

Grace
Dee May

MUSEUM &
LIBRARY

ILLUMINATIONS

MAY / JUNE 2023

***"First & Foremost
in Los Angeles History"***

Part Three begins on Page 3



Spring Street School - First Public School in Los Angeles

Grace Dee May Museum & Library • 665 W Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90007 • www.gracedeemay.org

ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

Grace Dee May

MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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Audrey Marie Stein

In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the **Grace** of God. Audrey's nickname was **Dee** and she had been born in the month of **May**. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the **Grace Dee May**.



"The free man cannot long be an ignorant man."

– William McKinley,

Freemason & 25th President of the United States

Freemasonry has long been associated with the Age of Enlightenment where reason elevated education over ignorance and superstition. American Freemasons have been stalwart proponents of public

education and have worked tirelessly to ensure that young minds are not only free to explore new thoughts but that access to education remains an essential right.

The first public school in Los Angeles was opened in the mid-1800s by Dr. Thomas Foster and Jean-Louis Vignes – both members of Los Angeles Lodge No. 42. From opening the doors of the Spring Street School to the founding of notable institutions of higher learning including USC, UCLA, Occidental College, the California Institute of Technology, and Woodbury College, members of the Masonic Fraternity have been champions of public education.

In 1973, I was hired by the Los Angeles Unified School District, as a special education teacher. At that time, there were very few educational resources available for children with learning challenges. I was drawn to the field of special education due, in part, because of my own childhood experiences. In the 1950s, my 2nd grade teacher ordered me to stand at the chalkboard and write my last name 100 times because she thought I had misspelled my own last name. My teacher was unaware that my mother (who had been married multiple times) had recently married a man named "McQuilian" and being so young, I had no idea how to correctly spell the last name of a new stepfather – and my legal surname was, of course, Foran.

The Benefactor of our Museum, Audrey Marie Stein, was a life-long learner and dedicated educator. During her 39 years in the classroom she mentored countless students first as a high school teacher in Downey and later as a professor at Orange Coast College.

Today, the Grace Dee May Museum's focus is on educating the public on the rich heritage of Freemasonry and in this issue I hope you will enjoy learning about some remarkable Masons who helped to ensure that children in California would always be free to learn from history, to explore new ideas, and to rise above the shackles of ignorance.

Sean Foran
Curator and President

Grace Dee May Inc. (EIN: 03-0591428) is a qualified tax exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

"First & Foremost in Los Angeles History"

Spring Street School was the first public school in Los Angeles originally built at Second and Spring streets



Portrait of the students of the Spring Street School, Los Angeles, ca.1860-1900.

Dr. Thomas Foster was a physician and responsible for the **first schoolhouse to be built at Spring and Second Streets**. Foster served as the 6th Mayor of Los Angeles Thomas Foster was a member of Los Angeles Lodge No. 42, F&AM.

Jean Louis Vignes (1780 –1862) He also contributed to the **founding of the first Los Angeles public school**. At his El Alizo winery he was the first commercial wine maker in California. Jean Louis Vignes was a member of Los Angeles Lodge No. 42, F&AM.

Dr. Walter Lindley (1852 –1922) He oversaw development of early medical and educational institutions. Lindley became the city health officer in 1879. Established the first system of births and deaths and set up a free vaccination program. Dr. Lindley was a member of Signet Chapter, No. 57, Royal Arch Masons.

In 1873 this school housed a hundred pupils and one teacher, Mrs. F. A. Parker. Two years later it was noted that the school was "running a double set of scholars, one class filling the rooms in the morning, and the other class receiving instruction in the afternoon." Mrs. Parker the school's only teacher, complained to the school board about her workload, stating she was teaching "a double number of scholars, and that she acted as Janitor and washed her own towels."

In 1875, the Los Angeles Herald observed: "The play-grounds of the Spring street school are a disgrace to the School Board. No flowers, no grass, but only unsightly grounds covered with rubbish and old school furniture."

In 1881 the school board appointed a committee of two medical doctors , R.W. Ellis and Walter Lindley, to examine the school. Their report stated many concerns that led to the improvement of public schools in California.



"First & Foremost in Los Angeles History"



The white, wood-shingled building now at 635 Childs Way, now known as Widney Alumni House, was once USC's only building.



Frank X. Pfaffinger

Director of the Midnight Mission and the Masonic Clubhouse at the University of Southern California is on land which he donated. Worked for the LA Times for 55 years. Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar

John M. Griffith (1829 -)

An active agent in the formation of the Chamber of Commerce and USC. Los Angeles Lodge No. 42, F&AM



Mayor Edward F. Spence (1832-1892)

He was a banker, entrepreneur and property developer and the 17th Mayor of Los Angeles, in 1884-86. He was one of the founders of the University of Southern California. Under his rule the city reorganized the Police and Fire Departments and placed all personnel on salary. Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar



Isaias Hellman (1842-1920)

He founded Farmers & Merchants Bank. Major investor. Regent of USC. Director of 17 banks and controlled \$100 million in capital. Member of Signet Chapter, No. 57, Royal Arch Masons



Dr. Henry S. Orme (1837-1912)

Twenty-seventh Grand Master of CA (1893) Created Medical program for USC. Member of Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar



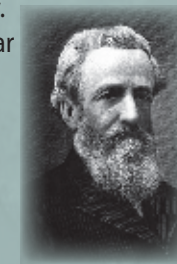
Gov. John G. Downey (1827 - 1894)

He opened one of the first pharmacies and was the first foreign born governor of California. Helped to lay the groundwork for the University of Southern California. He built the Childs Theater. Los Angeles Lodge, No. 42, F&AM, Los Angeles Chapter, No. 33.



Arthur Letts (1862-1923)

Developed Westwood, Holmby Hills, and donated land for the establishment of UCLA. Behind the scenes financial founder and owner of Bullock's and Broadway Department Stores. Los Angeles Commandery No. 9,

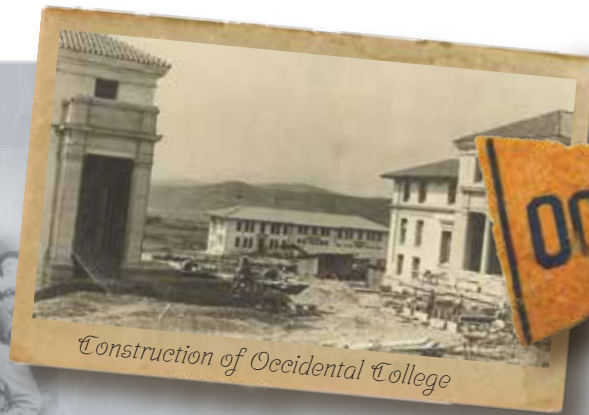


Orzo W. Childs (1824-1890)

Horticulturist, merchant, banker and one of the founders of the University of California. He was contracted to build an Zanja Mada, a canal system to bring water to the fields south of the pueblo. He was involved with Isaias E. Hellman and the Farmers and Merchants Bank. Signet Chapter, No. 57, Royal Arch Masons



"First & Foremost in Los Angeles History"



James George Bell (1831-1911)

American settler and businessman who is considered a founder of Occidental College.

Born in Bowling Green, Kentucky. His friend J. Edward Hollenbeck persuaded Bell to join him in California. He arrived in San Francisco, California, in 1875, then traveled down the coast to Los Angeles.

In 1875, Bell and his extended family purchased about 360 acres of the California property, near modern Los Angeles. Between 1870 and 1890, the grant was broken into smaller land holdings and acquired by newly arriving settlers.

Bell engaged in cattle raising and dry farming, developed water wells, and rented land to vegetable farmers. The Bell family initially lived at the Hollenbeck's "Town House" at Fourth and Breed streets in what is now Boyle Heights until moving to a "ranch" in 1876. The family's "Bell House" was built in an early Victorian architectural style. Bell helped the area develop into a small farming and cattle raising community. Originally known as Obed, the California town's name was changed in 1898 to Bell to honor the pioneer founder.

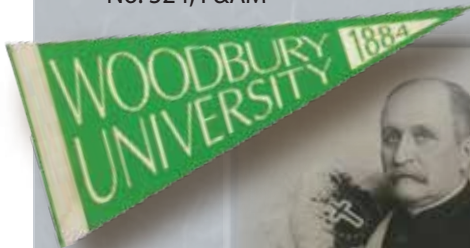
He served as Bell's first postmaster and rose through the ritual ranks of the Masonic Lodge. Late in life, Bell would subdivide his land into tracts of 5-acre farms and move to Santa Fe Springs to live with his son Alphonzo, Sr. He was one of the founders of Occidental College.

James George Bell's son, Alphonzo Bell, Sr., was an oil millionaire, real estate developer and champion tennis player. He established the Bell Petroleum Oil Company, and used oil revenues to develop Bel-Air Estates. His grandson, Alphonzo E. Bell, Jr. was a popular 20th Century California Congressman. The Bell family also gave their name to Bell, California, and Bell Gardens.



Norman Bridge

He was a physician, oil magnet and one of the founders of California Institute of Technology. Bro. Bridge was a member of Corona Lodge, No. 324, F&AM



Francis Chute Woodbury (1841-1898)

Founded Woodbury College.
He was a member of Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar.



Thomas Robert Bard (1841-1915)

U.S. Senator, Businessman, Oilman,
Founding Board Member of Occidental College.
Appointed George S. Patton to West Point
Hueneme Lodge No. 311, F&AM
Oxford Lodge No, 341, F&AM
Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar

"First & Foremost in Los Angeles History "



James Frank Burns
**First County Superintendent
of Schools**, City Treasurer,
Chief of Police/County Sheriff.
Master (1871-72) of
Los Angeles Lodge, No. 42, F&AM,
Los Angeles Commandery
No. 9, Knights Templar



Brig. Gen. Lancaster Brent (1826 –1905)
School Commissioner and a leader of the
movement to create a public school
system in Los Angeles.
He served as Los Angeles City Attorney in
1853 and owned Rancho San Rafael,
which included present day Pasadena.
Los Angeles Lodge, No. 42, F&AM,



Edward J. C. Kewen (1825-1879)
**First Attorney General
of California**,
Superintendent of the
Los Angeles schools in 1858
and Los Angeles County District
Attorney from 1859 to 1861.
Member of Sutter Lodge No 6,
F&AM, Los Angeles No. 42, F&AM,
Mount Moriah, No. 44, F&AM, and
San Diego Lodge No. 35, F&AM



James A. Foshay (1856 –1914)
Superintendent of Los Angeles
City Schools (1891)
Past Grand Master 1899
Los Angeles Commandery
No. 9, Knights Templar



Gov. William D. Stephens
(1859–1944).
Member of the Los Angeles Board of
Education. Los Angeles Commandery
No. 9, Knights Templar



Henry Dwight Barrows (1825–1914)
U.S. Marshal (appointed by Pres. Lincoln),
Teacher, Goldminer, Reporter,
Musician (organist for LA 42)
LA School Superintendent,
Writer, Founder of Historical Society
of Southern California
Los Angeles Lodge No. 42, F&AM
Los Angeles Chapter No. 33, Royal Arch Masons

John H. Shore
County Superintendent
of Schools.
Los Angeles Lodge, No. 42, F&AM,
Los Angeles Commandery
No. 9, Knights Templar

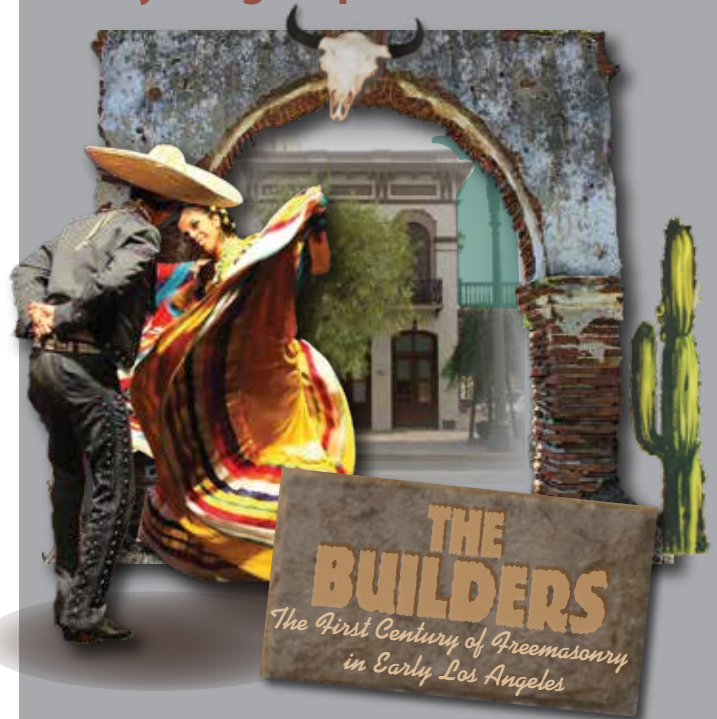


Invite Bro. George Washington to your next event.



"This is your life...Brother George Washington" is a short patriotic drama about our Founding Fathers. The GDM Museum is ready to bring this performance "to life" for your members.

Book a GUIDED VIP TOUR for your group



Planning a Table Lodge or Festive Board?

We'll provide an informative short talk and video plus Masonic giveaways on California Winemaking.



Curator Sean Foran leads a group tour through our gallery and shares the history of early Los Angeles

We'll happily put your event on our calendar.

Contact our Curator Sean Foran by email: info@gracedeemay.org or call: 818-222-6796

GDM Museum "Wish List" – we need your help:

- Flat-screen video monitor** to display our history videos

- Transfer of Masonic films to digital** to preserve historic images

- Digital scanner** for preserving large documents
Thanks to MW James H. Kendall, Past Grand Master of Washington

- Lighted museum cabinets** to display collections

- Utility cargo van** to transport display materials to community

- Plastic bins** to safely store artifacts

- Volunteer as a GDM Docent** to share stories of significant early Masons

- Join our "Founder's Circle"** with a \$1000. donation

- Become a museum member** for a \$35. annual donation

- Shop Online at the GDM Gift Shop** every purchase supports the Museum



Our Vision:

The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

Our Mission:

The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

**Support History & Art. Support Freemasonry.
Support the Grace Dee May Museum.**

Sean Foran, BOARD PRESIDENT AND CURATOR
818-620-2058 / info@gracedeemay.org
www.gracedeemay.org

For information contact:
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ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

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