

A Short History of Pasadena

<https://www.cityofpasadena.net/about-pasadena/history-of-pasadena/>

The land now famous for the Tournament of Roses, the Rose Bowl, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and California Institute of Technology, was once occupied by the Hahamogna Tribe of Native Americans. Subsisting on local game and vegetation, the Hahamognas lived in villages scattered along the Arroyo Seco and the canyons from the mountains down to the South Pasadena area. With the arrival of the Spaniards and the establishment of the San Gabriel Mission on September 8, 1771, most of the Native Americans were converted and provided labor for the mission.

The San Gabriel Mission, the fourth in California, grew to be prosperous, with abundant orchards, vineyards and herds. The vast lands which it administered for the Spanish Crown were divided into ranchos. After the rule of missions, California passed from Spain to Mexico, the Mexican government in 1833 secularized the mission lands and awarded them to individuals.

The northeast corner of San Gabriel Mission, consisting of the 14,000 acres known as Rancho el Rincon de San Pascual, had previously been gifted in 1826 by the padres to Doña Eulalia Pérez de Guillen, noted for her advanced age as well as her devoted service to the mission.

On February 18, 1835, it was formally granted by the Mexican government to her husband, Don Juan Mariné. He and his sons subsequently lost the land which changed ownership a few more times before being granted on November 28, 1843, by Governor Manuel Micheltoena to his good friend, Colonel Manuel Garfias, son of a distinguished Mexican family.

In 1852, two years after California was admitted as a state to the Union, Garfias built an adobe hacienda on the east bank of the Arroyo, where he and his family proceeded to live in grand style, until he could not meet the interest payment due on a loan. Title to the land was then transferred in 1859 to his lenders, Dr. John S. Griffin and Benjamin "Don Benito" Wilson. Portions of the Rancho San Pasqual were thereafter sold, leaving Griffin and Wilson with 5,328 acres in 1873.

In 1886 Pasadena incorporated, largely as a measure to rid the city of its saloon. In the ensuing decade, amenities such as sewers, paved streets, and electric street lighting were installed. On January 1, 1890, the Valley Hunt Club initiated a mid-winter festival with a procession of flower-bedecked horses and carriages. This became a yearly tradition that in 1898 was formally sponsored by the Tournament of Roses Association. An added tourist attraction was the Echo Mountain incline railway which opened in 1893 and included a mountain chalet resort and the Alpine Tavern at Crystal Springs.

The cultural and educational side of the city was Throop Polytechnic Institute and was not neglected. The educational system expanded in both the public and private sector. Throop Polytechnic Institute (first named Throop University) was founded in 1891 and later became the California Institute of Technology.

Pasadena had a Shakespeare Club and a Grand Opera House (never very successful) and numerous civic and cultural organizations. In the early 1900's more grand hotels were built. The city government was reorganized and in 1901 Pasadena became a charter city with an elected mayor. The city population grew from 9,117 in 1900 to 30,291 by 1910. The population included Chinese and Mexicans, who were brought in to work on the railroads, and Blacks, who moved in and started small businesses or worked

Water And Power – Early Views of Pasadena, CA

as servants in the big houses and hotels. The area of the city increased through annexations, first of sections to the north and east, then in 1914 San Rafael Heights and Linda Vista, which had been physically linked to the city by the Colorado Street Bridge in 1913. Some of the best architects settled in Pasadena, which became known for its fine architecture, particularly the Craftsman style, perfected by Greene and Greene.

The word Pasadena literally means “valley” in the Ojibwa (Chippewa) Indian language, but it has been interpreted to mean “Crown of the Valley” and “Key of the Valley,” hence the adoption of both the crown and the key in the official city seal.

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Early Views of Pasadena

Historical Photos of Early Pasadena

https://waterandpower.org/museum/Early_Views_of_Pasadena.html

[Editor's Note: This document is a brief set of six photos and descriptions of early 19th century Pasadena, California. The complete set of photos in the source webpage numbers in the hundreds, and is found in its complete form at the webpage link noted above. We hope you enjoy this document as well as the original source material found at WaterAndPower's website.]



(ca. 1880)* - Panoramic view of Pasadena as seen from the San Gabriel Mountains on a clear day.

Historical Notes

Pasadena is a part of the original Mexican land grant named Rancho del Rincon de San Pascual, so named because it was deeded on Easter Sunday to Eulalia Perez de Guillén Mariné of Mission San Gabriel Arcángel. The Rancho comprised the lands of today's communities of Pasadena, Altadena and South Pasadena.*^



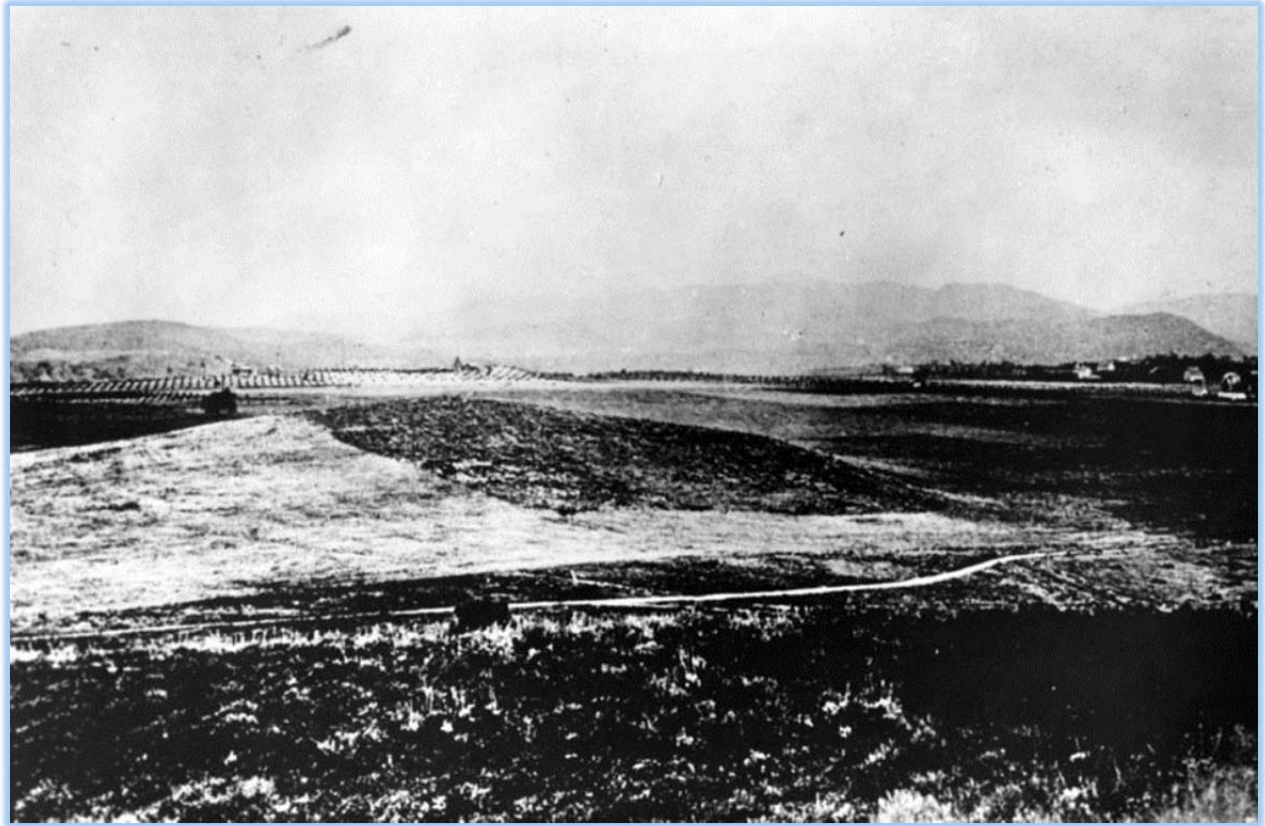
(ca. 1880)* - View of Pasadena and its surrounding areas, from Echo Mountain in the San Gabriel Mts.

Historical Notes

Prior to the annexation of California in 1848, the last of the Mexican owners was Manuel Garfias who retained title to the property after statehood in 1850. Garfias sold sections of the property to the first Anglo settlers to come into the area: Dr. Benjamin Eaton, the father of Fred Eaton, Dr. S. Griffin, and Benjamin Wilson.

Much of the property was purchased by Benjamin Wilson who established his Lake Vineyard property in the vicinity. Wilson, known as Don Benito to the local Indians, was also owner of the Rancho Jurupa (Riverside, California) and mayor of Los Angeles. He is the grandfather of WWII General George S. Patton, Jr.*^

In 1864 Wilson took the first white man's expedition to a high peak of the San Gabriel Mountains that would be named Mount Wilson. He hoped to harvest timber there for the making of wine vats, but he found the wood inadequate. The Wilson Trail became a popular one or two-day hike to the crest of the San Gabriel Mountains by local residents for years to come.*^



(ca. 1870)* - View from Bacon Hill. The Raymond Hotel was built atop Bacon Hill which lies between Pasadena and South Pasadena and was renamed Raymond Hill with the opening of the hotel in 1886.

Historical Notes

In 1873, Benjamin Wilson and Dr. S. Griffin subdivided their land (with Griffin getting almost 2/3 of the property, but Wilson retaining some better land (east of current Fair Oaks Avenue), near his Lake Vineyard property). Griffin then sold 2,500 acres of his property to the "Indiana Colony," represented by Daniel M. Berry. In 1876, after the Colony had sold most of its allotted land and established what would become the City of Pasadena, Wilson began subdividing and developing his adjacent landholdings which would become the eastern side of the new settlement.*^



(ca. 1874)[^] - Panoramic view of the orange groves of the first Pasadena settlers, looking northwest. Houses and stores are clustered around Colorado Street (later Boulevard) and Fair Oaks Avenue in the distance at right. Mountains are visible in the background.

Historical Notes

In 1873, Dr. Daniel M. Berry of Indiana visited the area in search of a place that could offer better climate to his patients, most of whom suffered from respiratory ailments. Berry was an asthmatic and claimed that he had his best three nights sleep at Rancho San Pascual. To raise funds to bring the company of people to San Pascual, Berry formed the Southern California Orange and Citrus Growers Association for which he sold stock. The newcomers were able to purchase a large portion of the property along the Arroyo Seco and on January 31, 1874, they incorporated the Indiana Colony.

The Indiana Colony was a narrow strip of land between the Arroyo Seco and Fair Oaks Avenue. On the other side of the street was Benjamin Wilson's Lake Vineyard development. After more than a decade of parallel development on both sides, the two settlements merged into the City of Pasadena.*[^]

First House

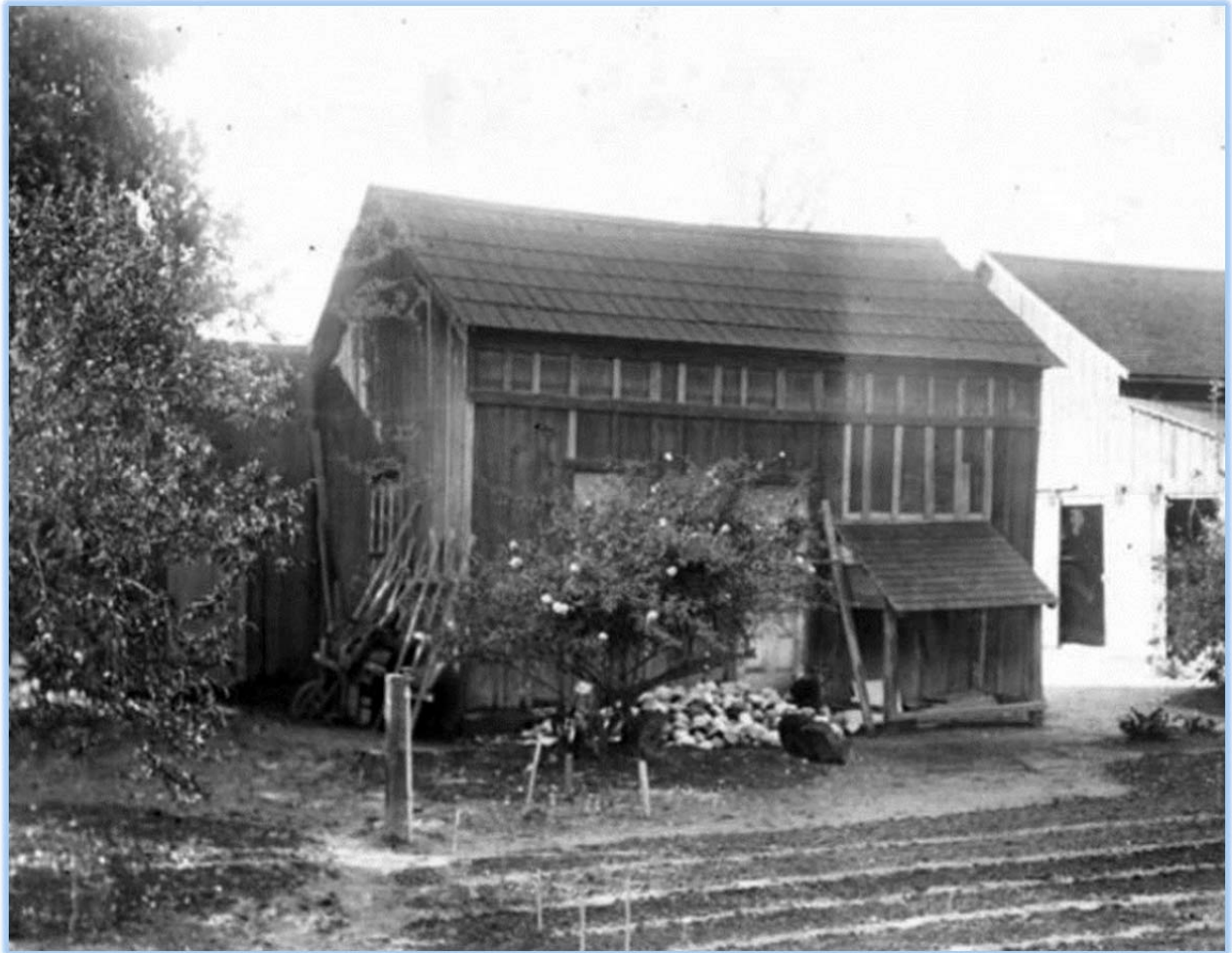


(1874)*^* – View showing the home of A. O. Bristol, located on the SW corner of Orange Grove and Lincoln Avenue. This was the first house completed in Pasadena.

Historical Notes

In January 1874, the new settlement was divided among the settlers and mapped. Generously sized parcels which were intended for the planting of orange groves were arranged on either side of the north-south axis of the colony, a street soon known as Orange Grove Boulevard.

Houses for the new residents began to be built on the parcels, the first of which was the A. O. Bristol home near the corner of Orange Grove and Lincoln Avenue, finished in March 1874. By the end of 1875, there were 40 houses set among orchards, groves and vineyards. *##*



(n.d.)*^* - Early view of the Bristol House, 1st house built in Pasadena. This photo was clearly taken after its use as a house had passed.

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About Water And Power: The Los Angeles Water and Power Associates, Inc. is a nonprofit, independent, private organization incorporated in 1971 to inform and educate its members, public officials, and the general public, on critical water and energy issues affecting the citizens of Los Angeles, Southern California and the State of California.

Our secondary mission is to preserve the regional history of water and electricity and show its role in the development and growth of the city of Los Angeles. Also, to disseminate knowledge of the rich and diverse multicultural history of the greater Los Angeles area; to serve as a resource of historical information; and to assist in the preservation of the city's historic records.

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