

0. LOS ANGELES in the 40s - Story Preface

1. WHO WAS SHE?

2. LOS ANGELES in the 40s

3. DEATH OF A DREAM

4. LAST SEEN AT THE BILTMORE

5. ELIZABETH'S BODY IS FOUND

6. POLICE and PRESS COOPERATE

7. THE SUSPECTS

8. A COLD CASE

In 1908, when the new "film industry" began to put roots into California soil, land was cheap and plentiful. Early Los Angeles, the "city of angels," had changed and was no longer a small farming town.

By 1912, the first section of the "Port of Los Angeles" was ready - just in time for the 1914 opening of the Panama Canal. (Be sure to click on the "animation" to see how ships pass through the canal's locks). LA became the closest port to the new canal.

As Los Angeles grew, and "Hollywood culture" took hold, the city needed more roads and workers. The "Great Depression" helped to fill that need as many jobless, displaced people moved to California.

How did Los Angeles appear during those years? USC's "Digital Archive" helps to answer that question:

- A 1925 panoramic view of Hollywood, looking north on Vine from Clinton Street, depicts the famous sign. At the time, it said "Hollywoodland."
- By 1926, there was a bridge over the Arroyo Seco ("dry stream") Canyon in Pasadena.
- The Arroyo Seco, along a section of future parkway, in 1936 Pasadena.
- Soon after it opened, the southbound Arroyo Seco Parkway (Pasadenia Freeway) had a major traffic jam (on February 4, 1941) near the Figueroa Tunnels.
- A 1946 view from Sepulveda, about one-half mile west of Sunset Boulevard.
- People rented boats, in 1947, at LA's Westlake Park (later named "MacArthur Park" and made famous in a song, of the same name, recorded by Richard Harris).
- By 1948, 5 o'clock traffic - on Arroyo Seco Parkway - provides a mere foretaste of future LA-road congestion.
- In 1956, California had its first hydroelectric plant (at Pomona).

In late 1946, Elizabeth Short moved to the Los Angeles area. In one of her last letters, she told her family she was about to realize a lifelong dream.

She was going to get a screen test.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LOS-ANGELES-in-the-40s-Black-Dahlia>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LOS-ANGELES-in-the-40s-Black-Dahlia>



Water-Way Map of the Panama Canal

Image online, courtesy enjoypanama.com website.

View this asset at:

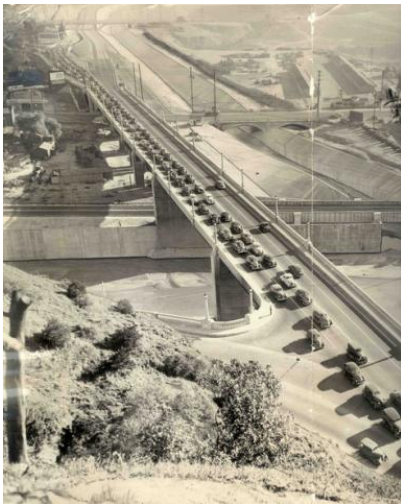
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Water-Way-Map-of-the-Panama-Canal>



1926 Pasadena

Image online, courtesy USC's Digital Library.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/1926-Pasadena>



California Traffic Jam - 1941

Photo, U.S. National Archives.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/California-Traffic-Jam-1941>

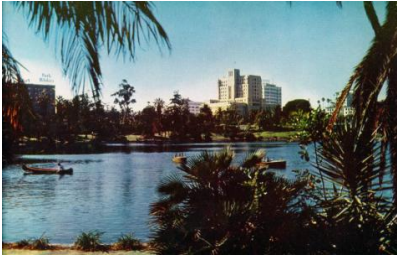


1946: View from Sepulveda

Image online, courtesy USC's Digital Library.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/1946-View-from-Sepulveda>



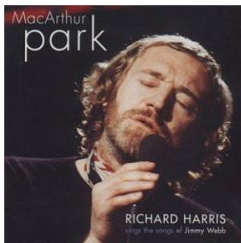
MacArthur Park in 1947

Image online, courtesy Yesterday LA.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/MacArthur-Park-in-1947>

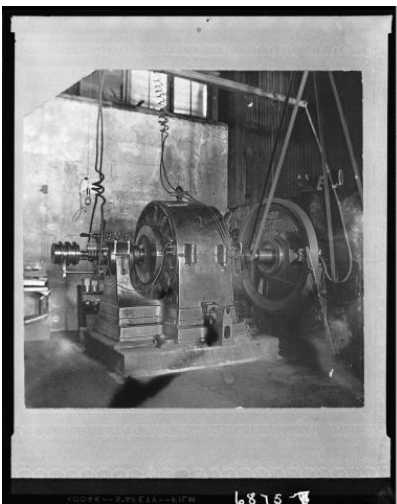


Richard Harris - MacArthur Park

Album-cover image online, courtesy Amazon.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Richard-Harris-MacArthur-Park>



Power Plant - Pomona, First in California

Photo, courtesy USC Digital Archive.

Quoted information on the first hydroelectric plant in California from *Report of the Railroad Commission of California* (July 1, 1915 to June 30, 1916.)

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Power-Plant-Pomona-First-in-California>



Commuter Traffic Feb. 4, 1948

Image online, courtesy USC's Digital Library.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Commuter-Traffic-Feb.-4-1948>