

Dr. Strevey helped develop LW concept

Dr. Tracy E. Strevey became enamoured with Leisure World before it became a reality. In the early sixties when he was vice president for academic affairs at the University of Southern California, a young builder named Ross Cortese came to the University to discuss a project to build a community for older and retired persons on a tract of land in southern Orange County.

He requested help from the University in establishing a research program to discover the needs, hopes and desires of such a group and which would cut across many fields such as law, medicine, sociology, social work, psychology and business affairs.

After talking with President Norman Topping and Cortese, Dr. Strevey was asked to create such a committee to research and prepare a report which could serve as a guide in developing both concept and many details of an ideal community.

In return for this study Cortese indicated he would establish a financial gift to the University for the creation of a School of Gerontology.

The committee was established and the work began.

Hundreds of interviews were taken, questionnaires sent out and the various areas brought into focus.

Upon its completion, the report was turned over to Cortese and in a sense became the blueprint for Leisure World. As a result of the financial gift to the University by Cortese, the School of Gerontology was established and today it is the largest and most famous one in the world.

Dr. Strevey has been chosen by Rossmore Corporation as Leisure Worldler for the month of June and his portrait will be hung in the rotunda of the sales office at 10 a.m. June 1 where it will remain for the month and then be presented to Dr. and Mrs. Strevey at a later time. Friends and neighbors of the Streveys are invited to attend the ceremony.

Dr. Strevey is recognized as one of America's outstanding educators and an authority on American history. He served 18 years with USC, first as dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, and later



Dr. Tracy Strevey

as vice president for Academic Affairs. Before coming to California in 1948, he was chairman of the History Department at Northwestern University, and even prior to that had taught history at the University of Chicago and University of Wisconsin.

During his earlier years in college he worked during summers in the railroad shops of the Great Northern Railroad as a machinist helper and as a "mucker" in the Bunker Hill & Sullivan Mines in Kellogg, Idaho, the largest lead and silver mines in the world. He actually began his teaching career as a substitute in a two-teacher high school in southern Oregon near Coquille. Then two years in Seattle as a history teacher and athletic coach. Somewhere in between he managed a short hitch in the Merchant Marine before settling down to graduate study at the University of Chicago.

It was during those many years in higher education that he served on the executive councils and boards of the Academic Deans Association, The American As-

sociation of Higher Education, the Western College Association and as head of accrediting teams to many universities.

In 1955 he was appointed by President Eisenhower to the Historical Publications Commission and to a second term which carried into the administration of President Kennedy. He recalls with fondness being seated between Justice Frankfurter of the Supreme Court and Senator Saltonstall at the meetings of the commission in Washington, D. C. The papers of the presidents and other commentary publication had to clear this commission.

A great deal of time was given to world wide assignments even going back to 1934 when the University of Wisconsin sent Dr. Strevey and two others to the Soviet Union in order to bring back a report on conditions and give a series of lectures to university audiences and by radio over WTMJ in Milwaukee.

He was in Germany in September 1934 and witnessed the marching storm troopers and rise of Hitler as the Third Reich began to take form.

A world traveler, he

June's LWer of month is Dr.

was guest lecturer to India in 1957 for the State Department; chairman of a team to survey the University of Teheran, Iran in 1958; and a member of a survey team to inspect colleges and universities in Nigeria, Ghana, Senega and Morocco in 1968. His travels have also taken him to Russia, Europe, the Middle East, the Orient, India, Eastern and Central Africa, Mexico and Central and South America. He has frequently lectured in various countries for the State Department speaking on American history and the evolution of the American Constitution. One such address was given to the Parliament of India and he reports that he doubts it had any great effect. Heckling in many of these countries by Communists was always expected and usually occurred. "It was best to be prepared and ready to throw it right back by referring to the conditions on their own countries and in Russia by asking, 'Well, why is it that you all want to come to the United States?'"

Though he officially retired from USC in 1967, Dr. Strevey has access to an office at the University, belongs to the President's Council and the Board of Counselors of the School of Gerontol-

ogy and attends monthly meetings. "It's good to keep in contact with your old profession," he says, "but the changes that have occurred in the past ten years are so fantastic that I find it almost like going into a strange community."

He especially sees a change in the student body. At the time he went to Ethiopia, student protests were just beginning, so he missed most of that. "Fortunately, USC did not have the problems that other universities had," he says, "largely because we were able, during the '50's to open up channels of communication between students and administration."

"If people understand they can communicate directly, talk out their problems, then solutions are available. It's when they are in the dark and communications are shut off and rumors float about, that these are magnified. The same occurs in Leisure World when information is inaccurate or not available, people begin to wonder and question and dream up their own answers."

Within a year after the Streveys came to Leisure World, he was elected to the Golden Rain Board where he served three years, the last as presi-

dent. During that time Clubhouse 3 was built, and work started on the building of Clubhouse 4. With Bob Price, he negotiated the purchase of the golf course from Rossmoor Corporation.

Later he served on the Saddleback Community Hospital Board for more than five years and during that time the hospital was built. At present he is president of the Laguna Hills Historical Society and has just ended a term as president of the "Academician Society" composed of retired college and university faculty and administrative personnel.

As Leisure World approaches the end of its growth, Dr. Strevey sees its influence growing continuously through the years. "We are at the center of the Saddleback Valley and in a few years the whole valley will be the center of a great megalopolis," he says. "But more important, is the community and its people. We are known among sociologists as the "elitest" type of retirement communities. We have the greatest reservoir of talent and experience that is concentrated anywhere in the United States - professional individuals, retired executives, educators, lawyers, doctors, ministers, top military officers, politi-

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cal leaders, among others."

This wealth of talent can and should be drawn upon to guide the development and improvement of Leisure World and its surrounding areas.

Dr. Strevey has been unstinting in his talents for Leisure World.