



ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Formed in 1891 as the Southern California Science Association, the Southern California Academy of Sciences took its present name in 1896 and was so incorporated in 1907. Today it has a membership of approximately 300 professional and student scientists and friends of science. Membership in the Academy is open to all who are interested in the advancement of the science and in the encouragement of professional and student scientists.

The Academy was one of the founding groups for the original Museum of History, Science and Art -- and how it came about is part of our history. In 1909, James Zaccheus Gilbert, professor of zoology at Los Angeles High School, showed the Academy some skeletal remains which he and his science students had collected at Rancho La Brea, and secured the Academy's backing for his project. Permission was obtained from Mrs. Ida Hancock Ross, owner of Rancho La Brea, for Professor Gilbert's excavations to be continued under the Academy's auspices. A generous donation from John Daggett Hooker (who also contributed the 100-inch reflector telescope to Mt. Wilson observatory) made it possible to get on with the work. Further backing came from the Los Angeles City Council and the County Board of Supervisor and, by 1910 a large number of bones had been exhumed.

A museum was needed. The Academy, along with the Cooper Ornithological Club, the Historical Society of Southern California, and the Fine Arts League, all needed homes for their collections, and approached the County of Los Angeles, which agreed to establish in Exposition Park the Museum of History, Science, and Art - forerunner of what, many years and additions since, is now the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

ENOUGH HISTORY; WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Publications: Our journal, the Bulletin, has been published continuously since 1902. Now issued three times a year (April, August, December) it seeks research articles particularly related to the Southern California and Baja California areas. In addition to going to members, it is also sent by subscription and exchange to many libraries and institutions within the United States and in several foreign countries. In the past a series of Memoirs (one subject monographs) was published irregularly and we continue to publish special projects, such as compilations of symposium papers.

Annual Meetings: Traditionally held early in May, these are two-day events of symposia and contributed paper and poster sessions open to all disciplines of the natural and social sciences... and open to professional and student scientists alike. To encourage student participation at the college level, Best Paper and Poster Awards are given in several

subject categories. Beginning in 2002, the abstracts of presented papers are published in the Bulletin.

Research Training Program for High School Science Students: Since its beginning in 1980, this program has grown to be one of the Academy's main efforts. Open to high school students in grades 9-12, this program gives each student selected the opportunity to work on his/her own research project under the individual guidance of a professional scientist at a nearby college, university or research facility. The program runs concurrently with the school year, and, in addition to research, includes periodic meetings at which students learn about preparing abstracts, writing papers, the ethics of research, and tour various scientific facilities. The program concludes at the Academy's annual meeting in May at which students present their research in a special session. Students who are judged to have the best presentations and papers are sent to the annual American Junior Academy of Sciences meeting, which is held in conjunction with the AAAS national meeting in February.

Research Grants: Starting in 2003, the society makes funds available to graduate students to support their research. Awardees must have a mentor who is a member of the society.

Funds: Activities of the Academy are financed through dues and registration fees to the Annual Meeting. In addition, the Academy receives support from an endowment. This consists of a General Fund, begun in 1912, which is built from Life Memberships and donations, and the Hertlein Fund, received from the estate of Dr. Leo G. Hertlein in 1981, which is "to be used only for the publication of scientific papers." Both funds are managed for the Academy as conservative growth funds.

Board: The Board of Directors meets once per month, from September through June and directs the activities of the Academy, especially the annual meeting. Elections for Board members are held each year, and board members serve a three year term. The President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Academy are selected from among the elected Board members.

Academy Office: The Academy has no paid staff members. The Academy maintains an office and stores its files and publications within the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. However, most Academy activities are directed by individual board members through their home institutions.

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