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Recollections of the Mountain View Ranch:

Grand Avenue ended at the entrance to the ranch. At the entrance to the property there was a large arched gate with the name Mountain View written across the arch. The driveway was at least a quarter of a mile long and ended in a circle in front of the house. The driveway was lined with palm trees on each side. The property consisted of about 100 acres of fruit trees. It extended from Cypress Avenue on the North to Badillo on the South. My Grandfather, Conrad C. Kohlmeier planted most of the orange and lemon trees, plus numerous other fruit trees such as peaches, apricots, pomegranates, pears and olives.

A railroad ran right through the property and served to transport fruit to market. I am told that the train stopped every day to drop off the Los Angeles paper for my Grandfather.

The house was three stories high and had a full basement. The front door entered into a large entry which was 11 or 12 feet high. To the right of the entry hall was a large living room and behind the living room was a suite of two or three rooms which served as an apartment for my grandfather and grandmother. Can you blame them....they had 11 children!

To the left of the entry hall was a large dining room. Behind the dining room was a butler's pantry and behind that was a large kitchen, and behind the kitchen was a large enclosed porch.

The second floor consisted of bedrooms and bathrooms which were occupied by the children who were living there.

The third floor was the size of the house and was used as a ballroom for festive occasions. It also held a fine piano.

Some distance back of the house was a large reservoir which was used for irrigation, but also served as a swimming pool.

All the work on the ranch was done with horses. A family account book lists costs of horse food as well as labor costs and water bought for irrigation.

There was a caretakers cottage on the ranch and I believe it still stands. My aunts and uncles remember there being a large buggy with four or five seats. Sometimes on warm evenings a couple of horses would be hitched to the buggy and the young people would go for a ride along the country roads, singing songs and having a great time.

I am told that Wednesday was baking day and my grandmother and my aunts would spend the whole day baking bread, rolls, pies and cakes for the week.

The entire Kohlmeier family would gather at the Mountain View Ranch on Thanksgiving and Christmas for dinner which was served in the middle of the afternoon. When the weather was nice, tables were set up on the lawn in front of the house.

The grown ups and older children ate at the main table and the younger ones ate at a separate table. After dinner the entire group would go up to the third floor and someone would play the piano while the others danced. (This has all been related to me by my Aunts and Uncles).

Note:

To the best of my knowledge my grandfather bought the house from the Ruddocks and after adding the fruit acreage and gardens he sold it to a family named Kratska(sp?). It seems my grandfather was a bit of a land speculator, having developed similar properties in San Diego county and Riverside county as well as property in Los Angeles. When the large Mountain View house was sold with a major portion of the land, the property extending from the railroad line North to Cypress Ave. was retained by my father, William S. Kohlmeier and he operated it until his death in 1946.

Ruth Kohlmeier Van Wyck

