

**JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT PROGRAM**  
**October 27, 2015, 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.**  
**Laguna Beach City Hall**  
**(Locals can watch live on channel 852 or 30)**

**“A Look Back at the Beach and the Lifeguards of Laguna Beach”**

We have the pleasure of hosting a talk by Kai Weisser who is working with the Laguna Beach Lifeguard Association and collaborating on a project to document the rich history of the Laguna Beach Lifeguards.

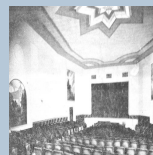
Kai is currently the president of the Huntington State Beach Junior Lifeguard Association and has been involved with lifeguards, rescue, life saving, and education during his nearly thirty-year career in Marine Safety. He is the author of *Huntington Beach Lifeguards*, Arcadia Publishing.

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**IN THIS NEWSLETTER**



**LIFEGUARD PROGRAM**  
 Kai Weisser will present on October 27



**FUN FACTS**  
 About Laguna Beach’s theatres



**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**  
 Memories... a look back at our city’s theatres



**HISTORY OF THEATRES**  
 Come see our temporary display at our Bungalow!  
 278 Ocean Ave.  
 Fri, Sat., Sun., from 1-4.



*Photo courtesy of Sherman Library-Dana & Ginger Lamb Papers. 1930 Lifeguard Crew, L-R: Dana Lamb, Dick Malone ?, Miss Harriett Shattuck, Cal Beardsley ?, George Griffith ?, Graeme Smith ?, ?*

*Continued from page 1*

During his presentation to the Laguna Beach Historical Society, Kai Weisser will present information about the inception of the Laguna Beach Lifeguards in July 1929 by an action from the Laguna Beach City Council. The first paid lifeguards were George S. Griffith and Jimmy Graeme Smith. Dana Lamb was the first Lifeguard Chief followed by Jack Blakeney in 1932 and Ed Hobert in 1935.

Kai will share photos from various sources including Carolyn Hobert Fisch (daughter of Ed Hobert), Mark Morris (son of Anthony Morris), "Keyhole" Tompkins, and David "Brother" Tompkins.

We look forward to the book about the Laguna Beach Lifeguards by Kai Weisser who is collaborating with a group who call themselves "Book Men". They include Chief Lifeguard Kevin Snow,

Lieutenant Kai Bond, Mark Klosterman (retired Chief Lifeguard) and Kip Kennedy (Laguna Lifeguard). There are many other great contributors including the Laguna Veteran Lifeguard Association, The Surfing Heritage Foundation, Dick Metz, Laguna Beach Historical Society, Laguna Beach Visitors Center, The Sherman Gardens & Library, O. C. Archives, Chris Jepsen, Victoria Skim Boards, Tex Haines, Crystal Cove Cottages, Craig Lockwood, Dale Ghere, Carolyn Hobert Fisch, Jay Riffe, Art Brewer, Hobie (Jeff Alter), Surfer Magazine, Grant Ellis, Mike Morris, and Dave "Brother" Tompkins.

Some of the presentation photos and stories can be found on <http://oldlagunalifeguard.blogspot.com/> and on Facebook at "Vintage Laguna." Further contact and/or inquiries can be made to [kai.weisser@gmail.com](mailto:kai.weisser@gmail.com).



*Photo credit: Dave Tompkins  
Circa 1946, 47 or 48  
(L to R) Top row: In all white Lifeguard Chief W C Myers,?, Dave "Keyhole" Tompkins, Danny Schull.  
Bottom row: Herb Oelke, Joe O'Sullivan, Parkin Crosby, Bob Kellog,?, ?*



*Photo credit: Carolyn Hobert Fisch  
Circa 1933 Ed Hobert at Divers Cove*

## Join the Laguna Beach Historical Society

\$25 for HISTORIAN (Individual) Newsletter, Historical Programs, Bungalow Visits

\$100 for HISTORY FRIEND (Individual, Business, Organization) Recognition in Newsletter

\$750 HISTORY PATRON- Highest Recognition (See our website for more details)

Online donations gratefully accepted now by PayPal or credit card on our website  
[lagunabeachhistory.org](http://lagunabeachhistory.org)

Or mail this form with your check to:

Laguna Beach Historical Society, 278 Ocean Avenue, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

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How would you like to receive our Newsletter? Paper  Digital  Both

**Thank you for your support!**

### THANK YOU TO OUR "PATRON" AND "HISTORY FRIEND" MEMBERS

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Contact us at [LagunaBeachHistory@gmail.com](mailto:LagunaBeachHistory@gmail.com)

## FUN FACTS ABOUT LAGUNA BEACH'S THEATRES

- ❖ In 1916, the Aufdenkamps built and opened the first Lynn Theatre on Forest Avenue. In 1922, the Aufdenkamps built the new Lynn Theatre on Coast Highway. That building was lifted up, rotated 90 degrees and MOVED to Ocean Avenue in 1935. Subsequently in 1935, another New Lynn Theatre was built on that same lot on Coast Highway so Laguna Beach had two theaters from 1935 to 1958. In 1958, the Ocean Avenue theatre closed and this year, 2015, the Coast Highway location closed.
- ❖ Artist Edgar Payne painted four large pictorial murals as part of his Laguna Beach Portfolio, which adorned the interior of the Coast Highway theatre.
- ❖ In 1937, the Coast Highway theatre became the Laguna South Coast Theatre and remained independent until Pacific Theatres took over its operation in the late-1970s. Edwards Theatres leased it in 1982, making it their 28th location. The auditorium was divided into two screens and refurbished including new seating and bathrooms at that time. Regency took over the theatre in 2001.
- ❖ The first movie shown after the 1935 building went up was "Ginger" starring Jane Withers. It was in the height of the Great Depression. A nitrate print of this film survives in the UCLA Film and Television Archives. Although it has been reported that Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks dedicated the new theatre, there are no records of this, according to Jane Janz, historian extraordinaire for the Laguna Beach Historical Society.
- ❖ Some of the theatre's longest-running shows were "Chocolat," "Slumdog Millionaire," and "Little Miss Sunshine." One movie, "Sordid Lives," directed by Del Shores, ran for almost a year. The last shows presented were "The Gift" and "The Man from U.N.C.L.E."
- ❖ Although the theatre closed last month, many are hoping that Laguna Beach will have a theatre again!

## Laguna Beach Historical Society Announcements

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

October 27 - "A Look Back at the Beach and the Lifeguards of Laguna Beach" by Kai Weisser.

November 24 - "Joe Thurston" (an early LB homesteader) by Phil Brigandi.

We are in need of **DOCENT VOLUNTEERS** for our beloved **Murphy-Smith Bungalow**. We are open every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**Would you consider a shift?** We will train you and it's fun! Email us at [lagunabeachhistory@gmail.com](mailto:lagunabeachhistory@gmail.com) and we will help find a shift that is convenient for you.

We would be honored if you would follow us on

**Facebook,**  
**Instagram, and**  
**Twitter**

and visit our website  
**lagunabeachhistory.org.**

Contact us at  
**lagunabeachhistory@gmail.com.**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A photo hangs in my office documenting life in Laguna in spring 1959. Our theatre stands erect in the background, its coned peak offsetting an overcast early evening. A lone streetlight illuminates Coast Highway, allowing the Marquee to announce the film "Imitation of Life". This film was ahead of its time as the country was evolving from the Eisenhower 50s to the Kennedy Camelot 60s. Starring Lana Turner, it documents the irony of a half black girl being raised white, and the injustices she suffers when her secret is discovered. It's fun to imagine what a quiet art colony beach town like Laguna thought of such a groundbreaking film.

Still ten years from the storefronts across the street of Coast highway becoming the Park, Laguna Drug shows the time as being frozen at 8 PM, under an Alka Seltzer ad. Oblivious to the conflict in names, another sign announces the structure as Laguna Pharmacy. The local Pharmacies were open later in that era, as well as having no apparent problem with the honor system placing books, newspapers, and even sunglasses on the street for customers to select as they walked by, drop in and pay. One wonders the effect of such a system today. Even Sea and Ski suntan lotion was strategically placed right by the front door.

Above the Pharmacy is a large sign directing traffic to the boardwalk to stroll to the Hotel Laguna a block south... as well as pointing out the Bath House directly behind the Pharmacy. Below the Bath House sat a Burger stand, steps from the Lifeguard tower, similar in both looks and location, as we know it today. I tried explaining once to a 10 year-old what a Bath House was and why beach cities all had them, but I found it very difficult to explain in 21st century terms.

The Laguna Beach Historical Society salutes The Theatre, its rich history, and smiles fondly on the 1959 Freeze frame our archives unearthed.  
*Gregg DeNicola, M.D.*



### **LAGUNA BEACH THEATRE DISPLAY AT THE MURPHY-SMITH BUNGALOW**

**Our own Jane Janz has gathered information through the years about the old theaters in Laguna Beach and has created a poster series that accurately describes the history of our three theaters (1, 2a, 2b, 3!) Come to the bungalow on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 1-4PM to see this wonderful temporary display.**

Please contact us about changes to your address at [LagunaBeachHistory@gmail.com](mailto:LagunaBeachHistory@gmail.com)

Laguna Beach Historical Society  
278 Ocean Avenue  
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

## **SPECIAL NOTE TO OUR LOYAL MEMBERS**

We couldn't keep up the bungalow, have our programs, or send out this newsletter without your support. **Thank you!** Be sure to check page 3 of this newsletter for our 2015 membership categories - more details on our website.

We hope to see you at the next program on October 27.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



*Photo credit: Dr A H Wightman during Laguna Chamber of Commerce photo contest. c1935  
Circa 1935*