

CONFIDENTIAL

By STANLEY ROBERTSON

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?

"Playing the Chinaman" was the most popular game of chance on the Eastside and you could wager anything from a penny upwards on "your number?" The police put the quietness on the game after a Chinese store owner was shot and killed in a brawl with a distraught player in his store on McKinley near Jefferson . . . The little "tannerville" like trolley use to run down Griffith avenue? During cold winter nights, the little trolley use to be buffeted about like a cork by the intense winter winds . . . Ted LeBerthon, columnist for the old Daily News, was the most read writer by Negroes in Los Angeles? He was fired by the newspaper at the height of his popularity, locals always said, for "writing about Negroes too much" . . .

Carver Junior High school used to be called William McKinley and had a track team that could beat any school in the city except Jefferson. Wise guys used to crack that the kids became so swift of foot by running from the cops wearing those old heavy WPA shoe and thick off-mustard colored jackets . . . Emmett Ashford, the umpire, was elected first Negro student body president of Jefferson High school? The percentage of Negro students at the school didn't become overwhelming until 7 or 8 years later . . . The Bill Robinson theater on Central avenue used to be called the Tivoli and Negro patronage "wasn't welcome?" During this time, many well-to-do white and Negro families lived in the East 40's and many had maids . . .

The 1933 earthquake and the havoc it caused? Many Eastside, and the few Negro families who lived West of Main street, slept on their lawns all night and no one went to work. Several shoppers were badly injured by flying glass and bricks on Central avenue and Jefferson; Wadsworth school, and San Pedro school had to be virtually built from the ground . . . The wartime "Zoot Suit" riots and the near large scale race riots that followed? A carload of white sailors, bent on "coming down to Central avenue and clearing out the Zooters," had to be rescued at the corner of Jefferson and Central one afternoon by several squad cars of police . . . The old "U" trolley which used to run down Central avenue and all the school kids hooked rides on the wide steps and cow catcher, saving their carfare to buy goodies? . . . The funeral of well known sporting figure Rich Baker at which the elite and the shady rubbed elbows? A famed sporting figure was snapped by a newspaper photographer "eyeing" a lovely blond from the Wilshire district . . . Strut Mitchell, the old time dancer who went around telling his friends, "I'm going to pay you what I owe you because I think my time isn't long." A week later, he was found dead? . . .

MORE LOS ANGELES YESTERYEARS

The tragic and beastial slaying of 9-year-old Dorothy Gordon? Her Easter Friday murder 17 years ago has never been solved although hundreds have been quizzed and released . . . When all the "cool cats" took their dolls to Finley's on Central avenue to eat chili? The place was the most famous meeting place along the avenue . . . When you could get a meal of chicken, potatoes, vegetables, bread, coffee, milk, and dessert at Father Divine's cafe on Adams and Central by merely saying "peace" as you entered? During the depression, people walked from as far away as the Westside to pick up on the choice and cheap vitals . . . The old "Poor Boy" sandwiches you could buy for a nickel from a cart that traveled along the street? One sandwich would feed several people . . . The Central avenue barbecue place which use to sell "packages of ends" for 10 cents? They had more takers for the "ends" than for the regular meals . . . When anybody who was anybody went to either Second Baptist or Independent churches? Kids during those days went to church twice on Sundays and their "dates" were taking a girl to Sunday evening young people's gatherings . . . When there were only 40,000 Negroes in Los Angeles and if you had a job in the post office, was a school teacher, or a porter at the Union Station, you were a "good liver?" Well, if you remember all these things, Dad, how does it feel to be on the "other side" of 30?

CONFIDENTIALLY YOURS

Local Democrats tell me that the biggest campaign issue come spring in the Congressional and State elections won't be civil rights or Sputnik, but unemployment. With some economists predicting that by February, 4½ million will be without jobs, the Democrats are slated to make their most severe attack upon Eisenhower and the Republican Administration. As one Democrat leader told me: "We know that this will appeal to Negroes and other minority groups because they will suffer from loss of jobs more than any group" . . . The oldest con game on the books was pulled against a well known professional man in Hollywood the other day when he "fell" for a "diamond wrist watch valued at \$1,600." He plunked down \$100 and later discovered he could have bought something better at Kress . . . Executives of a local fraternal group had to consult legal eagles to regain \$500 they were "conned" out of by a photographer who promised to get them a "spread" in a national publication. The lenseman came up with \$400 of the money and has "promised" to pay the other by Jan. 1. The guy isn't connected with any national publication . . .

THE LAUGHING SET

Bob Johnson, the bathhouse operator, answering the query of a friend who wanted to know if he were going to a particular social affair, Said Bob: "Can a mule whistle?"

A seedy looking male passenger on the Adams bus answering his pal's question of what a particular girl looked like. "Well," said the man, "it depends on how you look at her." "What do you mean?" his friend said. "From most places, when you look at her, I look like Jayne Mansfield compared to her. From the other places, I look like Diana Dors compared to her."

And finally, two school boys, talking at the corner of Vernon and Central. Said one: "Too bad our moon didn't get into outer space?"

"Yeah," said the other. "looks like instead of having a sputnik, we got a goofnik."

A MUCH NEEDED ROOM

Tomorrow night, Friday, something Los Angeles has needed for a long time, will make its appearance on the scene when Buddy Collette opens Terry Lester's Jazz Cellar in the Vermillion hotel, 6162 Hollywood boulevard. Every Friday and Saturday nights, and Sunday afternoons, Collette will appear in the room with a new piano-less quartet he has formed. As Collette says, "It's something Los Angeles has sorely needed for a long time. I'm not saying this because I have anything to do with the room, but this will be the only club which will regularly feature jazz on a permanent basis. We plan to have guest stars and other featured performers in the room. For a city of its size and being so close to what is becoming the recording capital of the world, we are way behind the rest of the country as far as places in which jazz can be heard."

Incidentally, this will be a big weekend for Buddy. He appears Monday night on Bobby Troup's great "Stars of Jazz" program, KABC-TV. Currently, Collette is dividing his time between playing in the orchestras which back Frank Sinatra's television show, Groucho Marx's show, motion picture studio work, and recording for various labels. A real talented musician and great guy is Collette.

THE FINAL REEL

Question of the week: Isn't a local social figure afraid that SHE will be drawn into the current investigation surrounding the strange happenings to those who appear as witnesses in narcotics cases?