

## **The Riviera Association: a Brief History**

August 27, 1930 marks the beginning of the Riviera Association. Gathered at the University Club in downtown Santa Barbara, prominent residents of the hillside area founded a homeowners association to promote much needed street improvements and desirable residential development. One of the first contributions was a two year guarantee to fund the maintenance of Franceschi Park. In 1929 the city was offered a 14 acre hillside parcel by Alden Freeman, including a much altered Franceschi House with the only remaining 2 acres of the original Franceschi property surrounding the house. Not until the association's annual \$ 1,500, available in 1931, did the city accept the Freeman offer.

In the early years, known as the Mission Ridge Improvement Association, the association planned and promoted many major projects for the Riviera, such as road widening and repairs, consulting with city officials regarding blind intersections, road surfacing, traffic safety, road side planting and clean-up.

Documentation of the first thirty years of association activities is sparse. Some of the records have been given to the Santa Barbara Historical Society and can be accessed at the Gledhill Library.

In the spring of 1965 the first newsletter was sent to the membership “ to open and maintain a line of communication between meetings..... We shall appreciate your comments, ideas and contributions.”

It also included the 1952 established geographical boundaries of the association as well as the highest points - 880-900 feet at the top of Franceschi Road and 1250-1300 feet near Mount Calvary. Membership had grown to 322 families, indicating continued development and growth of the area.

The January 1979 Newsletter listed over 30 years of accomplishments under the various presidents of the organization.