



LAGUNA
BEACH
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Laguna Beach Historical Society

presents

Laguna Beach and the Greenbelt

Celebrating a Treasured Historic American Landscape

March 14th, 2017 7:30pm, Laguna Beach City Hall

Locals can view the program live on Cox Cable **852**

IN THIS NEWSLETTER



**The
Committee
for
Preservation
of the Laguna
Legacy**



**Laguna Beach
Historic
American
Landscape
designation**



**Gregg
DeNicola**
President's
Message

American Society of Landscape Architects, who advised and coordinated submission of the materials to the National Park Service.

Why Laguna Beach as a Historic American Landscape? Laguna Beach, its Greenbelt, and its beautiful and dramatic natural landscape setting is intricately related

The Committee for Preservation of the Laguna Legacy will share their story of the newly designated title given to Laguna Beach: Historical American Landscape. Ron Chilcote, the chairman and his committee prepared the submittal for the Historical American Landscape Survey. They are: Barbara Metzger, writer and editor; Ann Christoph, writer; Tom Lamb, graphic design, photography and collections; Mark Chamberlain, photography and collections; Eric Jessen, art history and collections; Verna Rollinger, city research; Bob Borthwick and Harry Huggins, Greenbelt history and mapping. All contributed on the Committee to secure Laguna Beach for this special designation.

Another contributor to the work is Alison Terry, representative of The



The Committee for Preservation of the Laguna Legacy
Left to Right: Mark Chamberlain, Harry Huggins, Tom Lamb, Ann Christoph, Ron Chilcote, Verna Rollinger, Bob Borthwick, Barbara Metzger, Eric Jessen
Orange County Register. Photographer: Kevin Sullivan

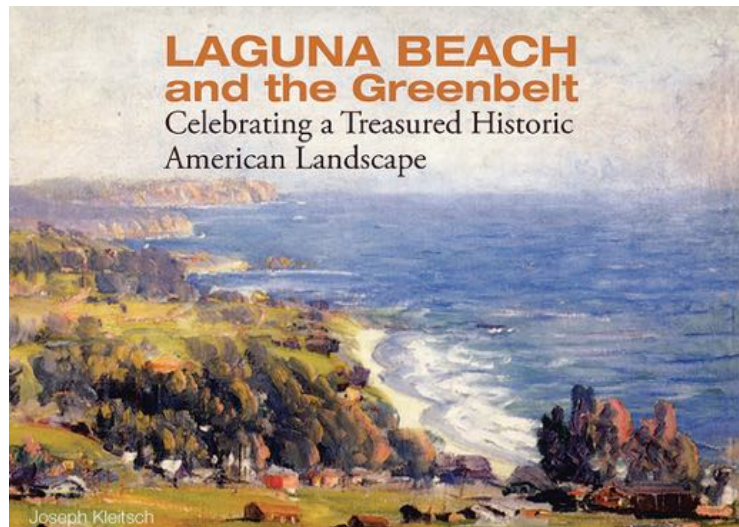
to the community and artistic tradition grew from it. Geologic formations, natural vegetation and the coastal location attracted artists beginning around the turn of the last century. The artistic influence and character of the landscape shaped the qualities of the town, village environment and unique community that descended from it making it worthy of this designation.

Laguna joins 700 sites that have been designated nationwide since the beginning of the Historic American Landscape program. Examples include Golden Gate Park; Bidwell Park, Chico; Camp Curry, Yosemite; Rancho Los Alamitos, Long Beach; California missions; Washington Monument grounds; and Mount Vernon.

Laguna is unusual in this designation because it is a large landscape but the National Park Service was impressed with the relationship of Laguna's natural landscape to the plein air artists, and the traditions that have led to the growth and preservation of our unique community.

FAST FACTS: About the Laguna Greenbelt

- Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. is a grassroots organization that began in 1968.
- The Greenbelt is James Dilley's dream. He was originally a book store owner in Laguna.
- Bubbles Lake, part of the Laguna Greenbelt and the Laguna Lakes is named after the hippo that escaped from Lion Country Safari Animal Park in Irvine to make her way there.
- Laguna is the Spanish word for Lake.
- A massive protest in 1989, called "The Walk" led us to Save the Canyon.
- The Greenbelt covers 22,000 beautiful acres, Jame Dilley's original vision of how it would be.



*Laguna Beach and the Greenbelt
Celebrating a Treasured Historic American Landscape
Cover artwork by Joseph Kleitsch*

*James Dilley, at right
was a charismatic leader
and speaker.*

*Photo credit:
LagunaGreenbelt.org*

The Library of Congress houses all the documents and artifacts submitted to Historic American Landmarks, often referred to as HALS.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

A few weeks ago, the Board of the Laguna Beach Historical Society enjoyed their first annual retreat at The Ranch in Aliso Canyon.

The facilities, food, drinks, and grounds were all wonderful. The Ranch proprietor, Mark Christy, has done an exceptional job of preserving the natural feel of the canyon as the creek empties into the Pacific at Aliso Beach.

History tells us that the current site of The Ranch was the Thurston family homestead. Generally regarded as the first homestead in the area, it was settled by George and Sarah Thurston with six of their 13 children in 1871. They first lived in a one room shack while farming the rough terrain using the creek for irrigation. Here they raised vegetables and melons and sold them, as well as honey from beehives found at the creek. They often took wagons to Los Angeles where they were able to sell their harvest.

The restaurant at The Ranch is called Harvest and has a delicious culinary menu. A bit different than what the Thurston's had to eat on their homestead – rabbit, quail, deer, and of course seafood from the nearby Pacific. Rumor has it that George Thurston killed eight quail with one shot which fed his family for several days.

The family would bath in the Pacific where they would bring home a few buckets of mussels to be fried or put in their soups. The only day the family did not work the fields was Christmas Day. A large fried chicken dinner was the Thurston family tradition.

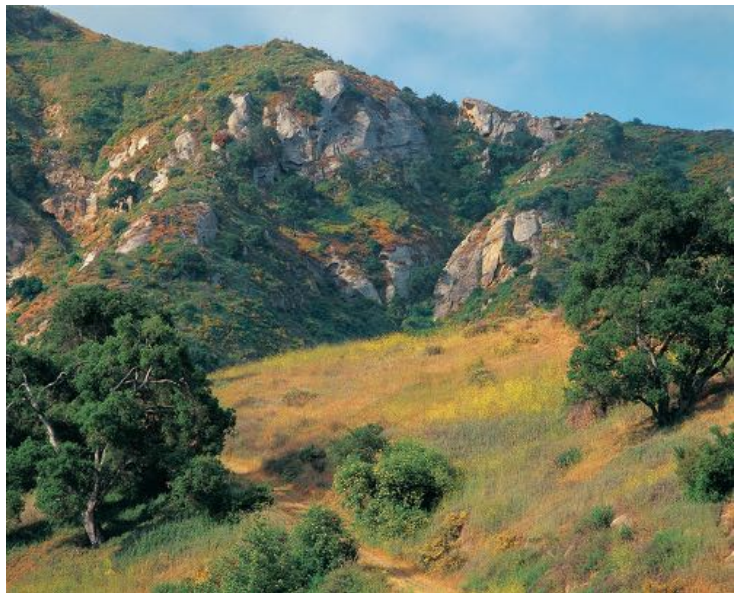
Son, Joe became a leader in the Laguna Beach community and the family name is recognized by the names: Thurston Intermediate School, Thurston Street, and Sarah Thurston Park.

You can feel the spirit of the Thurston family by visiting The Ranch. The buildings are welcoming and modern. The Ranch planners have done an excellent job of preserving the ambience of the hillsides by the creek flowing to the Pacific and remembering the Thurston family and a time that was.

My suggestion is to go in the late afternoon to the patio overlooking the canyon and enjoy a cocktail while imagining the hard work the Thurston family performed in that very spot.

However, bathing at Aliso Beach is at your own risk.

*Gregg DeNicola MD,
President Laguna Beach Historical Society*



Photograph of Laurel Canyon by Ron Chilcote

Laurel Canyon is part of The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and was included in the Historical American Landscapes Survey.

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Thank you to all our members for your support - We couldn't do it without you!

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\$25 for Historian (Individual)

Includes: Newsletter mailed to you, entry to historical programs at City Hall, Bungalow visits

\$100 for Historian Friend (Individual, Business, Organization)

Includes: All of the above plus name recognized in the newsletter

\$750 for Historian Patron (Individual, Business, Organization)

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Online donations gratefully accepted now by PayPal or credit card on our website at: lagunabeachhistory.org

You can also mail this form with your check to:

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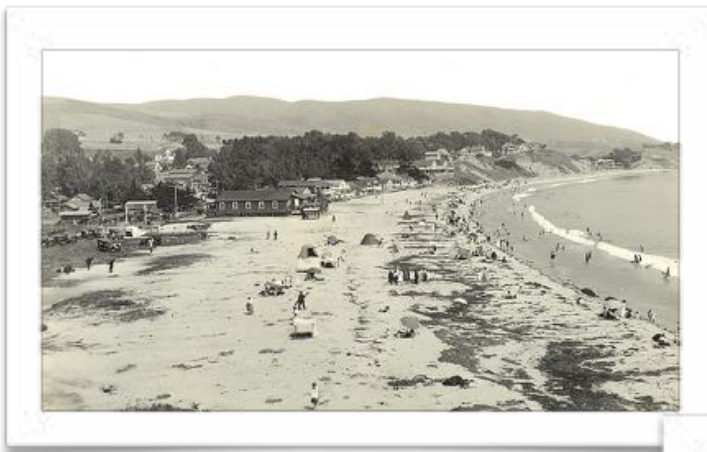
278 Ocean Avenue

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

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Historical Fact:

1968: Main Beach Park— On October 29, 1968, the city of Laguna Beach purchased 1,000 feet of beach frontage purchased from various property owners, an area known since as Main Beach Park. The cost was recorded at \$3,135,000. All structures were removed and the park was later dedicated in 1974. This was a major event opening up the village directly to the beach.

MAIN BEACH THEN AND NOW...

- Joseph Yoch’s Laguna Beach Hotel, was built in 1888 on the beach.
- Visitors from local cities pitched tents on the beach for vacations during warm summers.
- Laguna’s iconic lifeguard tower was part of a Union Oil Company gas station at PCH and Broadway. It was moved across the street in 1937 by a team of horses.



Laguna Beach Historical Society

278 Ocean Avenue

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

A 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 5 of this newsletter for our 2016

Visit us on You Tube: Laguna Beach Historical Society

Visit our Website: lagunabeachhistory.org

Contact us at: lagunabeachhistory@gmail.com

**We would be honored if you would follow us on Facebook,
Instagram, and Twitter**

