

# Historical Society

Laguna Beach Life | Past | Present | Future

## Mark Your Calendars!

### APRIL 10 Presentation

**Join us in a new location!**

Susi Q Community Center

7:30 pm

*Recorded programs can be viewed online at:*

Laguna Beach Historical Society - YouTube Channel

## President's Message

This year the Patriots' Day Parade honored two very notable Laguna Beach residents, including one of our own members. Look inside to read about it in Gregg DeNicola's letter.

## The Secret Door

Highlights from a docent and board member on our youngest visitors to the bungalow and what lies below.

## Save the Date: June 27

See inside for our next program.

## Fast Facts about Laguna's Beaches

Some facts you might not know about the beaches of Laguna.



# The History of Laguna's Beaches

by Eric Jessen on Tuesday, April 10th, 7:30pm  
at The Susi Q Community Center, Multipurpose Room

Eric Jessen will present Part 1 of "The History of Laguna's Beaches". The program will include a video on the acquisition, development and milestones hallmarking the establishment of some of Laguna's beaches and parks including Smithcliffs View Park/Bootlegger's Cove, Crescent Bay Point Park, Aliso Beach County Park, Camel Point & West Street Beaches, Secret Cove/Table Rock Beach, Thousand Steps Beach, the County's Three Arch Bay public beach, and Salt Creek Beach County Park. In addition, the program will feature stunning new aerial photographs of many other beaches in Laguna recently taken by helicopter.

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## The Secret Door

By Karen Lagrew

One of my favorite things to show visiting children when I docent at The Laguna Beach Historical Society is located right past the bathroom in the long hallway.

Often the young visitors see it first, and at times have asked if they could open it.

This is a place in the floor, which opens to the space below the house, rumored to have been a favorite stash spot for Rumrunners and their bootleg during prohibition times.

It's quite intriguing for children, especially visiting from newer homes to see a genuine old house with a secret trap door in the floor.

When you are in town, bring along a young guest and challenge them to find the hiding spot in the floor of The Murphy Smith Bungalow. You



might even find something surprising below the old wood floor boards!

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The difficulties and challenges of establishing public beach access to these areas dating as far back as 1924 will be highlighted, including prolonged litigation in some instances.

Detailed research is underway for Part II to be presented at a later date, which will look at the how the rest of the public beaches in Laguna were established.

A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

## A Message from our President

**Gregg DeNicola MD**

On February 4, the Laguna Beach Patriots' Day Parade Committee honored several local citizens that have an interest to us here at the Laguna Beach Historical Society.

The parade honored Gloria Fickling as the Grand Marshall. Gloria moved to our town in 1950 with her late husband Skip and co-authored the Honey West novels that went on to enjoy much fame.

In the first book, published in 1957, "This Girl for Hire," Honey enters the detective arena to solve her father's murder. Even in the Eisenhower fifties, sex sold, and she was made to be a sexy female detective in a type of merger of Sam Spade with Marilyn Monroe.

Of course we know that the books then spawned the TV series "Honey West" starring Anne Francis.

Before the books became lucrative, Gloria wrote local restaurant reviews and supported fundraising for many of the local nonprofits.

At 91, Gloria shows no signs of slowing down. She is still working to support local fundraising and is a frequent sight at Thursday night art walks.

The Parade Committee named none other than our own board member, Heidi Miller, the honor as The Parade's Citizen of the Year. Heidi's Frogen Yozurt became a very successful chain with Heidi opening her first store in Irvine followed with a second store here in town. She then went on to sell the chain and while keeping her roots in Laguna

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kidney in a major operation. Needless to say, we are very proud of our board member Heidi Miller.

Beach, she next opened the Coast Highway boutique Tight

Assets. She also rescued the Local World Newsstand as a gift to the city of Laguna Beach.

Despite her success as an entrepreneur, Heidi's honor was based more on her amazing generosity. After being a bone marrow donor several years ago to help a friend with cancer, she recently donated a kidney to another friend who had less than a year to live with his current kidney. After only several weeks, we could see Heidi bopping around town looking more like someone who had a cavity filled than giving up a

## Save the Date: June 27



Our next program, presented by Lou D'Elia will be on Wednesday, June 27th and the title is: "Guilty by Association: Fun Times with Pancho Barnes, George Hurrell, Gigi (Katy Weld) Parrish, John Weld & Friends." Be sure to mark your calendar.

## Baby, it's Cold!

We love our winter and year round visitors, but the bungalow can get cold on winter days and foggy summer afternoons. We are in need of a floor heater. If you or someone you know can help with this please contact: John Hoover at [info@lagunabeachhistory.org](mailto:info@lagunabeachhistory.org)

## Fast Facts: Laguna's Beaches

- We have more than 30 different beaches, coves, and parks.
- Laguna has 8 miles of coastline.
- Laguna has more beachfront lodging than any other city in California!
- The dolphin population off of Laguna's coast exceeds more than that of Florida, Hawaii, and the Caribbean combined.
- Skimboarding started in Laguna and dates back to the late 1920's when Laguna Beach lifeguards used to skimboard on pieces of wood.
- Forbes voted Laguna Beach one of five best beaches for Spring Break 2018.
- Local shops that were inspired by Laguna's beaches are: Toes on the Nose, Thalia Surf Shop, Hobie Surf Shop, and Laguna Surf and Sport.
- The long ramp and walkway to the right, below The Montage Hotel and leading to Goff Beach was originally installed in the 1920's so that crews could get movie props out to the island at low tide, then they'd film from the shore when the tide was up and it looked like a deserted island.

## **Members**

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Dr. Gregg DeNicola  
Eric Jessen  
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### **Historian Patron**

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Karen Lagrew

Heidi Miller

Laurie Sanders

*Thank you to all our  
members for your generous  
support -*

*We couldn't do it without  
you!*

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## **Become a Member:**

- \$25 for Historian** (Individual)  
Includes: Newsletter mailed to you, entry to historical programs at City Hall and other venues, appreciation gift at The Murphy Smith Bungalow with visit
- \$100 for Historian Friend** (Individual, Business, Organization)  
Includes: All of the above plus book on Laguna Beach history.
- \$500 for Historian Patron** (Individual, Business, Organization)  
Includes: All of the above plus a framed Laguna historical photograph.
- \$1,000 for Historian Platinum/Corporate Membership**  
(Individual, Business, Organization)  
Includes: All of the above plus special acknowledgements at programs, in newsletters, on website, and on site display board. Annual hosted reception.

Online donations gratefully accepted now by PayPal or credit card on our website at: [info@lagunabeachhistory.org](mailto:info@lagunabeachhistory.org)

You can also mail this form with your check to:

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

Name and/or Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The Laguna Beach Historical Society is a section 501 (c) non-profit organization.  
Tax ID #33-0519882

## **Other Ways to Support Laguna's History:**

### **Amazon Smile**

- We would be honored if you would choose Laguna Beach Historical Society as your "designated charity" on Amazon.
- Be sure to always start at AmazonSmile.com when you shop at Amazon.
- It costs you nothing extra and you will be supporting our organization –Thank you!

### **Ralph's Community Contribution Program**

- The Historical Society is now enrolled in the Ralph's/Food 4 Less/Foods Co. Community Contribution Program.
- To register, simply go online to [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com).
- Make sure to have your rewards card handy, choose The Laguna Beach Historical Society as your organization.
- If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the customer service desk at any store.
- If you are new to [ralphs.com](http://ralphs.com) online, please click on the top right: no account and register.
- You will receive an e-mail when you register your new account.
- Walk through the steps and enter our Ralph's Non Profit Organization (NPO) # - 84041.

**Laguna Beach Life | Past | Present | Future**

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

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**A Special Note to our Loyal Members:**

With your support, we are able to maintain our beloved Murphy Smith Bungalow, present historical programs, send this newsletter, and host other events — thank you!

**Visit us on You Tube:** [Laguna Beach Historical Society](#)

**Visit our Website:** [lagunabeachhistory.org](http://lagunabeachhistory.org)

**Contact us at:** [info@lagunabeachhistory.org](mailto:info@lagunabeachhistory.org)

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

