

## JIM HARRINGTON '37

Jim was born and raised at C St. Sacramento California. His Father worked for the Southern Pacific Co. Both of his parents were born in Ireland . His father originally worked six and one half days a week. The S.P. allowed the unions to operate within the company which eventually resulted in a five day work week. The company had its own hospital , which was unusual at the time and operated in Sacramento.. Employees came from all over California to this hospital. It eventually was moved to San Francisco.

Jim's Dad worked on the outside around 12<sup>th</sup> and C St. He was part of a group that checked out the train cars when they came in from the East. This included the undercarriage, wheels, breaks as well as the train couplings. It was hard work and he worked both in and out of the rain.

Like many immigrants his dad was interested in owning real estate This opportunity was not available to many of them in their home countries. His first purchase was the home on C St. He eventually purchased three additional properties.

The lot of the family home was 160' deep. Half of it was used for a vegetable garden. His dad loved working on the plot. Jim remembers that during the depression people came to the alley that ran behind his property looking for food . The word got around that this was a place that they might get food. All who received a lunch were very polite and grateful.

Jim and a few other students walked or used their bicycles go to and from school rain or shine. He went to St Francis Grammar school and then C.B.

He and his friends would play football and baseball at the park at 21st or 28<sup>th</sup> and C Sts. on weekends and during the summer. When it would snow, which was not often or hale they would make snow balls to throw at people or thing. At this time most autos did not have windows - just a top. When a car came by they would try to throw a snowball thru the auto and not touch the driver or auto. Apparently they were not very successful in that they did a lot of running thru alleys or back yards to get away from drivers.

The movie theater was a good form of entertainment. It cost .25 cents to get in. When a bunch of them got together to go to the Alhambra theatre to watch the "serials" and B movies on Saturday. One or two boys would buy tickets. They would then go up to the second floor and open the fire exit doors. The other guys would go up to north fire escape stairs and get in free. There was a constant battle with the ushers. He also remembers they had a live organ show before the movies. The "silent" movies were over by the time he went to the movies.

One of his early jobs was to take a quart bottle to the local grocery store and get a bottle of milk. Most stores had a file for each customer who would charge their groceries and pay for them at the end of the month. Each purchase had a slip that was filed away and summarized at the end of the month.

Jobs were hard to find during the depression. His first job was to have a paper rout for the Sacramento Bee which was an evening paper. Their large paper came out on Saturdays. . He would take his bike down to the basement of Bee office on 9<sup>th</sup> and J St. from his home on C St. to pick up the papers. He had a large territory to cover and usually didn't get home till dark in the winter. He had to collect the money for the papers at the end of the month. One customer gave him an official piece of paper. He took it to the bank and asked what it was. This was the first time that he ever seen a check. At that time most people paid in cash.

His next job was with O'Neil Brothers who's main station was at 13<sup>th</sup> and L Sts. Jim worked at their station at 38<sup>th</sup> and J St. Al Westlake a charter member of the La Salle Club, hired Jim. While working at 38<sup>th</sup> St

He remembers that occasionally certain girls would come by in the family auto after dinner and have Jim disconnect the odometer. Later on they would have it connected up again. They would tell their parents that they were going over to a friends house and would have had other plans in mind. Things never change.

Jim had a limited time to study. After work he would get home around at nine and start to study Ken Belke a classmate of Jim's said he was a good student. Jim felt that he had a very good education that served him well all of his life.

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