

## **SOUTH BAY HISTORY: Shamrock Skate Arena**

By SAM GNERRE | Daily Breeze

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### **Shamrock Skate Arena**

(*Torrance, CA.*) The **Shamrock Skate Arena** in Old Torrance delighted generations of children, families and teenagers during its 30-plus years in business.

The old-school wooden roller rink opened at 1851 Mullin Ave. sometime in the mid-1950s and for years did a steady business instructing customers on how to do the hokey pokey on skates.

Its biggest heyday came during the roller-boogie craze that blossomed during the disco era of the late 1970s.

Unfortunately for the **Shamrock**, business tailed off dramatically in the early 1980s after the roller-boogie craze cooled. The last night of public skating at the **Shamrock** was on Aug. 27, 1985.

The **Shamrock** was one of many small businesses on a 26-acre parcel north of Torrance Boulevard and east of Van Ness Avenue in downtown Torrance that was purchased by American Honda Motor Co. and torn down to make way for its U.S. headquarters, which opened in 1990.

The long-gone facility still has its fans, though. A Facebook site devoted to the Shamrock was launched in 2009 and currently boasts more than 800 followers.

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Sam Gnerre has worked for the Daily Breeze in Torrance since 1984. He grew up in Fontana, Calif., and is a graduate of Fontana High School. He earned a B.A. in English literature from the University of California, Riverside, and a Master's degree in library science from UCLA. He was hired at the Daily Breeze in 1984 to help with the conversion of the paper's manual clip file system to an online database of archived stories. Currently, he writes the paper's weekly News Quiz, does a weekly music CD review, and researches and writes local history articles for the South Bay History blog, in addition to his current duties as a night website editor for the Southern California News Group.

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