II. HISTORY OF LAKESIDE

The town site of Lakeside was created from the 1845 Rancho El Cajon land grant of approximately 48,800 acres and the smaller Los Coches or Mission Hog Ranch parcel of approximately 28 acres. The Rancho El Cajon land grant was given to María Antonia Estudillo de Pedrorena, wife of Spanish-born merchant Miguel de Pedrorena. The Los Coches parcel was purchased in 1859 by Jesse Julian Ames from the Catholic Church. The large Rancho El Cajon adobe was originally located in the center of Lakeside. In 1869, the Pedrorena family opened up the land for sale and subdivision. In the 1870s and 1880s, the Ferry Ranch and the Ben Hill home were established in the area. With America’s population growing, and pristine land available, other farmers like the Kuhners and Philbrooks moved to Lakeside. A flume to assist irrigation needs commenced construction in 1883.

With completion of the California Southern Railroad line in 1885, which connected San Diego County to the rest of the nation, the County population grew from 7,500 in 1886 to 25,000 by November 1, 1887. With demand for land high, the El Cajon Valley Company, comprised of local wealthy entrepreneurs, E. W. Morse, G. H. Mansfield, O. S. Hubbell and I. M. Merrill, was started in 1886. The group laid out the town of Lakeside (Exhibit 3) and built the fantastic Victorian Lakeside Inn in 1887 (Photo Plate 1). Planned to lure visitors from far and near alike to partake of Lakeside’s healthful climate, the resort proved a roaring success from the beginning, complete with an outdoor dining room, lovely Lindo Lake and park, tennis courts and golf links. (In 2003, only Lindo Lake boathouse remains.) Cuisine consisted of the finest and freshest produce, chickens, meats, dairy products and eggs. A railroad line was constructed from San Diego to Lakeside via Santee in 1887. Workers lodged at the nearby Victorian Swycaffer Boarding House, which evolved into the Lindo Hotel and ultimately the Lakeside Hotel, now located on the corner of River Street and Lakeshore Drive. George H. Mansfield, Vice-President of the El Cajon Valley Company, erected his large Queen Anne Victorian House on Castle Court Road in 1887, and grew raisin grapes on his extensive property.
El Cajon Valley Tract Map (1886)
Lakeside Historic Survey Report

History of Lakeside

Photo Plate 1

Lakeside Inn
The building boom ended in the late 1880s and Lakeside, like the rest of the county, developed at a much slower pace. Businesses like blacksmiths and harness shops, dry goods and grocery stores sprang up, catering to vacationers' and local residents' needs. A lumberyard imported wood necessary for building a few Folk Victorian structures and frame commercial edifices in the 1890s, like the A. K. French and Charles Culbertson houses on River Street and the Neale dwelling on Maine Avenue. Local citrus farmer John H. Kleine constructed his spectacular “Hebbard and Gill” designed Mission Revival style ranch on top of Prospect Hill in 1898.

To cater to the community spiritual needs, local architect Moses Frick created a dignified Colonial/Greek Revival, frame, Presbyterian Church in 1895 on Maine Avenue. Located in the center of town, the structure became the gathering place for major lifetime events.

In 1902, Father Henry Eummelan assumed management of the Lakeside Inn and established the Kneipp Sanitarium in conjunction with the hotel. Capitalist John H. Gay bought the building in 1904 and laid out a 60-foot-wide racetrack as part of the attraction. Barney Oldfield, nationally known racecar driver, often roared around the Inn and the countryside in his early autos, creating a sensation wherever he went. In 1905, there were 16 dwellings in town, including the Ross residence just finished on Maine Avenue. A view of Maine Avenue is shown in Photo Plate 2.

Between 1907 and 1913, Lakeside experienced a building boom like the rest of San Diego County. Written about often in the San Diego Union, a number of businesses and houses were constructed during the period including the J. B. Rumsey Store on Lakeshore, the Nason Bircharl House and confectionary on River and Laurel, the Anna Culbertson and Frank Bryant dwellings on River, and the Gandyra home and harness shop on Maine Avenue. In 1907, Dr. Junius Ireys, Lakeside’s first medical doctor, moved to town and built his home and office on Maine Avenue across from the Presbyterian Church.

Two vacation dwellings were erected in 1908 for San Diego banker W. R. Rogers on Caraway, and local grocer Mat F. Heller on Castle Drive. The second Lakeside School designed by prominent architect Theodore Kistner in the Mission Revival style in 1912 catered to an expanding Lakeside population. In 1913, railroad magnate John D. Spreckles’ architect, Eugene Hoffman, created a new depot for the San Diego and Southeastern Railway Company on Laurel. The Presbyterian Church built...
Maine Avenue circa 1904

Maine Avenue circa 1908

Photo Plate 2
a manse behind it in 1911 to house the local minister. As if to tout their growing town site, the community constructed its own town hall in 1911 with the assistance of the Lakeside Woman’s Club. The Lakeside Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1911 provides a diagram of the town at that time (Exhibit 4).

Lakeside Inn proprietor John Gay died in 1915, and the grand Inn fell into disrepair. The flood of 1916 washed out railroad tracks on the Lakeside-to-Santee line and destroyed 21 houses along with barns, silos, water tanks and other utilitarian buildings.

Demolition of the Lakeside Inn in 1920 ushered in a new town focus on local needs and survival. Businesses such as Heller's/Safeway and later Barker’s operated as early supermarkets. A major Lakeside service station under the ownership of Otto Einer emerged in the early 1930s on the corner of Maine Avenue and Woodside. Feed stores, dry good stores like Klauber-Wangenheim, banks, real estate offices, lumber and hardware establishments, the Hartung, then Dent bakery on Lakeshore, and pharmacies like Rocchio’s and Leo Ward’s Lakeside Pharmacy grew along Maine Avenue. In 1929, Edward Carender, appointed superintendent of Lakeside schools, moved to a Hebbard and Gill designed Mission Revival house on Channel Road, with his wife and family. Dr. Carlile took over and expanded Dr. Irey’s property in the 1930s, which eventually evolved into a mortuary business, a necessary community commodity. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1929 indicates an increase in the growth of the town since the year 1911 (Exhibit 5).

In 1939, Mary Mitchell built a frame ranch-style court on River Street near Woodside Avenue, an introduction to multi-family dwelling California style. Lakeside Motors, erected in 1947, along with the relocated Lakeside Feed Store up the street, were two of the post World War II structures constructed on Maine Avenue. A new Methodist Church was constructed on the corner of River Street and Parkside in 1946. In 1950, Art LaMadrid demolished his long-standing blacksmith shop on Maine Avenue and Laurel and erected the Lakeside Inn, a fashionable eatery for the local population.

As more people looked to San Diego County for their sustenance, the town of Lakeside grew. Maine Avenue exists, as if almost frozen in time, as one of the best central business districts in the area, proudly exhibiting buildings and businesses that go back a century or more. Houses where businessmen and shop owners lived still dot the streets immediately surrounding Maine Avenue. Photo Plates 3 and 4 depict the growth of Lakeside from the 1890’s to the 1940’s.
Exhibit 4
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1911)
Exhibit 5
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1929)
Lakeside 1940s

Photo Plate 4