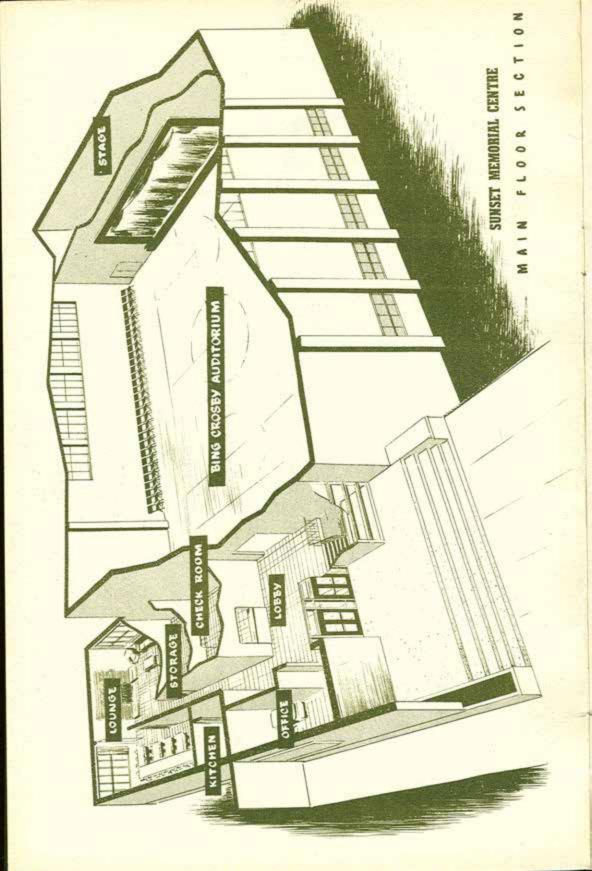




SEE INSIDE FOR PROGRAM OF OPENING 25° EVENTS AND GRAND PRIZE DRAWING





The Sunset Story

President
Stan Thomas
Reminisces . . .

IT WAS WAY BACK IN 1945 . . .

The District had always had this problem — it was a big one — and now something

had to be done about it . . .

At that time the entire area of Vancouver South was almost completely devoid of facilities for the recreational, social and cultural pursuits of its residents. Boys and girls, and men and women of all ages and in all walks of life were constantly in need of such outlets — but none were available.

In desperation, vet with a determination to start the ball rolling in the right direction, the P.T.A. of Sexsmith School called a public meeting to explore the situation and, if possible, make a start toward erection of premises of some kind.

A good attendance marked the initial meeting, and then and there a new Commun-

ity Association was given birth.

An Executive was named, consisting of W. D. "Bill" Fearn as Treasurer, E. F. "Ed" Arnatt, Vice-President, and the writer as President. Alf Taylor, Ed Parkinson, John Pope and Mrs. Rudi Dangelmaier were among the Directors elected at that first meeting. Mrs. Emily Quigley volunteered to act as secretary of the Association.

At the first subsequent meeting of the newly formed Board of Directors, it was decided to incorporate under the Societies Act. But the Treasury was non-existent — and it would cost about twenty dollars to register under the Act. So we passed the hat among those present; the "take" was good, almost

twenty-five dollars was realized.

Following receipt of our Charter, plans

gradually began to take shape.

A delegation was named to interview the Board of Park Commissioners. The Board gave us a sympathetic hearing and promised a portion of Sunset Park as a building site if,

(Continued on Page 3)



The kids started the ball rolling, Spring, 1945.



SUNSET MEMORIAL CENTRE

51st AVENUE AND PRINCE EDWARD STREET VANCOUVER, B. C.

Sept. 25th to 30th, 1950

PROGRAM OF EVENTS:

MONDAY

SEPT. 25th

BOXING—Jimmy McLarnin, referee. Leading amateur boxers of Canada, including three Dominion amateur champions. 8 P.M.

TUESDAY

SEPT. 26th

CONCERT—A two-hour concert to be put on by the B.C. Electric Glee Club. Many popular assisting artists will perform. 8 P.M.

WEDNESDAY

SEPT. 27th

FASHION SHOW—Sponsored by the Sunset Memorial Ladies Auxiliary. Commentator will be Mrs. Gwen Straith. 8 P.M.

THURSDAY

SEPT. 28th

SQUARE DANCE—Featuring Mernie Summers . . . one of Vancouver's most popular callers. This will inaugurate Sunset's weekly square dances. 8 P.M.

FRIDAY

SEPT, 29th

OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONIES
—followed by a large variety entertainment program. M.C.'s Cal
George and Bob Hutton of CKWX.
8 P.M.

SATURDAY

SEPT. 30th

SOCCER—Sunset's 21 and under team will play host to a visiting squad from Seattle. 2 P.M.

HOUSE-WARMING FROLIC - Dancing, whist, etc. 8 P.M.

"The Family That Plays Together . . . Stays Together"

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Every Success to Sunset Memorial Centre

The News Herald

"Your Morning Newspaper"

THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 1)

and when, we raised the necessary funds.

The next session of the Directors, which had by now gathered strength through the addition of new adherents, decided to adopt the name "Sunset."

Someone had the happy thought that ours should be a "Living Memorial," honoring those who had served and those who were still serving, from Vancouver South.

Thence came the name: "Sunset Memorial

Centre."

In their minds was the hope, often expressed, that the Memorial Centre would not only pay tribute to those who had pledged their all on behalf of our way of life but, also, would demonstrate to all residents of this striving metropolis the many blessings which we, as free citizens, derive from our Democratic system in spite of its numerous faults.

The working group gathered momentum. There was a story to be told and a means of putting it across was required.

We quickly organized a hundred youngsters, from tiny tots to 'teen agers. Amed with placards and variegated banners and with sound (noise) effects provided by pots, pans and other devices, they paraded one Saturday afternoon throughout the business areas. One of their pleas read: "We want a gym, but our chances are slim." (See picture, Page 1.)

Our initial objective was set at \$25,000.00

— a lot of money in those days! Our job was

to raise it.

A canvass of the entire area was decided upon. The territory covered many square miles, extending from 41st Avenue to the Fraser River and from Cambie Street to Knight Road.

(Continued on Page 6)



GRAND PRIZE DRAWING

Saturday Night, Sept. 30

FIRST PRIZE: MANTEL RADIO - SECOND PRIZE: CAR BLANKET

Fill in the Coupon below and deposit in the Ballot Box in the Lobby of Sunset Memorial Centre.

TEAR OUT ON DOTTED LINE

DEPOSIT IN BALLOT BOX

Name
Address

Phone

Nº 3948

KEEP THIS PORTION

Nº 3948

This Is Your Stub PLEASE RETAIN



Our New Centre Director

JACK HOPKINS, B.A., M.S.W.

Friendly and efficient, Jack Hopkins has been appointed Executive Director of Sunset Memorial Centre and from all reports is doing a first-rate job.

Jack has had a wide experience in directing community efforts—his work on the West Vancouver Recreational Survey, Alexandra Neighborhood House, North Vancouver War Memorial Community Centre and the Family Welfare Bureau has been widely acclaimed as an outstanding success.

He saw service in the last war with the RCAF. After leaving the Air Force he took his B.A. at the University of Alberta.

Following that, came a stint with the Edmonton Recreation Commission. In the fall of 1948, Jack came to Vancouver and enrolled at the U.B.C.

We're all sure Jack is going to make Sunset Memorial one of Canada's most efficient centres. But he will need a lot of help. Remember—by helping him—you help yourself. Let's all co-operate with him in every way possible!

SUNSET MEMORIAL LADIES' AUXILIARY

NOW TOTALS MORE THAN 100 ENTHUSIASTIC MEMBERS

By MRS. EVA FLEMING

The Ladies' Auxiliary to the Sunset Memorial was organized in February, 1948, and twenty-six attended the first meeting. We have grown in numbers to almost 100, with about 60 active working members. We held our meetings in recreation rooms and basements, etc., until the Centre was built.



Our money was raised in various ways. Two very successful fashion shows have been staged, modelling and catering were all handled by our Auxiliary and we have had rummage sales, dances, telephone whist parties, garden parties, drawings and have sponsored a musical revue and various other functions too numerous to mention.

The Auxiliary's objective was to furnish the kitchen and they have made a very good start. In our kitchen we have an electric range, utensils, dishes and silverware for 200, tablecloths, tea towels, etc., and we have recently purchased a refrigerator.

Our Auxiliary handles all the catering for the Centre, under the very capable supervision of Mrs. Jordis Butler, for dinners, weddings and social functions.

WELCOME

JIMMY McLARNIN

"He Helped Make Our Dream Come True"

When Stan Thomas went to Hollywood in the hope of contacting Der Bingle, he turned first to "Vancouver's Own" Jimmy McLarnin.

It was Jimmy who looked after Stan while he was in the Film Capital and who made our President's first visit to California such an enjoyable experience.

When Jimmy was told of the purpose of Mr. Thomas's trip south, he at once agreed to arrange a threesome with Bing. The three of them: Bing, McLarnin and Thomas, got together and talked it over during lunch at the swank Bel Air Golf and Country Club.

The Fighting Irishman threw quite a few punches into the conversation and Stan is firm in his conviction that it was largely due to Jimmy's efforts and his close friendship with Bing that Bing decided to make the long trek to Vancouver on behalf of Sunset Memorial Centre.

The ex-world welterweight champion is married to the former Lillian Cupit, a charming Vancouver girl. They have three daughters and reside in Glendale, California.



THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 3)



Stan Thomas pointing out the features of Sunset Memorial Centre. (Left to right) Chief Constable Walter Mulligan, the late Mayor Charles Jones, Stan Thomas, and Jimmie McLarnin.

Pledge cards, interim and official receipts were printed. A movie "short" was prepared for us gratis. This was shown in three local theatres — the Fraser, Victoria and Windsor.

The local press — South Hill News and South Hill Record swung right in behind us. The daily press carried the story beautifully and radio stations hammered out our plea by the hour.

Twenty-five volunteer canvassers toiled by day and in the evenings. Over a five-week period we raised approximately \$3,500.00.

In the fall of '45, a Klondike Carnival in the Canadian Legion Hall netted us \$2,000.00.

Lotteries were flourishing at that time and when operated by charitable organizations such as ours were not objected to in official quarters.

Our financial status precluded the staging of a drawing for a prize as costly as a house, so we made arrangements to obtain certain very scarce electrical appliances as the magnet for the sale of tickets at twenty-five cents each. Some of the prizes were displayed in store windows and downtown streets. Ladies lovingly stroked the hard-to-get washing ma-

Congratulations to SUNSET MEMORIAL CENTRE

on their Grand Opening

SOUTH HILL HARDWARE chine. Our net on the raffle was \$4,200.00. Our bank account was growing! In the summer of '46 we staged an outdoor carnival, raising \$1,800.00. Individuals and business firms were regularly being approached as time permitted. Several sizeable donations came from them direct and through the mail. The need for Community Centres was being universally recognized by now and much publicity, favorable to our cause, was appearing in the press and other mediums.

Earle Lathrop, one of our Directors, came forward with a great idea. Why not ask the building trades and suppliers to build us a children's playhouse — which would illustrate their products and workmanship and which we could raffle off.

Earle worked like a Trojan. It was built and placed on display — with appropriate fanfare — at the corner of Georgia and Granville Streets. We named it "The Children's Dreamhouse." For Sunset it was a pleasant dream to the tune of \$2,600.00.

During the summer of '47, we staged three outdoor carnivals under the chairmanship of Charlie Stephens, a tireless community worker in spite of a severe physical handicap. More shekels rolled in.

A Halloween party catered to 2,000 youngsters and adults on the site of the Centre. The fireworks display was beyond description.

We sponsored free X-Ray clinics, bandconcerts in Memorial Park, and assisted financially, families in distress.

An entire army camp, consisting of eleven buildings, located at Ferguson Point in Stanley Park was purchased by our group for \$3,000.00. It was our intention to salvage the lumber and materials for use in building the Centre.

Buses were chartered to transport scores of volunteer dismantlers to Ferguson Point each Sunday morning. Others drove their cars and stragglers arrived by street-car and foot-work. The materials were later sold when the Centre's objective was increased to \$125,000.00 and the need of new equipment

(Continued on Page 10)

Congratulations Sunset Memorial Centre

FROM

SOUTH HILL RADIO

6131 Fraser St.

FR. 1222

Bing Crosby

"A Great American"

THE STORY OF THE BING CROSBY SHOW

As many millions of people will remember, the Bing Crosby Show originated in the Vancouver Forum on September 22, 1948, before an audience of approximately nine thousand.

Bing on that occasion brought with him such outstanding stars as Ray Milland, Marilyn Maxwell, Bill Gargan, John Scott Trotter and members of his famous orchestra, along with other well-known figures in the entertainment world.

Thirty-two thousand dollars was grossed on the single performance, an all-time record for the City of Vancouver. Another all-time record was the scale of admission, one thousand people paid \$1.00 per person for the privilege of standing throughout the entire show.

The programme was released over the A.B.C. network of 238 radio stations in the United States plus two stations in Eastern Canada. The coverage was coast-to-coast in the United States and the estimated listening audience is said to have been well in excess of twenty million people.

Paramount Pictures sent its "Canadian Voice of Paramount," Win Barron, to Vancouver to cover Bing's memorable visit. Win tells us that in addition to its American showings, the news reel film was also seen by at least fourteen million people in Canada, Great Britain and France.

LOWER LEFT (Left to right) Front row: Producer Murdo McKenzie, Bing's secretary Jayne Riedel. Back row: Stan Thomas, Producer Bill Morrow, Marilynn Maxwell, Bill Gargan. LOWER RIGHT

Scene from the Bing Crosby show at the Vancouver Forum, Sept. 22nd, 1948. Bing becomes Chief Thunder-voice.





Best Wishes and Every Success to the Sunset Men

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KIWANIAN "WILF" MORGAN

THE SUNSET STORY

(Continued from Page 6)

and a fireproof building became fully apparent. On this venture, too, we showed a nice profit.

Our entry in the P.N.E. Parade in 1947 took top honors in the comic class: four young fellows dressed in barrels with neckties on bare necks, top hats, shoes and sox. The large banner on their truck read, "We've given everything to Sunset." Their clowning throughout the route of the parade, along with their novel state of undress, really put it across!

Our Ladies Auxiliary had by now become well organized. How reassuring it was to know that at last we had some real backing.

They have been from the very start of their organization a very capable, active and most co-operative branch of the Centre.

May I pause briefly to pay tribute to the President of the Ladies' Auxiliary, Mrs. Robert Fleming, and everyone of the hundredodd members of her grand group of volunteers.

We found it increasingly necessary to tell our story in every home of this large community. So we published our own monthly newspaper. Circulation 6000 — eight pages crammed with Sunset news and views. Volunteers performed all the work, from soliciting ads, writing the copy, and folding and mailing.

In various other ways, we continued to raise funds; small raffles, dances, direct mail appeals, etc. etc.

The greatest Rose Show ever held in the City of Vancouver was staged under our sponsorship in the Seaforth Armouries. It was a lot of work, some fun, but not very profitable — financially, at least.

During the fall of 1947 our Boy Scouts were organized under the very capable leadership of S.M. Rudi Dangelmaier. Shortly afterward, Mrs. Dangelmaier launched the Sunset Cub Pack. They have flourished from

(Continued on Page 12)

Congratulations to Sunset Memorial Centre!

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Plans for the Future

By JACK HOPKINS, B.A., M.S.W.

Executive Director-Sunset Memorial Centre

There seems to be no end of the growth or development in a community centre. Sunset Memorial Centre stands as a lasting edifice, a magnificent reminder to the people of South Vancouver particularly and Vancouver generally, that those who gave their lives for "democracy" will not be forgotten. To those who lie "in Flanders", we say, that the first big step has been accomplished.

But a community building is of little use unless people enjoy its

facilities and participate in the tremendous work associated with its operation. Our purpose is to make the Centre alive-for the citizens of all ages, irrespective of religious belief, color, or nationality— where they can congregate and know that they are wanted; where they

can participate in activities that bring happiness to them.

To do this is no easy task. A community centre "program" is not built up overnight. Not the kind that lasts. A program should appeal to the physical, emotional, intellectual, and creative needs of the citizens of all ages. To do this requires varied, trained leadership. which means a bigger budget, and at this stage of development, Sunser Centre is not ready to earnestly consider that factor. Eventually, it will have to include leaders who are trained in specific skills and who understand the importance of human relations. But a Centre cannot function adequately unless-and this should be emphasized-unless volunteers

from the community are found to help in the program.

Already, such volunteers are beginning to take an active part. Some are sport leaders, some are leaders in Scouts and Cubs, and others are helping out as stenographers; and a number of mothers are carrying on through the Ladies' Auxiliary, while others are busy assisting with the kindergarten. Truly, it is a neighborhood proposition. We realize that there are many citizens, young and old, anxious to work for the centre, whether it be in drama, sports, discussion groups, hobbies, music, sewing, painting, to name only a few among a great many possible activities. Other citizens may prefer to use their talents serving on the Board of Directors, or on the different Committees, that are required in the operation of the centre. A "community" centre will be most successful when the board, committees, staff, and the "unheard-from-community", function as a team.

It costs money to operate a large centre, and until that vexing stables is called the will be successful when the board committees, staff, and the successful when the board committees, staff, and the successful when the board community is successful.

problem is solved, there will remain further difficulties regarding the use of the facilities. Think of it-\$8,000 a year-has to be raised by the community in order to carry on the Centre. We have to do this by renting facilities, by planning special money-raising events, and eventually, we hope that there will be many active groups associated with Sunser Centre, and contributing their share of revenue, where

possible.

"Plans for the future" must of necessity rest on the desires and needs of the local community. Such plans will depend on the actions of your board, committees, staff:, and you—Mr. and Mrs. Citizen.
Operation of a successful community centre is "big business", and
requires the support of ALL its citizens, in the capacities in which they can most efficiently function. Of course, it means giving up some of your leisure time. The reward? An opportunity for our children, parents, yes, even everyone in the district, to participate in some spare-time activity, so that our community becomes a better place to live in. We know you want to help in our "plans for the future". You can do this in many ways, I know, and we'd appreciate it if you would drop around with your suggestions, or telephone us at FRaser 2665, and tell us how you want to help in the Centre program. This is your community centre. When you—Mr. and Mrs. Citizen, and the younger generation—believe that this is so, then I personally, have few doubts, that our "plans for the future" will be realized.

Think it over. Then, do drop around, and we'll discuss our

community centre problems-together.













Looking over the plans. (Left to right) Harry Duker, Charlie Stevens, Bob Fleming, Bill Fearn, Bert Emery, Stan Thomas. Fall, 1949.

THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 10)

the start. How could they miss with such outstanding leaders?

In the same year, our Teen-Town got under way and soon became one of the most successful groups in the Province of B.C. In a matter of weeks, it mushroomed to more than three hundred and fifty members. The 'teen-agers were not long content to do all of their dancing to recorded music, and in a very short time had organized their own fifteen-piece orchestra — the first 'teen-town orchestra in the Province.

It was during the summer of 1947 that the Directors felt the time had come to make a really big effort to put the drive for funds over the top. Our bank balance then stood at approximately \$22,000.00.

And so it was that a group of Directors cornered the writer and practically demanded that I go to Hollywood in an effort to see Bing Crosby in the hope that he might be persuaded to come here to stage a benefit show on behalf of Sunset Memorial Centre.

Although I like to think that I am fairly

optimistic I must admit that on this occasion that quality was conspicuous by its absence. However, I got busy and left Vancouver on October 1, 1947 armed with an official invitation from the late Mayor Charlie Jones to Bing, inviting him to visit Vancouver for the express purpose of staging one of his ever-popular radio shows on behalf of Sunset Memorial. Other letters to Bing lent additional ammunition. These were from Bing's friend, G. L. Fraser, K.C., and Park Board Chairman, Rowe Holland. Although I had known Jimmy McLarnin for many years, Jimmy was a far more intimate friend of Mayor Jones and from the latter I carried a very personal and most helpful letter to "The Champ" as Jim is best known in Hollywood.

You know the rest . . . on September 20, 1948, Bing and his party arrived in Vancouver via Great Northern. Four thousand cheering fans extended a riotous welcome to "Der Bingle." The Mayor and Aldermen,

(Continued on Page 13)

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THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 12)

Chief Constable Mulligan and the Police Pipe Band along with officials of Sunset Memorial Centre were on hand on the platform to extend greetings to this great American and his friends who had travelled 1500 miles in order to lend a helping hand to a group of Canadian citizens.

Tuesday, September 21, 1948 was one of the wettest days of the year, and that was the day on which Bing stood on the steps of our City Hall and, while our Firemen's Band provided the music, sang as only Bing can sing, "In the Blue of the Night." Thousands of enthusiastic admirers stood in the pelting rain to give Bing another tremendous ovation.

Following an unscheduled luncheon with some of the boys at a wayside lunch-counter, Bing and members of the official party journeyed to the site of Sunset Memorial Centre. Here, in a terrific downpour, even more thousands of Sunset folk had waited, in some cases for hours, to see and hear the most beloved man in all America.

At City Hall, the Acting-Mayor had presented Bing with the Key to the City — a beautifully engraved replica of Vancouver's skyline in solid gold, along with a slate totem-pole which had been carved by the Haida Indians.

At Sunset, our association also gave Bing

a totem-pole — a 20-footer! This was later shipped to his ranch in Elko, Nevada.

The skies opened even wider and old Jupe Pluvius really poured it on as Bing climbed aboard a large, brand new bulldozer and skillfully turned a wide swath, symbolic of the first official sod-turning on the Centre site. The crowd loved it and cheered themselves hoarse.

Here again, to the complete surprise and great delight of the thoroughly soaked gathering, Bing sang in his own inimitable manner. Believe it or not, his song was "Blue Skies"! What a man!

The story of the Bing Crosby Show and its supporting cast appears elsewhere in this effort. It will long be remembered by all of

(Continued on Page 14)



Centre under construction, Fall, 1949.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Sunset Memorial Centre

FROM

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The Bing Crosby Auditorium in Sunset Memorial Centre.

THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 13)

the 9,000 fans who were fortunate enough to be present on that great occasion.

Although Sunset Memorial Centre had undertaken to underwrite the travelling expenses of Bing and his party—it involved a return trip of 3,000 miles—and although we netted \$26,000.00 on the single performance, Bing would not accept one cent toward such costs! We sincerely believe Bing's extreme generosity is unparalleled in the history of this city!

With the profit from Bing's tremendous

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show, the Sunset treasury bounded upward to reflect a balance of \$46,000,00—the largest sum ever raised by any local Community Centre group.

We now had a substantial bank balance, but after adding \$20,000, the gift of the City of Vancouver, we were still far short of our \$125,000 objective; another \$60,000.00 was needed.

Working in conjunction with the Marpole (Continued on Page 16)

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Decoration of Sunset Memorial Shrine

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Stan Thomas, president of Sunset Memorial Centre, receiving The Captain Vancouver award on behalf of Sunset from Mayor Thompson.

THE SUNSET STORY (Continued from Page 14)

Association, we pooled our mental resources, such as ours were, and laid plans to submit a combined Local Improvement By-Law to the property owners of Vancouver South and Marpole. The object: to raise \$60,000.00 for each association.

The By-Law was given a huge majority. The Sunset district polled the largest favorable vote among four Community Centre By-Laws submitted at that time. The Community was right behind us! It was most gratifying.

With the Centre now assured, we called upon Architect W. K. Noppe to bring our plan up-to-date. Working closely with the Parks Board and particularly with Parks Superintendent Phil Stroyan, our ultimate objective drew closer with each passing week.

Several sessions later—it was now Spring of 1949—we submitted the plans to the Board of Park Commissioners.

After many unforeseen problems had been overcome, we finally called for Tenders in the late Spring of that year.

Construction got under way in August. Happy day! We watched the building rise and checked its progress more closely than that of any private owner.

A swirling snowstorm marked the ceremony of the Laying of The Cornerstone on Sunday afternoon, December 11, 1949. Several hundred hardy citizens braved the inclement weather to see Jimmy McLarnin, who flew up from Hollywood, do a beautiful job with an engraved silver trowel.

Mayor Charles Thompson deposited beneath the Cornerstone, a Monel-metal "Time Capsule" which will tell the Sunset Story to those who open it possibly two hundred years hence.

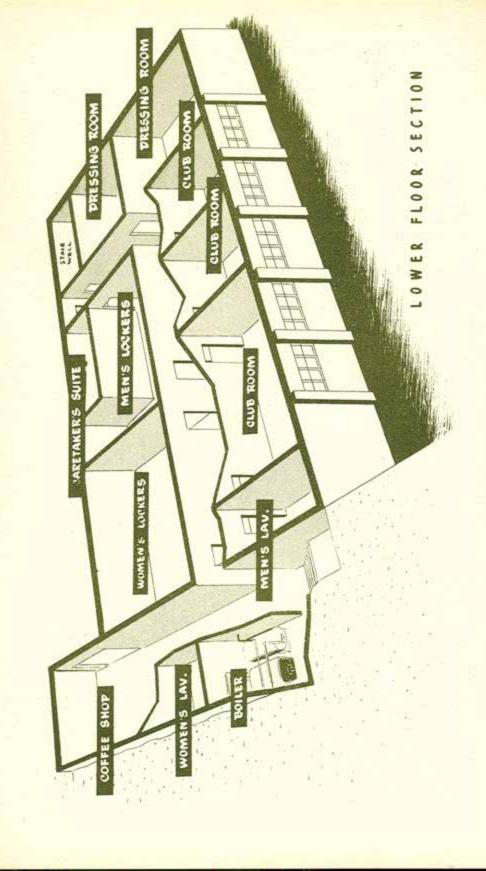
The Sunset Story to this point has been told. Countless details have, of necessity, been omitted and our report has, in many instances, been rather sketchy.

To mention all who have in one or a dozen ways contributed something toward this great community effort would require many more pages than are available herein. But to all such selfless people, our City in general and the community in particular, must forever be indebted.

Sunset Memorial Centre now becomes the community home of all residents of this huge, straggling area. It is theirs to use and to enjoy.

The founders will reap their reward in the knowledge that the Centre and Bing Crosby Auditorium can and will serve to bring the entire community together into one big, happier and healthier family.

The barriers of Race, Creed and Color are down-Let's Keep It That Way!



Officers and Directors SUNSET MEMORIAL CENTRE

1950

President: W. STANLEY THOMAS

1st Vice President: ROBERT FLEMING

2nd Vice President LAWRENCE BUTLER

Treasurer: WILLIAM D. FEARN

Secretary: PEARLE D. INWOOD

Executive Director: JACK HOPKINS B.A., M.S.A. Honorary President: BING CROSBY

Honorary Vice-Presidents:
O. B. ALLAN
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