



# EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring, 2011

## Prosperity and Demolition Eagle Rock 1945-1975

Servicemen returned or stayed; babies boomed; the last farmland was divided; trolleys were abandoned. Small gas stations occupied many corners; stylish cars were sold and rodded. The boulevards modernized. Smog browned, incineration ended, a dump built. The Arroyo was bridged again, heading for Eagle Rock. We organized and fought for the skyway route, 2 drove north. We went to the mall, built safer schools. Fire and quake. The world came.

At the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock, 2225 Colorado Boulevard, April 19 at 7:00, Eric Warren

will show photographs and discuss this formative period, when Eagle Rock took the shape we know. Many of the images are from his forthcoming book "Eagle Rock: 1911-2011", available in late July. Gathering pictures from a variety of sources; the many stories in our community life will be seen. This public meeting of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society is free and open to all. Refreshments will be served.

Eagle Rock's boulevards emerged from the depression and war years largely as they were when building had ceased in the mid-thirties. Business was good with servicemen and women returning and remaining to raise families. With the removal of the trolleys, first to Townsend in 1948, and then up Eagle Rock Boulevard in 1955, it became quite obvious to local merchants that their customers would now arrive by car. Some redesigned to have roadside appeal. Some built new with it in mind.

When the 134 Freeway bridge was built across the Arroyo Seco in 1953, Eagle Rock was reminded that Colorado Boulevard, then the highway, was slated to be the freeway of the future. The route would vary slightly to the north or slightly to the south to continue the use of Colorado as the arterial during construction. The fight began for another route.

By 1975, two freeways and a pioneering parking-lot-fronted mall had been built. Many schools were demolished and some were replaced for earthquake safety. Hundreds of houses had been torn down, and the last large open spaces had been subdivided and built. Rapid change left the businesses, institutions, and population in flux. The future of Eagle Rock was pressing and new approaches were needed. They are still evolving today.

**FREEWAY THREATENS**

**EAGLE ROCK  
PROSPERITY AND  
DEMOLITION  
1945-1975**

**SLIDE PRESENTATION AND Q & A**

**EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**CENTER FOR THE ARTS, EAGLE ROCK**

**2225 COLORADO BLVD.**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 19 7:00**

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG](http://EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG)**

## President's Message: Members and Friends

### Upcoming: Prosperity and Demolition: 1945-1975

Continuing our series of explorations of our history, we will view the formative postwar years. The massive alteration in landscape, population, and buying habits which took place in those years set the scene for community efforts at revitalization of the business district and continuity in the community. The world had changed. How would Eagle Rock survive and prosper?

### Our Thanks

To Nicole Possert, Frank Parrello, and Janet Hanson for an informative presentation on efforts to document our historic resources and methods to preserve them. In these difficult times, we must remain vigilant that the buildings that make our community distinct are not sacrificed for quick and expedient "development".

### Centennial

In 2011, Eagle Rock celebrates its 100th Birthday. A committee of community members is working to coordinate and present special events throughout the year to celebrate Eagle Rock. The Celebratory Kickoff, February 26, was a great success. In particular were the contributions from our local schools. The beautiful faces of the young performers presaged a bright future. The Fabulous Fourth and Colossal

Veterans Day Parade are still to come. Street banners, tree planting, and artistic enhancements will beautify our community. Get involved, everyone can contribute! We are all volunteers working together to celebrate this once in a lifetime event. We need you!

To learn more on how you can get involved with Eagle Rock's 100th Anniversary, visit the centennial website at [www.eaglerockcentennial.com](http://www.eaglerockcentennial.com) or email at [eaglerock100th@yahoo.com](mailto:eaglerock100th@yahoo.com).

### Centennial Calendars & Video

The calendar celebrates the great Eagle Rock and highlights the history of our community. Calendars are available for sale for a minimum donation of \$5. Great for yourself and gifts! Check out the dates for commemorative events! The video produced by Paul and Claudette Harrison and directed by Oxy graduate Nelson A. Melgar features many of our historic photos along with contemporary footage. Proceeds go to Centennial events and projects. Calendars and videos may be purchased at the following merchant locations:

**Read Books (4972 Eagle Rock Blvd.)**  
**Tritch Hardware (1620 Colorado Blvd.)**

### ERVHS 50th Anniversary Gala

Plans are afoot for a big bash honoring our own anniversary, Tuesday, October 18, 2011. We have reserved Fatty's, a Place to Eat (in the Dahlia Motors Building, LAHCM #692) for a delicious full dinner in this fine vegetarian restaurant. A flight of fine wines will also be available. Look forward to a classy dinner with limited speechmaking and lots of fun. Diva Morganne will perform. Although we will participate enthusiastically in the Centennial, we must not forget the history of our own organization.

### Renewals

We have had a wonderful response from our membership and we appreciate all of those whose continuing support makes the Society possible. Dues are now due for 2011. We have eliminated those who haven't paid for 2008 from our mailing list, and will notify unpaid members from 2009 and 2010, by letter, of their arrears.

### New history

The sequel to my earlier book "Eagle Rock" has been submitted to Arcadia Publishing. It will be available July 18. I have focused on the more recent history of our town and cover in more depth the west end and York Valley areas. Thanks to all of those who have generously given photographs and insights into our history from 1911 to 2011. As always it has been a pleasure to work with current and former community members documenting our history.

The objectives of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

- to preserve, clarify through research and to perpetuate the history of Eagle Rock Valley
- to make this history available to students, researchers, libraries and all interested persons
- to preserve and protect our local landmarks, especially the Eagle Rock

Membership is open to all who would further these objectives

Public Archive Hours 10 to 12 every Saturday  
at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock  
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA 90041  
for information call 323-257-1357

This journal is published quarterly by  
The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society  
Editor, Eric Warren  
Layout, David Mc Nutt

Contributors, Katie Taylor, Corey and Sarah Stargel

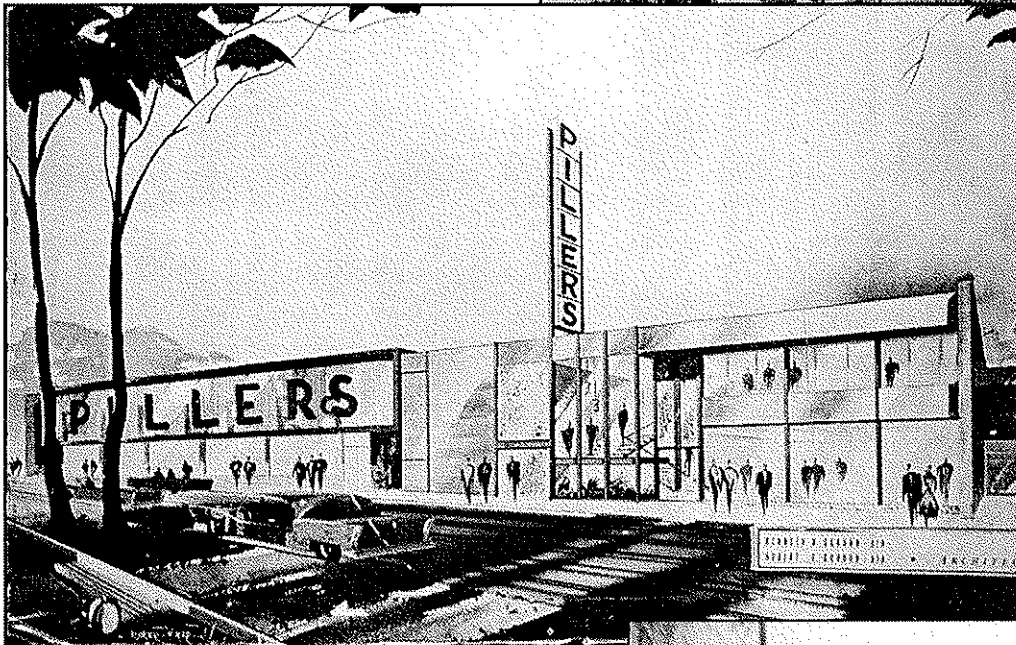
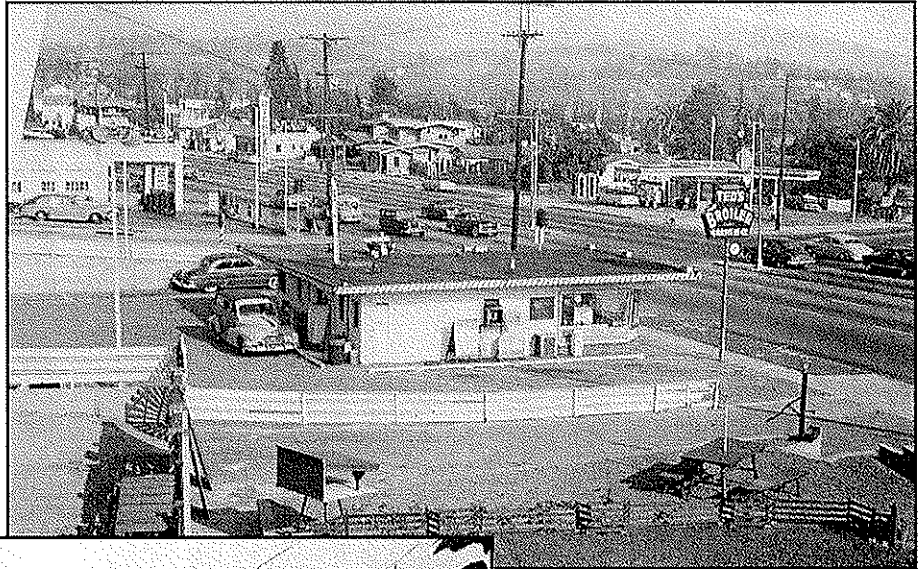
Visit our website at:  
[eaglerockhistory.org](http://eaglerockhistory.org)

It's time to renew your membership. If you have already paid your 2011 dues, thank you. If not, please take a moment and mail your check now. If we have not heard from you, a dues form and envelope are included with this newsletter.

Thanks, we depend on you.

## Let's Drive to the Store.

**Fill Her Up.** Ted Cox converted the "Broiler" from a soft serve ice cream stand to a sandwich restaurant in 1952. It was operated by the family until 1959. It later became the "Sizzling Platter" steak house. This property and the gas station across Colorado are all now part of the Christian Assembly complex. The station across Ellenwood Drive on the left is now Eric's Creative Wrought Iron. The two Craftsman houses, center, still stand. The house and gas station on the far corner became a self-storage and a motel. (Courtesy the Cox family.)



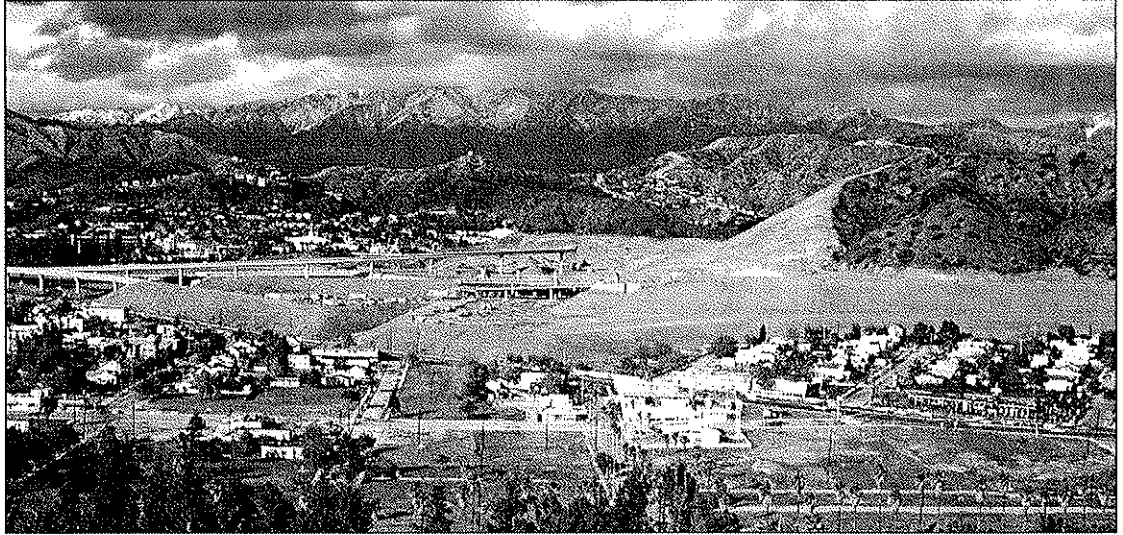
**Rendering of Piller's Store.** Clearly the intent was to appeal to customers in cars, the new building featured prominent signage and free parking. This family owned business offered close outs, discounted shoes and clothing gathered from throughout the city. The Renaissance Academy, a Charter school, now occupies the building. (Kenneth and Robert Gordon architects, rendering by Roscoe W. Martin.)

**Vanishing San Rafael, 1960.** The 1926 school building is in the midst of demolition here. Like most of the schools in Eagle Rock, it was built of unreinforced masonry. This small, but beloved, school was never reconstructed, as plans for freeway construction had already been made. (Photograph by Paul Ohannesian.)

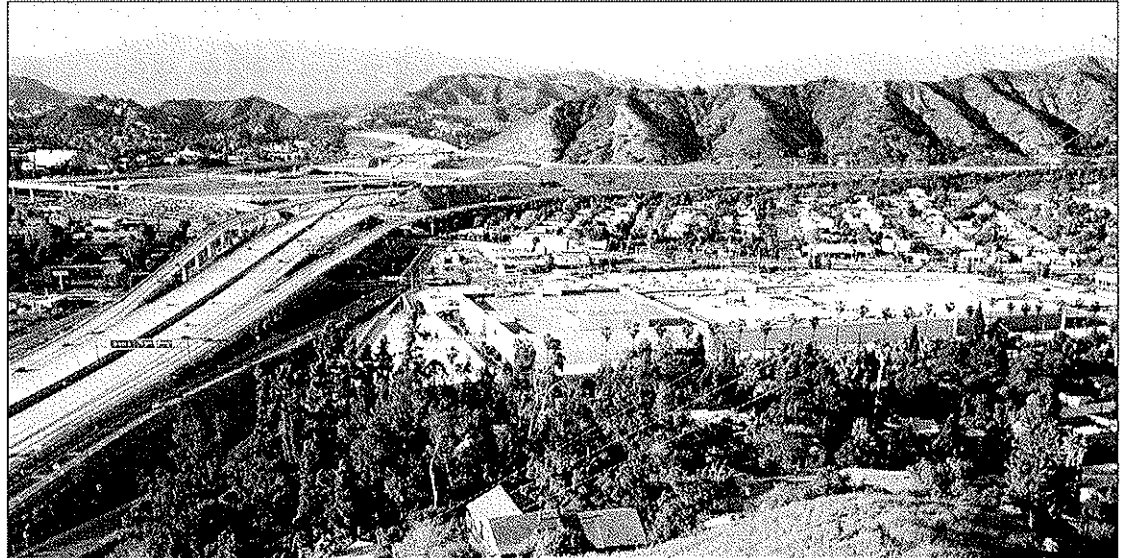


## Our Town, Our History

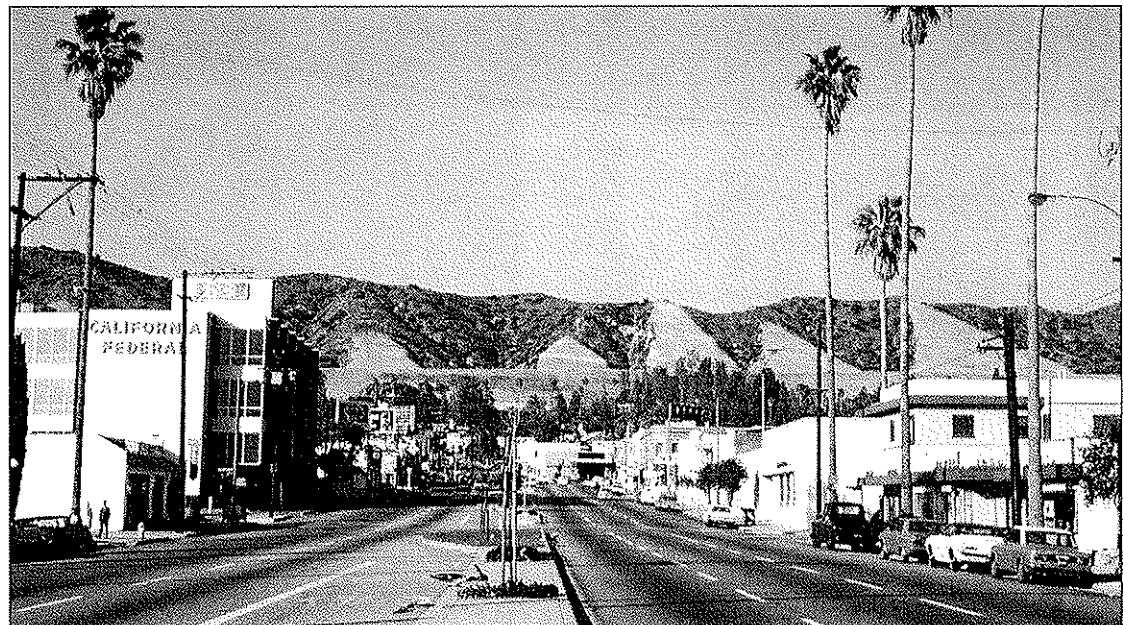
**The Big Clearing, 1971.** In the foreground is the area demolished to build the Eagle Rock Plaza. The houses in the wedge between Colorado Boulevard and Broadway would be taken for the route 2 freeway. Construction is proceeding on route 134 from Glendale east. (Photograph by Harold Ohannesian.)



**Shop Near the Freeways, 1981.** In a similar view, the changes are here complete. On the left the route 2 freeway runs north through Glendale to La Canada. Route 134 runs along the base of the hills from east to west. The roofs and part of the parking lot of the Plaza are in the middle ground with the May Co. on the left and Montgomery Ward on the right. (Photograph by Paul Ohannesian.)



**Eagle Rock Boulevard, North.** By 1971, the four-story California Federal building had been built; the 134 freeway scarred the hills; and the new, car friendly, Security Bank, at center right, replaced the old. (Photograph by Harold Ohannesian.)





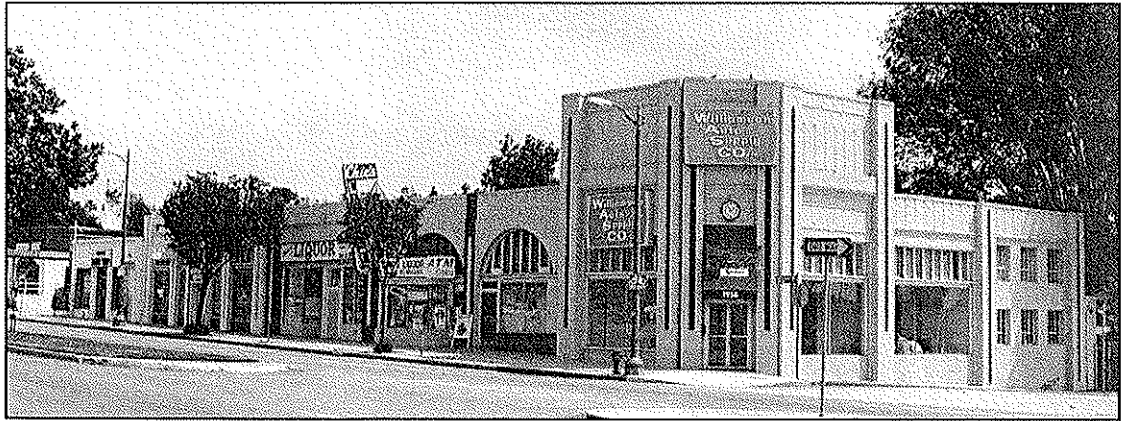
## L. A. Historic Cultural Monuments Update

**#734 10-29-2002**

**Bell Commercial block  
1948-1958 W. Colorado  
Boulevard**

Two monuments were inadvertently omitted from our "comprehensive portfolio" published in the last issue.

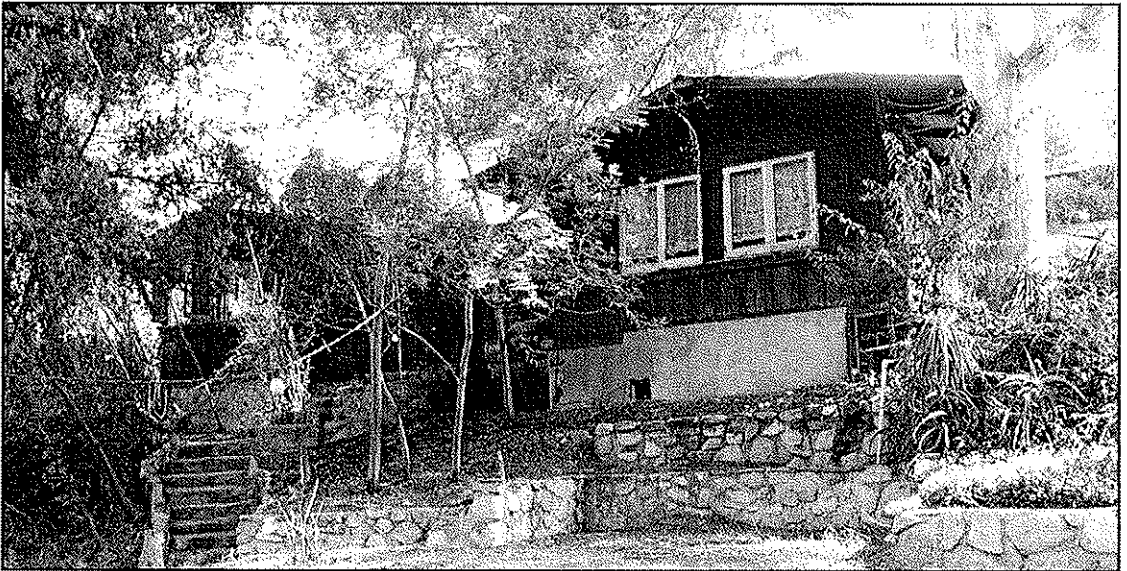
The most familiar is the Bell Block, which now houses the Coffee Table Bistro, Coffee Table Lounge, and Lemongrass.



**#383 08-05-1988**

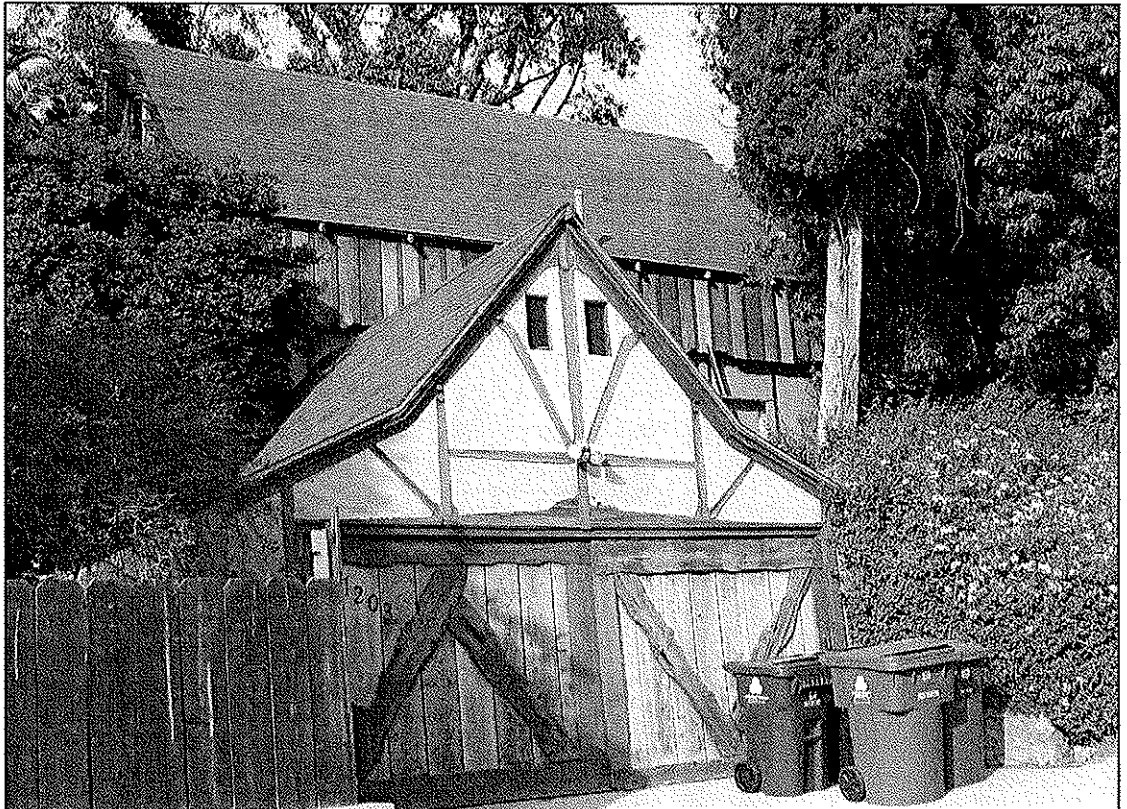
**Residence  
1203-1207 Kipling Ave.**

More mysterious is the remarkable Folk Craftsman style house listed only as Residence by the city at the time of its designation. The only clue we have is its photograph in the collection of Edward Arden Edwards, there referred to as "Happy Camp". It is unknown whether Edwards or an acquaintance built the house.



**Above** is the photograph submitted at the designation.

**Below** is a later photo by the editor showing the garage and studio. The property may have been divided and sold.



**GALA ERVHS FIFTEETH  
ANNIVERSARY BANQUET AT  
FATTY'S : A PLACE TO EAT  
Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 6:00**

**Continental Breakfast 8:00am  
Woodbury, Woodbury  
October 18, 2011, 1:00**

**Prosperity & Demolition  
Eagle Rock 1945-1975  
Tuesday, April 19, 2011, 7:00**

**at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock  
2225 Colorado Blvd.**

**EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**The Member's Corner**

**Deborah Huntington**

When Deborah was a child, her family moved to California from Denver, CO for the conducive climate her father's construction career needed. First living in Chino, the family moved to Eagle Rock when Deborah was fourteen years old. She attended ERHS for two years and then Pacific Christian in Highland Park for the final two years. After attending several junior colleges and living outside of Eagle Rock, she graduated from Woodbury University with an Interior Design degree. She currently has her own business, Deborah Huntington & Associates, which specializes in historic renovations.

In 2002, Deborah found herself caring for her aging mother and moved back into the Eagle Rock house her parents had purchased in 1966 and has been there ever since. Although moving back to Eagle Rock was prompted by circumstance, she loves it here and certainly has no plans of leaving. She loves that Eagle Rock is "so close to everything" and that a person can cover going "to the mountains, the beach, and the desert all in one day."

Deborah's son and three grandkids live in Highland Park and she is able to visit them regularly. She cares for many cats (she revealed with a laugh). She has been a past member of TERA and the Neighborhood Council. She has been a member of the Historical Society since 2002, helping us over the years with our Oral History Program and, as of last month, attending an archives workshop at USC, aimed at training volunteers who work with archival materials. We are excited to have her new expertise put to use in our archives!

-Katie Taylor

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category:

- Individual \$20    Business \$35    **New**  
 Family \$25    Life \$300    **Renewal**

Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS?

- Yes    No  
 Archives    Newsletter    Oral history  
 Meetings    Fundraising    E-mail me  
 Publicity    Displays    to help

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to : **ERVHS**  
**c/o Center for the Arts**  
**2225 Colorado Blvd.**  
**Eagle Rock, CA 90041**

Date \_\_\_\_\_