

## Santa Ana mystery: Why are some Fairhaven headstones older than the cemetery itself?

### ■ Many first families of Santa Ana and OC rest in Fairhaven Memorial Park and Cemetery

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At the turn of the 20th century, Santa Ana residents were grappling with a housing shortage of another kind: burial space in the original cemetery established by the Ross family at 8th (now Civic Center) and Ross Streets, which was directly in the path of the city's explosive growth.

But some planters, ranchers and other residents wanted a different kind of cemetery anyway—a memorial park with flat markers instead of upright monuments.

Fortunately, Santa Ana had room to accommodate both in its cemetery district established in 1875. And so Fairhaven Memorial Park was incorporated on Aug. 18, 1911 just west of the Santa Ana Cemetery, which was established in 1878.

Although the first interment in Fairhaven was that of Mary J. Reed on Nov. 11, 1912, the Palmer family claims the earliest headstone with a date of birth of 1788 and a date of death of 1875.

"The United States was



Photo by CATHERINE CATE

*Over the decades, Fairhaven has evolved to incorporate a combination of memorial markers and traditional headstones. Many carry names of prominent families like Raitt that are now familiar street names.*

still operating under the Articles of Confederacy when that person was born—the Constitution wasn't ratified until 1789—and George Washington would live 11 more years," says the Rev. Lou Carlson, a pre-need planner and ecumenical specialist at Fairhaven.

The body, which was moved to Fairhaven in about 1920, is just one of hundreds relocated into Fairhaven Memorial Park from the original city cemetery over the next two decades.

To date, there have been about 62,000 interments in the 78-acre site, which now includes both a memorial park and a traditional cemetery, as well as a mortuary, which

is responsible for handling interment arrangements and services.

The markers read like a "Who's Who" in Santa Ana history: Raitt, Bowers, Segerstrom, Judge William Towner, and aviation pioneer Eddie Martin, as well as world-renowned names such as guitar giant Leo Fender, screen actor Victor Montgomery, and religious author and speaker Corrie Ten-Boom.

"Fairhaven has served families of every racial and ethnic background," says Carlson. "We are pleased to know that families have received correct services since the mortuary was created to serve them in 1971."