

## GER Ron and First Lady Nancy Hicks' Visit to Pasadena

After a couple of weeks home for Christmas, we were back in the air again on Wednesday, December 30, for our trip to "The City of Roses," Pasadena, California, at the invitation of Pasadena Elks Lodge 672. It was great having the time to share the joys of the Holidays with family and friends, and our fellow Fredericksburg Lodge members. Among the many events we shared at our Lodge were the annual Toys for Tots Christmas Dance and the Trolley Tour of area Christmas Lights with stops at shut-in-Member homes for the singing of Christmas Carols.

The Pasadena Lodge also invited Ron's Aide, Ray Dameron and his wife Elizabeth, to join us on this trip for the Lodge's New Year's Eve Celebration, the Rose Bowl Parade and Rose Bowl Game. A welcome break for Ray, who has been busy handling the GER Office duties while we are having a wonderful time traveling throughout Elkdom.

We were met at the airport by PGER and Co-State Sponsor Jim Grillo and his wife Lucia, State President Don Schultz and his wife Shirley, PDD Aaron Anderson and his wife Cheryl, State VP John McEntire and his wife Donna, and other California Elks. After lunch we arrived at our hotel, and with a delayed check-in, we spent time in Don's room getting to know our hosts. Dinner Wednesday night was at the beautiful Pasadena Lodge, built in 1911. Upon arrival we found the Lodge



Ron's Aide Ray Dameron and his wife Elizabeth, Ron and Nancy, and PGER Jim Grillo and his wife Lucia.



Ron, Nancy, and State President of California Don Schultz and his wife Shirley



Stealth Bomber that flew over the parade route before the Rose Parade began

wrapped with grandstands and the parking lot filled with TV trucks and equipment, in anticipation of the New Year's Day Parade. The Lodge is in a prime location at the beginning of the Parade route, so is able to rent their ground to several media outlets and other companies. We were greeted by Billie Jo Olson, the enthusiastic and proud ER of the Lodge, and enjoyed



Looking from a balcony at some of the Floats for the parade getting their finishing touches the day before the parade

meeting other Officers and many Members from Pasadena and other area Lodges.

Thursday morning we were off early to view some of the floats that would be in the Parade. It was a beautiful sunny California day, and we had no need for the warm jackets we had intended to

wear. We went to the warehouse of a company that builds floats for a number of organizations, including the Lions, Odd Fellows, Kiwanis, and several area cities. The

floats were beautiful and we watched as "Pedal Pushers" (volunteer flower workers) put final flowers on the floats before judging. Then we returned to the

hotel to ready ourselves for the Santa Anita Racetrack, where we enjoyed a very nice lunch overlooking the track. We were escorted to the paddock prior to the third race, where Ron was given the honor of announcing "Riders Up!" for the jockeys to

mount their horses for the race. The fifth race was sponsored by the Pasadena Elks Lodge, so ER Billie Jo, Ray, Ron, and I, were invited to the winner's circle to meet the winning horse, jockey and owners. All in all, it was a great afternoon at the track and we even left without losing any



Up close photo of one of the floats



Up close photo of one of the floats

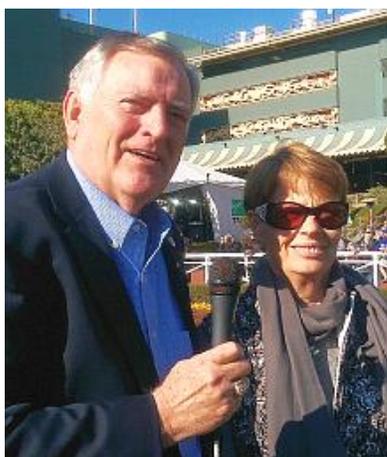


Afternoon at Santa Anita Race Track

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"Pedal Pushers" at work putting on finishing touches



Ron announcing "Riders Up" before a race in the paddock area



In the "Winners Circle" with winner of the Race sponsored by the Pasadena Elks Lodge



Taking off out of the gate



Sea Biscuit, 1933-1947, world's Greatest Money Winner at that time

money.



Ron dancing with Pasadena Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler Billie Jo Olsen



Ron and Nancy in the center and on the front row in the grand stands in front of the Pasadena Elks Lodge waiting for the Rose Parade to begin at 8:00 am

Back at the hotel, Ron went to the Business Center to catch up on the day's Elk business, then we dressed for the formal New Year's Ball at the Pasadena Lodge. A large crowd enjoyed dinner and dancing until past midnight. At eleven o'clock, everyone joined hands for two circles on the dance floor, as ER Olson walked around between the circles reciting the heart-felt Toast, followed by everyone joining in the singing of "God Bless America." At midnight, the champagne was flowing as everyone sang "Auld Lang Syne." It was a wonderful evening shared with our new Elk friends! On the way back to the hotel, we passed thousands of hearty souls already staking out their favorite spots along the Parade route, with many tents, sleeping bags and fires to keep them warm. Fortunately, it was a beautiful night. Quite a spectacle!



"Pooper Scoopers" shovels were even decorated with flowers!



The motor cycle police squad signaling the beginning of the parade



Ron wrapped up and trying to stay warm while watching the parade



The Virginia Military Institute Color Guard marching with the VMI Marching Band

We were up early (4:00 am!) on Friday morning for our trip back to the Lodge before the streets closed in preparation for the 8:00 am start to the Parade. As the grandstands were filling up outside, we joined other Elks in one of several rooms open for breakfast inside the Lodge. After breakfast, we went out into the streets to look at floats,



L-R.: Ray Dameron, Ron, Jim and Lucia Grillio, and Aron Andersen checking activities out before the start of the parade. These are the stands we sat in to watch the parade.



Grand Board of Trustees member from the Glendale, California lodge Hugh Scanlon and his wife Dale with Ron and Nancy after the parade

bands, and other Parade entrants gathered in the areas behind and near the Lodge. The streets were filled with people and Ron became quickly separated from our group (He said "we" were lost!). Our seats for the Parade were in the center of the stands in front of the Lodge, on the first row, right above the sidewalk, and overlooking the street. Ron arrived right at 8:00, and after "crawling over" many people, mostly Elks, who had already taken their seats in the packed stands, rejoined our group. (The tickets for these seats were \$85 each!). What a great experience, and another item checked off of our Bucket List!!

After lunch at the Lodge, Ron, Jim, Ray, and Elizabeth headed to the Rose Bowl with several other Elks for the much-anticipated football game between Stanford and Iowa. Lucia and I went back to the hotel. They parked

about two miles from the stadium on a thirty-six hole golf course that had been converted into a vast parking lot for the big event. After finally reaching the stadium and working their way through the metal detectors and large crowd, they made their way to their seats located about eight rows up from the goal line in a section filled with Iowa fans. Stanford scored on the first play from scrimmage and never looked back. The game was



Fire breathing Dragon on the Singapore float



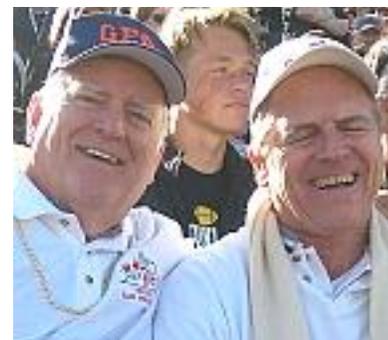
City of Los Angeles Float



Lots of beautiful horses in the parade too



Cowboys and Stage Coaches too



Ron with PGER Jim Grillo at the Rose Bowl Game



PGER Grillo found the "Car of his Dreams" in the parking lot at the Rose Bowl Game

essentially over by halftime, 31-3, so the Elks decided to leave early and return to the hotel. Fortunately, it was still daylight as the group spread out to look for their two cars far from the stadium. They could not believe they had parked so far from the stadium, and with thousands of cars on the course, finding the cars was difficult. Jim Grillo was able to spot his dream car during the search, and finally, just before dark, the cars were located.

Dinner Friday night was at The Derby Restaurant, which was adjacent to our hotel, and we said our goodbyes as we walked back to the hotel after dinner. Saturday morning, we left with PDD Aaron Anderson, our chauffeur during our time in Pasadena, about 7:30 am for the hour drive to the airport and our flight to Honolulu, Hawaii.

#### Miscellaneous Parade and Race Track Photos





Submitted by Ron and Nancy Hicks

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