

THE FREE VENICE

BEACHHEAD

Number 2, Season's Greetings, 1968

FREE VENICE, 1969

10,000 copies FREE to Venice residents

venice of los angeles

by JANE GORDON

History has ups and downs. Venice started coming down after Abbott Kinney died. The powers interested in Venice were at that time divided into 2 main camps: those who wanted to adhere to Kinney's principle of absolutely no limits on business--i.e., amusement concessions--and those who wanted Venice to be a residential beach resort.

City mis-management brought this division to a head. For one thing, politicians seemed to be helping themselves instead of serving the people (1922: City treasurer vanishes with Venice's valuables). Also, many were dissatisfied with public facilities. Motorists needed more streets and parking. Population growth resulted in an overburdened sewer system. There were complaints about the canals; since Kinney's death, the shallow canals were left untended and tidal flow was not adequate to prevent stagnation. They were declared a health menace.

So the argument shaped up--annexation vs. independence. In 1923, annexation to Santa Monica as well as to Los Angeles was to be voted on. Nobody knew for sure who was the good guy, which plan would be better. No plan got a majority. By 1925, the businessmen and other proponents of annexation to LA had got themselves together. They argued that annexation would solve all the above problems and as an extra added attraction, Venice would get in on LA's Chamber of Commerce, Board of Health, Police force, water supply, etc.

That is, the annex-ites were willing to allow their community

Continued on back page

COP-FRONTATION

by CAROL FONDILLER

The new community relations officer of the Venice police met a vocal, concerned and together group of blacks, browns, and other minority groups that make up Venice at the Venice Service Center, Monday evening, Dec. 9.

Lt. Archbold told the group that he had no intention of becoming a public relations officer for the police, but a liaison between the people and the police. He stated that he knew very little about Venice, but was eager to learn.

When asked about the Desert Fox Jeep detail on the beach and

the course of HUMAN EVENTS

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• Los Angeles has now destroyed the last surviving landmark on Venice beach, the public restrooms at the foot of Brooks Ave. L.A. police claimed that "undesirables" were using the facility. Venice residents were not consulted. Free Venice!

• Children continue to play in the "vest-pocket park" at Grand and Howland Canals. Venice residents cleared the lot, raised money for playground equipment. L.A. city attorney has decided not to prosecute for zoning violation. There are many vacant lots in Venice near where children now have only the streets to play in. Let's make parks!

my venice

by VIRGINIA BOHANNAN

MY VENICE is.....the sun worship rituals of the seagulls...a tiny patch: "Please do not pick these flowers; they are for everybody.".....kittens supreme in high windows on streets where footsteps dance and houses are alive.....and puppies joyously ignoring signs to fly laughing on the beach..fiery western suns and crackling surf...bouquets of names (Breeze, Brooks, Sunset Horizon).....windows warm with color-messages beating from within.....and colored bonnets, boots and beads, beards on sons of prophets centuries gone..... a shawl, a tallith, a mezuzeh standing guard...corn and squash which love brought forth from sand, entwined with blue and gold and flame.....and passing eyes, the shy, the calm, with question and greeting, velvet brown and crystal green, and warming blue and deeply black... all mine-- all yours-- all ours! Our Venice heart.



VENICE FAMILY REUNION & PICNIC, Dec. 1, 1968. Some of the more than 500 Venice residents who attended the event sponsored by the Venice Survival Committee listen to attorney Herbert Porter's advice on how to cope with cops.

Photo by James Anderson

the harassment of people on the beach, he stated he thought the jeep was used only in summer. In reply to a statement that it was introduced in winter, he said he'd have to look into it.

He was questioned on his opinion of the Metro Squad coming to Venice; he justified its use by citing the high crime rate, stating that burglaries were cut by 16% after the Metro visit.

Why were there unconstitutional searches and seizures on the beach and in the home? Lt. Archbold replied that his door was

always open and all he needed was one documented report of police harassment and brutality that included an officer's badge number or car number (although he never quite said what he'd do with his one report). He was told that police were hostile and sometimes refused to give their numbers, or threatened one with arrest, to which he replied that as long as one did not interfere verbally or physically with an officer discharging his duty, a witness could stand and

Continued on page three

PFP BEGAN IN VENICE

by JOHN HAAG

One of the two political parties that appeared for the first time on this year's election ballot began in Venice, California. The first proposal for a national anti-war political party to be called "Peace and Freedom" was dated April 24, 1967 and was mailed from 1415 W. Washington Blvd. When the Committee for the Peace and Freedom Party Registration Drive was formed in June, 1967, its first headquarters was at that address. For several months that was the only office the PFP had.

During those early days, people up north tried to belittle our effort to get the PFP on the ballot by calling us the "Venice registration drive." By mid-October, the "Venice registration drive" had spread throughout the state. Our headquarters had moved closer to downtown Los Angeles and our origins in Venice were all but forgotten. Less than three months later we qualified for the ballot in California with 105,000 registered voters and our organizers were preparing to carry Peace and Freedom into other states.

We registered over 1,600 voters in Venice-- the highest concentration in Southern California. We predicted then that within a year the PFP would be the only political party still active in Venice, and so it is. The only political office now open is the PFP office, still on W. Washington Blvd.

The reason we are still open is that we are performing services for the people of Venice, while the other political parties have nothing to offer. Their business, now that the election is over, is elsewhere -- in Washington or Sacramento or even downtown Los Angeles, but

not in Venice. Peace and Freedom people, on the other hand, are active in several local organizations and the PFP office and facilities are being used by a variety of Venice groups.

During the election campaign this year, two Venice residents were PFP candidates. We encouraged the activities of the Venice Survival Committee, advocated a community newspaper and urged the liberation of Venice from the City of Los Angeles.

PFP members believe that Venice residents should get together and plan for our own future. The only "master plan" for Venice that we can support is a plan drawn up by Venice residents to provide for our present and future needs.

We oppose any freeway through Venice. A freeway will increase taxes and rents by taking land off the tax rolls. It will dislocate many of us, drive some out of business and poison our air with smog. The most likely route would disrupt the cultural and commercial development now taking place on West Washington Blvd. and would place a permanent wall between the black and white sections of our community.

In addition to a wide range of economic and social services, Venice PFP members have endorsed and will work with other groups to create a Venice Art Festival, a film festival and workshop, an art cinema and sidewalk coffee house, cooperative housing, and a community radio station. We advocate that Venice become an independent city run on the democratic principle of one man, one vote. Venice residents could, if we chose, form our own government by 1970.

The Venice Peace and Freedom Party meets every Wednesday at 8 p.m. at 1727 W. Washington Blvd. Phone 399-7681.

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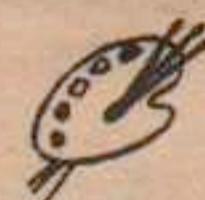
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BUBBLE MACHINE

by JAY JAMIESON

L.A.'s tearing down the public restrooms at Brooks Ave., & Ocean Front Walk. As usual, the L.A. Governors promise a bigger, better, prettier-than-ever replacement building, next year.

Meanwhile, there are restrooms in 2 bars, 2 restaurants and 1 coffeehouse --when they're open-- in the long mile of sand between Rose and Windward Ave's.

Oh well: Free Venice.

L.A. Governors downvoted a stock transfer tax, 9-1. Then shook hands with the stockbrokers and bankers who contribute their campaign funds. Eight of the LAG's are up for re-election next April. Remember it when your sales tax goes up.

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Staff for this issue: Dora Bayrack, Virginia Bohannon, Phil Chamberlin, Rick Davidson, Frances Dote, America Dunnavant, Carol Fondiller, Jane Gordon, John Haag, Jay Jamieson, Cindi Lee, Ed Mendelson, Diane Powell, Bill Olive, Leonard Spear, Jerry Wells. Special thanks to Jack.

This issue of BEACHHEAD is dedicated to all our departed brothers, living and dead, who have loved Venice, and in particular to Eden Ahbez, Bruce Boyd, Josh Gould, Taylor Mead, Rusty Penn and Alfonso Sosa. To those who read, greetings! We would welcome you back.

CYCLES & VENETIANS

by LEONARD SPEAR

Many residents of Venice, both rich and poor, have taken to motorcycles for pleasure and transportation. A student as young as 15 years of age can buy his wheels for \$50.00 and visit friends or tour with a girlfriend or buddy at a cost of 30 cents for a hundred miles of go. He can leave the smog behind and take the Coast Hiway to Malibu or the non-paying side of Zuma Beach--or wind the scenic routes of Malibu and Topanga Canyon with a stop at groovy Tapei Park. These roads and wayside stops are full of happy people who wave and enjoy friendly chats. The solitary rider may like to watch the sights as he sings at the top of his lungs into the wind and the noise of the cycle. Then there's the "scrambler"

who likes to run his cycle in the dirt (brush) and is willing to take a spill now and then as he attempts more speed or more difficult terrain. We see them in the fields on Lincoln Blvd. near Culver Blvd. and on the East side of the Grand Canal on the Peninsula. Some of these cycles never see the street and are not even registered but instead are used in competition driving at breakneck speeds thru the desert.

Another type of cycle sometimes seen in Venice is the chopper. This bike is low in the seat with high handlebars. The engine is powerful, well taken care of, and usually has chromed, shiny motor parts. A long safety bar is located at the back to make feminine passengers feel safer and is called a sissy-bar. The riders are often members of clubs with scary names but they are just people doing their own

thing. They are roaming cyclists who take long trips (motor trips) and who have found the joy of cycling with fellow enthusiasts.

Cyclists often have a forbidding look when properly dressed for the sport, but all the gear is functional. The greatest danger is from a spill which can happen to anyone. All cyclists drive defensively and statistics show that two out of three accidents are due to careless motorists. The helmet practically ensures that a spill will not be fatal and the leather clothing prevents bad scrapes. Boots aid in shifting gears and are sometimes dragged to maintain balance. But the gloves are just for the fun of it.

If you want news about bikes and riders in Venice, write the BEACHHEAD. Perhaps the readers would like to help organize a Venice competition meet.

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Martin P. Abramson
venice wst wntr '62

FREE VENICE!

ORGANIZING COMM. FOR A FREE VENICE: Meeting to organize a secession from Los Angeles for Venice. Organizers, researchers, people with money or ideas, all invited. Every Wed. 8pm. P&F office, 1727 W. Washington Blvd. 399-7681.

COP-FRONTATION (from front page) take notes as near to the scene as he liked.

How do police judge cases of police malpractice, and why are we not informed of disposition of said cases? We were told we could fill out a complaint form at any police facility, and the case would be taken care of by an internal system of judgment within the police department. A black woman stated that in a case she had been involved with, where police had threatened to arrest some young black people just for taking a survey on the beach for the Service Center, she had complained to every level of police channels and had received nothing but a runaround. Lt. Archbold said that when someone files a complaint, he always

gets a letter informing him that the case has been disposed of. Many people replied that they indeed complained, but never had they received such a letter. To prove his point, Lt. Archbold revealed that there were officers on suspension, or just back from suspension, at that time. He refused to comply with a request to give their names, however, indicating that it was not public information. In other words, the officers could return after suspension and harass and hurt citizens again, but citizens could not be made aware of the officers' former offenses. A woman summed up the group's feelings on this matter by pointing out that police are punished anonymously, while people who have not yet been brought to trial find their names in the pa-

pers. But if charges are later dropped or reduced, this is not likely to get coverage. She added that although a policeman might get reprimanded, fined or suspended, it does not mean loss of his job; when a person is thrown in jail, causing possible loss of job and accumulation of debts from bail and legal costs, the police take no blame for it.

A meeting with some of the officers was requested, to talk over some of the same subjects. Lt. Archbold responded that of course any meeting for a good purpose was fine, but that he would not have his officers "vilified." The response was made that being made aware of complaints and conditions in the community resulting from police action is not villification.

Dear BEACHHEAD,

I enjoyed myself very much at the family reunion that was held at Westminster Park. The children, the bands, and the people were delightful. But I want to know one thing. There were a lot of men who took pictures of me. They were very nicely dressed young men. But they kept to themselves. I asked one of them if they would send me some pictures (glossy 8"x10") so I could have a souvenir of a beautiful

day. They didn't even answer me. May I suggest that you hire more agreeable photographers?

Yours truly,
Lucretia Naive

P.S. I want to thank our Boys in Blue for defending the Park. I really felt safe with all those police cars around and the blinking red lights gave it sort of a Christmas atmosphere, don't you think?

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EDITORIAL

The BEACHHEAD staff agrees with the following statement distributed by the Venice Peace and Freedom Party and the Free Venice Organizing Committee at the two recent Human Relations Commission hearings on Los Angeles' master plan for Venice:

"AN ALTERNATIVE

"Generally, we believe that the basis of human dignity is the ability of people to make the decisions that affect their lives -- to order their own private lives as they choose and to decide collectively with their peers on matters of collective concern.

VENICE & THE MASTER'S PLAN

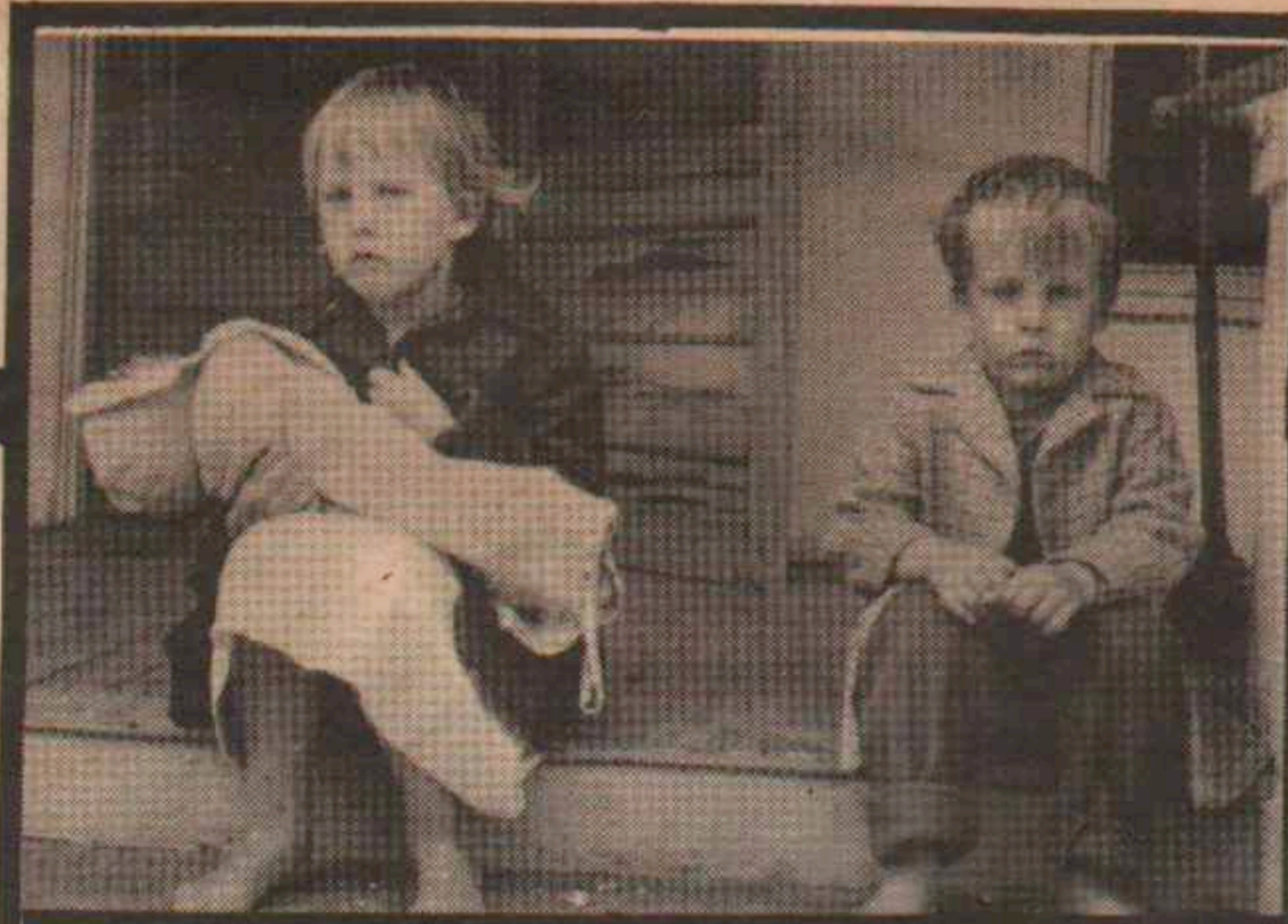
RICK DAVIDSON

This article is the second in a series, directed toward the problem of humanizing urbanization. A series conceived as beginning with the general and progressing to the specific. Logically, this article should still be in the general, but due to the immediacy of the hour relative to the master plan for Venice, being prepared by the L.A. City Planning Department, the 2 public meetings of last week should be mentioned. Meetings set up by the Human Relations Bureau (H.R.B.) for the purpose of discussing Venice's future and who will be part of it. For those who were unable to attend, they went something as follows:

Most segments of Venice were present. Noticeable exceptions were marina, canal and peninsula residents. At the front of the auditorium (Broadway School) sat the Housing Commission of the H.R.B. and about the room was a panel of experts: representatives from the planning, building and safety, parks and recreation and highway departments. Max Mont, H.R.B. Commissioner, opened each meeting with an excessive string of words aimed at convincing the audience that the H.R.B.'s only purpose in setting up the meetings was to help the poor people of Venice. The majority was unconvinced.

"Specifically, since a large segment of the Venice Community subsists at the poverty level, any plans, graphic, written or verbal should attempt to solve Venice's poverty problems--problems which the Los Angeles Planning Department has admitted are beyond their scope, and thus the reason why their specific plans for Venice do not deal with the poverty issue.

"Therefore, if solutions are beyond our Planning Department's ability, then the mayor, the city council and any and all depart-



WHERE DO THEY GO FROM HERE?

Photo by Fred Burkhart

Questions and statements were directed to the Commissioners and panel of experts who responded in typical bureaucratic fashion: "Sorry, I don't know about that. That's not under my department." Mr. Mitchell, from the Community Redevelopment Agency, proved to be the heavyweight on the team when he suggested that the solution to Venice's poverty problems lies with a new HUD (Housing and Urban Development) home improvement program -- a program where direct loans are made to owners of four units or less, for the purpose of upgrading their property (all other HUD program are administered through local banks). But the absurdity of Mr. Mitchell's thinking is seen when considered in the light of present and future densities of Venice. The present density is about 20 people per acre; the projected density of one and one half to two times that, or about thirty to forty per acre (an acre is approximately 200 feet square). The loud and direct spoken Mr. Mitchell, when asked about the residents who rented rather than owned their home or apartment,

ments of city government should be made to authorize the formation of whatever body is required in order to seek out and solve the problems of Venice's poor. The findings of such a body should be subject to the approval of Venice residents only.

"Furthermore, until such a body is formed, all plans should be shelved and the present level of rents and property taxes should be considered maximum. This should continue as long as necessary."

Whether or not the Los Angeles government approves, we should act now to create a representative body of Venice residents to make our own plans to meet our own needs. Free Venice!

lowered his voice and became less comprehensible.

To me, the following facts are obvious:

1. All the poor people of Venice share the same hopes, fears and frustrations.
2. The Human Relations Bureau is a public relations committee for the mayor.
3. The various departments reflect the desires of city hall. (L.A. City Hall).
4. The only way the poor minorities can fight city hall is to get together and confront it directly--not through their bureaucratic front runners.

It has also been obvious for a long time that Venice is prime land--too prime for poor people. SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? A meeting has been called, for Thursday, January 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Westminster School, for the purpose of getting Venice's poor together--all the poor--so that a solid front can confront the mayor and city councilmen with demands that Venice's poverty problem be solved here in Venice-- relocation is not a solution. If you feel that you have been down this road before, you are mistaken. Different little groups have gotten themselves together from time to time, but never a united front. We are calling all the poor minorities and all Venice residents who don't want to see Ocean Park's solution used here, to unite.

To give up is to die and the spirit of Venice is alive. Come to the meeting now!



Ho-tai (3 years) lost his puppy (10 weeks) Tuesday PM on Horizon near Main. Black + grey female, Shepherd and Huskie (?) -- Sloppy right ear; lives at 221 1/2 Horizon in Venice, but is too young to find her way home alone. Would someone, please, help her?... and us? Thank you. Merry Christmas.

VENICE OF L.A. (from front page)

to be controlled from the outside in return for financial gain. This to them was better than working with their neighbors to decide for themselves and to provide the reforms and services Venice needed.

The opposite faction felt that the residents' interest in the community was more legitimate and sincere than the speculators' interest. They resisted the idea that others would be making decisions about their community for them. Their slogan: ANNEXATION MEANS SLAVERY.

But LA won Venice. The vote was 3,139 to 2,197. That was in 1925. The LA Chamber of Commerce immediately started announcing

glowing plans for spending \$10,000,000 to make Venice a more famous and glittery amusement park than Coney Island. The canals were on the list, too. They were filled in and paved in 1927. Thus they took in 2 birds with one bulldozer, providing roads for the tourists' automobiles and doing away with the health menace of the canals. Speculators decided to continue in LA's progressive direction by next filling in the lagoon to make way for a shopping center.

As a side note, a court decision was necessary before LA could touch the canals -- Kinney had provided that they should always remain private property in

order to foil just such a plan.

Well, you can see just by looking out your window that a Coney Island we ain't. A Safeway, Post Office and Bank don't make much of a shopping center. What happened to LA's plan for Venice will be discussed next time.

A word of thanks to the LA City Planning Department, which let me come down there to look at their material on Venice. They planned to let us see our past before they let us know our future (see BEACHHEAD editorial). But they haven't been able to get enough money together to print the damn thing. Bodes ill for the future.