



**City of San Bernardino
Historical and Pioneer Society
P.O. Box 875, San Bernardino, CA 92402**

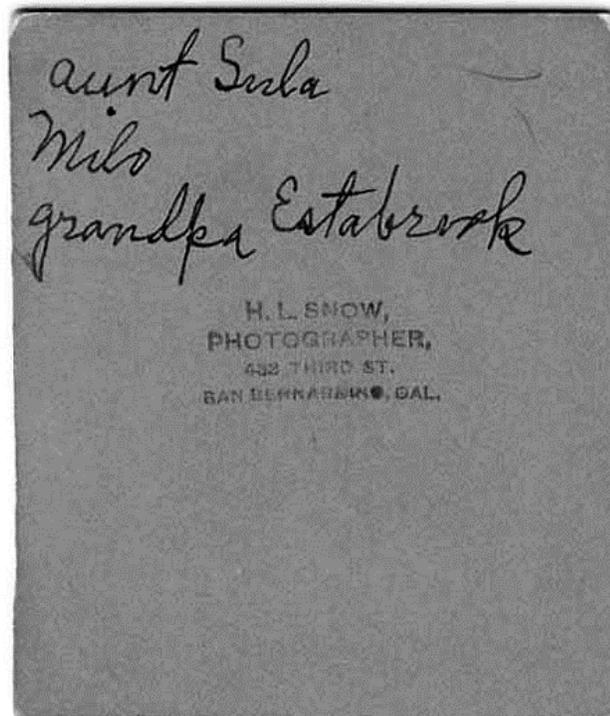
LIBRARY NEWS AUGUST 2010

By Richard D. Thompson, Librarian

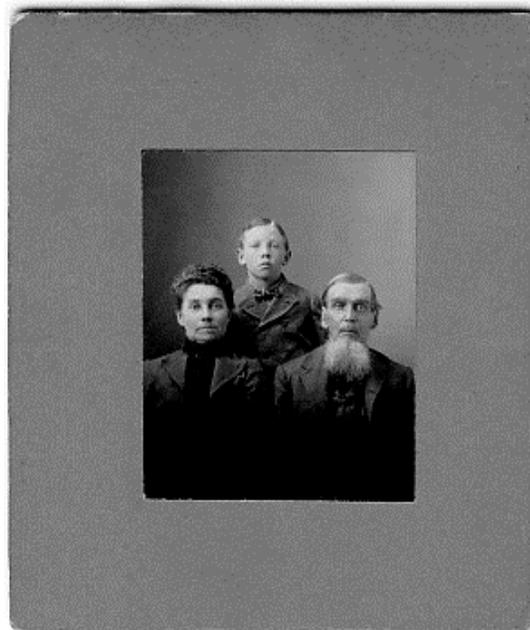
HERBERT L. SNOW, SAN BERNARDINO PHOTOGRAPHER

Genealogists Mary L. Lewis and Virginia Harshman made a list of local photographers and published it in the *Valley Quarterly* (put out by the San Bernardino Valley Genealogical Society). The data for their project came from census records, voting registrations, newspapers and directories. They believed that knowing when and where a photographer practiced might help in identifying photographs of unknown persons. Herbert L. Snow is on the list, and the Historical and Pioneer Society has at least two of his original photographs.

Snow's obituary appeared in January 1911. It stated he came to San Bernardino 11 years previously, and that he spent several years in the East honing his photographic skills. The following picture shows the back of a Snow photo. Note that the photographer had a simple stamp identifying his business. This might indicate that the photo was taken early after his arrival, since a stamp can be obtained in a short period of time.



—**Persons identified but otherwise unknown.** The front side of the above photo (shown below) appeared in the April 2009 issue of this newsletter. It was hoped that someone could offer information on the three subjects, but no one came forward.



Aunt Sula, Milo and Grandpa Estabrook remain a mystery

Our other H. L. Snow photo is of a woman and three children. This picture shows background drapery and furniture, and Snow's name appears with a fancy stamp on the left side of the cabinet card. To me, that indicates this photograph was taken later, after he'd had time to become more established.



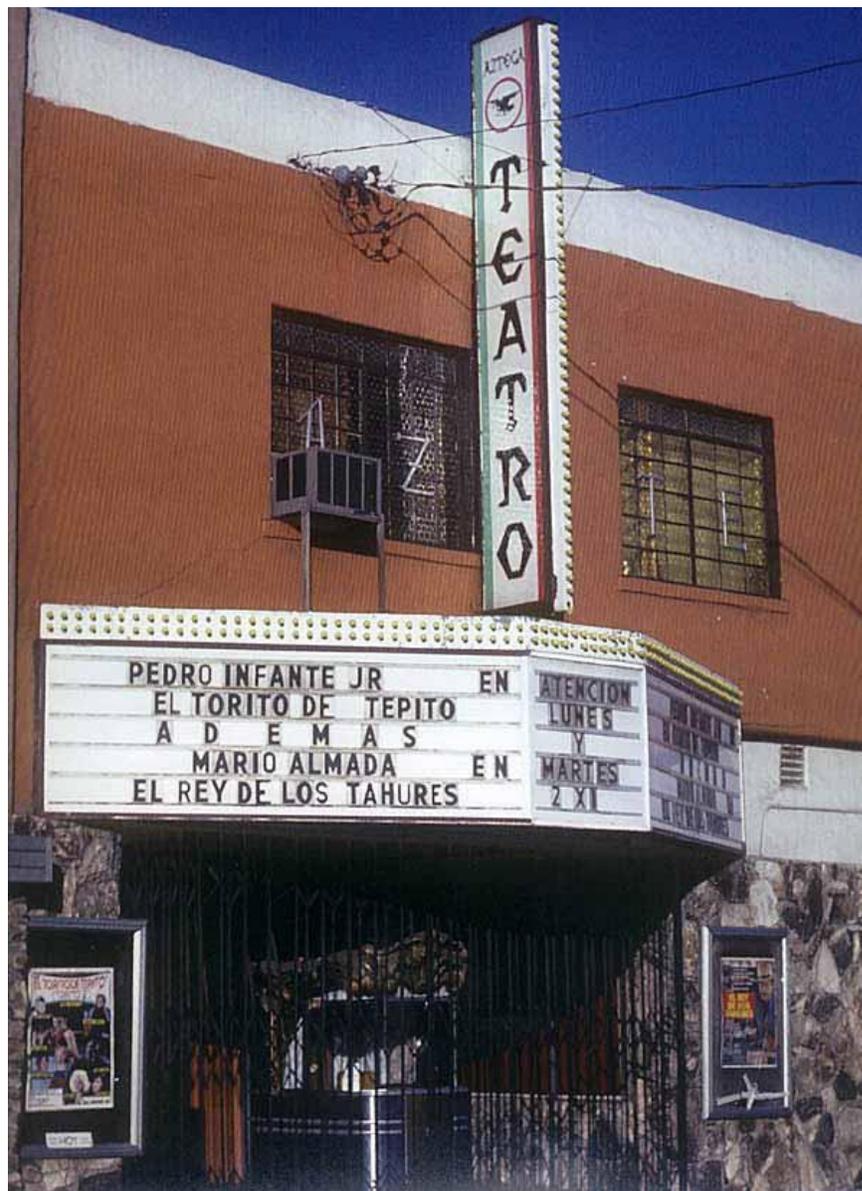
The identities of these people are unknown. Can anyone provide information on them?

MT. VERNON AVENUE PHOTOGRAPHS

Recently, I began searching for photographs of old Mt. Vernon businesses taken during the 1950s and 60s (or earlier or later, depending on what is available), and I found the following two pictures that I felt were rather interesting.

— Teatro Azteca aka Azteca Theater

This Teatro Azteca photograph, the earliest one I could find, was purchased on the Internet. The colors of the building and the marquis make it look more exciting than the current drab structure. The building, located on the northwest corner of 7th Street and Mt. Vernon Avenue, still exists, although the theater is no longer in use. It was a single-screen theater, and an Internet site states that it is seated 600. Looking at the building today, it is hard to believe they could squeeze that many people in. Maybe one of our readers can remember just how big it was, and will let me know.



Teatro Azteca in 1983

– Columbus Theatre

Some of you might remember Louise Gavuzzi Torta, a former board member of our Society who passed away in November 2008. Louise, who was born in San Bernardino in 1920, wrote an article that appeared in the 1994 issue of *Heritage Tales*, in which she talks about her grandmother's place, "Mother Massetti's," and, more generally, about the Italian community along Mt. Vernon, Kingman and Fifth Streets. She does not mention the Columbus Theatre in her writing, but she had a brother named Henry "Hank" Gavuzzi, who remembered it well. I worked with Hank for many years and he used to tell me about the Italian community he grew up in. During one of our discussions, he mentioned the fact that the Columbus was the earliest theater on the corner of 7th and Mt. Vernon. I since came across the name in old City Directories, but despaired of ever seeing a photograph of the place. However, just recently I came across the photo below. Notice the theater is in that portion of the building closest to Seventh Street. When the Azteca Theater came into being, it was located in the central part of the building



Columbus Theatre, date unknown

If anyone has a photograph of an old Mt. Vernon business he or she would like to share, and would not mind having a scan made of it, please contact me. I would greatly appreciate it.

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