

## Life in the 1920's



When South San Francisco entered the 1920's, times were good and the town had slowly expanded to 2,420 people. More housing filled in the area of north Linden Avenue. Martin School and Siebecker Park were built for those new families. Parkway Terrace was developing along Palm, Magnolia, Commercial, and upper Orange Avenues in the mid-1920's. Orange Avenue Park was built on former marshland, and Magnolia School was completed in 1928 next to earlier elementary school buildings on the corner of Magnolia and Grand Avenues.

### City Developments

The new city hall was dedicated in November 1920, and tennis courts were built in 1924 where the city hall parking lot now stands. The "Industrial City" sign was whitewashed on Sign Hill in 1923, and joined by an electric sign on the crest later that year. A bond issue was passed with the help of the Chamber of Commerce in 1928, and the present 60-foot concrete letters were constructed in 1929. "The sign will be the best advertising asset that this city ever had" declared President Kauffman.

### Special Election

City trustee recall petitions started circulating in July 1925 with rumors that the city trustees were going to fire police chief, Louis Belloni. The petitioners not only wanted to keep Belloni in office, but they also charged Mayor Hugh McNellis with public drunkenness and two trustees, Carl Blank and Hugh McCaffrey, with irregularities in city contracting projects. This eventually led to a special election. The results put Belloni back in office and installed three new councilmen; Roderick Tibbits, Reese Lloyd, and Mike Minucciani.

### Economic Development

Shoppers jockeyed with autos and streetcars along Grand Avenue. The Palace Meat Market opened in the new Vincenzini building. Movies flickered at a nickelodeon on Grand Avenue, and later at the Royal

Theater on Linden Avenue (a round arched building now owned by the Giorgi Family). The popularity of new auto and airplane industries brought Fred Lautze Ford (1920), Friesly Aircraft Co. (1920-24) Union Oil Co. (1920), Richfield Oil (1925, Colma Motor Car Co. – Buick (1927), Cook Oil Burner Co. (1928), E. Bendinelli & Co- Lincolns (1927), Marchette Motors (1928), enterprise Oil Burner Co. (1929), and Standard Oil (1929).

## **New Industries**

The major industries in town continued to be meat packing and steel industries. New steel-related industries that came during the 20's included Metal & Thermit (1920), Wildbery Bros. Refinery (1920-81), Specialty Wire Co. (1927-30), Michel & Pfeffer Iron Works (1929) and Western Metal Co. (1929). Other new industries included Fontana foods-Macaroni (1922), McClellan Orchids (1926), Barrett Co. (1927), Morrill Ink (1927) Gueren Bros. (1927), and Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (1929).

South San Francisco had a reputation as a wild and woolly town. Gambling, liquor and prostitution all added to the mix.