

History of The GOLDEN WESTSIDE

BOOK ONE

by Ralph Brogdon

The RANCHO PARK Story Chapter One

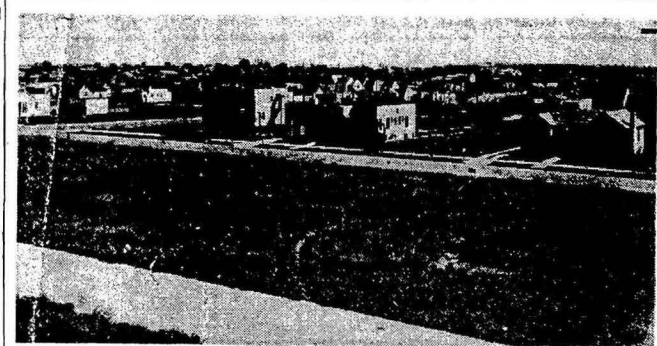
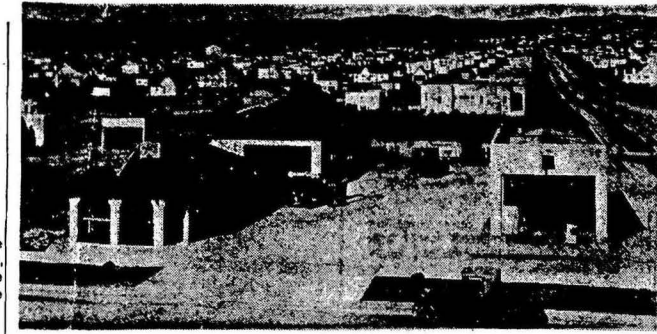
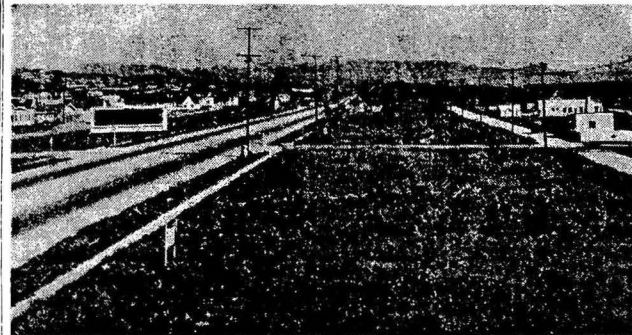
FOREWORD

In this first chapter of The Rancho Park Story we consider the nearly two decades from inception of the community, through the "terrible thirties." During the next few weeks we will consider the later periods.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

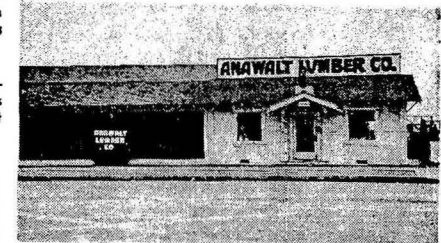
We gratefully acknowledge the assistance received from such pioneers as Bill Luthiger, Gail McKay, Bob Hindall, John Hayler, Pete Lillie, and Mrs. Wm. H. Hayler from whose collection came the pictures shown.

JANUARY 1928 PHOTOS—Looking north, south, east and west from point where Parnell Ave. dead-ends at Pico Blvd.

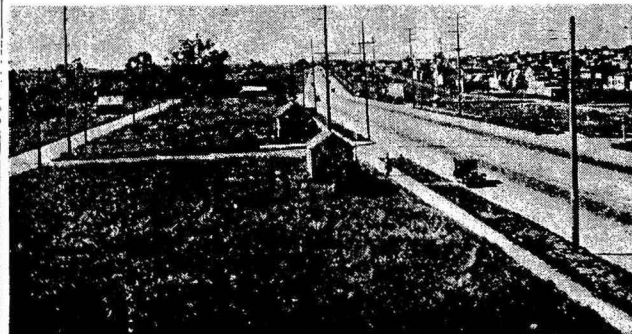


DIRECTLY ABOVE (Top) — Looking north. Buildings in foreground now Hayler's Automotive.

IMMEDIATELY ABOVE — Looking south; first homes facing Ayres Ave. Cheviot Hills center background.



ANAWALT LUMBER COMPANY—Pictured above as it was in the '30's was one of the first businesses established in the area which later became Rancho Park. Anawalt Lumber Company is the only business in Rancho Park which has operated continuously under the same family management since that early date. Fred Anawalt (who passed on in 1963) founded the lumber yard in September of 1923. Dick Anawalt, present operator and son of original owner, was a young child during those early years. Building shown above, with shed added, at left; was original office. That office was situated directly in front of the dead-end of Sepulveda Blvd. before the road was cut through.



ABOVE (Top)—Looking east along Pico Blvd.

DIRECTLY ABOVE—West along Pico Blvd. Bill Hayler's real estate office on southwest corner of Manning Ave. is shown with group of men on lawn.

There are crass individuals who insist Rancho Park was initially developed by a giant investment corporation. The corporation which, from its beginning in 1912, was able to achieve world-wide fame by 1929 for a tremendous tract

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Early Growth

A concise account of the

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"The Robert Ginters were also in that building with their cleaning outfit."

Rancho Park
Rx Pharmacy

Reliable Prescriptions
Since 1929

Free Prompt Delivery

Closed Sundays

10569 W. Pico, Corner of Prosser

Rancho Park

475-3001, 838-3666

Ginter's
Dry Cleaning

JOHN GINTER

In This Area Since 1929

10767 W. Pico

Rancho Park

Pete's On Pico

Since 1939

LUNCHEON DINNER

STEAKS — LOBSTER
STEAMED CLAMS
PRIME RIB

Fine Cocktails

10928 W. Pico.

Rancho Park

Open Daily 10 a.m. — 2 a.m.

The Heyler Company Realtors

Same Location Since 1927

ELLIS WINZELER

10630 W. Pico Blvd.

Rancho Park

GR 9-6117

of land, when they named "Westwood," had been successfully subdivided by the Janss Investment Corporation. This original Westwood tract extended from Santa Monica Boulevard south to Pico Blvd. bounded on the west by Sepulveda Blvd. and stretching for nearly two miles toward the east.

The northern environs of the community of Rancho Park now encompass the southern portion of the original Westwood tract (from Olympic Blvd. to Pico) Rancho Park also envelopes the region south of Pico to National Blvd. from Cheviot Hills on the east to Sepulveda Blvd. on the west.

"Old-timers" of the area will tell you that Rancho Park, like other communities on the "Golden Westside" of metropolitan Los Angeles, was in reality developed by civic-minded homeowners and business people.

Some of our old-timers remember the first feeble stirring of the embryonic community nearly a half-century ago: even before William Fox established the old Fox Company "ranch" (primarily to make Tom Mix films) on the 150 acre site between "Westwood" and Beverly Hills.

They remember the year 1925, when University of California Regents announced selection of the "Westwood" site for the Los Angeles branch of the state university, and thus added another incentive to the already great incentives beckoning house-holders to this budding community.

Fox Moves In

A glamorous backdrop was added to the other attractions when, late in 1928, the Fox Company expanded its Fox Movietone City, complete with main offices and studios, to the location fronting on Pico Boulevard.

The records show that during the two years 1928 and 1929 both the residential community and the business community of Rancho Park enjoyed phenomenal growth. The reader of this history will note especially that numerous commercial buildings were constructed in '28 and occupied in '29.

However, the growth of this community, like all the others was cut short by the "crash" of November, 1929; and the long depression which followed.

For eye-witness accounts of this first chapter in the

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"We bought our lot in February, 1925. We waited a couple of years to see if our conclusions were right before we decided to build. We moved into our new home in June, 1928. Life was simple; and times were hard, especially during the depression. But Rancho Park was a splendid place to raise children.

"As our work took us to downtown Los Angeles each day, we commuted on the Pacific Electric Red Cars. A bus took us to Rimpau and Pico where we took the 'Pico' car downtown.

"During the summers Fox Studios would sometimes drain their lake. Since no sewer was available, the water, in great volume, would flow down Lauriston Avenue to Manning where it entered the newly constructed sewer line. Coming home from work on the bus and walking north on Prosser at Lauriston we had to take off our shoes and wade across.

"The late Bob Eldredge told me that his service station, built early in 1923, on the corner of Pico and Midvale Ave., was the first business building on Pico, in Rancho Park. Although Fred Anawalt established Anawalt Lumber Company at Pico and Sepulveda later in 1923, Pico was at that time a narrow, unpaved country road.

"A couple of years later Roy Craft built a service station on the northwest corner of Pico and Parnell.

"A young man named John Heyler operated the station with Craft. Heyler told me that in 1926, while Pico Blvd. was, at last, being paved, the construction work interrupted business to the point where he was forced to seek employment elsewhere. He returned in 1937 to purchase the station. John Heyler still owns and operates the station (with his son, Jack) under the name of Heyler's Automotive.

"Our nearest market for grocery shopping was a Piggy Wiggly store erected in 1929 between Prosser and Parnell on the north side of Pico. Buildings were also constructed on the northwest corner of Pico and Prosser in 1928 and soon we could get our

and what is now the Rancho Park Pharmacy was on the corner." (Ed note: The Robert Ginters mentioned were the parents of John Ginter, owner of Ginter's Cleaners, since located at 10767 W. Pico.)

Gail McKay Story

As Mr. Hindall so vividly recalled for us the names and periods of the establishment of commercial organizations we were prompted to consult another pioneer of the area, Gail B. McKay, for an account of the activities of early residents. Mr. McKay, who has for many years been affectionately known as "Mayor" of Rancho Park, drew this brief word-picture for us: "In the early part of 1930 the area now known as Rancho Park attracted our attention as a wonderful place to live; there was no congestion of traffic and everything moved at a leisurely pace."

"New arrivals quickly found themselves acquainted with a wonderful group of friendly people. Small-town customs prevailed; worthwhile projects were easily accomplished. The entire area responded to any call upon their time and effort toward developing the community.

"But new building projects were gradually ceasing . . . A depression had started . . . Fine homes were being sold at real bargain prices. You could make your choice of the type of home you wanted and could almost dictate the price you would pay for it."

(Ed. note: We are sure it was not mere coincidence that Bob Hindall and Gail McKay, kindly men, both chose to omit from their narratives most of the years of the "terrible thirties." Your historian also failed to turn up much evidence of anything to record for other than the morbid). However, by 1939 the depression had given way to improved economic conditions.

Two men, for years prominent in Rancho Park business circles, came to the community in 1939. One of them, Aaron (Kirk) Kurkov still operates (among other business interests on the Westside) his Pico Drug Company which he managed as well as owned for many years after purchasing it nearly thirty years ago.

Pete Lille

The other '39er, Pete Lille, famous throughout Southern California for his restaurant and bar, "Pete's On Pico," tells an amusing story of incidents which occurred nearly three decades ago. "On warm

trying to catch their chickens in the weeds, stumbled over the two-day-dead body of a man. They took off so fast they forgot their chickens."

Gail McKay Continues

We here return to Gail McKay's narrative to learn more of this short period between the "terrible thirties" and the even more terrible years during World War II. . . .

"The area at this time was still called 'Westwood.' Westwood Village had become the nearest large shopping center.

"We thought it was about time to have our own community. We must separate ourselves from Westwood. There were many names suggested for our new community but there was a pioneer real estate broker here who had established his office on Pico near Manning back in 1927. His name was Bill Heyler. Bill did as much as any other person to develop the area; so when it came to adopting a name for the community, the wisdom of our pioneer was in counsel. The honor of naming this community 'Rancho Park' went to Bill Heyler."

(Ed. note: Mr. Heyler passed on in 1959. He served as first president of the Rancho Park Business Men's Association, forerunner of the present Chamber of Commerce. Ellis Winzeler, who is now serving his second term as president of the Rancho Park Chamber of Commerce was for many years Bill Heyler's only salesman. Upon the death of Mr. Heyler, Winzeler became owner of, and still operates The Heyler Company, Realtors, in the same location established by Bill Heyler in 1927.)



NEXT WEEK

THE RANCHO PARK

Story Continues

Into the War

Years



Pico Drug Co.

Serving This Area Since 1939

"Precise Prescriptions—

The Cardinal Rule of Our Pharmacists—
Compounded at Most Sensible Prices"

Open 7 Days A Week—
7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

10654 W. Pico

Rancho Park

Phone 870-0337

Heyler's Automotive

"You'll Like It"

30 Years On This Corner

John, Jack, Emily, and Shirley

Phillips 66 Products

10601 W. Pico at Parnell

Rancho Park

475-1226

Ginter's Dry Cleaning

JOHN GINTER

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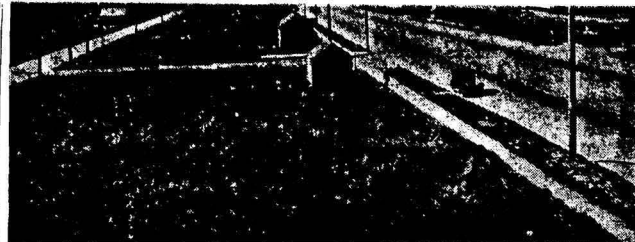
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A concise account of the early growth of Rancho Park was related to us by "Bob" Hindall who seems to be a typical example of a "first resident" of Rancho Park. Mr. Hindall, who came here 42 years ago, is well known in local business circles and was for many years active in civic affairs of the community. His narrative follows:

"We bought our lot in February, 1925. We waited a couple of years to see if our conclusions were right before we decided to build. We moved into our new home in June, 1928. Life was simple; and times were hard, especially during the depression. But Rancho Park was a splendid place to raise children.

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summer evenings," related Pete, "my bartender, Larry Flary, who, by the way, is still with me, would sit near me outside the bar and we would watch the headlights of cars returning from the beach area. There wasn't much along Pico to the west but a broad expanse of weed-covered fields. We would equip ourselves with cans full of rocks which we would hurl at the dozens of rabbits which would spring from the weeds and dart across the road in the glare of the headlights. One day," continued Pete, "a truck hauling several pens of chickens stopped at the bar. Some chickens escaped from one of the pens and scuttled into the field. Among the weeds was a stand of castor bean plants so tall that hoboes would sometimes crawl under them for shelter. The truckers, trying to catch their chickens in the weeds, stumbled over the two-day-dead body of a man. They took off so fast they forgot their chickens."

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