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Mr. James L. Armstrong
 City Administrator
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Dear Mr. Armstrong:

There is a most deserving individual who could be memorialized by naming the new air terminal for him. He is little known today due to his passion for anonymity while he was making innumerable major contributions that clearly were the foundation of the international fame of Santa Barbara as we know it today. In particular, he was the modest driver of Santa Barbara's renaissance following the 1925 earthquake. The list of his contributions, mostly civic but also humanitarian and equestrian, runs several pages. His name; Mr. Dwight Murphy (1884-1968).

As mayor in 1953 Mr. John Rickard, who among other very fine things was a gifted speaker, delivered an extraordinary tribute to Mr. Murphy in presenting him with the "Man of the Year" award and cited dozens of his contributions to Santa Barbara, and in fact the entire state, that were truly staggering. (It was about this point in his life, age 70, that Murphy finally let his associates -- and publisher Tom Storke, his best friend and monopolizer of the local press -- start to reveal his uncanny and unstinting efforts.) Upon his death in 1968 Dwight Murphy's editorial column obituary stated: Once in 1953 he was named Santa Barbara's "Man of the Year". He was in fact, as much as any local resident, the "Man of the Century". He still deserves that accolade.

Overcoming earthquake, Great Depression, World War II and much civic indifference Dwight Murphy was clearly the genius behind Santa Barbara's renaissance becoming founder, chairman, donor and moving force of many projects including: The 1927 airport site selection committee; development and long term preservation and success of Fiesta and the horse shows including acquisition of the fairgrounds and most of the municipal golf course land; building of the fairgrounds; city's conversion to Spanish themed architecture (Plans and Planting sponsor, founded and chaired City Master Planning Committee following 1925 earthquake); as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission, quadrupling of the developed park system and lining miles of streets with trees completely changing the city's urban landscape (Invented unemployed relief programs concept and when adopted nationally headed California's programs); personal acquisition for the city of the entire beach front from Milpas to Santa Barbara Streets and back to the railroad right of way (repaid by bond issue); underwrote bond issue for the two beachfront blocks from Santa Barbara to State Streets; acquisition and rehabilitation of Stearns Wharf with acquisition for the city of the beach front from State to Chapala Streets; the breakwater which also created Leadbetter Beach and most of East Beach (funded feasibility studies, handled Major Max Fleischmann's donations and paid workmen on own when contractor failed); A. Childs estate property acquisition and development of the zoo, and Bradbury Dam/Tecolote Tunnel/South Coast Water Distribution System (pushed for essential election vote and Federal funds). These just scratch the surface. (For a full list see page 227 of *California's Knight on a Golden Horse*). For several decades it was unusual for anyone or any organization to undertake a project or cause without asking Mr. Murphy to become either its leader or major participant. He also was clearly the city's greatest humanitarian from 1920 until his death in 1968. And, as California State Horse Racing Board commissioner for 16 years, eight as chairman, single handedly eliminated corruption rife in the industry. Also, he saved from extinction the Golden Palomino, the ceremonial royal horse of Spain.

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It is worth noting that Major Max Fleischmann relegated much of the detail work of most of his very substantial philanthropies and donations to Mr. Murphy because the Major was disdainful of detail whereas Mr. Murphy, whose business career included head of the family's large railway equipment business, loved management in all of its aspects. As its treasurer from the founding of the Santa Barbara Foundation in 1928 he was instrumental in its operation and ultimate success and forced, through a threat to quit, the introduction of women both to its board of trustees and membership. From the late 1930's through the Cachuma Reclamation Project of the 1950's, latterly under the sponsorship of the Foundation, he successfully championed efforts to expand the city's water supply. As the city's foremost fund raiser it is likely Dwight Murphy encouraged some of Fleischmann's huge donations, e.g. breakwater, Old Mission restorations.

Quoting from a recent article by William McGurn of the Wall Street Journal: "The purpose of memorials ... is not simply to commemorate a dead past. It is to take out something vibrant from that past to inspire those in the here and now". For forty years this obsessively modest man dedicated his life, fortune and extraordinary genius to Santa Barbara's quality of life, making it much more "vibrant" in the process. No one did more or served as a more outstanding citizenship example.

In researching, at the request of the city's Parks and Recreation Department for its 2001 Centennial, my father's administration of that department from 1930 to 1935, I uncovered some indication of the true extent of Mr. Murphy's extraordinary contributions to Santa Barbara and feeling a part of its vital history would otherwise be lost forever, I became his biographer. Due to his uncanny success in generally avoiding the public eye for 40 years, extensive research was necessary. In the process I concluded a great injustice would be done unless his name was properly memorialized in some appropriate manner.

Realizing the need for increased public awareness of him various publications were produced including: The hardcover biography *California's Knight on a Golden Horse* of which 1,300 copies have been sold locally (Esp. pgs. 103, 139-48, 157-58, 165-68, 170-72, 222-23); the Historical Museum's *Noticias* of Winter 2001 and the double Summer/Autumn of 2005; plus various articles for local news papers and the Montecito Magazine. Also, some two dozen talks with visual projections were given to most local institutions of any significance and service clubs, attendees totaling about 2,000.

Feeling that the city's decision makers, relevant for such a memorial, cannot fully appreciate the significance of Mr. Murphy's impact without doing so, I will most gladly provide copies of the above publications gratis. Such thorough documentation would seem to be required for so important a memorial.

Furthermore, should the new air terminal be named for Mr. Murphy I plan to propose that an enlarged, possibly life sized, version of an impressive Spanish equestrian statuette of Mr. Murphy be placed in front of the new terminal building. (Please refer to page 118 of *California's Knight on a Golden Horse* for photo.) It along with a number of other articles from Mr. Murphy's estate have already been offered for the historical displays planned for the terminal interior.

Given that extensive effort has gone into designing the new terminal building using the Hispanic metaphor, I can think of nothing more suited to dramatically emphasizing that metaphor for newly arriving air passengers to our very special city, special in great measure because Dwight Murphy above all other citizens made it so, particularly as the father and long time sustainer of La Fiesta along with his key role in the adoption of Andalusian style architecture for the business district.

I would personally exert all possible effort to assist in the funding and approval process for such a memorial.



Cc: K. Ramsdell