

# Torrance Herald

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Sixteen

TORRANCE HERALD DECEMBER 12, 1957

## Expansion, Change Seen As 'Y' Notes 75th Year

In late 1881, when 26-year-old Samuel I. Merrill arrived in Southern California, Los Angeles was a dusty little frontier community of 14,000 persons—about the population

of San Marino today. It was, however, in the midst of a boom which had seen the population increase by 25 per cent in one year. Like many of the newcomers young Merrill subsequently achieved wealth and stature in a business career that lasted until his death in 1932.

But doubtless his most significant contribution to Los Angeles was made only about a month after his arrival and was not in the field of business.

**Saloons Popular**  
Noting that practically the only gathering places for the newcomers like himself were the crowded saloons, Merrill decided to do something about it. So on Jan. 28, 1882, he asked 20 other young men to a meeting in Trinity Methodist Church South and founded the Young Men's Christian Assn. of Los Angeles. He was elected first president.

That was 75 years ago and this month (December) the Y is winding up a year-long celebration of its diamond anniversary.

The organization Merrill founded has grown into a sprawling YMCA of 93,209 members, more than any Y in the world, with total assets of \$3 1/2 million in 25 branches and five mountain camps. It serves youth in a 750-square-mile area from San Pedro to San Fernando and from West Los Angeles to Montebello.

**Torrance Branch**  
One of the branches of the YMCA that Merrill founded was established 11 years ago in Torrance, which had previously been affiliated with the San Pedro YMCA.

From almost nothing, the Torrance YMCA has grown to a membership of 1500 youngsters and 1000 adults participating in 78 YMCA groups. Another 4000 youngsters take part in various YMCA activities—camping, day camps, Saturday trips, and other doings.

During its 11-year history, the local YMCA has grown under the leadership of four full-time secretaries—Ted Meier, L. Milton Isbell, Stan Roberts, and Joe Wilcox—and one part-time secretary, Dick Brown. All five of these men still live in Torrance.

The present secretary, Wilcox, has joined this year by another full-time man, Doug Cannon, and the Y plans to add a third full-time man in March.

**Quarters Cramped**  
Its quarters at 2080 Washington St. are getting rather cramped and the board of managers, under the leadership of Chairman Ben Smith, is eyeing the possibility of building expansion.

Although early YMCAs were primarily for older young men out of high school, today's emphasize activities for younger young men still in school. The Torrance Y was one of the first to initiate a complete "father and son" program in which both fathers and sons belong to clubs, not the boys alone.

In the past 75 years it has served many thousands of boys, girls, and young people with a Christian program designed to make them better citizens.

And during those years the organization has pioneered a number of activities that have since been considered so important they have become functions of government.

**School Started**  
About 1891, for example, the association started the YMCA Technical School, first adult night school in the city. The Y's first major building on Fort St. (now Broadway) near Second, boasted Los Angeles' first gymnasium.

In 1892 the association, which originally had been established to serve young men, began working with boys. It was the first local organization to enter this work, which subsequently became its most important activity.

It is almost a certainty that the first basketball game played in Los Angeles was under YMCA auspices shortly after the game's invention in

1891 by Dr. James Naismith, an instructor in the YMCA's Springfield (Mass.) College. One of the city's first playgrounds was the old YMCA athletic field on Stevenson Ave. (now Whittier Blvd.) in Hollenbeck Heights.

Built in 1911, it had a grandstand for 5000 and was the scene of college and high school track meets, football games and tennis matches for a number of years. First athletic director of the field was Dean B. Cromwell, later to gain fame as USC's track coach.

**Aided Young Men**  
In the early years the Y's principal service was to young men who were newcomers to the city.

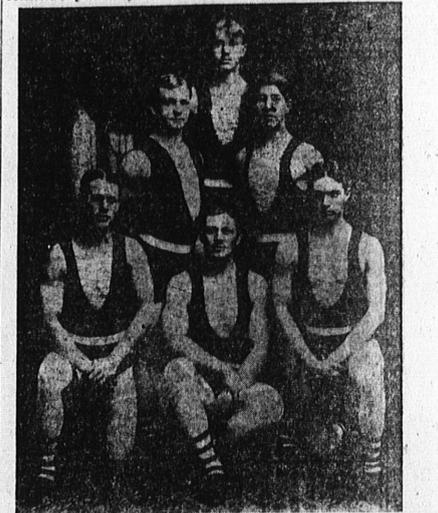
The first general secretary, F. J. Culver, recalled many years later that the work had consisted primarily of "relief

the lack of operating funds, the availability of a superior and permanent staff enabled YMCA expansion to continue into outlying areas, and the youth program was the most effective to that date.

As the depression waned, the Y faced a problem of providing facilities and programs for the thousands of World War II servicemen who spent leaves, passes and furloughs in the Southland.

Practically every night between 1941 and 1946 saw the five residence branches—Downtown, Hollywood, 29th St., San Pedro and East Los Angeles—serving a staggering number of men in uniform.

They had to sleep in lobbies and gymnasiums, but they enjoyed parties and dances several nights a week while the Y was under the USO banner.



**EARLY YMCA BOYS . . .** During the 1890's the Los Angeles YMCA wrestling team was far west champions. In those days, the YMCA was primarily for older younger men, but today it is for younger young men and their fathers. The Torrance YMCA, a branch of the Los Angeles Y, is one of the first to initiate a complete father-and-son program.

activities in the care of sick young men coming to Southern California from all parts of the world as a mecca for all diseases . . . over 200 men were laid to rest in Evergreen Cemetery . . .

The work before 1900 gave the Y a permanence that enabled it to establish its first branch, now the 28th St. unit, in 1906. Then in 1908 the association completed the present downtown building on Hope St., then the largest structure in the city.

**Work Spreads**  
The second decade of the century saw the YMCA start its pioneering pattern of decentralization to match the spreading growth pattern of Los Angeles.

Work was established in East Los Angeles, Hollywood, and San Pedro between 1911 and 1918. By 1928 the latter two branches and 28th St. had completed major buildings, all of which are still in use.

During the '20s YMCA camping for boys, which had been initiated before 1900 with trips to such places as Laguna and Catalina, was given a definite pattern with the acquisition of Camps Little Green Valley and Round Meadow in the San Bernardino mountains.

As the pattern of decentralization gained momentum with establishment of the Wilshire, Southwest and Southeast YMCAs, the branches were granted two important principles—self-management of budgets and the right to accept contributed funds directly from the citizens of their communities.

**Self-Management**  
These rights are in many ways the greatest source of the Los Angeles YMCA's strength today. They insure that a Y branch, for all practical purposes, belongs to the people played in Los Angeles was under YMCA auspices shortly after the game's invention in

**Branches Expand**  
The post-war years have been marked by an expansion from 19 to 25 branches, a 110 per cent increase in the number of youth served and a struggle to keep up with the exploding growth of the city.

According to President Harold F. Whittle, who has held office since 1940, "We are now at work planning for the future in terms of the facilities and youth programs which will be needed to serve Los Angeles in the years to come."

"Our first 75 years are completed and we face only the future. But we must pay tribute to the thousands of citizens who have worked and sacrificed for the Y and the youth of our city."

"To all who had a part in the Y's history, we dedicate a forward-moving program for further generations of Los Angeles youth."

**Council Asks Decision on Isen Status**  
The city will seek an independent decision from the legal firm of O'Melvaney and Myers whether Mayor Albert Isen may list himself as an incumbent for the newly created office of mayor on the April election ballot.

Decision to seek the outside opinion followed a protest by Councilman Dralle over an opinion prepared by City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier which held that Isen could be listed as an incumbent for the new post.

**CITY GIVEN EASEMENT**  
Street easements for the extension of Carson St. west of Madrona Ave. were received officially by the city this week from the Chanselor-Western Oil Development Co.

Further easements from the Del Amo Estates Co. will permit extension of the street to Hawthorne Blvd. in the near future, city officials explained. It will be a major access road to the new Broadway-Sears shopping center which will be located between Madrona and Hawthorne south of Carson St.

## 1957 City Taxes Average \$16.20, Increase of \$2

What makes taxes so high? There are a number of different answers to that question, depending on whose taxes you are discussing. The biggest share of the Torrance tax dollar goes to the Torrance Unified School District, El Camino College, and Los Angeles County. The city of Torrance gets about 17 per cent of the total amount collected.

The city's tax rate jumped from \$1.184 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$1.224 this year. On a \$4000 assessed valuation, this would be an increase of only \$1.60, but most people's tax bills went up more than that.

**Taxes Increase**  
There was also an increase in the taxes paid to the other government agencies—as well

as the fact that the assessed valuations were hiked as well as the tax rate. No property is taxed at its full value. One \$16,000 house in Torrance, for instance, had an assessed value of \$3950 this year, which was considerably higher than the amount on which the owner paid taxes last year.

An informal survey by the North Torrance Civic Improvement Assn. showed that assessments had increased from 16 to 40 per cent among its members, with the average increase about 27 per cent.

**Budget Increases**  
The rapidly-growing city of Torrance (11,000 new residents in the last year) saw its budget increase from \$2,845,551 to \$3,608,591 in the past year, an

increase of \$763,000 or about 21 per cent.

Of this increase, some \$100,000 or about one-fifth went for rubbish collection, due to the ban on incinerator burning. The city met this increase by charging all city residents \$1 per month for the previously-free service. This increase is not reflected in the tax rate.

Other large budget increases went to the Police Department, \$140,000; Fire Department, \$81,000; Park Department, \$83,000; Recreation Department, \$50,000; Engineering Department, \$36,000; Finance Department, \$35,000; Health and Sanitation Department, \$33,000. Most other city departments showed smaller increases in budgetary appropriations. One, the Building Department, dropped \$17,000 due to the decrease in building activity here.

**Salaries Rise**  
The reason for these increases is mainly salaries. Rising costs have forced the city to pay higher salaries to its employees and the rapid growth has forced the addition of many new employees, particularly in the Police and Fire Departments.

Nearly everything costs more than it did a year ago. In addition, the city must spend \$60,000 to hold its regular elections this year, an expense which it did not have last year. How does the city propose to meet this \$763,000 increase in its budget?

Last year, the city's budget cost every man, woman, and child in the city about \$14.25 in taxes. This year's budget will cost each citizen about \$16.20.

Of the \$763,000 increase, some \$304,000 is provided by the increased tax revenues. Increased sales tax revenues will add another \$100,000. Increased gas tax funds received from the state will up the city kitty by about \$127,000.

**Refuse Charges**  
Refuse collection charges, new this year, will provide about \$250,000 additional revenue, although the start of the refuse collection program increased the budget by only \$160,000.

Parking meter fines due to stricter enforcement are expected to put an extra \$15,000 in the coffers, while moving violations will bring in an additional \$24,000. Other city sources of revenue—business and liquor license, franchise taxes, recreation fees and subsidies, and others—also showed small increases.

However, the increases were offset somewhat by a decline in building activity from the previous peak year—1956. Various building permits and engineering and inspection fees are expected to be about \$110,000 lower this year fiscal year than they were in 1956.

## The Budget

ESTIMATED REVENUES 1957-58

	Estimated 1956-57	Estimated 1957-58
Taxes—Current	\$1,188,951	\$1,492,791
Taxes—Delinquent	12,000	18,000
Taxes—Interest & Penalties	1,500	2,000
Business Licenses	110,000	116,000
Liquor Licenses	15,000	18,500
Permits—Building	90,000	40,000
Permits—Plumbing	44,000	18,000
Permits—Electrical	20,000	8,000
Permits—Sewer	13,000	4,000
Permits—Moving	300	500
Permits—Variances	1,000	1,800
Subdivision & Building Plan Checks	12,000	12,000
Court Fines—General	24,000	24,000
Court Fines—Vehicle Act	120,000	144,000
Motor Vehicle License Fees	373,800	500,000
Miscellaneous Refunds	14,000	10,000
Auditorium	2,000	2,000
Franchise Earnings	115,000	147,000
Sales & Use Tax	550,000	650,000
Miscellaneous Income and Sales	12,000	10,000
Dog License Commission	2,000	2,000
City Dump	15,000	18,000
Refuse Collection Fees (Net)	20,000	270,000
Parking Meter Fees	10,000	25,000
Recreation Fees and Subsidies	30,000	35,000
Engineering and Inspection Fees	50,000	40,000
	\$2,845,551	\$3,608,591

For Tax Purposes:	
Total Secured (Land, Improvements, Personal Property & Public Utility)	\$148,071,300
Less Contested	391,720
Net	147,679,580
Less 2% Delinquency	2,953,590
Value for Tax Rate	\$143,725,990
Unsecured Real & Personal Property	7,132,830
Contested	1,356,690
Net	\$5,776,140
Less 2% Delinquency	115,520
Value for Tax Rate	\$5,660,620
Revenue from \$1.00 Tax Rate:	
\$143,725,990 @ \$1.00 per \$100	\$1,437,260
\$5,660,620 @ \$0.981 per \$100	55,531
	\$1,492,791

## 1957-58 ANNUAL BUDGET ESTIMATE

General Fund		
	Estimated 1956-57	Estimated 1957-58
City Attorney	\$30,592	\$30,695
City Clerk	65,468A	24,859
City Council	13,600	22,925
City Custodian	28,612	39,470
City Manager	34,486	49,523
City Treasurer	13,967	14,927
<b>DEPARTMENTS:</b>		
Building	133,842	116,638
Dump	41,224	49,792
Engineering	113,548	149,952
Finance	10,000	45,901
Fire	445,143	528,260
Garage	29,166	32,614
Health and Sanitation	98,200	131,281
License	11,895	20,363
Paint	249,128	13,715
Park	517,216	332,616
Police	657,150	657,150
Public Works	27,123	73,400
Recreation	166,932	216,734
Street	373,095	533,268
Street Lighting	60,768	73,400
Civil Service Commission	10,504	11,618
Planning Commission	24,991	30,660
Recreation Commission	900	1,200
Auditing	4,000	b . . .
Auditorium	4,850	4,850
Building Repairs	5,000	5,000
City Hall Expense	14,076	19,458
County Tax Commission	3,700	3,700
Insurance—Compensation	35,000	40,000
Insurance—Liability	30,000	37,500
Insurance—Other	7,000	7,500
Insurance—Employees	15,500	18,000
Miscellaneous	7,500	17,500
Printing	5,000	c . . .
Civil Defense	4,630	4,805
Chamber of Commerce	14,000	16,000
Promotion	6,000	d 8,800
Elections	60,000	60,000
Bus Operation Fund	8,000	14,400
Unappropriated Reserve	208,418	204,474
<b>Total Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$2,845,551</b>	<b>\$3,608,591</b>
a-Included License Department.		
b-Included in Finance Department Budget.		
c-Included in Council Budget.		
d-Public Officers Association	\$2,800	
Community Promotions, Music, Advertising and Promotion	2,000	
Decorations and Advertising	1,500	
Torrance Area Youth Band	2,500	
	\$8,800	

## TORRANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1345 El Prado, Torrance  
I wish to be a "part" of Torrance's entry in the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day.

Name .....

Address .....

Donation .....

## SIX NAMED TO SCREEN MAGAZINES SOLD HERE

Six members of the 10-man committee to screen the so-called "girlie magazines" being sold in Torrance have been named, it was revealed at the city council meeting Tuesday.

Four councilmen name their appointees to the committee, and a fifth councilman, Nick Dralle, said he would have his appointment next week.

Named by councilmen were Dr. Donald Cortum (Blount), Frank Kristufek (Benstead), Mrs. Donald Hauser (Jahn), and Rev. William Schatz (Isen).

## Chairmen for Sportsman's Club Named

A. G. Koester, president of the Hollywood Riviera Sportsman's Club has announced the appointment of permanent committee chairmen.

They include: M. M. Kauffman, finance; Henry G. Behrens, sports; Louis M. Regan, Scout; Art Dennis and Robert Surber, log; Surber, publicity; and Koester, membership.

Taking charge of the Sportsman's annual Christmas tree sale this year will be Phil Eschandi. The lot will be at the same location as last year in Riviera Village.

At last night's meeting John Baird, special consultant to the Southern California Gas Co., told humorous anecdotes about gas company employees and their customers and explained the more serious story of supplying ever-increasing amounts of natural gas to the expanding Southland economy.

He also explained the future of gas supply in Southern California and steps being taken by the Gas Co. to meet the enormous demand for fuel in this area.

## Details About Juvenile Hall Proposal Asked

Mayor Albert Isen gave notice this week that he doesn't intend to give up easily on his battle to keep a juvenile hall away from Torrance.

To gather information for his battle, he ordered the police department Tuesday to find out the size of the area desired by the county for the facility, the area to be embraced in the operation of the branch, and make a compilation of the juvenile cases originating in Torrance during the past year in which the facilities of the county's juvenile hall was used.

He also asked for a legal opinion from City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier on the "city's rights" in the matter.

Isen previously challenged reported proposals of the county to acquire land in the Torrance area for a juvenile hall facility. He brought the matter up several weeks ago and asked for a formal resolution protesting the plan.

This week it is to be included in the resolution, he indicated.



**VALLEY OF SMOKES . . .** Torrance residents got a demonstration of why the Los Angeles Basin is called the "Valley of Smokes," when fire broke out in a flare pit at the General Petroleum Corp. Sunday. The fire resulted when smokeless burning equipment at the plant failed to function, but there was no damage to facilities or injuries to personnel. (Herald Photo)

## MEMBERSHIPS SOUGHT FOR ROSE TOURNAMENT

Torrance, the AllAmerica City, is proud of its citizen participation. Won't you uphold this honor by clipping out the coupon below and mailing it with your donation to the Torrance Chamber of Commerce. Memberships in the Torrance Tournament of Roses Assn. are as follows: Associate, \$1.00; Sustaining, \$5.00; Sponsor, \$10.00, Patron, \$25.00.  
Your membership card will be mailed to you.