

THE IRVINE RANCH
WHOM AND WHAT MADE IT WHAT IT IS
A 225 YEAR Retrospective

The Whom: Gaspar de Portola, Jose Yorba, Teodosio Yorba, Don Jose Sepulveda, William Woofskill, Benjamin and Thomas Flint, Llewellyn Bixby, James Irvine, James Irvine jr., Myford Irvine, The James Irvine Foundation, William Pereira, Charles Thomas, William Mason, Ray Watson, Donald Bren.

The What:

(1769), Spanish colonization of California

Portola explores Calif. coast line

200,000 Indians roamed "area's fertile plains and valleys"

(1810-1846), Spanish and Mexican land grants

Spanish: Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana (62,500 ac.) to Jose Yorba & his nephew Juan Peralta.

Mexican: 1. El Rancho Lomas de Santiago (47,226 ac) to Teodosio Yorba.

2. Rancho San Joaquin (50,000 ac) to Jose Sepulveda.

1846), Americanization and treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (

(1860) William Woofskill buys Rancho Santiago for \$7,000 (\$.15/ac)

(1863-1866), Drought

(1866-68), Flint brothers, Bixby and James Irvine buy the Ranch

1. 3800 to 12,000 ac of Rancho Santa Ana as settlement of debt.

2. Rancho Santigo for \$7,000

3. Rancho San Joaquin for \$18,000 (\$.36/ac)

(1876), James Irvine buys out his partners for \$150,000

Total basis for ranch= \$170,000 (less than \$.17/ac).

Completion of So. Pac. Railroad (1876) and Santa Fe (1885) usher in the "Great Boom" of Southern Calif.,

(1886), James Irvine dies and leaves ranch in trust to 18 yr old son

(1887), Sale of Irvine Ranch for \$1,385,000 recended by Court

(1892), James Irvine Jr. takes control of Ranch

(1892), McFadden brothers lay out town of Newport

(1894), Incorporation of The Irvine Company

(1905) Irvine Company sells 700 acres to George Hart for \$105,000
(\$150/ac) now CdM, ,

(1906) San Francisco earthquake ,

Coast Hwy links Laguna Beach and Newport Beach, (1925),

(1937) Irvine Foundation created ,

(1947) James Irvine Yr. dies and wills 510 shares of stock and control
to Foundation ,

(1950's) Beginning of Post WWII suburbanization of northern Orange
County ,

Univ. of California Regents vote to create three new campuses (1957),

Myford Irvine dies and Foundation takes control of Company (1959),

(1959), I-5 completed thru Ranch,

(1960), Pereira proposes Irvine Company build a New Town

(1960), Irvine Directors approve 1000 acre gift to University AND to
build a New Town. Univ. Regents accept gift and sign agreement,

(1960's), Business and industry join the suburban movement

(1963), Santa Ana's proposed "dumb bell" annexation defeated

(1964), Company's General Plan approved
Irvine village concept born in East Bluff and University Park

(1965), University openings

(1971) City of Irvine incorporates

1995

City of Irvine: 117,000 pop, 42,000 DU, 150,000 jobs, great School and Recreation system, one of safest cities in U.S.

UCI: 17,000+ students, gone from an idea to a pretty campus to an internationally respected higher education institution.

The proposal in 1960 to build a New Town around a New University became a reality by 1971 and continues to this day. I doubt, however, that any of it would have been possible had it not been for the: The early land grants, droughts, railroad and road building, suburban residential and business growth and finally the commitment of a progression of owners of the Irvine Ranch to farm it, ranch it and ultimately to develop it as a whole.

I feel fortunate to have found myself there at a critical time in its history and to continue to be allowed to play a role in its late 20th century evolution.