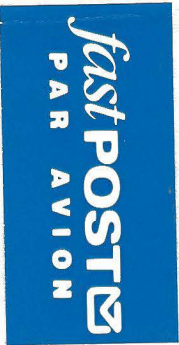


Sender: Farquhar  
15 Nottingham St  
Wellington 5,  
New Zealand



The Director,  
Monrovia Chamber of Commerce,  
620 S. Myrtle Ave,  
MONROVIA, CA 91016,  
U. S. A.



fax (818) 578. 6380

15 Nottingham St  
Wellington 5  
New Zealand.

tel/fax: (64-4) 476. 8146

12 Jan 95.

The Editor  
Monrovia News-Post  
34 E Huntington Drive  
Arcadia, CA 91006, USA.

Dear Editor,

Can you help me, or offer advice  
where to enquire?

I attach on page 2 a cutting from  
the Monrovia Newspaper (the News-Post?) of  
May 2, 1922. The little girl referred to is  
Raydia d'Elsa, now my wife. After her  
mother's death, she was taken to Dublin and  
cared for by her mother's family; when  
her father remarried she was brought to  
New Zealand at the end of 1924, aged  
2½.

We would like to visit Monrovia  
and see her birthplace, and wonder if the  
house her parents built is still there, and  
identifiable? All we know is that the house,  
in Nurembega Heights, was intended to be the  
beginning of a community called the Alma  
Centre. The house faced south, with a  
garage underneath an octagonal living-room.

and in 1922 you could see  
45 miles to the California  
Coast and oil-derricks!

If you could answer  
my queries about the house  
in Nurembega Heights, or  
advise me where to write,  
or perhaps pass this letter  
on to the appropriate person,  
I would be most grateful.

Yours sincerely,  
David Farquhar.

May 2(?) 1922

WEATHER: Fair tonight and with fog or clou

ONROVIA, CALIFORNIA, TUESDAY, MAY

ND  
ES  
BUSY

HELD SIMPLE SERVICE  
'NEATH SPREADING OAK

NE

In the great outdoors, with rug-  
ged hills for a background, and in  
the shadow of a spreading oak  
standing before the almost-comple-  
ted home which had been planned  
with such infinite care, a simple  
funeral service was conducted yes-  
terday afternoon by the Rev. George  
E. Swan, of St. Luke's Episcopal  
church for Sophia Luise d'Elsa, wife  
of Guy d'Elsa, who died in the Ha-  
ben hospital last Saturday morning.

Mr. d'Elsa had been working hard  
to finish the house he had been  
building for his wife and the little  
girl who arrived just three weeks  
ago, but the call to the "other side"  
came before he had the task com-  
pleted. By his special wish and in  
accordance with what he thought  
his wife would have desired, he ar-  
ranged for the obsequies to be held  
there, amid the hills she had so  
grown to love.

Some time ago Mr. and Mrs.  
d'Elsa, after traveling all over the  
continent, found in Nurembega  
Heights, to the northeast of the  
city, what they considered the ideal  
setting for their home. They pur-  
chased a ten-acre tract, which in-  
cludes a number of canyons, and  
decided to perch their home right  
on one of the hillsides.

The service was brief and simple  
and the remains were then taken to  
Pasadena for cremation. Only a  
few friends were present at the  
ceremony.

late born 10<sup>th</sup> April.

ENGINEER REAGAN

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The Director,  
Monrovia Chamber of Commerce,  
620 S. Myrtle Ave  
Monrovia, CA 91016

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15 Nottingham St  
Wellington 5  
New Zealand  
tel/fax: (64-4) 476.8146

1 Feb 95

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Dear Director,

The attached letter to the Editor of the Monrovia News-Post has just been returned to me as "undeliverable" — I gather the paper must have gone out of business.

Your organisation was suggested to me by the American Embassy here as a possible avenue to answer my enquiry. Can you help? — or pass this on to someone ~~of~~ who can? — perhaps a land-agent in the Nuremberg Heights area could advise whether the house still exists...?

I'd hope to hear from you,  
— and hope also that the recent frosts haven't hit Monrovia...

Yours sincerely

David Farquhar

512 S. Ivy Avenue  
Monrovia, CA 91016-2828  
March 12, 1995

Mr. David Farquhar  
15 Nottingham Street  
Wellington 5, New Zealand

Dear Mr. Farquhar,

Your letter of 1 Feb 1995 was sent on to me by the Monrovia Chamber of Commerce. I serve as the official historian for the City of Monrovia, and Darlene Rios of the chamber thought I might be of some help to you. I read your letter with great interest, and have spoken with several long time residents of the Norumbega Drive area of the city, asking about the unusual house with the octagonal living room. I have also asked several local realtors, thinking they might have heard of such a house. So far the responses have been in the negative. Most recently, at the suggestion of Susan Motander, who herself lives on Norumbega Drive, I copied your letters and Susan kindly took them by a local beauty salon frequented by many of Monrovia's long time residents. Hopefully one of the patrons may have heard of the house.

I am a member of St. Luke's Parish, and recognized from the obituary the name of The Rev. George E. Swan. Mr. Swan was a dynamic churchman, responsible for the present church constructed in 1925. Several Sundays ago I went down to the church archives in the basement and located the old burial register. The following is a transcription of the entry:

Sophie Louise d'Elsey, female, 40 years of age, baptized and confirmed.  
Died in Monrovia April 29, 1922. Cause of death: blood poisoning.  
Disposition of remains: Pasadena Crematory. Service held May 1, 1922.

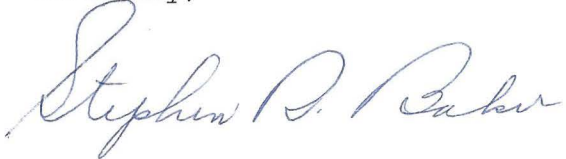
The Haben Hospital still exists, although its name is now the Monrovia Community Hospital.

There is one other possibility for locating the house or the site thereof, and that is the deed recorded at the Los Angeles County Recorder's Office. It would give a complete legal description, and given that information and the maps of the area in the public works department at the Monrovia City Hall, it should be possible to determine the location. Unfortunately the recorder's office is open only during the hours I normally work, but I will try to find several spare hours to make the trip.

I read with interest of the Alma Centre, as I had not previously heard of such a project. I would be grateful for any additional information you might have.

I will fax this letter to the number you provided. If you would like my fax number at work, it is (818) 305-7686. I look forward to hearing from you, and hope to have some concrete information to report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen R. Baker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Stephen R. Baker

Stephen R. Baker  
 512 S. Ivy Avenue  
 Monrovia CA 91016-2828  
 fax: (818) 305-7686,

15 Nottingham St  
 Wellington 5  
 N.Z.

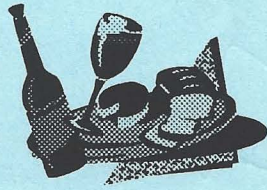
Dear Mr. Baker,  
 Thank you so much for your letter, for all the trouble you've taken and for all the information you've been able to find. It really is most kind of you.

I don't know that I can tell you anything about the Alma Centre. As I understand it from Sophie's letters, she hoped that like-minded people would join them on the Norembega Heights property, build houses there and make a community. We have the impression that she and her husband had belonged to communities on their travels through Canada and Florida, and that these communities were based around spiritual, theosophical ideas.

Rayna sends her warmest thanks too — we'll both be delighted and fascinated if you are able to locate the house — if it still exists!

Good luck and very best wishes: David Farquhar





# PARTY PARTY PARTY

SUNDAY

JUNE 25, 1995

555 NORUMBEGA DR.

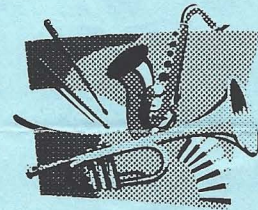
1 PM - ???

MONROVIA, CA 91016

RICK AND KAREN NORMAN

INVITE YOU TO CELEBRATE:

OUR NEW HOME  
SUMMER  
OUR 4TH ANNIVERSARY  
LIFE



LIVE MUSIC - THE BLUE ROOM BOYS

KIDS AND VISITING RELATIVES WELCOME

PLEASE BRING YOUR FAVORITE POT-LUCK DISH

CALL KAREN AT 818/357-0156 FOR SUGGESTIONS/RSVP

*P.S. We are the 8 sided living room w/ garage under house -  
D'Else's father built etc . . . .*



Attn: Steve Baker

Rapida called us Mon. eve. in response to our fax to her.  
Had a nice chat. Will you in later. They may try to come  
Sept. - Oct. ?

You have our ph.

heres our fax at work 818 575 3756

See ya!

Rick + Karen of the  
8 sided living room

Res: P.D. 19 days  
Ca 3 mos  
U.S. 1 yr 6 mos

Prof William Guy  
Monrovia, Cal

DOB 4/29/22

Att'd 3/2/22  
4/29/22

alini 4/28/22  
2:45 a.m.

Case Purpural Septicemia

Cont'd 16 days  
Septicemia Venenata  
40 days

L. A. Co.

1922 1767

GUY, SOPHIA L.

Sophia Luisa d'Elea Guy  
Haben Hosp.

F W M

Wm Guy

7/6/1882 40/9/23

Hawaii

BP Ireland

NOF Marquiesoni (S.K.)

BP of Saxony

M N O M

BP of Ireland