

Historic Mar Vista Lima Bean Field

If you are standing anywhere on the Westside, it is likely you are standing where a lima bean field used to be.

Mar Vista is a particularly rich area for agriculture, always has been. Mar Vista was known as being in the Lima Bean Belt of the Nation.

Back in 1868, a sailor from South America was in Santa Barbara. When asked about the longish green vegetable he was eating, he replied that it grew near his home in LIMA PERU.

Lima Beans from Lima!

Glen Howell, Mar Vista Historical Society historian, says according to Gidney, Brook and Sheridan in The History of Santa Barbara, San Louis Obispo and Ventura Counties California, (published in 1917), in 1868, Henry Lewis planted the first lima beans ever put in the soil of the United States. They could be found all along the coast.

Santa Monica had a lima bean warehouse in 1917, a picture of which is in "Santa Monica, The Early Years". Anawalt Lumber at Sepulveda and Pico was formerly a bean field. Hughes aircraft was a massive bean field. In Westchester, some residents could just lean over the fence and pluck a few. Asked one long time resident how she cooked them. "Boiled them".

Mar Vista celebrates 80 years since Mar Vista became part of Los Angeles. That event is to be celebrated on August 5.

What better way to commemorate Mar Vista History than for some of us to plant a mini-lima bean field. The beans were put in the ground on May 30, just under the Ocean View Farms entry sign on the Southeast corner of Centinela and Rose. Now if the lima beans will cooperate, we'll have beans galore by August 5. Our cool coastal air needs to let the hot sun shine down on these descendents of those beans from Peru.

Watch us grow! Pick up a lima bean recipe at the Mar Vista Historical Society booth on Grandview on August 5. Or guess how many lima beans in the jar. Hold a lima bean cookoff!

History is so fun!!

Visit our website: <http://marvistahistoricalsociety.net/>

