

**Laguna Beach  
Historical Society**  
Murphy-Smith Bungalow  
278 Ocean Avenue  
Laguna Beach CA 92651  
949-497-6834



# Laguna Life

The Laguna Beach Historical Society Newsletter: May 2014

**Please attend Historical Society Program to be held at  
Laguna Beach City Hall Council Chambers, 505 Forest Avenue  
Tuesday, May 27th – from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M.  
*25<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of “The Tell” by Mark Chamberlain***



## **“The Tell” in Laguna Canyon by Mark Chamberlain and Jerry Burchfield 1989**

The name "Tell" comes from the archeological term for a mound of artifacts from prior civilizations - buried over by natural elements. This Tell was built (rather than unearthed) as a small mountain composed of thousands of photographs, reflective of the lives of the people who donated images. It grew to 636-feet long and ranged from 36-feet high, dwindling down to the ground, as it undulated across the landscape and dove back into the hillside.

**Consider a Donation to the Bungalow’s Maintenance Fund**

# “The Tell” a collaborative photo mural by Mark Chamberlain and Jerry Burchfield

A growing army of environmentalists began constructing a 636-foot-long photo mural called "The Tell" on May 1, 1989 in Laguna Canyon. Photographers Mark Chamberlain and Jerry Burchfield, along with hundreds of supporters, started building the mural - a giant piece of environmental/assemblage art - after three years of planning and months of fundraising.

Since 1989 was the Centennial of Orange County, CA and the 150th anniversary of the discovery of photography, the project would be comprised of more than 100,000 photographs, contributed by people from all over the country. They shared the concern about the survival of the historic Laguna Canyon. At that time, that Canyon was endangered by the Laguna Laurel Housing Project - a proposed suburban tract that would have destroyed the irreplaceable artistic face of the historic beach city.

When completed, the photo mural was a contemporary mound of artifacts and a hybrid environmental art work that reflected the community's past and looked to its future.

The Laguna Wilderness Park stands today where a suburban tract was once planned. The James Dilly Preserve, the site of the Tell, prevails where a final stand once took place in such dramatic fashion."

The sculptural character of the artwork resembled the voluptuous nature of the surrounding canyons, with echoes of a female figure in its shape. It had a stylized Easter Island head as its physical and philosophical foundation.

The pictures, glued onto the wooden framework, were woven together like pixels in a pointillist painting by density, color, content and type of material. They told numerous stories of man, woman and the land. These symbols were positioned by story lines on the chakra points of the larger body of the photo mural.

## Giant Photo of The Tell at James and Rosemary Nix Nature Center, Laguna Beach, 2009

Go to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park's headquarters; it is the gateway for recreational users to explore a vast network of linked trails throughout the 20,000-acre South Coast Regional Wilderness. The nature center's picture windows frame four main views into the surrounding parklands, challenging visitors of all ages to consider the wilderness from various perspectives. Call the park at 949-923-2235 for program information.



**Consider Volunteering at the Murphy-Smith Bungalow**

# Laguna Canyon by President Emerita Belinda Blacketer

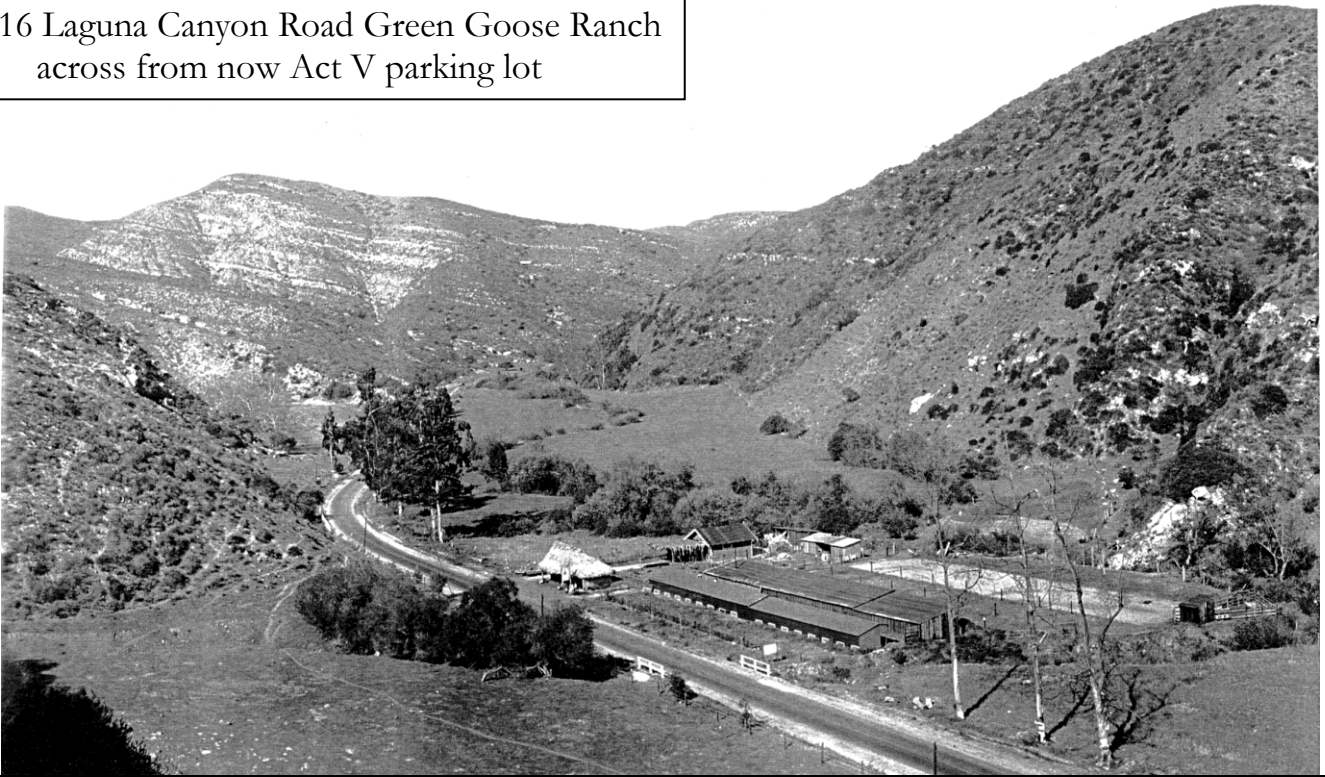
The History of Laguna Beach, as we know it, actually starts in Laguna Canyon. The first white settlers came from Aliso City, as El Toro used to be known, to the crossroads of El Niguel Creek (El Toro Rd.) & Laguna Canyon Creek, and settled there. The Laguna Canyon watershed consists of 6,020 acres. It extends 6 miles from its border with the San Diego Creek/ Newport Back Bay watershed to the Ocean at Laguna Beach.

We know the first inhabitants were the Native Americans, who hunted, fished, and lived in the canyons. We have found their cave dwellings, plundered their graves and destroyed their kitchen middens in the name of progress. We have even gone so far as to dig up their bones and re-bury them again nearby.

Located in Laguna Canyon are the only natural lakes in Orange County. To the northwest of the present road, a vernal pool formed, and to the east, another larger lake believed to be fed by a natural spring formed, giving us two distinct lakes. A 1924 study by a pioneer aquatic ecologist, Dr. James G. Needham of Cornell University, (while on a teaching sabbatical at Pomona Marine College in Laguna Beach) identified them as “ponds”. However, natural fresh bodies of water are so rare in Orange County that we now call them lakes. A vernal pool is one which contains water only during the wet season, but serves a distinct ecological purpose. This one gathers its water from sheet flow.

Laguna’s name comes from the lakes in the canyon, “La Canada de Las Laguna’s.” The “lakes” have been restored under the auspices of the Laguna Canyon Foundation and the Laguna Greenbelt. The original large lake is actually a single “lake”, possibly formed by scour of the original depression by runoff, and the possible presence of a small spring within the lake, spoken of by many older residents. In wet years the lake covers up to 14 acres, and in dry years it seemed to shrink to almost nothing.

1915-16 Laguna Canyon Road Green Goose Ranch  
across from now Act V parking lot



## Historical Society Business / Organization Members

**Wells Fargo Bank    City of Laguna Beach**  
**Caduceus Medical    H.J Baker & Bro., Inc.**

Andy Alison Bungalow Hunters    Ann Christoph Landscape Architect FASLA    Borthwick Guy Bettenhausen  
Brooks Street Books    Butler Box    Charles' Wig Chateau    Chicago Title    Emerald Bay Community Association  
Indiana James Limited Partnership    Dr. Korey Jorgensen    Ken's Jewelry Store  
Laguna Beach Visitors & Conference Bureau    Laguna Broadcasting Network    Realtor Gayle Waite  
Reynolds Carpet    Sawdust Festival    Stewarts Landscaping    Teller Architects    The Stand Natural Foods Restaurant

View Laguna Photos at [www.Laguna-Historical-Society.smugmug.com](http://www.Laguna-Historical-Society.smugmug.com)

## Laguna Beach Historical Society Board of Directors

Gregg DeNicola – President		Sandra Desmond
Gene Felder - Treasurer	Anne Frank	John Hoover
Jane Janz	Eric Jessen	Ronald Kaufman
Carol Lloyd	Glenna Matthews	Francie Holder Pemper
Laurie Sanders	Don Sessions	Karen Smith
Nelda Stone - Secretary	Ed Storke	Kimberly Stuart

## Consider Contributing to Historical Society Maintenance Fund

### President's Message by Gregg DeNicola

*25<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary of "The Tell" by Mark Chamberlain*

**Tuesday, May 27th from 7:30 to 9:30 P.M.**

The next Laguna Beach Historical Society program will be 25th Year Anniversary of "The Tell" by Mark Chamberlain. The program is Tuesday, May 27th from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and will be held at the Laguna Beach City Hall Council Chambers, 505 Forest Avenue. The public is invited and there is no charge. The proceedings will be videotaped and shown live on local Channel Cox 30 and 832.

....Due to health reasons, Karen Smith has stepped down as President. We will still avail ourselves of her many contributions as she remains a member of the Board of Directors.

In addition to the program, the meeting will serve as our annual membership meeting for 2014.

At this meeting, we will be asking the membership to vote on a new set of bylaws, allowing the Laguna Beach Historical Society to incorporate the Society. This will provide many benefits to us, including up policies, better ability to own property, facilitate charitable giving by donors, and protect liability of its members.

It also allows us to clarify our Mission. This includes the goals of:

- \*Collecting and preserving our historical materials
- \*Disseminating these materials to interested individuals

The Society has a lot going on these days...join us and climb on board! We'd love to have you as a member. Just send \$15 per individual, \$25 per family or \$50 per business to Laguna Beach Historical Society 278 Ocean Blvd Laguna Beach Ca 92651

Gregg DeNicola MD  
President

**If your Dues are due (check your mailing label) Send \$15 per person, \$25 per household or \$50 per business or organization to Laguna Beach Historical Society, 278 Ocean Avenue, Laguna Beach CA 92651**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_