

Fairview Register



Monthly Publication of the Costa Mesa Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3)
Member: Conference of California Historical Societies, National Trust for Historic
Preservation & American Association for State and Local History

VOLUME: 163 No. 28 EDITOR: Annette Watson 949-631-5918 DATE: May 2016
Website address: www.costamesahistory.org E-mail address: cmhistory@sbcglobal.net

President's Message

SANTA ANA ARMY AIR BASE
DISPLAY CASE

By Our President Dave Gardner

We at the historical society are truly blessed to be a part of world history. On June 19th, 1941, the Air Base came in to being because the government anticipated that we would be brought into the war in Europe sooner or later. Our Society's exhibit shows such things as text books, a history of the air base, many pictures, artifacts and a plaque dedicated to the memory of the men and women who went through the air base from 1942 – 1946. In years past, the historical society would put on an all-day program for people to attend, featuring many displays, pictures, and photos of the graduating classes. It was a big job. We would set the displays up on Friday and take down late on Saturday night. To this day, we still have pictures at the building site. As many as 500 people would show up for the reunion which was held at Orange Coast College.

Moving on to how Costa Mesa and the Harbor area were affected, the whole country went to rationing of various items; namely, sugar, gasoline, tires and meat. Each household received a book of ration stamps which determined how much gasoline you could buy, when you could buy tires, and how much sugar you could purchase. As I remember, some black marketing went on, although I don't think it was very much. Costa Mesa did not suffer from having to be blacked out at night. However, Newport Beach was blacked out every night for several years. If you were driving down Newport Blvd. towards Newport Beach, at 15th Street, you had to turn your headlights off and drive with only your parking lights. It was a little scary. We only went to Newport Beach about six times during the war years. All of the houses along the beach in Newport had to be completely blacked out. People called block wardens would walk the streets and if you had any light showing, they would bang on your door and tell you to fix the problem. Since this country was not ready for a military attack from Japan, there were no defenses what so ever along the coast. All we had after the
(President's Message continued on page 3)

Mark Your 2016 Calendar

Sunday, May 22nd, 2016 from 1 to 4pm at the Neighborhood Community Center; a very special program is being planned honoring the Society's 50th Anniversary. Be sure to **"Save the Date."** (Also see enclosed flier and articles on page 3.)



Sunday Speaker Programs

Sunday, June 26, 2016, Speaker: Historian Craig MacDonald will speak about Ulysses S. Grant's time in California. There will be more details in June's newsletter.

Special Events

Third 50th Anniversary Celebration: Sunday August 28th 2016 from 2 to 6pm at the Diego Sepulveda Adobe. Again, Save the Date!

The Adobe Schedule: On the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month the Diego Sepulveda Adobe at 1900 Adams Ave. is open from 12 to 4pm. Individuals and groups can make appointments to tour the Adobe **at other times** by calling 949-631-5918. On regular open days, no appointment is necessary because the docents are there already.

The Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum is located at 1870 Anaheim Avenue in Costa Mesa; this is a non-mailing address. Museum hours: 10-3 Thursdays and Fridays and by appointment. Our mailing address is: Costa Mesa Historical Society P.O. Box 1764, Costa Mesa, CA 92628. Questions? Call 949-631-5918, email us at cmhistory@sbcglobal.net or find us on Facebook.

Promoting and preserving Costa Mesa's history is our mission.

Costa Mesa Historical Society News

April's Sunday Speaker Program



To survive an airplane crash during World War II is quite a miracle and the story that goes with that is always amazing. And so it was when Steve Snyder presented his father's story from the book he wrote "Shot Down: The true story of Howard Snyder and the crew of the B-17 Susan Ruth."



After Steve retired in 2009 he soon began his quest to learn more about his father's experiences as a fighter pilot and his crew on the Susan Ruth, a plane named after Steve's older sister. He read the many letters his father had sent his mother during his time away and this sparked even more interest. He said his father never really talked about his experiences until about the mid-1990's which was so typical of this generation's soldiers. Steve said he wished he had asked his Dad more questions throughout the latter period of his Dad's life...his father died at age 91 in 2007.



Steve passionately continued his research reading as much as possible about World War II during the time his father was involved in it—even finding out that Hans Berger, now 92 years old, shot his father down. After four and a half years he completed and self-published the book which is well-respected, having received seventeen awards as well as being placed in air museums and the Smithsonian Institute. Steve is very involved with World War II organizations and goes to many reunions and he has met and talked with Hans and discussed war experiences with him.

In 1942 Howard received training in Costa Mesa at the Santa Ana Army Air Base and then was stationed in England. On February 8th 1944 his plane was shot down over the French/Belgium border after a mission to bomb Frankfurt, Germany. Flying was very dangerous and mid air collisions were not uncommon; anti-aircraft on the ground could easily shoot through the plane's thin aluminum sides; the elements caused big problems as the planes were not pressurized; and, the men wore harnesses but the parachutes themselves were not worn, they were placed around the plane so pilots had to find them if they needed them. Steve said, "During 1942 and 1943 there were devastating losses."

When the Susan Ruth was shot down in 1944 Howard was the last to bail out and wound up hanging in a bunch of trees in a Belgium farmers field. He left in the middle of the night in the rain on a bicycle with shrapnel in his leg bothering him. He had several close calls to being captured. He then joined the French resistance and after seven months he was liberated. Later he found out that two crew members died, others were sent to prison camps and some were unaccounted for. After about eight months Howard was able to go home.

(Pictures: Sid Halburn leads the flag salute; Steve Snyder discusses his father's experiences with Society members, Dan and Sharon Dearing and Mark and Jeanne Krogh waiting for the presentation to begin.)

"We are Family"



Yes, Society members rallied around one of its own, Vice President of Membership Dana Kurzbard-Kelsen, during her first Art Exhibit at Coastline College's new facility on Monrovia in Newport Beach. "Family away from Family" is how we describe being with our Society volunteers.

Dana, a hard-working volunteer, is a fine artist who has decided to begin her career in art, and her booth had Society members enjoying her various projects. Her family and friends joined in too. The evening was festive and fun and seeing the various artists submissions in an Ikea "Ribba" frame was very interesting. We here at the Society wish Dana the best in her new endeavors. *(Pictures: From Top From left: Jacob Dixon—Dana's "little" brother—and Dana; Dana and fellow artist Jenna, Dana and _____; Jacob, Mary Ellen Goddard, Dana and Art Goddard, Linda and Jim Bradford, Annette Watson, Mari and Bob Palazzola and Dana)*



A Downward Spiral Can be a Good Thing



This month's "Step Back in Time" article features international sculptor and painter Lita Albuquerque's "Legend"—a public works project on the Orange Coast College campus on Fairview across the street from Costa Mesa High School. It was located near OCC's Peterson Gymnasium and the Administration Building. This environmental sculpture was built or "dug" in 1985, opening in 1986.

At the entrance of this "experiential, rather than visual" art installation was a poem on a cement slab situated between two ten and a half foot high cement columns; initiating a contemplative mood the poem said "Looking in the mirror is the key to your own center and to your own time." Beds of bougainvillea and a circle of eucalyptus trees created a path to the spiral (fifty feet in diameter) which had a grass ramp leading twelve feet down into the ground. This provided a very tranquil, meandering journey where you could gaze up into the sky as the harsh sounds of traffic on Fairview slowly became a hum and the silence of your meditative mood heightened.



At the bottom of "Legend" was a small bowl where a twenty foot cement column stands, capped by a reflective copper oval that Lita said represents a mirror. "The mirror also reflects the world as it is right now," Lita explained. Lita hoped that the peaceful atmosphere of "Legend" would lead participants to become aware of themselves and their place in the environment.

In 2004 OCC's Theater Department performed Sophocles' Electra, one of the great tragedies of ancient Greek literature, in "Legend."

Somewhere between 2004 and now, this small "park" was transformed into another parking lot. As they say, "Things change, but memories last forever." And that is certainly true for all who nostalgically reminisce about their walks through "Legend." *(Pictures show approximately where "Legend" was located: Parking lot looking across at Costa Mesa High School's new Performing Arts Center, the Captain's Table, and the new Watson Hall which replaced OCC's original library.)* Information provided by articles in the LA Times and OCC press releases.)

President's Message...continued

war started, were naval gun emplacements along the bluff, where Superior Road and Pacific Coast Highway meet. After the war, they took the guns out but left the tunnels. We used to ride our bikes through the tunnels. Also during the war, there were a couple of wooden towers that people stood in, looking for enemy planes. I worked at the one that was located at the Santa Ana River and Victoria St. I remember working with Pink Pinkley who owned the drug store.

The Lighter Than Air Base in Tustin was built to hold blimps that patrolled out over the ocean looking for Japanese submarines. They would fly down Santa Ana Ave. about seven in the morning and fly back up the Santa Ana River at dusk. When we were working in the tower, looking for enemy airplanes, we would wave at the blimps when they flew over us. On a given night, between Long Beach and Los Angeles, search lights went on and anti-aircraft guns were fired. When the air raid siren sounded, the city went completely dark. The city of Costa Mesa had one black out during the entire war. We were very lucky people.

Reminders

“OC History Exposition”
is a free event
from 1 to 4pm on Sunday, May 22nd,
at the Neighborhood Community Center,
1845 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa.

“OC History Exposition”

The Society's 50th Anniversary Celebratory Year continues with “OC History Exposition” for its second event. Featured on May 22nd will be keynote speakers who will talk about how information will be collected and saved in the future as collection methods change and new digital technologies are developed. The event will definitely direct us all into a “Future Forward” mindset.

Joining us will be local history groups, museums, authors of local history books, and more, bringing exhibits about themselves, books written, etc. We think you will be glad you attended!

Attention: “OC History Exposition” Exhibitors

For those who want to participate by having a table with their organization's brochures, displays and perhaps some items to sell please call us at 949-631-5918 or email us at cmhistory@sbcglobal.net and we will send you a table reservation form which is also available on our website— it is very important that you ***respond by May 9th*** so that the Society can begin preparing to include you in this event. Space is limited and reservations will be on a first come, first served basis. We at the Society welcome the opportunity to make your experience with us phenomenally amazing.

New Display features selections from Prolific Costa Mesa Author Nell Marburger's collection displayed in a case from Costa Mesa's iconic Pink's Drug Store.

Information Please! Nancy Pedersen is currently working on a project about Costa Mesa boat building. She would like to find photos of the businesses as well as of the employees building the boats. You can call the society at ***949-631-5918*** and say your message is for Nancy Pedersen, and leave your phone number--she will promptly return your call.



Take a Piece of Costa Mesa with you wherever you go or ***Give a Piece of Costa Mesa to friends and family members:*** now you can buy one (or more) of our ***Limited Edition Pens*** which are available in our gift shop for ***\$2 + Tax.***

Marc and Denise Dionio
Independent Owners/Operators
Costa Mesa Grocery Outlet
1835 Newport Blvd., Ste C140
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

**Grocery Outlet
bargain market**

(949)642-5800 Office costamesa@groceryoutlet.com
(949)642-5803 Fax groceryoutlet.com
facebook.com/CostaMesaGroceryOutlet

Thank You, Copy4Less

Our newsletter printer, Copy4Less at 4360 Campus Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660 near the John Wayne Airport, is discounting our printing costs throughout our 50th Anniversary Year. Their phone number is (949)252-8960. Thank you so much for this; we appreciate this very much, Copy4Less.

In Search of More Sponsors

Our Society is looking for sponsors to help us create our very special events throughout the year. If you or a business you know would like to help us with donations and discounts, please let us know. As a non-profit our budget is very limited so additional financial assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Are Your Dues Overdue?

Your dues are important because they help to support the Society's major programs and projects. You can locate your Dues Expiration Date by looking on ***YOUR NEWSLETTER LABEL...***it is there to the right of your name... as a reminder. If your dues are due, just send a check to our Museum (see ***mailing address below***); Attention: Susan Weeks. Or drop by in person on a Thursday or a Friday from 10am to 3pm. ***Changes to Annual Membership Dues: As of January 1st, membership fees will be changed as indicated in Membership Information Box on page 4. Editor's Note: Life Membership to the Costa Mesa Historical Society has been changed to \$500.***

COSTA MESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O BOX 1764
COSTA MESA, CA. 92628
Phone (949) 631-5918

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL



NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SANTA ANA, CA
PERMIT NO. 4352

**Costa Mesa Historical Society
P.O. Box 1764
Costa Mesa CA 92628**

— Membership Form —

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

New Member

Renewal

Annual	Membership Categories		Special
Individual	\$ 20.00	Historical Society Life Member	\$ 500.00
Individual Senior (60+)	\$ 15.00	SAAAB Wing Annual Member	\$ 10.00
Family	\$ 25.00		
Student (under 16)	\$ 10.00		
Contributing	\$ 50.00		
Business & Professional	\$100.00		
Public Agency	\$100.00		
Benefactor	\$250.00		

Make your checks payable to the Costa Mesa Historical Society.
The Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, operates under the Corporation Laws of the State of California.