

The Evolution of

PART ONE

Bunker Hill

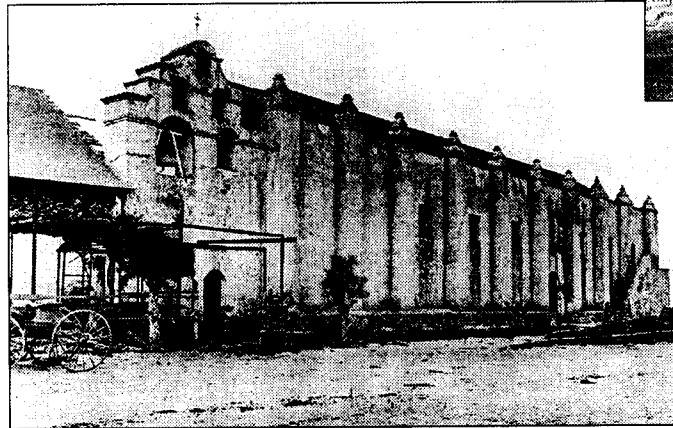
Former Community Redevelopment Agency Principal Planner Yukio Kawaraitani has spent the last few years assembling more than 600 documents, studies, reports and photos relating to the history of Bunker Hill. Parts of these have been turned into the Bunker Hill Historical Presentation, a series of nine poster-boards detailing distinct chapters in the evolution of the community. Over the next nine weeks the L.A. Downtown News will run excerpts of the text and photo collection.

PART ONE OF A NINE-PART SERIES

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THE PUEBLO, 1769-1866

The occupation of California by Spain began in 1769, when Gaspar de Portola led a Spanish expedition from San Diego to San Francisco Bay. When they crossed the Los Angeles River, they encountered Yang-na, the Indian village of the region. The Indians were later subjugated and renamed the Gabrieleno tribe after the San Gabriel Mission, founded by the Spaniards and missionary Father Junipero Serra in 1771. Based on a plan from Governor Felipe de Neve, the Pueblo of Los Angeles was founded in 1781 with 44 settlers from Mexico. The pueblo's plan had 50-foot house lots around the plaza and seven-acre farm lots nearby between the Zanja Madre irrigation canal and the Los Angeles River. Across the river were the commons and pasture lands. A century of pastoral living on ranchos with long-horned cattle grazing followed. The Pueblo of Los Angeles was the social and trading center for the ranchos. In 1822, the Spanish period ended with Mexico's successful revolt for independence. Then, America's victory in the Mexican War resulted in California becoming a territory in 1848 and reaching statehood in 1850. The Ord Survey, Plan de la Ciudad



The San Gabriel Mission.

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Drawing of Los Angeles in the early 1850s.

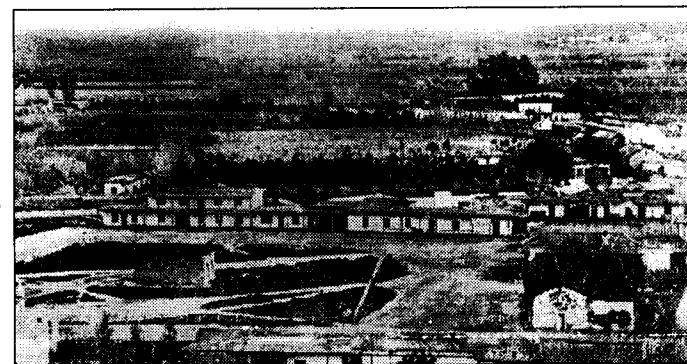


From the book "Panorama: A Picture History of Southern California"

Drawing depicting Yang-na, a Native American village.

de Los Angeles, set up the present street grid system in Downtown Los Angeles. The survey extended along and up to the base of the geologic dome formation that was later called Bunker Hill. The gold rush of 1849 brought many people to California. Los Angeles became a roisterous boomtown from 1849 to 1857 because of the high demand and prices for beef from the ranchos. When the gold pickings became slim, the big bust came to the ranchos and the town of Los Angeles. Compounding their debts, a series of drought years started in 1862, which ruined the ranchos. Many were foreclosed, broken up, subdivided and offered for sale as farm acreage.

Next week: The Rise, 1867-1925



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The Plaza: The earliest known outdoor photograph of Los Angeles.

