

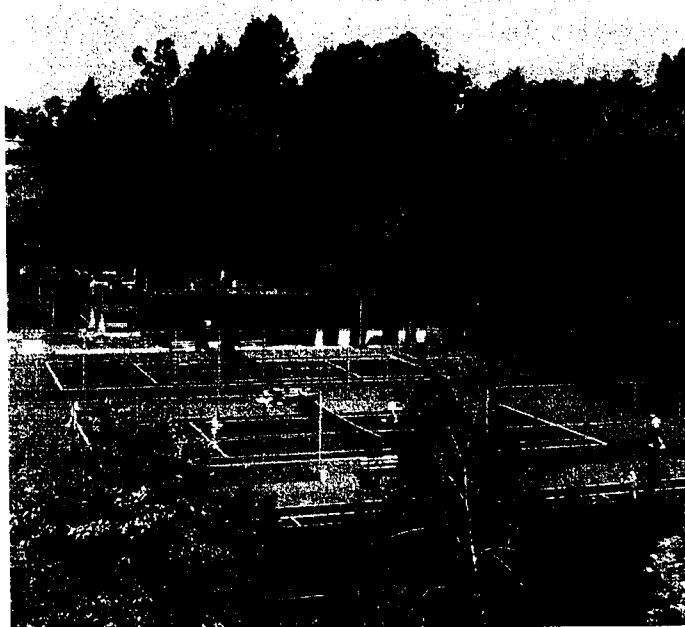
A History of the San Marino Tennis Foundation

By Peggy Hamlin and Don Scott

San Marino Tennis Foundation was established because, in 1967, three San Marino mothers saw the need for more tennis courts in the community. When Char Wachtel, Frannie Brossy and Susie Trotter started the afternoon tennis program at Huntington School they realized the three courts never accommodated all the students who were interested (over 100 signed up for the program). These three ladies called a meeting of other interested parents to discuss the building of additional courts of better quality. There was great support and enthusiasm shown at this first meeting, called by Char Wachtel, President of Huntington PTA. Doris Clark suggested her husband Stan might be interested in giving leadership to this idea. Stan was a natural, being former NCAA Tennis Champion and a local attorney. Stan's knowledge of the law was helpful in writing the Articles of Incorporation, and forming a non-profit organization in 1968.

Lacy Park was inspected as a possible site for the new courts, as this tiny northwest corner of the park was vacant, only being used as a dump, and not really an integral part of the park. This area seemed to be perfect, and after many meetings with the San Marino City Council, approval was finally granted. The Concession agreement with the city was signed on June 26, 1968. Only residents in the San Marino school district could be members but the courts were available to all for a daily fee. The steering committee called prospective members in the community offering memberships for \$350 a family. Harry Booth, the first Treasurer of the Foundation, collected these funds (approx. 210 families joined). Their monies, plus loans from a friend of tennis and the bank, allowed for the six professional courts to be built, plus a small pro shop. Under superb leadership of Don Scott, Chair of the Building Committee, the land was graded, the courts laid out in a perfect angle to the sun and the Pro Shop built from local resident Bob Millsap's design. The total construction costs totaled approximately, \$112,300. It was not long before the loans were completely repaid thru membership fees as well as guest fees.

The opening day was held on Saturday afternoon, June 14, 1969 and was a gala affair! Stan Clark presided as the first President of SMTF, the Boy Scouts posted the colors with a flag that had flown over our U.S. Capital, a gift from our Congressman Glen Lipscomb. Allan Laws, the Mayor of San Marino, cut the ribbon with a large pair of shears and the dedication of the new facilities to the city was completed.



Lacy Park Tennis Courts-2003

Next was an exhibition match by the new Pro at SMTF paired with Stan Clark against Pancho Segura (for many years the number two ranking player in the world) and Hugh Stewart, (ranked number one in the 35 years age group in 1965). It was a great doubles match-no one remembers who won!

Mention must be made of Paul Dobbins, San Marino's Park Superintendent. Paul and his wife lived in the Thurnher house on Virginia Road in Lacy Park and all the way through the process from before the concession agreement until he retired from the City was very helpful in every way to the tennis facility and the San Marino Tennis Foundation. He helped with the design of the landscaping, sprinklers, planting and care of the trees, shrubs and flowers. He was truly proud of the tennis facility which was part of "His" park.

Interest in tennis was at an all-time high; everyone wanted to play tennis, or thought they did, so there was much action on the courts in these early years. From the beginning, children's tennis clinics were offered at Lacy, as well as private lessons for all ages given by the pro or his assistants.

The first Pro was Dick Leach – a perfect choice. He was a teacher at Arcadia High School and a coach of the Varsity Tennis Team. After seven years at SMTF, Dick Leach moved on, eventually becoming Varsity

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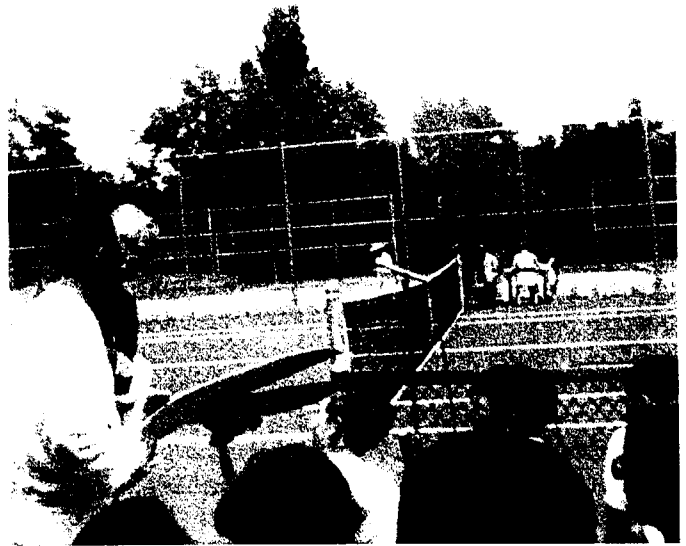
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Tennis Coach at USC in 1980. Ted Eisenhardt, who replaced Dick Leach in 1976 as head Pro, continued the Junior program very successfully. Andrew Thurm succeeded Ted and ran SMTF from 1991 to 1998, being followed by Sam Lizzul, our present Head Pro. All have been excellent teachers & leaders in every way.

Ongoing activities over the years have included such traditions as Saturday morning men's doubles. This started when the club started and was basically open mens doubles on all 6 courts, using San Marino Tennis foundation's unique racking rules. There were up to 50 men playing tennis on a given Saturday morning, talking and drinking coffee from about 7AM to 11AM. Another event held 3 or 4 times per year was an inter club day with the Valley Hunt Club, Flint Canyon, Live Oak, Irvine Tennis Club, Balboa Bay Club or some other club. Current activities include the East-West trophy match, Mixed Doubles on Sunday afternoon, and Ladies Costume play on Halloween.

The SMTF continues to give excellent lessons for every age group and ability. The Foundation has almost always managed a profit and these excess funds have been returned to the community in the form of lights and new nets for the courts at Huntington School and the High School. The Foundation has also paid for the resurfacing of the courts at these schools as well as at Carver Elementary. Because of the fine quality of our courts the CIF finals have been held at Lacy. The San Marino community, as well as the Foundation members, have found good use of the courts. Both the Chinese Club and the City Club hold their tournaments at the courts and the USTA Junior Tournament is an annual event. Also, a close working arrangement exists with the San Marino Recreation Dept.

We are very proud of the founders of SMTF who built these fine tennis facilities and we are very proud of our contribution to tennis in this wonderful community.



Mayor Allan Laws on opening day-June 14, 1969

Past Presidents

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2004-05 Bill Payne | 1986-87 Michael Blaylock |
| 2003-04 John Whiting | 1985-86 Bernard LeSage |
| 2002-03 Bill Hildeburn | 1984-85 Tom McNulty |
| 2001-02 Paul Crowley | 1983-84 Laurie Zeh |
| 2000-01 George Stewart | 1982-83 Sandy Bode |
| 1999-00 Dan Nixon | 1981-82 Robert Raney |
| 1998-99 Tom Martin | 1980-81 Bill Hunefeld |
| 1997-98 Roger Johnston | 1979-80 Lawrence Henrickson |
| 1996-97 John Rossiter | 1978-79 Wesley Poulson |
| 1995-96 Chuck Stephens | 1977-78 Webb Coulter |
| 1994-95 Paul Johnson | 1976-77 Ben Hammon |
| 1993-94 William Daegling | 1975-76 Steb Chandor |
| 1992-93 John Connell | 1974-75 John Austin |
| 1991-92 Janet Sebenius | 1973-74 Don Clark |
| 1990-91 Wayne Carter | 1972-73 Ray Pentz |
| 1989-90 Vince Tricarico | 1971-72 Robert Koenig |
| 1988-89 Tita Johnson | 1970-71 Carl Lieber |
| 1987-88 Allan Wolff | 1969-70 Stan Clark |

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Thank you.

WEBSITE

Visit our web page to learn more about your Society's programs and activities:

www.smnet.org

(Click on "Community Resources" and then on "San Marino Historical Society")

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Society Presidents (1974-2004)

Midge Sherwood.....	1974
Mary Smith.....	1976
Jack Sherwood.....	1978
Ed Ford.....	1980
Graziella Almanza 1.....	1982
La Verne Smith.....	1985
Jeanne Imler.....	1989
Gary Fleming.....	1991
Lillian Campbell.....	1993
Marilyn Peck.....	1995
Paul Crowley.....	1999
Gene Dryden.....	2004

OLD SAN MARINO



Susie Trotter, Frannie Brossy and Char Wachtel, " Founding Mothers" of the San Marino Tennis Foundation-1969



The Mayberry House-1922. Located at the corner of Oak Knoll Avenue and Monterey Road, it was San Marino's first City Hall and school from 1913-1923



Historic "Twin Palms", moved from the Palm Springs area to Wilson Ranch 100+ years ago. Still located at the rear of the 1541 Cambridge Road home.

The Origination and Now of Tennis in Lacy Park

Ladies active in the PTA always accomplish things.

Mothers who love their children do the best they can for them and so seeds were planted to form the San Marino Tennis Foundation.

It was in 1965-66 at the Huntington School that three PTA ladies whose children were involved in tennis, recognized there were not enough tennis courts in San Marino to satisfy growing interest.

The three thought and talked about this problem. Soon they were joined by other mothers - for sure, there were not enough tennis courts in San Marino to satisfy the need.

It was fortunate these mothers discussed the matter with Stan Clark in 1967. Stan, an outstanding tennis player in college, was also an attorney and he joined forces with the ladies.

It was also in 1967, the L.A. Times had written of Armin Thurner, the first to supervise the development of Lacy Park who was also advisor to San Marino's Beautification Committee. Thurner had indicated the northwest corner of the park was still undeveloped and could be improved for adult recreation.

By coincidence, another southern California community had similar needs for tennis courts and set a precedent that was helpful to Stan and the ladies. Then, they studied the undeveloped northwest corner of Lacy Park and movement started.

Stan Clark formed Articles of Incorporation for the non-profit San Marino Tennis Foundation and in December 1967, they were approved by the Secretary of State of California. The purpose of the Foundation was based on the belief that "The health, welfare, physical and mental well being of the youth and adults of the San Marino Unified School District could be greatly enhanced by active participation in sports such as tennis."

With the Foundation now a legal entity, presentations before the San Marino City Council started in March 1968. Altogether, nine separate public discussions were held with the City Council as to how the courts might be built, operated and maintained. The Foundation was to have this responsibility under an Agreement with the City but the Council was to retain appropriate control.

This Agreement was a mandate to the Foundation to improve Lacy Park; pay for all improvements; convey and dedicate all improvements to the city free of claims; restrict membership to residents of the School District; be regulated and controlled in revenue production by the City Council; maintain the premises; agree the tennis courts must be open as a public facility; and agree the courts were not to be operated as a private club solely for the benefit of Foundation Members.

(over)

In June 1969, Mayor Laws and the four other members of the San Marino City Council (Burnett, Chadwick, Jones and Kenyon) unanimously adopted a resolution Commending and Congratulating the San Marino Tennis Foundation and Acknowledging with Appreciation the Construction and Financing of Tennis Courts in Lacy Park.

The facility was opened and has been tremendously successful where to date, about 300,000 healthful recreational experiences have been realized.

It is also of interest that in 1924, a Bond Election was held to acquire and improve the land that is now Lacy Park. The Boy Scouts expressed the probability (as a part of their 'Vote Yes' campaign) that a 'plunge, dressing rooms and athletic fields' would be part of the Park.

Now, in 1986, pressure has been built to increase the number of tennis courts because of the continuing and growing popularity of the healthful sport.

The northwest corner of Lacy Park, still partially undeveloped, is where the two proposed courts would be located. The Junior Program at Lacy Park is overcrowded - some must be turned away. Also hundreds of adults recognize the need for additional courts. Most 'planned urban developments' include an abundance of tennis courts as part of strategically placed recreational areas among the homes. The needs of Juniors alone are not the sole reason for more recreational tennis courts.

Char Wachtel, Susie Trotter and Fran Brossy - ladies from the PTA - we admire you. Your efforts with Stan Clark in originally establishing public courts in Lacy Park are now being used as a model with strong support by young people and parents as well as by adults without children at home.

ALW 10/86

References:

- 1) Los Angeles Times - San Gabriel Valley Section, March 5, 1967
- 2) Articles of Incorporation - San Marino Tennis Foundation
- 3) AGREEMENT between the City of San Marino and the Tennis Foundation in 1968
- 4) Minutes of the meetings of the San Marino City Council from March 1968 thru June 1969.
- 5) Resolution #1232 of the San Marino City Council.
- 6) San Marino Tennis Foundation Newsletter of February 1978.
- 7) The San Marino Siren "Community Extra" December 6, 1924. (Published every three weeks by Troop 1, San Marino, CA Boy Scouts of America)