

President's Message

During these times when we're not able to meet I'd like to remind you that the Orange Community Historical Society hasn't gone anywhere. We are merely waiting in the wings until it's safe enough to meet again.

Since the days and weeks ahead are still uncertain, I'd like you to know that we will get back to meeting regularly in 2021 once this pandemic is in the rearview mirror. We look forward to once again seeing you in person, and really can't wait until we share an embrace along with a friendly greeting. We know it will be all the more wonderful when that day finally comes.

Thank you for your support and understanding during this difficult time. Again, we will continue to stay in touch over the coming months with any new developments affecting the OCHS

Jane Owens
President O.C.H.S.



The Quarantine Special Edition

THE "FLU" IS INCREASING

No one knows the cause of this disease.
It killed twice as many people in the United States last year as our armies lost in France.

IF YOU WANT TO PLAY SAFE:

1. Keep away from sick people, especially if they cough or sneeze.
2. Use your handkerchief when you cough or sneeze.
3. Avoid crowded street cars, trains, or houses.
4. Don't spit on the floor.
5. Wash your hands before eating.
6. Keep your fingers out of your mouth.
7. Avoid common drinking cups.
8. Keep out of dusty places.
9. SEE THE PLANT DOCTOR IF YOU ARE NOT FEELING RIGHT

COLONIAL THEATRE will be closed until Further notice by order of Board of Health on account of Spanish Influenza.

—If you are unfortunate enough to be affected with this prevalent malady and you have drug needs, see us.
—Better still, we suggest that you prepare against this need and provide yourself with the necessary drug comforts of the sick NOW.
—Let us fill your Prescription—Registered Pharmacists always in charge.

HARMS DRUG COMPANY
We Give S. & H. Trading Stamps. Next to Colonial Theatre.

Orange Daily News—Oct. 1918

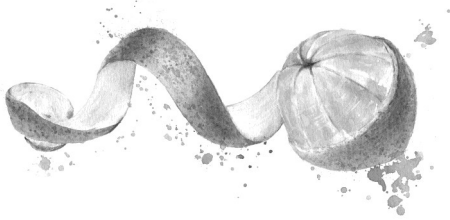
Save Now — May Save Later

ORANGE DAILY NEWS

VOL. XL ORANGE, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1918. No. 144

ORANGE SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, THEATER, CLOSED

Save Now — May Save Later



Under the Orange Peel

Rev. Nathan Riley

Thinking back across the decades I remember each year being anxious for the arrival of summer. Middle of June, the Orange plunge, playing baseball out in the streets, swinging those hula hoops around our necks and knees, racing our bicycles down city streets, across town, along side of the orange groves if not through them, hanging out with all our friends. Summer! I mean what young, red-blooded American kid wasn't anxious for summer? It didn't mean you hated school, your teachers or your schoolmates, it was just that playing outside with your buddies was a lot more fun than doing the necessary nightly homework. Do you remember? And then when summer finally did come there was summer's inevitable ritual—the casting off of our shoes! At least at our house that was the case. On all days but Sunday—we were shoeless! Of course there were the necessary nightly ablutions to compensate for this seasonal irregularity and, though, as I recall, the bathtub's water did turn quite brown each evening before bedtime with that required quick baptism of our dangling feet, it didn't mean that our feet were necessarily clean. And of course that meant the bed sheets became extra filthy early on making more work for dear old mom. Did that happen at your house or something like it? Well, inevitably summer did come and there our feet were exposed to the elements once again. Hot streets and hot feet went hand-in-hand until tender toes and sensitive soles eventually toughened up—so tough I could've walked on broken glass without cutting my feet, I do believe! The only vulnerable parts were between the tips of the toe and the balls of our feet where there was yet some exposed tenderness. And don't you know one summer a honeybee found this tender target and did me in. I howled and hopped and finally settled down to apply the home remedy—removing the stinger and soaking the foot in vinegar. Don't know if that actually helped—the vinegar part—but I do know we did it nonetheless.

This sans shoes stuff was a practice we practiced only at home and only in the summer yet when I look back now at the vintage school photos of our parents, aunts and uncles and such—the kids that grew up and went to school around here before our time, I see that summer shoelessness was extended for some right into and through the entire school year! The boys especially were often shoeless when they headed off to school. Was that of necessity? These were, after all, tough economic times, and some families had just enough to barely get by. Was your family one? Well, be that as it may, I don't seem to see much shoelessness these days come summer but if I did—I am quite certain it would take me right back to a very special, albeit fleeting, time that resides now only in fond memories.



<p>Have a Picnic This Weekend WE HAVE ALL THE TRIMMINGS AND WE'RE OPEN SUNDAY</p> 	<p>Roy and Andy Barron & Vargo MARKET 942 W. CHADMAN AVE. EPICURE KE 9-9095</p>	<p>PLENTY OF FREE PARKING Entrance on Citrus or Chapman</p>
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Remembering Phil Brigandi



Orange's own preeminent historian. An author of numerous books and articles about Orange and Orange County. In this issue we have selected one of those he wrote in 2011—King Citrus and Queen Valencia.

King Citrus and Queen Valencia

Once upon a time in Orange County, money grew on trees. Citrus was the crop that made Orange County orange. Citrus - primarily Valencia oranges - once cascaded in green and gold down out of the mountains and along the rich coastal plain in neat, orderly rows, divided by windbreaks of eucalyptus trees. Sixty ago, much of central Orange County was a vast orchard, dotted with little towns like Santa Ana, Tustin, Anaheim, and, of course, Orange. The crop fueled the local economy for decades, creating an Easterner's image of paradise: a sunny, fertile land, where health grew on trees.

The first small seedling groves were planted here in the early 1870s, at a time when scores of new crops were being tried - most unsuccessfully. In 1875, the first commercial grove of hearty, spring-ripening Valencia oranges was planted by R. H. Gilman on what is now the Cal State Fullerton campus.



In those days, the biggest crop in the area was grapes, grown for wine or raisins. But in the 1880s, local vineyards were ravaged by a mysterious blight, clearing the way for thousands of new citrus plantings.

“Very naturally,” wrote Fullerton grower C. C. Chapman in 1911, “an occupation which is so attractive as citrus culture soon interested many enterprising men.” And among the enterprising men it interested was C. C. Chapman himself, who grew rich growing and packing his Old Mission brand oranges. But for every large operation like Chapman's, there were dozens of other local ranchers with five-, 10- and 20-acre groves of their own. And the groves meant work for more than just the growers. There were fumigators, pickers, teamsters, packers and sundry other tradesmen living on the wealth of the groves. For example, the Orange City Directory for 1919 shows perhaps one-third of the local workforce employed in some aspect of the citrus industry.

Over the decades, the citrus industry employed many immigrant workers, both in the groves and in the packing houses. First (in the late 19th century) the Chinese, and later (especially after 1910) Mexican-Americans. But labor relations were not always cordial. In the big strike of 1936, hundreds of citrus workers walked out at the height of the Valencia season. Tensions ran high over the next four weeks as worker meetings were broken up by armed men, and replacement workers were attacked by strikers. In the end, the workers received a slight increase and pay, and some improvements in working conditions, but their biggest goal – union recognition – went

unfulfilled. When World War II pulled many Mexican-Americans into the service, or other war work, the Federal government launched the Bracero program, to bring temporary workers up from Mexico. Until the 1960s, they worked side by side with the local Hispanic population.

By 1915, there were over 20,000 acres of orange groves in Orange County. By 1936, when Orange County supplied one-sixth of the nation's Valencia crop, there were 64,000 acres, and the citrus industry was generating two-thirds of the county's agricultural income. As late as 1948 there were still 67,263 acres of Valencias - more than five million trees. And that didn't even include other citrus crops, such as navel oranges, limes, grapefruit and lemons.

But in 1949, nearly 7,000 acres of oranges disappeared. The post-war migration to Southern California had begun in earnest, and each year more and more trees fell as housing tracts began to blanket Orange County. By 1985, there were less than 4,000 acres of Valencias in the county, primarily on the Irvine Ranch. Twenty years later, less than 100 acres survived.

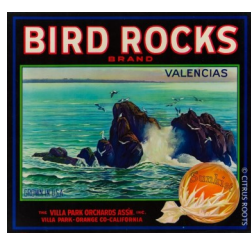
Beginning in 1881, when the first local packing house opened in Orange, more than 60 packing houses served local growers. In the early years, many of them were owned by individuals, but later the growers formed their own cooperative associations to handle the packing of their produce.

At their peak, in the early 1940s, 45 packing houses were operating in Orange County. There was the Anaheim Orange and Lemon Association, the Garden Grove Citrus Association, the Bradford Brothers in Placentia, Golden West Citrus in Tustin, the Olive Hillside Growers, McPherson Heights and dozens of other plants. These packing houses handled millions of pounds of fruit. In 1929, for example, Santiago Orange Growers in Orange handled some 60 million pounds of fruit - 2,000 railroad cars full - making it one of the largest packing houses in the country.

Today, the old packing houses are best known for their colorful and distinctive advertising labels that were pasted on the ends of each wooden crate of fruit until the introduction of the cardboard box in the mid-'50s. Many featured idyllic scenes or lovely maidens, or promoted their place of origin. There were brands like Rooster, and Bird Rocks, and Cleopatra, and Atlas, and Jim Dandy, and any of a hundred others. Each was unique. They had to be, for their main purpose was to make each packing houses's fruit instantly recognizable to wholesale buyers at Eastern auction markets.

The real marketing, though, was carried on by the old Southern California Fruit Exchange, which after several name changes finally became Sunkist Growers in 1952. Over the years, Sunkist launched vast national marketing campaigns, which promoted Southern California almost as much as they touted its golden fruit.

The Villa Park Orchards Association was the last of Orange County's packing houses to go. Founded by local growers in 1912, they moved their operation to the old Santiago Orange Growers packing house in Orange in 1978, and operated there until 2006, when they moved to Ventura County.



The key to Villa Park's success has been expansion. As other packing associations closed, Villa Park Orchards began enlisting the remaining growers. As early as 1959, they absorbed the Escondido Co-Operative Citrus Association, bringing in important San Diego County acreage. In 1962, they added their first grapefruit and tangerine growers in the Coachella Valley, allowing the packing house to remain active between orange packing seasons.

Villa Park also helped open important new markets around the Pacific Rim, and their fruit can be found in markets and street stalls in Malaysia, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan and Korea.

Harold Brewer (1891-1990) was active with Villa Park Orchards for decades. He became a member in the early 1920s, when he established his orchard up on the Cerro Villa Tract; joined the Board of Directors in 1930, and served as president of the Association from 1959 to 1970.

A nephew of pioneer Valencia grower R. H. Gilman, Brewer came to Villa Park in 1923. "As far as the area was concerned," Brewer recalled in 1985, "almost all of it was in citrus. A widow down here on Center Street had about 20 acres in walnuts, and outside of that, this whole area was in either oranges or lemons.

"You'd drive along the streets and about all you'd see was a citrus grove and maybe a house on the corner or maybe long driveways leading back into a home. There were windbreaks to protect the orchards from the Santa Ana winds - the 'Devil Winds' they called them. You could drive to town and meet maybe one or two horse-and-buggies, or automobiles. Villa Park had no 'town,' except there was a little store at Villa Park Road and Wanda."

Brewer recalled the growth of the cooperative packing houses: "In the early days, packing and shipping was all [done by] independents. "They would come and either buy your fruit for so much a box - estimating it on the trees - or they would pick it and pack it and pay you so much, with them keeping a commission. And it got to be - if you want it politely - so many robbers. So the growers had to seek a way to defend themselves. That's what started the co-ops back years before Villa Park Orchards was started...."

"Just like any other business," he said, "a group can do business cheaper than a single individual. The picking was cooperatively done. The hauling was done by the packing houses - they were still hauling with teams of horses when I came over here. All of these [things] - and the packing - were much cheaper than having somebody in the business to make a profit to do it. That profit was divided back to the growers."

But first the growers needed trees old enough to bear a crop. After all, it takes an orange tree about seven years to reach fruit-bearing maturity, a span of time that conjured up a lot of make-do business, as would-be growers sought to make a living any way they could.

When Brewer bought his grove in 1923, the trees were only a year old. For the next half-dozen years, he raised tomatoes and corn, often picking and selling them himself. He also did orchard



work for other ranchers, while still tending his own young trees. When they finally came into full bearing, he began a pattern that continued for more than 40 years:

“The blooming was in the spring - April, May - and you did your irrigation and cultivation. Valencias were a crop that had ripe fruit and blossoms for the next year’s crop at the same time, so that in this season you would have the picking of the crop that was formed the season before. Along in the fall, then, you would either fumigate or spray - fumigating for red scale [a parasite] and spiders, or spraying with oil sprays.”

“Then by the middle of fall your crop was all picked and you mostly irrigated, cultivated it up and sowed a cover crop, either clover or mustard or something to grow in the winter to make a mulch for the spring to work into the soil to help build it up.”

“Then during the winter, if you were in an area like I had in my lower acres here when it got cold, you had to watch the thermometer and maybe once in a while light up some smudge pots. In later years, the smudge pots went out and wind machines went in.”

“Then in the spring, you disked up [the soil] with a tractor and worked in this cover crop you’d grown through the winter.”

The picking was done by a variety of workers. Local Mexican-Americans made up much of the work force, but, as Brewer noted, “there weren’t enough to do the job.” During World War II, even German POWs were sometimes used. And the Bracero program (1943-64) allowed migrant workers to come north to add to the local labor force.

Once the fruit was packed in field boxes, it went to the packing house, where it went through a process that remained virtually unchanged for more than a half century. As Brewer explained:

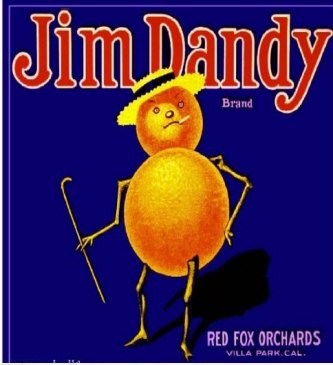
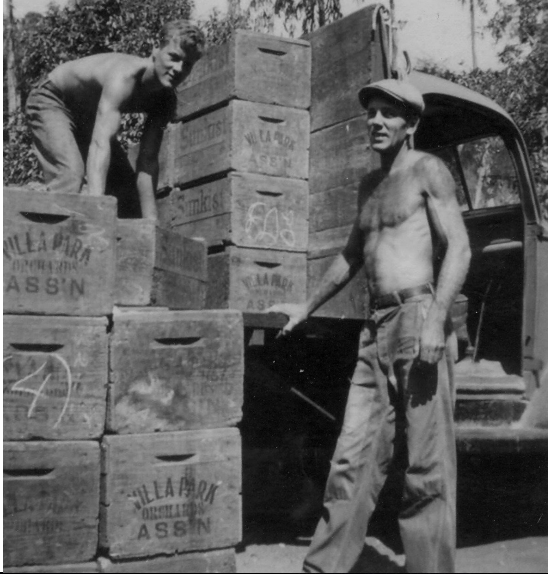
“It went down into the basement of the packing house. They had rooms in there where it was stored for anywhere from a week to two weeks. If it was a season of greenish fruit, ethylene gas was released into these rooms to ripen the fruit.”

“Then, when the fruit was to be packed, it was raised on an elevator upstairs and dumped into a washing container. [Then] it was elevated out onto a belt and it was air-dried. In later years, it ran through a machine that put on the waxing and polishing.

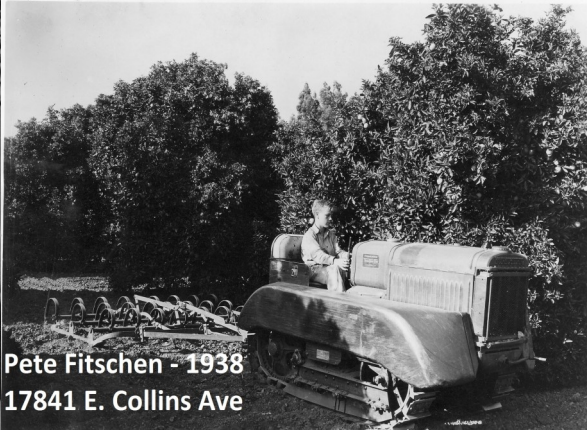
“And then it was dumped out onto tables in front of the graders, who put number one fruit and number two fruit onto different belts... Then it went down to the packer’s bins.” There the fruit was sorted according to size, wrapped in tissue paper and boxed. “In later years,” Brewer concluded, “the fruit went out to the pre-cooler and was stored in the cooling rooms before it was loaded into the freight cars to be sent east.” END



1940 - Pete Fitschen & Luther Kaun - Villa Park Orchards



Bill Kast Jr. - 8 Feb. 1956
Did orchard care for Strehly



Pete Fitschen - 1938
17841 E. Collins Ave



Weldon Field - Tree Removal
Circa 1948 in Orange, CA

MANURE!

STABLE	COW	SHEEP	CHICKEN	STEER	GOAT
Mellilotus Seed					Tankage
Vetch Seed					Fish Meal
Horse Beans					Bone Meal
Bean Straw					Guano, Blood
Barley Straw					Nitrate of Soda
Gypsum					Superphosphate

HERMAN KOLBERG
COMMERCIAL FERTILIZERS
AND COVER CROP
Phone 29R4 Res. W. Collins Ave.

Lima Bean Straw

A FEW HUNDRED TONS
which must be moved at once. For price call
Orange-54

Arthur H. Pease Co.

Orchard Care

BY THE HOUR

OR

CONTRACT RATES

CHARLES R. TALMAGE

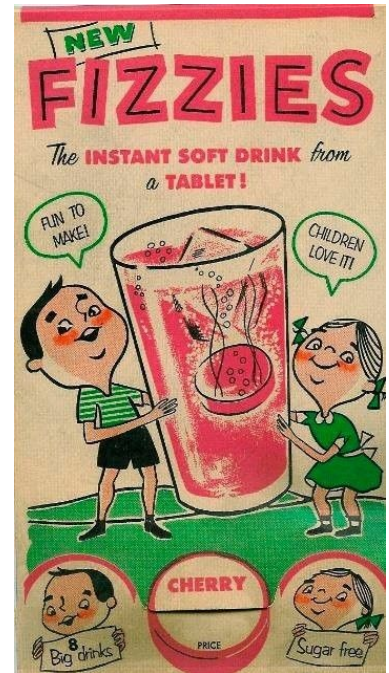
453 N. OLIVE ST.

ORANGE

Phone 299-M or 18



May 1953 - Eucalyptus root cutting - Herb Nelson Ranch at Chapman and Prospect



O.C.H.S. Webpage: <https://www.historicorange.org/>
O.C.H.S on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OCHS1888/>

Membership: 2020 paid membership dues will be good through the calendar year 2021. - Thank You

UPCOMING EVENTS

5TH ANNUAL OHG FARMER'S MARKET TO TABLE DINNER
 Saturday, August 29
 6-9 PM
 CANCELLED

2020 Orange Street Fair ?
 September 4-6 in Old Town Orange
 TBA in late July

9th Annual OHS Pub Crawl
 Saturday, November 14
 Old Towne Orange
 12 noon to 5 PM

2020 OCHS Board of Directors

President - Jane Owens
 towens46@aol.com (714) 281-1336

Vice President, A/V, Programs - Lyle Drinkgern
 drinkgern@sbcglobal.net (714) 767-8549

Treasurer - Bill Utter
 bill.utter@hotmail.com (714) 998-7428

Secretary - Mary Noguera
 marysellsoc@gmail.com (714) 458-2714

Membership - Jan Drinkgern
 drinkgern@sbcglobal.net (714) 767-8526

Website - John Russo
 russo@johnrusso.org

Hospitality – Carol Summo
 csummo@socal.rr.com (714) 289-1018

Newsletter—Roger Fitschen (714) 628-9902
 fitschen@roadrunner.com

OCHS MEMBERSHIP

Application for Membership Year 2020 (Membership Year covers January-December)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____



Please return application and check to:
Orange Community Historical Society
P.O. Box 5484, Orange, CA 92863-5484

OCHS is a 501(c)(3) organization, ID #33-0416234.
Contributions are tax deductible to
the fullest extent permitted by law.

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (check one)

NEW

RENEWAL

(See the mailing label for when
your membership expires)

Individual - \$20.00

Family - \$25.00

Life - \$300.00

Business/Organization - \$100.00

Donation - \$ _____

Orange Community Historical Society Members enjoy: programs and newsletters, opportunities to support and contribute to the preservation of Orange history, contact with members of the community knowledgeable about Orange history, and discounts on OCHS merchandise.

Our Mission

The mission of OCHS is to commemorate the rich heritage of our community. Our purpose is to collect photographs, written materials and related ephemera, promote research, events, activities and programs celebrating Orange history, and sponsor local history endeavors. We remain self-supporting through memberships, donation bequests and special projects.

We welcome everyone.

LOCAL HISTORY QUESTIONS?

(714) 288-2465 | history@cityoforange.org

Check out the Orange Public Library's
Local History and 24/7 Reference Service
www.cityoforange.org/library

The City of Orange website provides a brief history of Orange, as well as demographics and contact information for schools, businesses and organizations in the area.

ORANGE HISTORIC AFGHANS

Red & White or Green & White Afghans:
\$45.00 with Membership, \$55 without

If undeliverable please return to:

ORANGE TRIBUNE
Orange Community Historical Society
P.O. Box 5484
Orange, CA 92863-5484