

MONTEREY PARK LIFE IN THE EARLY DAYS

(Excerpts taken from articles that appeared in the Monterey Park Californian and Progress Newspapers)

1920's

They came a buyin' and a sellin' land in Monterey Park during the '20s. Up to the middle '20s, the City registered about \$1,000 a day in building permits. By 1926 more than \$435,000 in permits were registered. Lots in the early '20s could be purchased for about \$200.00.

City improvements progressed with the leveling and widening of streets. In 1920 five thousand men were employed at a weekly salary of \$1.75 for a nine hour day, six day a week job.

The City Water supply was upgraded in 1923 as a 1 million gallon reservoir opened in the Garvey Hills.

In 1923, Garfield Avenue paved the way to Montebello. Atlantic Boulevard followed in 1928. These two streets were hailed as the most modern perfectly designed streets in the west.

In 1923, Mancha Bruggemeyer, a retired judge from Chicago, gave the newly adopted City a new Library. One of the City's most famous citizens, Laura Scudder, started her now famous potato chips behind her husbands gas station on the northeast corner of Atlantic and Garvey.

In 1926, the City celebrated it's 10 year Anniversary on May 1, with a parade and celebration on the newly opened Garvey Ave. 1926 saw a slow down in building and development. The oil wells failed, lots did not sell and the City Budget was strapped, due to a lower than average tax rate. There were very few City Services available to stimulate the economy. The City was only able to raise \$16,900 in taxes, (compared to Alhambra \$169,000)

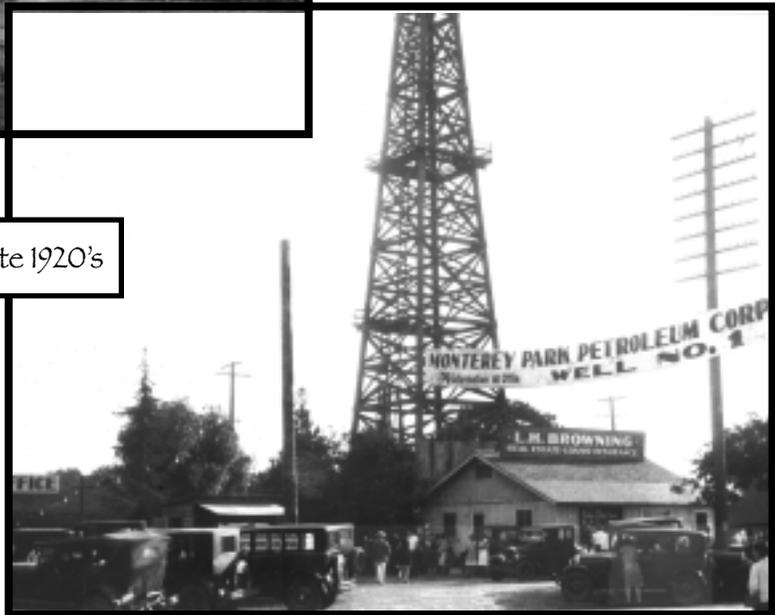
1927-28 were the years PN Snyder developments came to town with hopes to make the City boom again. Two projects, a 367 acre development called Golden Gate Hills and a second project Midwick View Estates were launched with high expectations of success. These projects went bankrupt in 1929 due to the stock market crash. El Encanto and Cascades Waterfall are all that remain of Mr. Snyder's dream.

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Then: L.H. Browning Realty Co.
at the corner of Garvey Avenue
and Orange Avenue.

Browning Well #1 in the late 1920's



Now: Still L.H. Browning Realty Co.



Then: Garvey Avenue in 1926. Corner of Garvey and New Avenue, looking west.



Now: Garvey Avenue, looking west.



Then: Vernon Gasoline at Atlantic and Garvey, built by the Scudder Family, was the “First all steel gas station in Monterey Park.”



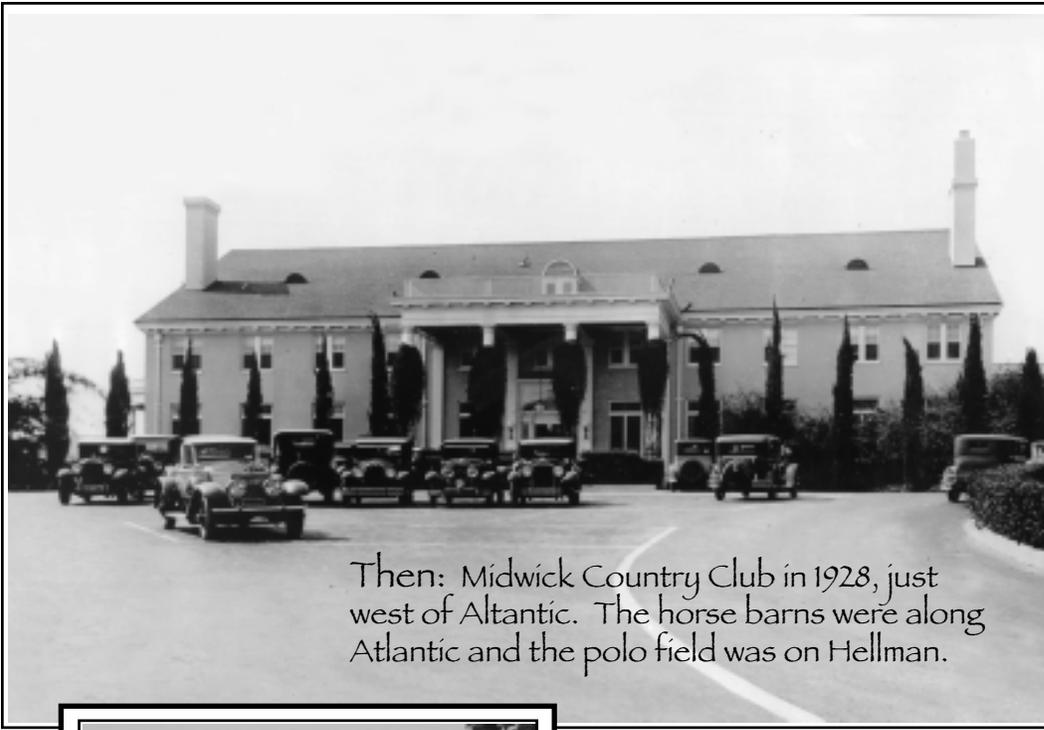
Now: A bright red TEXACO gas station stands on the site of the original station and continues to offer automotive service to the community.

Then: Laura Scudder Potato Chip Factory with a fleet of delivery trucks, Garvey Avenue east of Atlantic Boulevard.



Now: Shopping Center at Garvey Avenue and Atlantic Boulevard.





Then: Midwick Country Club in 1928, just west of Altantic. The horse barns were along Atlantic and the polo field was on Hellman.



Now: View of the remaining Water Tower, photo taken from the old Midwick Country Club location.

The creation of the Waterfall and Jardín el Encanto (enchanted garden)

In the 1920's, Peter Snyder began the development of Midwick View Estates. The entrance to the estates is a short street named El Portal Place which ends at De la Fuente Street. There Snyder created a focal point for the area. A beautiful water fountain with a series of shallow pools which cascades down the hillside forming a series of waterfalls. Where the eastern block of El Portal ends at El Mercado Street, a Spanish-style sales office for the estates was built. The building was crowned with a neon sign proclaiming "El Encanto."

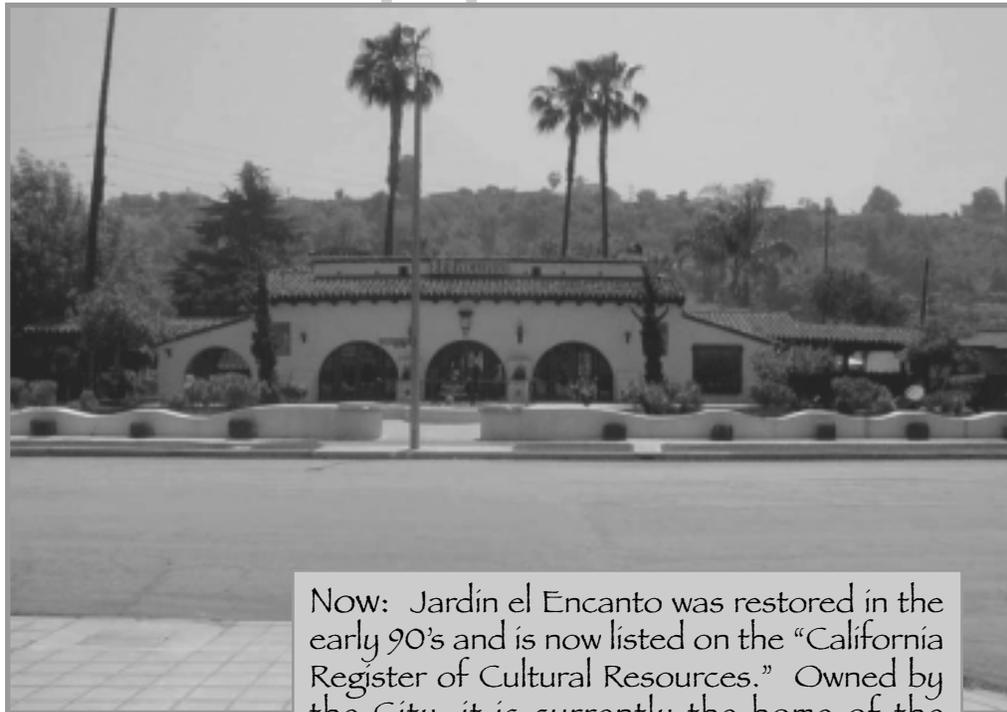


Now: Listed by the State of California on the California Register of Historical Resources, it was deeded to the City in 1937.

Jardín el Encanto



Then: El Encanto Real Estate Office of Peter Snyder, 1929.



Now: Jardín el Encanto was restored in the early 90's and is now listed on the "California Register of Cultural Resources." Owned by the City, it is currently the home of the Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce.