

# Legacy Links



**PRESERVING OLD LA VERNE'S  
ENVIRONMENT:  
MAKING HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE**

**LA VERNE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
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## Every Picture Tells a Story



Take a last look.... Many of you recognize this house located at 3717 Fruit Street south of the Lutheran High School. The house was recently demolished to make way for a 50-townhome project on the 2.5-acre property, which was once part of a much larger citrus orchard. With support from the Kalousek family and Brandywine Developers, members of the LVHS were invited to salvage materials for restoration use in their own homes. While it is always sad to lose a vintage home, parts of it will live on throughout La Verne and enhance other homes. *Legacy Links* hopes to feature

the future homes of the salvaged materials, which continue to enhance our community.

After spending some time at the Fruit Street house, it became apparent that other La Verne homes must have been designed, and maybe built, by the same person. There are several such "sibling houses" that feature the hipped roof, curved roof line, front porch, second floor balcony, turned columns, and prominent porch windows that characterize the house.

The following images compare this set of La Verne "sibling houses".



This house on 2137 "E" Street is very similar to the Fruit Street house. Sidelights and a transom window

have been added to the front door and the front steps have rails. Foundation materials are mortered rock, different from the Hanawalt block foundation of the Fruit Street house. The knee wall that swoops up to the balcony is identical, as is the curved balcony roof line.



This house at 2434 Bonita (above), viewed from the east-facing side, also features curved roof lines, and a front porch with turned columns and prominent windows. However, the east façade features a curved bay window and the upstairs room either never had a balcony, or it was enclosed to create a larger interior space. There does not appear to be a hipped roof at the back of the house. This house also features low curved piers flanking the front porch steps.



This house at 3949 Bradford Street was purchased by the current owners in 2001 and is undergoing

extensive restoration. The front porch and upstairs balcony had been outfitted with Victorian-style trim work and the original front windows had been replaced with 12-pane windows, and both the balcony and front porch windows were flanked by shutters. The front door and porch had been replaced. The original Hanawalt block foundation was intact, but the porch piers had been removed. The back of the house featured a shed roof over the west-facing upstairs bedroom, which had originally been a screened “sleeping porch” but was enclosed sometime in the 1920s. The front porch windows and hipped roof of the house on Fruit Street provided the model for restoration of this historic home.



The house is nearing the end of its exterior restoration. The balcony and porch were rebuilt, with the addition of larger supporting columns and windows that approximated the original. New porch piers with rails were constructed and the porch and balcony knee walls were raised to meet code requirements. The shed roof was replaced by a hipped roof extension at the back. Restoration plans are ongoing.

Although these houses feature different interior floor plans, their similarities in architectural style, size, and materials suggest that they may have been designed and built by a single craftsman or were the products of house plans shared among local builders. *Legacy Links* would like to report on other “sibling houses” in La Verne.

## President's Message

The LVHS has been busy with “rehabbing” its look for 2022. Our website has been changed with updates in content and format to make it more visually interesting and searchable. On the “Event Photos” page, we have posted a montage of images from our “Year in Review” narrative, which will give readers an idea of the scope of Society activities. In future, this slide and narrative will also appear as a regular feature in the October edition of *Legacy Links*. The 2021-2022 calendar has also been updated and is posted for viewing. Check out the “Event Videos and Podcasts” for a recording of the March 14<sup>th</sup> presentation by members of the Claremont Wildlands Conservancy. We are working to make membership more updated and user friendly with the ability to join or renew with the LVHS electronically. Stay tuned for this innovation. Bill Lemon has worked tirelessly to make these website upgrades.

Because 2021 remained COVID-intensive, several of our in-person activities were cancelled. We intend to restore these in 2022, and once again you'll hear about a home tour, cemetery tour, and bus trip. However, the LVHS is once again sponsoring a “Get on the Bus” activity with the Hillcrest Retirement community. For safety, the three tours will be restricted to members of Hillcrest's Woods community, the general Hillcrest community, and LVHS members. The tours are scheduled for May 21, 2021, and will leave from the Citrus Parking Lot at Hillcrest at 8:45am, 11:00am, and 1:45pm. Details will be available in an upcoming flyer.



**Pucker Up!** The LVHS is selling Meyer Lemon and Washington Navel Orange marmalade, made from La Verne fruit. At \$10 per jar, your marmalade donation

will help restore the 1938 International truck. Once it's gone, you'll have to wait until spring 2023. Look for pomegranate, apple, and cinnamon apple jelly in the fall of 2022. Pickles are planned for the summer of 2023. Contact Sherry Best via email at or [sbest@lavernehistoricalsociety.org](mailto:sbest@lavernehistoricalsociety.org) or call 909/596-4679 to place an order. Treat yourself to some homemade deliciousness.

The LVHS is not the only organization getting back to normal. The Pomona Concert Band, celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, is celebrating with a spring concert on **Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup> at 3:00pm** at the bandshell at Ganesha Park in Pomona. Their Summer Concert series will begin on July 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm and continue every Thursday through August 25<sup>th</sup>. The Pomona Concert Band is here to play!

Adventures are also on the way at **Heritage Park**. Starting in mid-March they began hosting their “Orange Squeeze” activity for school-age and preschool-age children. The activity includes touring the Weber House and the park. The children will be able to see the animals, the garden, and orange trees. This activity will be available to book tours through mid-April. Children will have an orange squeezing activity.

A new event for the park this year is Bonita Unified School District using the park for the Hands-On-History activity of Gold Rush Days. Another school related activity is the “How We Lived” curriculum for younger students. This activity provides a chance to visit the park and learn about how people lived and worked in early La Verne.

Starting in June, Concerts in the Park will continue with the first concert scheduled for June 5<sup>th</sup> and continue every two weeks for five concerts. The Weber House will be open for tours and Heritage Park product will be available for sale. Vendors will be part of the concert activities. We look forward to everyone coming and enjoying the activities at the park. They love having you and having you enjoy the park.



## Rolling with the International

Students in the Bonita High School auto shop class with teacher Rob Zamboni have stripped the International truck to the frame, which was towed Sander's Towing to Azusa Sandblasting to remove all rust and expose cracks. Members of the Cal Rods organization worked on the truck frame.



**Bonita High School students disassemble the body of the 1938 International from its frame**



**Cal Rods members Russ Golesh, Gary Bogel, and Ralph Hemrick (left to right) repair the frame**

Once the frame returns to the high school, the students will get busy painting the chassis, installing the steering gear assembly, rear end unit, transmission, power steering and brake assembly, front end (brakes, shoes, and cylinders), and springs.

The California School News Radio created a podcast on December 2<sup>nd</sup> featuring teacher Rob Zamboni, Bill Lemon, and Bonita High School Students who discussed their efforts in restoring the International. Click on the following link to listen:

[12/2/21 Get Your Kicks on Route 66: Vintage Auto Restoration at Bonita Unified \(buzzsprout.com\)](https://www.buzzsprout.com)



**Teacher Rob Zamboni visits with Superintendent Carl Coles and members of the Bonita USD Board**



**Rotary presentation highlights the International truck**

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022, LVHS President Sherry Best spoke to members of La Verne's Rotary Club about Society activities, including highlights of the truck restoration. Two days later, Bonita High School hosted its car show, featuring the work by students in Rob Zamboni's auto shop classes.



## Reaching into La Verne's Past

On January 29, 1991, Inman Conety passed away in Glendora at age 93 and was interred in the Pomona Valley Memorial Park next to his wife, Ruby (Sheldon) Conety. Some La Verne residents remember Inman and his ties to the LVHS were especially strong, described in the following tribute by the late Galen Beery.

*Inman was one of the founders of the Historical Society of La Verne, serving as Vice-Chairman of the La Verne Cultural Heritage Committee, 1970-1972, under Chairman Rose Palomares. He worked to incorporate the Historical Society, succeeded Byrl Harper as President, and as such, signed incorporation papers for the organization in the summer of 1973. He served as President, Board Member, and President Emeritus for the next eighteen years. He was named as La Verne's "Citizen of the Year" in 1985.*

*One of Conety's outstanding contributions to the Historical Society was to secure a source of income. With the aid of the Lions Club, he set up a recycling center in a city parking lot on Bonita Avenue. He hauled the paper on his truck to paper companies until around 1980. The truck – with over 960,000 miles – was then retired from service. The Lions Club recycled glass from the center; the Methodist Church handled aluminum cans.*

*Recycling at the officially designated "Inman Conety Recycling Center" continued until 1989 when a parking lot went in. Operations were moved to a barn near the Methodist Church. Conety's actions resulted in paper sales which yielded more than \$20,000 for the Historical Society. This enabled the Society to secure speakers and carry out numerous projects. These included marking historical sites, collecting and framing early documents and photographs, microfilming issues of the La Verne Leader, making contributions to the La Verne Library and the Heritage Foundation (a Historical Society committee), and publishing Evelyn Hollinger's book on La Verne.*

*As a result of his activities, Inman's spirit continues on. The Historical Society and Save Old La Verne's Environment merged in 1991 to continue his concern for the future by preserving the past. The 1938 International truck still sits behind his home. But it was purchased from him in 1991 for \$1350 – approximately what it cost for him to acquire it – and is being made roadworthy by members to be preserved as a memory of his endeavors and La Verne's "Orange Empire".*

This remembrance, written by Galen Beery and published in the February 1991 edition of the newsletter of The Historical Society of La Verne and Save Old La Verne's Environment (SOLVE), merits reprinting. Inman's connection to the LVHS, his acts of public service, and his vision for preserving city history provide the foundation upon which the LVHS rests and guides its future.



## Unpacking Three Historical Groups in La Verne: the LVHS, SOLVE, and La Verne Heritage

The previous article provides parts of the story that explains the relationship among the La Verne Historical Society (LVHS), Save Old La Verne's Environment (SOLVE), and La Verne Heritage. The LVHS website chronicles the genesis and relationship among these organizations, which arose from different community needs and serves complimentary functions. The following is a summary based on material from past issues of the Historical Society of La Verne/SOLVE newsletters (written by Galen Beery),

Evelyn Hollinger's book *La Verne, the Story of the People who Made a Difference* (1989), and recollections from Mr. Bill Lemon, La Verne City Historian and LVHS Vice President, and Ms. Karen Huigens, one of the founders of SOLVE.

### La Verne Historical Society

The early history of La Verne was a tale of a city called Lordsburg and an unincorporated area known as La Verne. Lordsburg was founded in 1887 by I. W. Lord, a land speculator who never lived in the town he named after himself. In 1906, the town of Lordsburg incorporated, and, following Lord's death in 1917, the people of Lordsburg voted to name their city La Verne.



La Verne flourished with the boom in the citrus industry, but the most groves gave way to development and were replaced with suburban housing. In 1969 La Verne City Council members became concerned about the loss of history and appointed a Cultural Heritage Commission to seek a solution. The commission chair, Rose Palomares, born in Lordsburg in 1894, was one of the daughters of early settler Jose Dolores Palomares. A teacher, she had a keen sense of history and had a strong recollection of her childhood neighbors and community.

One of the recommendations of the Commission was for La Verne to start a historical society, so an "Old-Timers Picnic" was held in Kuns Park to solicit input from residents. More than a hundred persons came. They dined, talked of the old days, and elected officers and a board to form a historical society. The official Historical Society of La Verne was incorporated

in 1973. This group has met regularly and will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023.

For the first few years, Historical Society meetings were quite formal, held in public halls, opening with a flag salute and invocation. Lecturers spoke. The Society began to accumulate old photographs and historical records, books, yearbooks, and all sorts of artifacts from the orange grove days. An old house was donated for a museum, but the low-budget group had no funds to move it - just income from dues and donations. The house was unfortunately bulldozed.

Smarting from this loss, the Society, under President Inman Conety set up a collection center for old newspapers and glass. Conety trucked the paper and glass to recycling centers in his 1938 International truck. The funds raised by recycling were used to publish a history: *La Verne - the Story of the People who Made a Difference*. City Historian Evelyn Hollinger, a newspaper reporter and city welcome lady, wrote the book after interviewing old-time residents and reading hundreds of old news articles in the *Pomona Progress-Bulletin* and the *La Verne Leader*. The book was printed as an exercise at a Los Angeles trade school under the leadership of Charles Davis. Members of the LVHS assembled the sections for binding. Copies of the history were placed in schools and libraries. Book sales brought in funds for projects, one being microfilming of copies of the *La Verne Leader*. Evelyn Hollinger's book is now out of print but occasionally copies can be found online.

The Historical Society of La Verne (AKA The La Verne Historical Society) suffered a sickening loss when its long-time LVHS President Emeritus, Galen Beery, and his wife Doris Beery, LVHS Secretary, newsletter editor, and membership chair, were killed in a car accident in October 2016. Although Sherry Best had taken over the presidency in 2015, the organization was faced with a crisis and faced the possibility of closing. Instead, a decision was made to strengthen the organization and raise its profile through



enhanced membership and programming. Currently, the LVHS sponsors a calendar that includes four yearly member/community meetings, guest speakers, walking, bicycle, and bus tours, historical home tours, and special projects with collaborative partners interested in preserving local history. In 2020, the LVHS published a book as part of the Images of America series with Arcadia Publishing, comprising a collection of past and present images that highlight aspects of La Verne's development.

The La Verne Historical Society adopted the motto "Preserving Old La Verne's Environment, Making History for the Future" in 2016. A new Society logo was added in 2020 to honor the 1938 International truck left to it by former LVHS President Inman Conety.



### Save Old La Verne's Environment (SOLVE)

The organization known as Save Old La Verne's Environment, affectionately known as SOLVE, was born of necessity early in the 1970s. La Verne Planning Commission member Robert Hoover encouraged a small group of young couples to get involved in trying to enhance the old part of town. Most were restoring older homes on Third Street. The group became politically active when they found that city planners had rezoned the area from R-1 to R-4, which meant that old homes could be divided into apartments or razed for modern structures.

Rapid development was happening in the city, often without the benefit of Environmental impact reports and without input from the Council on Environment Quality. As orange groves increasingly gave way to housing developments, La Verne's quality of life was endangered. SOLVE members met in each other's homes for planning sessions and attended meetings of

the City Council, Planning Commission, and Commission on Environmental Quality. One City Council meeting was attended by over 500 people and had to be moved to an Auditorium at the University of La Verne. City leaders with conflicts of interest (including grove owners) were asked to remove themselves from voting on these development issues. A new City Manager (Marty Lomelli) really started turning La Verne in a new direction. The downtown was revitalized, and the new Planning Director was a Historic Preservationist. The downtown Historic District was established, an historic inventory was documented, and the zoning was changed to single family homes for the Historic District. Finally, SOLVE worked with city staff to enact a hillside ordinance that preserves foothills and mountainsides.

SOLVE raised funds by holding nine annual "Olde Home Tours" of fine old houses and pressed for preservation and beautification of the city. This organization had securely met their goals.

In 1991, a decision was made to merge SOLVE with the Historical Society to consolidate funds and member numbers. The decision was made to merge the two groups as "The Historical Society of La Verne / Save Old La Verne's Environment", known as HS/SOLVE. The logo of HS/SOLVE was a rendering of the Hanawalt House on Second Street.

### The La Verne Heritage Foundation

The La Verne Heritage Foundation was originally a sub-committee of the La Verne Historical Society. In 1984, City Councilman Craig Walters worked with others to establish a park and preserve an adjoining orange grove in a small draw just below an old mansion in north La Verne. The developer building tract homes in the area arranged to have an 1883 farmhouse (the Weber House) moved to a 1½ acre site in the orange grove. Volunteers rebuilt and restored the house to its original condition. Old vehicles and farm equipment were rescued, a windmill donated by the LVHS was erected, and two old barns and other buildings were moved to the property.

The La Verne Heritage Foundation, dedicated to preserving “A Slice of La Verne’s Past”, offers events for families and school groups throughout the year. Tours and events begin in January with orange picking, followed in March by Spring Squeeze field trips, April and May for Hands on History, Summer Concerts in the Park, and October Pumpkin Patch field trips.



A collaboration with the Bonita Unified School District will use the park for the Hands-On-History activity of Gold Rush Days and the “How We Lived” curriculum for younger students. This activity provides a chance to visit the park and learn about how people lived and worked in early La Verne.

These three organizations were established for different purposes and conduct different activities but are highly complementary. SOLVE raised awareness for preserving La Verne’s heritage and not allowing our past to slip into oblivion. It made residents realize that neighborhoods can be fragile and also that residents of neighborhoods can be active in policy that affects the quality of their lives.

The LVHS and La Verne Heritage carry on that history through varied activities. Having a physical location allows La Verne Heritage to display artifacts and re-create the image of a working orange grove with immersive experiences for students. Their website advertises their events, with a family-friendly emphasis. Residents expect and look forward to returning to Heritage Park.

The LVHS has no permanent home to display its artifacts and looks forward to that dream becoming a reality. In the meantime, having the 1938 International truck will provide a mobile venue for the Society. The truck will bring history to different parts of La Verne, partnering with other organizations to develop and present activities. The LVHS has expanded the scope

of its outreach and sponsors speakers who describe communities from Redlands and San Bernardino to Pasadena, all of whom grew up along the foothills in the “citrus belt” of Southern California.

The LVHS reaches into the past with cemetery tours that involve enactors who provide an exciting “take” on history. Recognizing that history is constantly being created, the LVHS reports on current events through its newsletter, *Legacy Links*.

### Fire Station #3 Re-opens

With great public appreciation, the Fire Station on Esperanza Dr. re-opened and was dedicated on Saturday, March 26, 2022. Enjoy these images of the celebration.

