LOS ANGELES in the 40s



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There are "ten giant oil fields" in the Los Angeles Basin. At the time Elizabeth Short moved to Los Angeles, beach-going people (especially in the Huntington Beach area) would have seen all kinds of oil derricks as part of their beach experience. This picture, from the 1940s, is online via the <u>City of Huntington Beach</u>. Click on the image for a full-page view.

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 <u>opening</u> of the <u>Panama Canal</u>. (Be sure to click on the "<u>animation</u>" 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 <u>1925 panoramic view</u> 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 <u>major traffic jam</u> (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, <u>5 o'clock traffic</u> on Arroyo Seco Parkway provides a mere foretaste of future LA-road congestion.
- In 1956, California had its first hydroelectric plant (at Pomona).

Although it may be hard to fathom today, oilmen were harvesting oil and gas from the ten significant oil fields which are part of the Los Angeles Basin. A "day at the beach" would have included looking at staggering numbers of oil derricks not far from the beautiful California beaches.

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

Media Stream



Water-Way Map of the Panama Canal

Image online, courtesy enjoypanama.com website.

View this asset at:

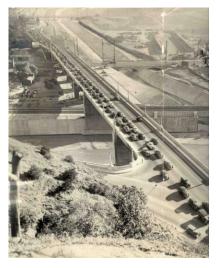
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Water-Way-Map-of-the-Panama-Canal



1926 Pasadena

Image online, courtesy USC's Digital Library.

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California Traffic Jam - 1941

Photo, U.S. National Archives.

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1946: View from Sepulveda
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MacArthur Park in 1947
Image online, courtesy Yesterday LA.
PD
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Richard Harris - MacArthur Park
Album-cover image online, courtesy Amazon.
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<u>Power Plant - Pomona, First in California</u>

Photo, courtesy USC Digital Archive.

Quoted information on the first hydoelectric 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:

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