

THE LETTER

LAFAYETTE ASSOCIATION OF HOMEOWNERS, INC. NEWSLETTER

JULY-AUGUST 2003

WWW.THELAFAYETTELB.ORG

ISSUE #31

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Ed Coutchie

By Thea Robertshaw

Listening to Ed's stories, one is amazed about his travels and experiences in life. He has journeyed to five of seven continents. He lived, worked and traveled in some places whose names no longer exist. He has lived abroad in politically unstable areas, often under hardship conditions. I could hardly keep up with the names of these exotic places.

It seems that it all started with Viet Nam. Ed says, "I got lucky—I was not sent to the front lines." Because of his administrative and organizational skills, he was chosen to be part of a select group, a military unit called MAC-V. This group was composed mostly of officers and ranking NCOs who trained their respective Vietnamese counterparts.

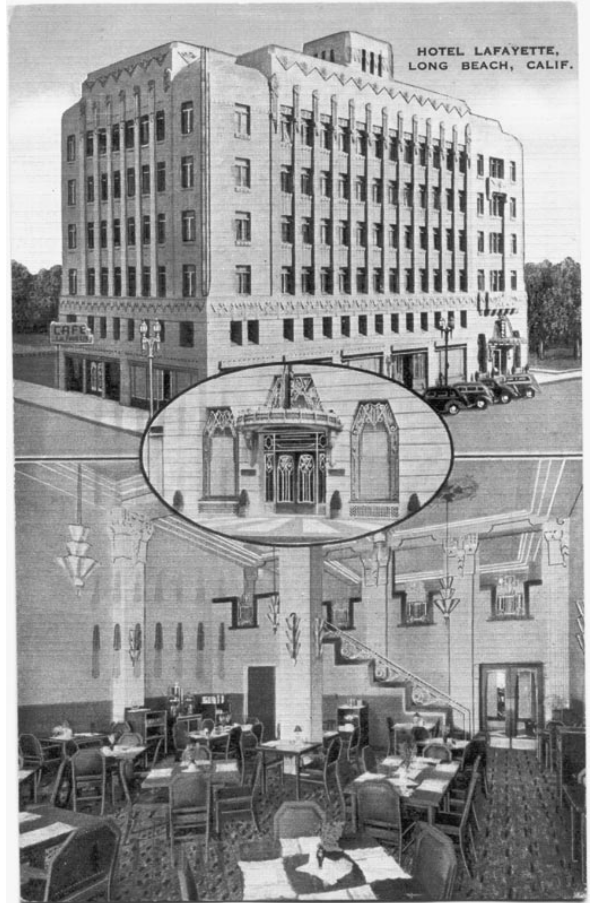
One officer, a good friend, needed to visit elders of an outlying village and asked Ed to go along. They traveled down river in a small fishing boat and were welcomed at their destination with food and drink. After the meeting, a side trip was made to the mouth of the river to visit an abandoned fort used during the French Indo-China war. By the time they left, Ed says, "We were tired and duly intoxicated. We dozed on the boat trip back, not thinking of the dangers of the ever-present Viet Cong. We could have been killed." He says, "Over time you adjust to your environment and sometimes develop a false sense of security." Thinking back, Ed feels he was vulnerable to danger on many occasions and only by chance did he escape harm.

After military service, Ed Coutchie purchased a one-way ticket to Europe, landing a job in Greece with an American concern. He lived on the island of Crete and worked in the city of Iraklion. For two and a half years he lived and socialized mostly with the Greek populace. He shopped in local markets, did without a refrigerator, had no heat in the winter and during the summer months carried water, bucket by bucket, to his holding tank. "One day," Ed said, "after spending the morning filling my water tank, I returned home from work only to discover my

neighbor had used all my water to do her laundry. In Greece I learned how to conserve water."

On a visit to Egypt, Ed befriended a fellow traveler that offered to show him Cairo and outlying places of interest. She was Greek, her family had lived in Cairo much of her life and she spoke fluent Arabic in addition to five other languages. One excursion was the overnight train to the city of Luxor, located on the Nile, and a visit to the historic temples of the Pharaohs. They crossed the Nile using local boats, rented bicycles and cycled to the tombs at the Valley of the Queens. This was a strenuous all-day excursion, braving the intense sun and

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POSTCARD COURTESY OF BILL GUZIK

This postcard from the 40s shows a curiously isolated view of the Lafayette Hotel (that's a nice park back there), along with an interior view of Cafe Lafayette at 500 Broadway. Today, this space is occupied by Sithea's Salon.

THE LAFAYETTE
CONDOMINIUMS
140 LINDEN AVENUE
LONG BEACH, CA 90802
(562) 436-5391

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FROM THE BOARD

August 9th Block Sale Fundraiser

By Bill Guzik

Saturday, August 9 will be a great opportunity to get rid of that pink Izod shirt buried in the bottom of your closet or that Atari Game Set that you no longer play. Sell your own treasures or donate them to the Lafayette for the Second Annual East Village Linden Avenue Block Sale! Sharon Hays and Bill Guzik are accepting items for donation to the Lafayette Association (take it as a tax write-off). If you want to sell your own stuff, residents are asked to donate \$15 to the Lafayette (non-residents \$20) to reserve a space. Be sure to also ask all your artist and musician friends if they would like to participate too. For more information, see the back page or call Matt Hood at (562) 715-3105.

Trash

There has been an increase in large items being dropped off adjacent to or across from the trash bins. Keep in mind that Sharon and other volunteers must take the time to throw out or cut down to size your trash. NOT A FUN JOB!

All trash must be put in the containers and the lids must be able to be closed. If you leave your trash outside of the bins, you will be fined. If a bin is locked, ask Sharon for assistance in the morning. If you need a special pick-up by the City, please call the Refuse Hotline (562) 570-2876. Please be considerate!

Theft

CDs used for the lobby music disappeared from the mezzanine two weeks ago. If anyone knows anything about this, please let Sharon know. If they are dropped off in the office after hours, no questions will be asked.

Rent/Sale

Having trouble renting your unit or hoping for an even quicker sale? Give Sharon the numbers

of your realtor so that she can post them on the lobby's information board. It works!

Bingo and Carpet

The Bacardi and Bingo fundraiser cleared a profit of \$886, which went to the reserve fund and will be used to pay for the new carpet. The Abington Mill ruby colored floral pattern won a majority of votes by the residents. It will be installed in our hallways beginning in September. The board will be meeting with the installers at some point later this month to plan the installation schedule.

More Income

The Lafayette has agreed to lease the Linden parking lot and the Embassy room to the TV series "CSI: Crime Scene Investigations" for location filming July 31st (as you may know). For the inconvenience of being relocated to the Marriott parking lot for a day, the Association has earned \$2,000 in reserve funds.

Committee Sign-Ups

Many of the same names and faces have volunteered for our various committees. We need new blood, sweat, fun and ideas from more residents (owners and renters). Take pride in your building! Take part on a committee!



PHOTO BY ANONYMOUS RESIDENT

Are you feeling lucky? Neighbors and their friends gathered in the Solarium for the June 13 Bingo Night fundraiser.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Who's Who at the Lafayette

2003 Board of Directors

President: Bill Guzik

First Vice-President: Jean-Louis de Bien

Second Vice-President: Lou Schor

Treasurer: Derrick Lloyd

Secretary: Andy Blinn

Office Manager

Sharon Hays

Contact the President

E-mail: billguzik@aol.com

Phone: 495-6264

(Weekdays 8am-9pm, Weekends 9am-9pm)

Contact the Board

In writing: Each board member has a mailbox in the office. All written comments will be addressed in a timely manner. Or go to "Feedback" on the Lafayette's Website at www.thelafayettelb.org.

In person: Come to the board meetings every first Wednesday of the month at 7pm in the Solarium. Also come to the open planning meetings every fourth (last) Wednesday, 7pm.

Contact the Office

Phone: 436-5391 9:30am to 6pm weekdays

THE LAFAYETTE LETTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY FROM THE OFFICE OF THE LAFAYETTE ASSOCIATION OF HOMEOWNERS.

EDITOR/ART DIRECTOR
ANDY BLINN

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
BILL GUZIK
THEA ROBERTSHAW

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS THE 21ST OF THE MONTH. AD SPACE AVAILABLE. CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR RATES.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR, CONTINUED

extreme desert heat. This is not how the average American travels, but Ed always invited the experience and the challenge.

Back in the states, Ed acquired a background in finance and the banking industry, which he used later to obtain employment with an American construction company doing business in Saudi Arabia. During his five years of Saudi residency, not only did he experience Saudi hospitality first hand, but he also lived and worked with people of numerous nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

With generous vacation allowances he further explored parts of the Middle East, Asia, East and South Africa. Life in Saudi Arabia was followed by three years in West Africa working in the petrochemical industry. His years in Port Harcourt, Nigeria were the ultimate in the experiences of his life. Ed explains about dealing with food shortages, inconsistent water and electricity supplies, extreme poverty, rampant crime and corruption—all a part of his everyday life. Ed experienced “coup d’etats” and the resulting anxieties and hardships that followed. Ed says, “Fortunately these regime changes were basically bloodless, but they were awfully scary.”

To endure these hardships, Ed treated his situation as a once in a lifetime adventure. He learned to adapt to local conditions and resources. He lived in a house that was surrounded by a high wall. The grounds were gated and had 24 hour security. He says, “I was fortunate to have a house staff to assist with the day to day house and garden chores.” On shopping day, Ed would accompany his housekeeper to market. “Many food items (butter, milk, canned goods, sugar, etc.) and consumer goods (toiletries, etc.) were scarce or non-existent. When such items became available, you had to make on the spot quantity purchases.” On one occasion, while shopping in the outdoor markets for local food products, Ed decided to try the local snails, which were “as big as a man’s fist.” They were taken home, placed in boxes in the kitchen and fed on corn meal to clean their system. To Ed’s surprise, he entered the kitchen the next morning to find the snails were all over the walls and cabinets. The real disappointment came when his “escargot” did not please the palate.

There was a small foreign community in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, composed of mostly Dutch, English, Italian and French. From these people Ed learned to make many foods from scratch: Ricotta, pasta, brasaola, sauerkraut, breads and other dishes which supplemented his diet. During this time, Ed journeyed to other African nations and took in some spectacular sights such as Victoria Falls and a trip down the Zambizi River. Other travels included the

Himalayas, the Brazilian Falls of Iguazu and the Amazon.

Ed also has a fascination for his ancestors and the information he has collected is impressive. He showed me a photograph of his paternal great grandparents who immigrated from Poland and Slovakia to America in 1903. He has journeyed to Slovakia to find relatives still living in the family home in which his great grandmother was born. When he departed, the entire family escorted him to the train station and as he began to board the train, the entire entourage began to sing an old Slovakian farewell song, which touched him deeply. Ed has a beautiful photograph of his maternal great, great, grandfather who was of Cherokee blood. As a child he and his family walked the “Trail of Tears” that lead from Georgia and forced resettlement to the

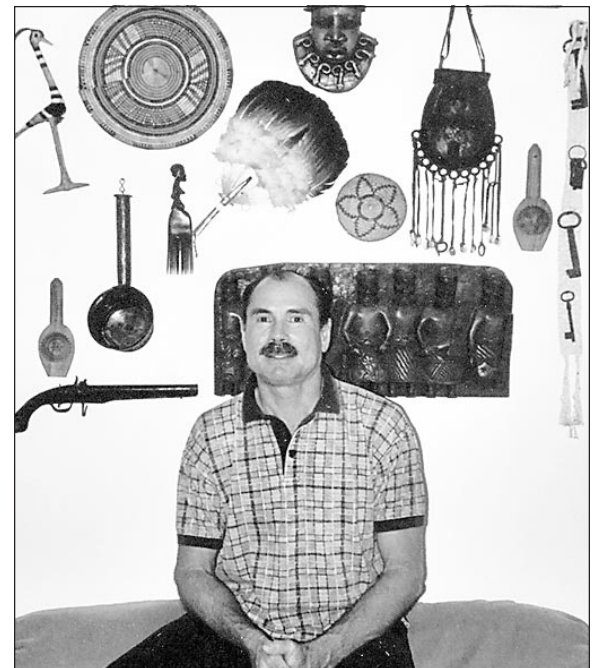


PHOTO COURTESY OF ED COUTCHIE

Ed along with a small portion of the many artifacts he’s collected during his world travels.

Indian Territories of what is now Oklahoma.

Born and raised in Arizona and one of five children, Ed Coutchie came from a family of modest means, but rich in family history and strong in community standing. Ed has taken an active role in the Homeowner’s Association, hoping contributions, suggestions and advice based on his diversified personal and professional background will be of use. Currently he is remodeling his own place in the Campbell building. It is a long and arduous project. It will be beautiful with memories and objects from his years of travels.

2ND ANNUAL EAST VILLAGE LINDEN AVENUE BLOCK SALE

Join your friends and neighbors!
Setup at 6:00am
Fun starts at 8:00am
Art Walk starts around 6pm
It's over when it's over!

Saturday, August 9th

8:00 a.m.

(Setup at 6:00 a.m.)

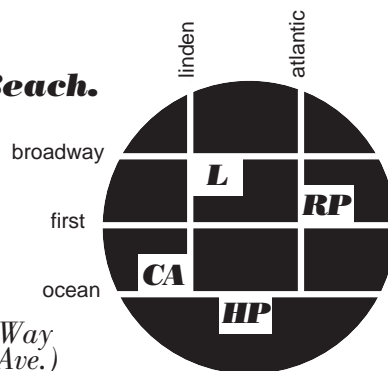
**Funds Raised Will Directly Benefit the
Preservation Efforts of the Participating
Downtown Historic and Landmark Buildings.**

Highlights

- Lots of treasures — furniture, antiques, books, clothes and more! Over 100 vendors!
- Live music at each location!
- Works by over 40 Southern California artists!
- Fun stuff for kids of all ages — classic cars, fire engines, face painting
- Food and drink
- Sale coincides with monthly Second Saturday Art Walk!
- Tell your friends! Stay all day!

**Linden Ave. and Ocean Ave. in the
East Village Arts District of Long Beach.
Participating buildings include:**

- The Lafayette** 140 Linden Ave.
- The Cooper Arms** 455 E. Ocean Ave.
- Harbor Place Towers** 525 Seaside Way
(Ocean Ave.)
- The Royal Palms** 100 Atlantic Ave.



Contacts:

General events,
artists and musicians contact:
Matt Hood 715-3105

To donate or sell your own treasures,
contact one of the following:

Lafayette:
Bill Guzik 881-3756

Cooper Arms:
Al Colin 225-3669

Harbor Place Towers:
Stephanie Morrison 212-0308

Royal Palms:
Louise Kripal 477-7599