

# 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: 160 No. 25 EDITOR: Annette Watson 949-631-5918 DATE: April 2015  
Website address: [www.costamesahistory.org](http://www.costamesahistory.org) E-mail address: [cmhistory@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmhistory@sbcglobal.net)

## President's Message

### Are you the one?

Costa Mesa, like many other cities, has a rich and interesting history full of events that helped shape and define it. We know what events took place and when, but first hand accounts and inside information are not always available.

Fortunately, there are people in our community that have been witness to some of these events, some may have even been involved. Unfortunately, there are many of those people that haven't come forward to share what they know because of one reason or another. Maybe they don't know that we are constantly looking for people like them to fill in the history gaps.

For instance, were you there on June 29, 1953 when Costa Mesa was incorporated and do you recall the slogan: "If your heart's in Costa Mesa, vote for incorporation"?

How about the first Newport Pop Festival at the OC fairgrounds, August 3-4, 1968?

Maybe you were part of the movement in 1973 that helped designate 257 acres as open space between Placentia and the Santa Ana River, which is now known as Fairview Park. Did you attend the opening of the Orange County Performing Arts Center in 1986?

Do you have knowledge of anyone who was affected by the construction of Triangle Square, which opened in 1991?

The events mentioned above are only a very tiny fraction of those that are a part of Costa Mesa's history. There are untold stories about these and other events in the city's past. We know that someone out there has a story we haven't heard.

*Are you the one?*

*Bob Palazzola*

## Mark Your 2015 Calendars Sunday Speaker Programs

**Sunday, April 19th, Speaker: Robert V.**



**"Bobby" McDonald**, president and executive director of the Black Chamber of Commerce of Orange County, will speak about the History of the Buffalo Soldiers. He is a member of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> (Horse) Cavalry Association—Buffalo Soldiers. (See *flier for details*).

**New Requirement For Attending Sunday Speaker Programs:**  
Now **reservations** will be needed for attending our popular Sunday Speaker Programs. (See "New Requirement" page 2)

**Sunday speaker programs, unless otherwise noted, are held at the Costa Mesa Historical Society Museum, 1870 Anaheim Ave., Northwest Corner of Lions Park Complex. Doors open at 2pm; Program begins 2:30. Please arrive early as seating is limited. Free admission and refreshments. Any questions: Call 949-631-5918, email us at [cmhistory@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmhistory@sbcglobal.net), or find us on Facebook.**

## Special Events



The **Gems from a Shoebox Photo Exhibit at OCC** will continue through April 17<sup>th</sup>. The location is the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the OCC Arts Center. (See "Gems" on page 2)

**April 24-26: OC Fair Imaginology Youth Expo** featuring family friendly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) activities. (See "Imaginology" on page 2)

**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 by calling 949-631-5918.

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

### “New Requirement” *continued*

For reasons of safety, we need to limit occupancy in our museum at any one time. So please call the Society anytime at 949-631-5918 and leave your name, number and the total of how many will be attending. Or call Thursday or Friday between the hours of 10am and 3pm and talk to one of our volunteers who will register you for the program. We will then hold your reservations until 2:20pm the day of the program.

### “Gems” *continued*

You will want to park in Lot D on Merrimac Way



where there are **parking meters and their fee is 25 cents per half hour....so remember your quarters.** (See “Reception: A Nice Touch for Photo Exhibit” on column 2.

### “Imaginology” *continued*

The Society will be sharing a booth with OCME (Orange County Model Engineers) who sponsors Costa Mesa’s annual Scarecrow Festival in October. So come and join the fun...and learn a lot! For more information about Imaginology check <http://www.ocfair.com/steam/2015/index.php>

## Costa Mesa Historical Society News Reception: A Nice Touch for Photo Exhibit



Over a two year period from 2010 to 2012 Society member Richard Bagley brought a huge collection of 6,000 photographs into the Historical Society Museum and as Art Goddard went through them he selected 40 of them to include in a historic retrospective that became the current Gems from A Shoebox Exhibit at OCC’s Arts Center. Art took on this challenge of photo restoration and the making of the prints as a personal project in mid 2014. Through various contacts at OCC it was decided that the Exhibit would be set up on the Arts Center’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, which also permanently houses the Society’s Gremlin Murals from the Santa Ana Army Air Base of World War II.

At the reception on March 11<sup>th</sup> Art gave a tour of the photographs and explained the details that emerged to him as he worked on the restoration project—details that weren’t noticed when he first viewed them. Examples included a wedding ring on a lady wearing a man’s army uniform and the kind of medal on that uniform, which implied that she was wearing the uniform of her wounded or dead husband. Light refreshments were served and people gathered around and chatted as they enjoyed viewing the enlarged and restored prints of the photographs.



The various categories that Art established displayed a panorama of life in the early to mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century: In Another Time, Working

Folk, Early Color (photography), Dressed Up, Childhood, Greater Los Angeles and Bagley Family Photos. Art said that he was drawn to the various photos in the exhibit because of historic content, composition and the timeless humanity expressed in the photos.

Some examples include the following: In “Early Color” had Mark Twain’s daughter Clara Clemens, her husband and daughter photographed in a lovely garden setting; in “Working Folk”, Cannibal Girl Zoma is featured in her native costume; in “Childhood” a little girl at the beach displays a timeless scene; “Everything Dear” shows a family sitting on a car runner...family pet, children, parents with the family home reflected on the car door; “Confirmation Day” shows a young girl in her homemade, yet elegant dress, with her sponsor getting ready for that coming of age Sacrament; and, in “Another Time” showed a couple each eating a huge piece of watermelon.

The Exhibit continues through April 17th and provides a very worthwhile journey through life’s special moments, moments we can all identify with.

(Pictures in article on column 1: Top: Art starts the tour and sister and brother Lupe and Richard Davila are already enjoying themselves; also enjoying the exhibit are: 2nd: Mari Palazzola, Mary Ellen Goddard and Mary Hornbuckle; 3rd: Kathy Bequette, Susan Weeks, and Dana and Eric Kelsen; and 4th: Bob Palazzola, Tess Bernstein and Cindy Humphreys)

## Inspiration in Abundance at Dennis Holland Program



Dennis Holland followed his dream to become a master shipbuilder and along the way he inspired others to follow their dreams. He became a person of legendary stature as he managed building his ship against great odds, working as a carpenter and raising his

family of four with his high school sweetheart Betty. Dennis’ son Dennis Jr., longtime friend (since he was 7 years old) and journalist Eric Longabardi and Dennis’ wife Betty chronicled the life of this phenomenal person.



As a child he loved to build model ships and as time went on the ships got larger and larger with the culmination of his career being the completion of The Pilgrim, a replica of a 118 foot Revolutionary War-era tall ship in the front yard of his Costa Mesa home. After 13 years of hard work The Pilgrim was launched in Newport Harbor as an estimated 2500 people watched this handcrafted vessel first touch the water.

To save money and earn money at the same time the Holland family moved from the home on their Eastside Costa Mesa lot to the ship and lived there for 7 years. Stories circulated about the adventure and the Holland story was featured in 1980 on “Real People,” the first reality show on television. For many years after the ship was launched the Hollands operated a charter sailing company with Betty serving as the chef extraordinaire as the ship

had only authentic-to-its-era equipment so she had to do the best she could with a wood burning stove and no running water. They did this for 15 years. Then Dennis sold The Pilgrim to the Ocean

Institute in Dana Point, where the historic ship still sails and provides living history lessons to all who visit it.

Dennis was always busy with projects that had to do with history but not just with ships...he restored vintage cars, one of which, a 1909 Buick, was brought to the Neighborhood Community Center where the Sunday Speaker program took place last month. His passion was to make working pieces of history—authentic in every detail. His last project remains incomplete....a battle with cancer and



the city of Newport Beach interrupted his completion. The ship was the Shawnee, a 1916 sailboat that was badly in need of restoration. Dennis had admired this ship ever since he first saw it as a child. He arranged to restore the ship for the title. The ship was moved to his Newport Beach backyard in 2006

about the time Dennis was diagnosed with late-term prostate cancer. However, as the restoration was taking a long time neighbors complained and eventually Dennis had to dismantle the 72 foot ship. "Working on that ship was his therapy," Eric said. He even had his disease in remission. After the ship was dismantled his health quickly went from not so good to a lot worse, Eric explained. And when that dream was taken from him his health deteriorated and he died in May of the following year. (Pictures: page 2 column 2: *The Pilgrim built and launched; top above: Eric Longabardi, Betty Holland, Dennis Holland Jr. and his wife and 2 boys gather by the 1909 Buick; 2nd and 3rd: Dennis Holland was a proud 5 time participant in the Great American Race with this Buick.*) (Some information and quotes taken from a May 14, 2014 LA Times article by Jeremiah Dobruck)

### In Memoriam Henry T. Segerstrom The Society Remembers Henry

The Historical Society's involvement with the Segerstrom family goes back to the very beginning of the Society in 1966. The Diego Sepulveda Adobe and surrounding 5-acre parcel had been donated to the City of Costa Mesa by the Segerstrom family; later the land and the building that was provided by the Segerstroms were open to the public. The Costa Mesa Historical Society was formed to establish and operate a museum inside the restored Adobe.

In 2002, The Society hosted a Segerstrom family reunion at the Adobe. Dozens of family members were treated to tours of the adobe and an exhibit of Segerstrom family history.



In 2012, development funds from the Segerstrom Home Ranch development of the IKEA Company were used to renovate the exterior walls of the Adobe. Later that year in September, the Segerstroms hosted a luncheon at the Adobe, featuring a southwestern menu and presentation of one of the original adobe bricks by Cathy Bybee, the daughter of original president of the Costa Mesa Historical Society.

Mary Ellen Goddard remembers, "We all know that the historical society began when the adobe was given to the city to become a museum for the community. Suddenly I put things in a different perspective – if it hadn't been for the Segerstrom family's gift of the adobe, the city would probably not have had a historical society – or at least not had one for some time. And when we did have one, it would have been without the adobe, and so our celebrations of city history would have been different. And we wouldn't have taken thousands of children (and adults) on tours through the Diego Sepulveda Adobe." Mr. Segerstrom was proud of his family's place in the community. And he contributed a large part to this legacy. The Historical Society is grateful to Henry Segerstrom and the

entire Segerstrom family for their interest and enthusiasm for local history and preservation of the Adobe for generations past and yet to come. (Mary Ellen and Art Goddard contributed to this segment.)

### Henry's Life and Times



Henry T. Segerstrom, famous businessman and philanthropist for culture and the arts, died Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> at the age of 91. His father Anton was a tenant farmer and a janitor...a rags to riches story...his grandparents were Swedish immigrants who leased a 20 acre orange grove in Orange in 1898. They started buying land and by the 1940's his family was the largest independent US grower of lima beans and eventually owned more than 2,000 acres in what is now Costa Mesa.

After Henry returned from World War II he went on to earn an MBA from Stanford and then started getting involved in the family business. At the Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> Day of Remembrance Event in his honor many came to pay their respects to the man who has done so much for our county by developing the luxurious and internationally known South Coast Plaza and a Town Center which features an open air sculpture garden, "California Scenario" by Isamu Noguchi, the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, South Coast Repertory, the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, and soon next to this will be the new home of the Orange County Museum of Art which will move from Newport Beach to Costa Mesa. "He has been credited with creating hundreds of thousands of jobs and putting Costa Mesa on the map," said Costa Mesa resident Scott Williams. On display at the Day of Remembrance was the Purple heart and European Theater of Operations Ribbon with Battle Star that Henry received in 1945 for his service during World War II.

It is interesting to note that at South Coast Plaza, a top-grossing high-end shopping destination, Henry insisted on including in the leases that each store in SCP has to host at least one philanthropic event a year. In deed Henry T. Segerstrom was a gentleman and a "Renaissance Man" – which was often mentioned when people talked about him. (Article Pictures: Col. 1 Mary Ellen Goddard explains the 2002 Family Reunion exhibit to Henry and his wife Elizabeth; Top: Henry enjoying the Celebration at the 50th Anniversary of the Adobe being given to the City.) (Information from The Register journalists for this article included: Mona Shadia, Tom Berg, Timothy Mangan, Lisa Liddane and Jonathan Lansner.)

### New Parking Lot Completed



Upon completion of the 9-month storm water reservoir project, the Historical Society, along with the Dungan Library and the Neighborhood Community Center, have been treated to a newly re-surfaced parking lot. **The new parking lot looks quite spiffy**

- stop by and take a look!

**VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES. Call 949 631-5918**

**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.**

**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 on page 1); Attention: Susan Weeks. Or drop by in person on a Thursday or a Friday from 10am to 3pm.

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

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

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

**— *Membership Form* —**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Categories**

<b>Annual</b>		<b>Special</b>	
Individual	\$ 15.00	Historical Society Life Member	\$ 1000.00
Family	\$ 20.00	SAAAB Wing Annual Member	\$ 10.00
Student (under 16)	\$ 5.00	SAAAB Wing Life Member	\$ 50.00
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.