



Heritage Hill Historical Park

PARK HOURS: TUES. – SAT. 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. | TOUR RESERVATIONS: 949-923-2230
GUIDED TOUR HOURS: WED., THURS., SAT. 11:00 A.M.

Mailing address:
25151 Serrano Road
Lake Forest, CA 92630-2534
949-923-2230

HISTORIC PARK

Heritage Hill Historical Park is a 4.1-acre park that preserves some of Orange County's rich cultural heritage through a collection of four historic buildings. Fully restored and furnished, they represent distinct eras in the early development of the Saddleback Valley and the town of El Toro. The Mexican Rancho era is typified by the circa 1863 Serrano Adobe. The 1890 El Toro Grammar School and 1891 St. George's Episcopal Mission are representative of the founding of El Toro. And the citrus farming days of the early twentieth century are called to mind by the 1908 Harvey Bennett Ranch House.

A BRIEF HISTORY.

The roots of Heritage Hill Historical Park began with the land grants by the Mexican government to Don Jose Serrano in 1841 and 1846. In 1863, the Serrano family built the adobe on the land, then called Rancho Cañada de los Alisos, and the adobe remains on the site to this day.

Over the years, the Serrano Adobe passed through various hands. It eventually passed to the Whiting family, and was first restored by George and Dwight Whiting, Jr. in 1932.

ONE MORE ADDITION TO THE VILLAGE.

The County continued to develop plans for a historical park at the Serrano Adobe site based on the historical village concept, and in 1978, another venerable El Toro landmark, the Harvey Bennett Ranch House (1908) became available. Cooperation between the County, William Lyon Company (developers of the Bennett Ranch subdivision) and the Historical Society resulted in the donation and move of the Bennett House to the Serrano Adobe site that same year.



A PARK IS BORN.

On May 15, 1982, after further development and restoration of the historical structures, Heritage Hill Historical Park opened as Orange County's first historical park. The Bennett House was subsequently restored, other park improvements were made and the park was rededicated in September 1985.

Today, Heritage Hill Historical Park is the only historical site in Orange County to offer a chronological interpretation of the County's past through historical buildings spanning several periods of development.



FROM THE BAKERS TO THE COUNTY.

When the Bakers sold the 5,000-acre Baker Ranch to Occidental Petroleum in 1969 for \$11 million, they stipulated in the sale that the Serrano Adobe be donated to a public agency for preservation.

In 1974, the Serrano Adobe site was donated to the County of Orange. The County then set aside 4.1 acres surrounding the Serrano Adobe for the development of a historical park.

In 1976, the Saddleback Area Historical Society's successful fund-raising efforts resulted in the ability to acquire El Toro's first schoolhouse and church. The El Toro Grammar School (1890) and St. George's Episcopal Mission (1891) were later moved to their current locations in the park.

HISTORY LIVES AT HERITAGE HILL HISTORICAL PARK.

The park offers a number of programs that help bring the past to life. (A Native American tour is available to elementary school children and features a visit to the Acjachemen village exhibit to learn about the life of the "People of the Land Before 1769.") A Living History program geared toward fourth-grade children lets students experience a typical school day in the early 20th century. A hands-on program with an activity at each historical building is offered to third grade students.



A BEAUTIFUL WAY TO BEGIN YOUR OWN HISTORY.

Heritage Hill Historical Park offers two charming spots for weddings: the historic St. George's Episcopal Mission (capacity 75) and an outdoor Victorian Arbor (capacity 150). Requests to use other locations within the park will be considered on an individual basis. For receptions, outdoor facilities are available (capacity 150). For more detailed information, please call and make an appointment to tour our facility.



ENJOY HISTORY HERE ALL YEAR LONG.

Heritage Hill has something to offer all year long. Among the many celebrations that are worth marking on your calendar are Rancho Days Fiesta, Fall-O-Ween, Candlelight Walk and Holiday Lights.

A STATE HISTORICAL LANDMARK.

The Serrano Adobe was granted the status of State Historical Landmark No. 199 in 1932. It again changed hands and was last privately owned by Mr. and Mrs. V.P. Baker from 1958 to 1969.

The restored Serrano Adobe was used primarily as a vacation home for the Bakers and a meeting place for the Aliso Water Company.



TOURS FOR YOU AND SIX OF YOUR FRIENDS.

The park offers free tours weekly for individuals and groups of seven or less. Just show up Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Volunteer docents meet visitors at the front porch of the Serrano Adobe and give a guided tour of each building, offering an interpretation of Saddleback area history through the artifacts, events and people associated with each building. Groups of 8 or more should call the park to arrange a tour.

Free tours are offered Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 11:00 A.M. for groups up to 7 people. For groups of 8 or more, please call to schedule your tour. For wedding reservations, please call the park office at 949-923-2230.

866-OCPARKS | heritagehill@ocparks.com • www.ocparks.com/heritagehill

OC Parks has been entrusted with the care and protection of this park. Help us preserve our county's natural and cultural resources for you and your fellow guests' future enjoyment. Please check with your Park Ranger for this park's specific rules, or see them online at www.ocparks.com.



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LIKE HERITAGE HILL HISTORICAL PARK? YOU'LL LIKE THESE HISTORIC SITES, TOO.

ARDEN: HELENA MODJESKA HISTORIC HOUSE AND GARDENS • GEORGE KEY RANCH HISTORIC PARK • IRVINE RANCH HISTORIC PARK • OLD ORANGE COUNTY COURTHOUSE • PERALTA ADOBE HISTORIC SITE