

Laguna Beach Historical Society

P.O. Box 1526, Laguna Beach, CA 92652 • 494-2318

November 1992

Vol. 1, No. 7



Cornerstone Ceremony of the new Chamber of Commerce Building at the Corner of Glenneyre and Park Ave. Saturday, May 16, 1925 at 2pm. H.H. Henshaw (back to camera) presided at the ceremony, which featured speeches by Chamber President H.G. Heisler and past presidents Elmer Jahraus, Roy Peacock, Edward De Ahna and Joseph Thurston. In the cornerstone was placed a box containing newspapers, lists of members of the board, letter heads and signatures of businessmen, along with their written comments, rare stamps, coins and currency. The trowel was handled by Lynn Watkins. Josephine Hills entertained with her violin, and there was a community sing of "America."

At first the Chamber just wanted to get any old building up. But to win the approval and support of the artists and residents, the building had to show some esthetic merit and "harmonize with the natural beauties of the town"—an early form of design review. A design by Frank Cuprien, noted seascape artist, was enthusiastically endorsed. In the photo, Cuprien is the gentleman with the white beard.

In the '20s, the Chamber of Commerce functioned almost as the government of Laguna Beach, and it continued to play a leading role even after the city was incorporated in June, 1927—two years after the ceremony recorded here.

Smith Cottage Open House

In co-operation with the owner, Wells Fargo Bank, the Laguna Beach Historical Society and the Laguna Beach Hospitality Association are holding an afternoon open house for the Smith Cottage at 278 Ocean Ave. The house will be open for walk-throughs between 1 and 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21.

This is a "before renovation" tour to give everyone a chance to see what the society is up against in making it serviceable.

Admission is free. Refreshments will be served, and laser prints of old Laguna photos will be available for purchase. Everyone is invited.

Memberships will be available, and donations to the restoration project will be gladly accepted.

Octoberfest

Sincere thanks go to Linda Gray and Coldwell Banker for generously sponsoring a booth for the Historical Society at Octoberfest. Special appreciation is also due Sandy Thornton for her wonderful creative ideas and hard work. Many festival-goers enjoyed the historical exhibit and photographs while they munched on Pauline Buzan's cabbage rolls and Hennessey's Tavern chicken wings. The Laguna Beach Historical Society truly appreciates this wonderful example of community support.

Chamber of Commerce Observing 75th Anniversary

The Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1917, will celebrate its 75th anniversary at Las Brisas Wed., Nov. 18, from 5 to 9 p.m. There will be period music and food, special recognitions and a display of photographs of old Laguna Beach provided by the Historical Society. Admission is \$5 members/\$7 non-members. No-host bar.

Smith House News

Progress is being made on turning the Smith House at 278 Ocean Avenue into a real addition to the Laguna Beach community. Plans are afoot to turn it into a combination pre-1940s historic house/museum and visitor information center. The historical society and the Laguna Beach Hospitality Association have come to an agreement about shared use of the limited space on the premises, and the society has taken the first steps in getting a required conditional use permit from the City. In addition, Wells Fargo Bank, the owner, has agreed to a five-year

lease of the property to the historical society and is drawing up the lease now.

Under the lease, rent will be one dollar a year. But the Historical Society will be responsible for taxes (ground \$3,000 annually), utilities and upkeep.

That is a big undertaking for an organization not yet two years old. But encouragement comes from the interest shown in the project by many individuals and organizations who have made offers of assistance. With the community's help we will be able to succeed and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to present Laguna Beach's past and present to residents and visitors.

Don't forget! Membership dues, contributions, and gifts to the Laguna Beach Historical Society are tax deductible for federal income tax purposes.

Anne Frank
President

Laguna Beach Historical Society

50 YEARS AGO

From the South Coast News
June 26, 1942

ISAAC FRAZEE, ARTIST-POET, IS CALLED

57th Wedding Observance is Day for funeral
FIRST VISIT MADE HERE AUGUST 1878
Indian Pageant Viewed by Thousands in Past

Isaac Jenkinson Frazee's hands which painted on canvas the trees, landscapes and seas of Laguna Beach, and wrote poems of beauty and sentimentality, and created the spectacular Indian pageant, "Kitshi Manido," the Great Spirit, more than a score of years ago, became lifeless Tuesday when his great spirit departed, leaving another void in the ranks of the pioneer artists who brought Laguna Beach into existence.

Mr. Frazee, 83 years of age, died at his home, 495 El Bosque.

Funeral services will be conducted at Laguna Beach chapel Saturday morning at 11 o'clock, on the same date 57 years ago when he and Bettie Dickenson were married in 1885. Mrs. Frazee survives her husband. Interment will be in Loma Vista cemetery, Fullerton.

Mr Frazee, was born at Winchester, Indiana, November 30, 1858...

Mr. Frazee was one of the first men who came to Laguna Beach and discovered its beauty, camping on the Laguna beach August 15 and 16, 1878. In 1874, when he first came to California he advised the Indiana colony when they came here later that year to settle where Pasadena now stands. It was his alluring tales of the glories of the Golden State after he had made a trip out here with his father in the early '70s that caused so large a group from his home state to come to California as pioneers.

In those days Mr. Frazee was "Judge," a rising young attorney, and his

advice went a long way with his friends who sought his counsel at San Bernardino before deciding where to locate.

The first day Mr. Frazee came to Laguna, he saw but one house in the vast valley, and the poet-painter consumed his luncheon on the spot where the Laguna bowling alley now stands. He made his first Laguna sketch from that point as he saw it then.

For several years the Frazee family lived on a ranch in San Luis Rey valley, San Diego county. While living there Mr. Frazee published two volumes. The first was called "Nolida," a story of Spanish-American life, and the second was a Christmas story called "The Real Santa Claus," a book which brought to its author letters of appreciation from Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Van Dyke.

His interest in the Indians of California led to the production of his colorful pageant, which was viewed by thousands on the site now known as El Mirador Tract.

Mr. Frazee was a devoted member of the Laguna Beach Art association and always had exhibits in the Festival of Arts. A number of his poems have been published in the South Coast News of Laguna Beach.

On June 10 two weeks ago Mr. and Mrs. Frazee and Mr. and Mrs. William Wendt celebrated Mrs. Wendt's birthday. This week death beckoned Mrs. Wendt and Mr. Frazee.

LAGUNA BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LAGUNA BEACH IS A SPECIAL PLACE, A TOWN UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN ORANGE COUNTY. COME LEARN ABOUT OUR CITY'S COLORFUL PAST.

THE LAGUNA BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S PURPOSE IS TO ACCUMULATE, RECORD AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TOWN'S UNIQUE HISTORY.

IF YOU JOIN THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, YOU CAN

- LEARN THE INTERESTING BACKGROUND OF THIS UNUSUAL COMMUNITY.
- GET THE REGULAR NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTING LAGUNA HISTORY AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS
- RESEARCH A SPECIAL TOPIC IN THE HISTORY OF THE TOWN.
- HELP IDENTIFY AND SAVE LAGUNA'S HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS
- HELP BUILD A COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH MATERIALS AT THE LAGUNA BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY.

WE'RE JUST BEGINNING. WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU JOIN AND HELP US WITH OUR PROJECTS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CALL ANNE FRANK (714) 494-2318

I WISH TO JOIN THE LAGUNA BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY. ENCLOSED IS MY MEMBERSHIP FEE (INDIVIDUAL \$15; COUPLE \$25; STUDENT \$5)

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: (home) _____ (work) _____

COMMENTS: _____

Please return to Laguna Beach Historical Society, P.O. Box 1526, Laguna Beach, CA 92652.

THANK YOU!