

# Class Size Fires Sense Of History

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Staff Writer

David Worsfold, who for 24 years served as secretary of the Palms Chamber of Commerce, picked up his Star-News-Vanguard and read the list of June graduates from Palms Junior High School.

The total number was 417.

A bell began to ring in Worsfold's memory. Somehow, that number 417 had special significance.

Worsfold, who happens to be recognized as just about the best-informed authority on the history of the west area, carries more information around in his head than an IBM.

Suddenly he remembered.

Back in 1880, the census for the whole area west of Hoover Street—the Los Angeles boundary at that time—listed exactly 417 inhabitants.

Just to check on his memory, Worsfold looked it up. He was correct.

"In 1880," Worsfold said, "Ballona Township was a great area extending from the summit of the Santa Monica Mountains to the Palos Verdes Hills, then to Exposition Park and north along Hoover Street.

"There was a settlement, railroad station and a post office called Machado where Palms is now located. But the village of Santa Monica had most of the people—the rest were scattered on ranches and farms.

"Ballona Township had more animals than people for sure. There were 30,000 head of sheep, 2,000 beef cattle and 300 dairy cows.

"This same area today has 10 incorporated cities, more than 20 well known communities and a population approaching a million. The tremendous growth and change in a period of 83 years is difficult to visualize—a staggering evolution from a pastoral era to the space age."

"Persons interested in history," reflected Worsfold, "will note that the number 417 was just a statistic out of the distant past. Now that same number pops up because Palms Junior High School had that number of graduates."