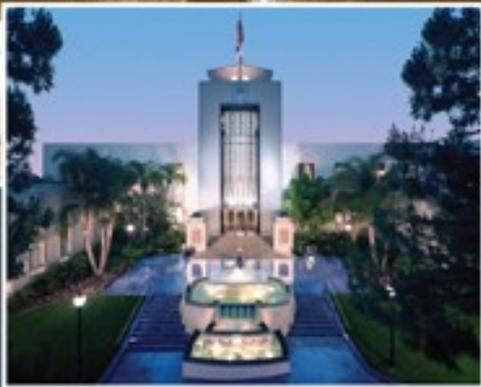


BURBANK

Centennial History



1911–2011

Celebrating Our Past and Embracing Our Future

In the 1890s, the real estate boom came to a crashing halt, and many real estate speculators faced financial ruin. Despite economic decline, the natural fertility of the surrounding farmland enabled ranchers to survive the lean years. Vineyards flourished, and Burbank became known for producing fine wine. A number of wineries operated in the early 1900s including Randisi, McClure, Brusso, Gai, and Grangetto. The Brusso Winery, located at Thornton Avenue and Ontario Street, survived Prohibition in the 1920s by producing excellent grape juice. It returned to the wine-making business in 1933 until it closed in 1967.

In the early twentieth century, one of Burbank's claims to fame was as the home of James J. Jeffries, the 1899 Heavyweight Boxing Champion of the World. In 1904, Jeffries purchased a 107-acre Burbank ranch located on what is now Buena Vista Street and Victory Boulevard. He grew alfalfa and raised prize-winning cattle on the property. Eventually, Jeffries developed a herd of thoroughbred bulls and began exporting them to Mexico and South America.



Top: McClure Winery. Photo courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.

Middle: Brusso Winery, 1926. Photo courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.

Bottom: Grape Pickers and Queen. Photo courtesy of Jeanette Henderson.

(now McCambridge Park). The Benmar property was also considered a potential site to build the University of California at Los Angeles. Although the five hundred-acre parcel appeared to be a promising contender, Westwood was chosen as the future home for UCLA. As a reminder of Ben Marks's grand vision, university-named streets in the tract—such as Harvard, Dartmouth, and Amherst—still exist.

In 1921, the Sunset Canyon Country Club and nine-hole golf course was completed adjacent to the city's northeastern border. The property covered 1,300 acres and extended along Sunset Canyon Drive from Orange Grove Avenue to Verdugo Avenue and to the top of Country Club Drive. It was followed by a new country club, located on Sunset Canyon Drive and Orange Grove Avenue. Nestled in the Verdugo Mountains, the exclusive country club had a golf course, swimming pool, and was often used as a location for motion pictures. However, years later a fire consumed the Verdugo Mountains, followed by torrential rains and mudslides. The cleanup from this natural disaster caused the country club to go bankrupt, and the City would eventually annex the property in 1926. Today, the Sunset Canyon Country Club building and much of the surrounding property is owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.



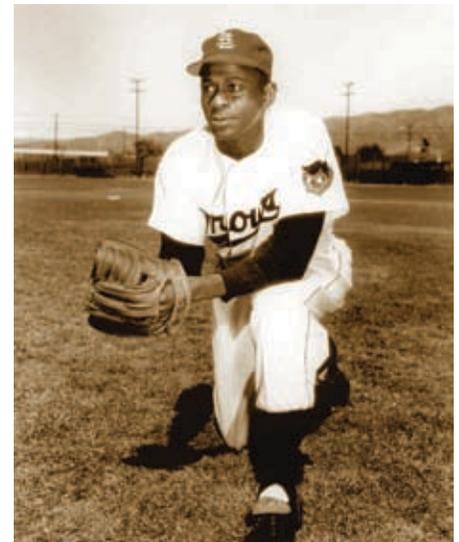
Facing Page: Benmar Hills Development brochure.
Top Right: Original Sunset Canyon Country Club, 1927.
Middle Right: New Sunset Canyon Country Club, 1939.
Bottom: Golfers at the Sunset Canyon Country Club, 1932.
 Photos courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.



Top Right: Debbie Reynolds at the Verdugo Park Swimming Pool dedication ceremony, 1948.

Middle: Hall-of-Fame baseball pitcher Satchel Paige during spring training in Burbank. Photo courtesy of Luminary Group LLC.

Bottom: St. Louis Browns manager Rogers Hornsby is welcomed to spring training in Burbank, California, by Mayor Walter W. Mansfield (first right) and Al Rediger (second right), president of the Burbank Chamber of Commerce, 1952. Photo courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.



Bros. security when the CSU strike boiled over into a riot in front of Warner Bros. Following national attention, negotiations resumed, and the strike eventually was settled.

Returning military came home to start families and careers and launched the birth of the “Baby Boomer” generation. New housing tracts and recreation facilities were needed. In 1948, Verdugo Park swimming pool and bathhouse were completed. Miss Burbank—Mary Frances “Debbie” Reynolds—was part of the dedication ceremony. Lockheed sponsored the Miss Burbank competition. Reynolds entered the competition on a lark to receive a silk blouse and free lunch. After being crowned Miss Burbank at age sixteen, she signed a motion picture contract with Warner Bros. Studios.

From 1949 to 1952, the City of Burbank entered into a contract with the St. Louis Browns professional baseball team for use of the Olive Avenue Memorial Stadium as a spring training headquarters. The Browns played nine exhibition games, including two against the world-champion Cleveland Indians. An estimated 32,000 spectators attended the Browns routine workouts and games. Burbank was fortunate to see famous Hall-of-Fame pitcher Satchel Paige play for the Browns and Hall-of-Fame baseball player Rogers Hornsby manage the team in 1952.



Burbank Unified School District

The Providencia School District was established in 1879. Dr. David Burbank donated the land to build the first school on Burbank Boulevard near what is now Mariposa Street.

In 1887, the newly formed town of Burbank saw a small spurt of new development. To accommodate an increase in residents, the Providencia School District replaced the grammar school with a two-story wood-framed grammar school building on Magnolia Boulevard near San Fernando Boulevard (which has since been demolished).

In order to meet the demands of the growing population, a two-story brick building, the Burbank Union High School, was constructed in 1909 at the northwest corner of Cypress Avenue and Second Street.

In 1919, Burbank Grammar School was replaced with Thomas A. Edison School located on San Fernando Boulevard. The original Burbank Union High School later became John Muir Junior High School. John Muir was replaced by a new junior high school, Burbank Junior High School (later named John Muir Junior High School), in 1924.

Burbank High School was constructed in 1922. The school opened in September, with a student body of three hundred and a faculty of twenty. A library was added to the original



Top: Union High School, 1909.
Bottom: Burbank Grammar School, 1903.
Photos courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.





Shift change at Lockheed Gate 8 on Hollywood Way, 1943. Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin.



[Chapter Five]

Business in Burbank



Airplane flyover. Photo courtesy of Burbank Historical Society.



[Chapter Six]

Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

Youth

In 2008 and 2010, the City of Burbank was named one of the nation's 100 Best Communities for Young People for its effort to provide experiential learning opportunities for young people. This award is a result of quality partnerships and a comprehensive effort to support the success of youth through programs, services, collaborations, volunteer opportunities, and community-wide priorities.

The City of Burbank serves as a model to inspire and educate other communities across the nation to tackle the challenges that face their children and community, and to implement initiatives that will provide them the essential resources they need to succeed in life. Burbank has always had a strong commitment to address the needs of young people who are truly the future of the community.



