They were married in New York state. Adams was born in Plainville, Conn. and Mrs. Adams is a native of Meriden, Conn. They

## Police Probe Woman's Strange Fall from Car

Unsatisfied with the account of the strange fall of leap of Mrs. Juanita McDougald, 30, from a car Thursday night as given police by four other occupants of the machine, Police Chief John Stroth intends to question the injured woman at Torrance Memorial Hospital as soon as she recovers sufficiently.

Mrs. McDougald, mother of five children, is suffering from a possible fractured skull and numerous cuts and bruises. She is reported improving but is still unable to give a coherent account of the accident.

No reason was given, according to Stroth, as to why the woman, who, with the others in the car, lives at the Terry Auto court off Western avenue, should have jumped or fallen from the car as the machine was coming into Torrance on Torrance boulevard.

Asks Driver to Slow Up Near the intersection of Madrona, while the car was traveling about 25 miles an hour, Mrs. McDougald suddenly moved from the front seat to the pavement. Police were informed that Mrs. Peggy Rushing was driving the machine, a sedan, but later learned from another witness that her husband was behind the wheel with Mrs. McDougald beside him.

In the rear seat, according to Stroth, were Mrs. Rushing and Mr. and Mrs. William Knowles. The group had been involved in a collision on Elena street in Redondo Beach a few minutes before and were proceeding home.

Mrs. McDougald, according to Stroth, was informed that she was in a highly nervous state and she asked the driver to slow down while near Madrona. Then she jumped or fell from the car and was picked up by a passing motorist before the Rushings could stop their machine and taken to the hospital.

E. H. McDougald, husband of the woman, has told police he is not content with the story of the accident as reported and has urged Stroth to make a full investigation of the mishap.

## Chamber Board Prepares Election

Directors of the Chamber of Commerce this week appointed J. E. Pooler, James E. Hitchcock, Charles V. Jones and Hillman Lee as a nominating committee to select six candidates to stand for election June 5 to the three directorships which are expiring. The retiring members of the board are Sam Levy, J. W. McQuaid and Earl Brunner.

A decision will be made at the next directors' session regarding a suggestion made this week that the Chamber hold an annual, instead of a series of quarterly meetings. Paul Tania, manager of Cornet's 5 and 10 Cent store, was received as a new member of the Chamber.

## Bus Lines' Offer of Local Survey Is Accepted

Further discussion of the proposed municipally-operated bus line to serve Gardena, Torrance, Lomita and Welteria was held at a luncheon meeting in Daniel's cafe Monday noon attended by Torrance and Gardena city officials and civic leaders.

Councilman Earl Jacobs of Gardena reported the officials of the Los Angeles Motor Coach company had offered to conduct a survey in conjunction with Pacific Electric railway to determine the amount of traffic that could be expected from the territories served by the proposed bus line. It was pointed out that these utilities would be interested in having such a bus system installed as it would act as a feeder for their buses at Manchester avenue. Their offer to make a study of the proposed municipally-operated line without cost was accepted by the committee.

Doubt was expressed by some present at the luncheon whether a plan for joint municipal operation of a bus line could be satisfactorily worked out, and some stated that if the line were to be operated municipally that either Torrance or Gardena should undertake the entire responsibility.

Representing Torrance at the meeting were: Mayor William H. Tolson, Councilman Tom McQuaid and James Hitchcock, Acting City Engineer Leonard Young, Chamber president, Dr. Alden W. Smith, L. J. Gilmeister, chamber secretary and Grover C. Whyte. Gardena was represented by Mayor Wayne Bogard, Councilman C. G. Pursche, Earl Jacobs, and Fred O'Haver, and chamber secretary Pat MacDonnell.

## Japanese Fined for Deceptive Berry Picking

When the County Agricultural Commissioner says that boxes of strawberries, now starting their season in Torrance, must contain berries of uniform size, he doesn't mean . . .

That growers can put the smallest ones on the bottom and the cover them with the large, red-tips, attractive morsels that induce housewives to treat their families to strawberry shortcake.

That fact was impressed on the local Japanese gardeners, G. Suninaga and K. Jude, who operate in fields off Hawthorne boulevard in Welteria, Tuesday morning when they faced City Judge Robert Lessing following arrest by Victor Daniels, inspector for the County Agricultural Commission.

They were charged with deceptively packing strawberries in boxes and introducing such of their boxes as evidence. When the berries were dumped out on Judge Lessing's bench, two-thirds of each box were found to be much smaller than the large berries that formed the top.

Daniels showed how the berries were thus packed, filling the boxes with the sub-standard grade nearly to the top and then carefully covering them with the larger fruit. He informed the court that both Japanese had been warned before against such practice. Both, plead guilty and after stating that similar offenses had received fines up to \$50 last season, Judge Lessing fined Suninaga \$100 or 50 days in jail, suspended \$90 or 45 days on condition that the two growers were not arrested for the same offense within two years.

Daniels informed the court that the smaller berries were selling between 60 and 65 cents per tray while the larger fruit was commanding premium prices of from \$1 to \$1.40 at the present time.

## Matton Dist. 70 Meeting Tomorrow

A meeting of all property owners in the Matton District No. 70, Torrance, will be held tomorrow (Friday) night at 8 o'clock at the Steelworkers' hall on Cravens opposite the fire station. Those having questions or proposals to be considered are prepared to give full information about efforts to relieve the A. and I. assessment burden.

## Public Forum at Hi School Here Opens April 24

A Public Forum devoted to free discussion of local and national problems weekly will be launched at the high school assembly hall next Monday night, April 24, under the leadership of able Dr. Paul J. Ritter. The first meeting, which will start at 8 o'clock, will have four speakers and members of the audience will be invited to participate in the discussion following each talk.

Dr. Ritter, who has had 15 years' experience in Public Forum work, has been several days during the past week contacting community leaders to get their ideas about the project. Yesterday he declared that never before has he received so much encouragement and pledges of assistance in carrying out an extensive program of interesting meetings every Monday night at the high school hall.

The project is being sponsored here by the Torrance Evening high school and its principal Bertram L. Fitzgerald. The speakers next Monday night will be:

**Questions Are Invited**  
Mayor William H. Tolson on "Civic Problems As I See Them"; Principal Thomas H. Elson of the high school on "Educational Problems in Torrance"; Principal Fitzgerald on "Evening School Offerings"; and Dr. Ritter will explain details of the future Forum sessions.

All residents of Torrance and vicinity are cordially invited to attend and ask questions of the speakers at the close of their talks. Members of the audience are, naturally, expected to refrain from personalities but otherwise the discussion will be as free and open as they choose to make it.

It is planned to alternate the Forum themes with local and national subjects. The session on May 1 will be devoted to the project: "Shall We Have a War Referendum?"

**Library Contract Penalty Is Held Illegal by County**  
Penalties sought by the board of supervisors in contracts with the county council office informed the board this week.

The council's office informed new contracts similar to those which have previously been in effect. The contracts are scheduled to come before the board for action this week.

**Corrective Eye Operation Said Complete Success**  
A corrective operation performed last Friday morning at a Los Angeles hospital on the eyes of little Patricia Rojo, 11-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Rojo of 1515 Amalpa, was a complete success, it was learned yesterday when the little girl was brought home. Patricia will be confined at her home for a brief convalescence period before returning to school. Rojo is manager of the Torrance Laundry and Dry Cleaning company.

**VICTIM IMPROVES**  
Arthur Webster, Long Beach oil worker who was critically injured in an accident at a South Torrance field week April 8, is reported making a good recovery at Torrance Memorial hospital.

**Cuts Corner Too Sharply, Crashes Into Youth's Car**  
Arthur Basile, 20, of 1824 Gramercy, had his car badly damaged shortly after noon Tuesday when the machine was struck by a car driven by Gale Maddock, 18, of 20035 Vermont. Maddock cut the corner at Carson and Watson street, near the high school, too sharply and ran into the car driven by Basile.

Watson, according to police reports, neither driver was injured. The injured were Joe Basile, 17, driver of the car, 1829 Gramercy; John Rogers, 16, 2215 Antwood; George Beckham, 16, 1518 Post, and Walter Edmonds, 16, 1604 219th street.

**Boys Like Slower Auto Rides Now**  
Four local boys who were injured a week ago when a front tire blew out and overturned an automobile on Crenshaw (Cedar) boulevard just south of 190th street are completely recovered from their lacerations and bruises now but are taking their rides at a slower pace.

The injured were Joe Basile, 17, driver of the car, 1829 Gramercy; John Rogers, 16, 2215 Antwood; George Beckham, 16, 1518 Post, and Walter Edmonds, 16, 1604 219th street.

**ONE-TENTH WILL SAVE LAND**  
Data Given on County Tax-Deed Sale  
Tax-deeded property may be redeemed by the last owner of record up to within an hour of the date fixed for its sale at auction shortly, County Counsel H. O'Connor advised County Tax Collector H. L. Byram this week.

Some 1,200 parcels of property are to be offered for sale shortly at public auction, as soon as State Controller Harry Riley approves the list forwarded to him recently by the supervisors. Next step will be for the supervisors to formally advertise the 1,200 parcels for sale.

It is not necessary for the property to be redeemed in full, as any property owner may take advantage of the 10-payment plan and deposit only one-tenth of the unpaid taxes if he wishes. O'Connor informed Byram's office. But most of the parcels have back taxes against them far in excess of their present market value, it was indicated by the list.