

Historical Data on the City of El Cajon
Copied from notes made by Hazel Sperry

The floor of the valley is 460 ft. above sea level.

Union Title Record shows that the first El Cajon City plot was filed April 1886.

Incorporation of the City of El Cajon was on November 12, 1912.
The people voted 103 yes and 35 no to make El Cajon a city of 6th. class.

Mr. James A. Harris was first Mayor.

First city council consisted of

James A. Harris - Mayor

Dr. Charles Knox-

John B. Rumsey -

William Still

George W. French

The same year the State Highway Commission announced plans for constructing "one of its" highways to El Centro with that highway passing through La Mesa, El Cajon, and Bostonia."

First Chamber of Commerce was promoted by James A. Harris.

Notes from Valley News, 1952.

1892- Village:

Back in 1892 the business community was apparently quite small since the Valley News advertising columns indicate the principal business establishments were;

Knox Hotel-consolidated with Hotel del Coronado

Valley Paint Shop

El Cajon Meat Market owned by Bascom & Co.

El Cajon Barber Shop & Bath House.

E.E. Burgess Store (a major institution of that time) which advertised groceries, dry goods, hardware, boots and shoes, paint, oils, etc.

"Everything found in a first class country store".

In 1892-the railroad in El Cajon Valley had five stations, El Cajon Heights, Hawley, Santee, Riverview and lakeside. Railroad completed through El Cajon - March 1889

The 1900-1910 Era:

Still Burgess Store- Northeast corner of Main and Magnolia.

This was a general store--post office in the corner of the store.

S.E. corner of Main and Magnolia had their warehouse for hay and grain, also owned by Still Burgess.

N.W. corner--Corona Hotel- (later burned to the ground)--Corona Hotel at one time was owned by retired Dehesa Storekeeper by the name of Munger. He also operated a Stage between "the Corners" and the Railroad Station.

Mr. David Knowles had an early boarding house. Mrs Knowles was Called "Aunt Lou". 21 meals for \$3.00 and room for \$2.00 per week. Food served on large platters family style.

There was an orange and lemon packing house at the railway station- operated by Ira S. Ireby.

East of "The Corners" was Adams Harness Store.

John Lindstrom's Shoe repair

Al Browsers' Pharmacy where Harry Hill later got his store. Then W.D. Hall (wood shed housing cross cut and rip saws, small planes and one or two other machines.

Weinstock Bldg. housed the newly organized Cuyamaca State Bank downstairs and Home Telephone, upstairs.

Howey Crandall later had a meat market there. The Cuyamaca Bank moved to S.W. corner of Main and Magnolia.

Going west from Weinstock Bldg. there was a space-then two stores of John Ramsey-merchandise and grocery, John McKinnon Blacksmith Shop, Bascoms Meat Market and Still Burgess Warehouse, John Brenner had a barber-shop in the corner of the Corona Hotel.

Population in El Cajon.

1847- Map showed 15 homes on Rancho El Cajon- original 48,000 acre ranch.

1877-25 white families comprising 90 individuals in the entire valley.

1940 $\frac{1}{2}$ -El Cajon was a small farm town of 15,000 people.

1951--7,200--city--66,000 ^{Potential} patented trade area.

1952--8,000--city--75,000 ^{Potential} patented trade area.

1956 -- ^{Annex Flying Hills - Bostonia more than 21,000}
1957--Over 25,000 in city--about 50,000 in valley.

1960--Population almost 40,000.

Post Office

The first post office was in Knox Hotel- Mr. Amaziah Knox was the first Post Master--1878.

Then Mr. Bowden (druggist in 1892) had the post office in his drug store (probably Burgess & Derbyshire had the post office in the drug store. (Mr. Bowden's sister married Mr. Dodson who was one of the Post Masters.

Mr. Dodson appointed post master in 1895 (took over job from E.E. Burgess. Mr. Dodson moved post office in three wheel barrow loads.

Mr. Dodson resigned as post master to become Justice of the Peace.

I.G. Burgess (of Still-Burgess Warehouse) became post master in 1898- Post office was in Still Burgess Store.

First Still Burgess warehouse was on S.E. corner of Main & Magnolia-- then across street on N.E. corner. Then they constructed their new general store on S.E. corner where Dunlaps is now located (Dunlap's 1950 era). The post office was usually in their store.

Mr. Dodson says that sometimes the train couldn't make it over the hill and he would have to send a truck to San Diego to bring the mail. Mr. Dodson was quite a joker.

Then Mr. Dodson became postmaster again in 1914- remained in that position until his retirement in 1940.

When Mr. Dodson was post master in 1895, he was the sole postal worker for the Valley and for years after 1895. Mr. Bye was the first rural route carrier.

In 1957, Mr. Roether had 58 clerks and operated 24 rural carrier routes. When Mr. Roether took over in 1940 he had 5 employees and 2 rural routes of 1500 residents each.

In 1960- 103 employees were working out of the El Cajon post office and the city population had climbed to nearly 40,000.

Postmasters (Authentic information.)

1st. Amaziah Knox---June 6, 1878

2nd. ~~xxxxxx~~

E.E. Burgess---Dec. 15, 1888

3rd. A. J. Derbyshire---July 20, 1890

4th. E.E. Burgess---March 14, 1891

5th. Dodson-----March 6, 1895

6th. John G. Burgess- -March 2, 1899

- 7th. Wm. Stell---Feb, 23, 1906
- 8th. Dodson---- 1914 (remained until 1940)
- 9th. Mr. Jack Koether 1940 . remained until 1960
- 10th. Thomas C. Smith--1960
- 11th. Wm Guy Clark

The first newspaper in El Cajon was "The El Cajon Star-- the first edition of this paper was ^{May} ~~Mar~~ 18, 1889. The newspaper was printed down by the railroad station. The editor was Francis Whaley. He moved here from Oceanside where he had been publishing his paper entitled "The Star-- San Diego County".

1892-- The first "Valley News in El Cajon--Mr. Somers was editor. A little later E. N. Sullivan was listed as publisher. (Mr. Sullivan was San Diego printer and he published the San Diego County Advertiser (started in 1891). He sort of merged the two papers.

1898--"Once a Week"--was a paper started by Mr. Kessler of Kessler and Hall. This paper was taken over by the Valley News after a few years.

The early Valley News office was in back of Weinstock's Building at the S.W. corner of Prescott and Main St.

Telephone.

The first telephone office in El Cajon was situated in the Weinstock Building at the corner of Prescott and Main Sts. (Southwest corner. This building was earlier the El Cajon Hall.

When the Home telephone was housed upstairs in this building, the newly organized Cuyamaca State Bank was downstairs. The telephone exchange had one operator on twenty-four hour duty. Another girl watched the switch board at night and wakened the operator if there was a call.

The Cuyamaca Bank started about 1910.

The first telephone in El Cajon was established in 1902.

The Home Telephone Co. was established in El Cajon in 1906.

Lights--Electricity--Gas

The first electric lights to El Cajon came in 1911 with ten miles of line placed from La Mesa through El Cajon to Santee.

The first gas service to El Cajon arrived October 1, 1929.

Flume Notes.

Mr. Dodson tells about people bicycling in the flume during draughts. They could bicycle almost around the Valley in the flume.

1892--issue of the Valley News urged people to lay water pipe to connect the village with the flume line.

1886-- May 14--Flume Co. organized.

1888-- Cuyamaca Dam and ^{Diverging} Dam completed. The San Diego Flume Co. completed its' big redwood flume from Cuyamaca Dam (at Cuyamaca lake and ~~Dodson lake~~) to the Valley in 1887. (This dam emptied into Grossmont and Eucalyptus reservoirs. The first water was transported from the Diverging Dam through the Flume to La Mesa area on February 22, 1889. The original Board of Directors-- Milton Santee, George Marston, R.H. Stretch, Robert Allison, J.M. Lucc, T.T. Crittenden, and A.W. Morse. Others interested heavily in the venture were A.W. Hawley, T.S. Van Dyke, W.L. Robinson, Bryant Howard, George Copeland, and W.H. Ferry.