

APRIL 2021

# THE LAGUNA BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

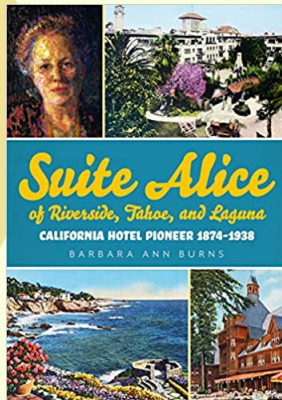
LAGUNA BEACH LIFE | PAST PRESENT FUTURE

**NEWS AND UPDATES  
FOR THIS MONTH:**

*OUR FIRST VIRTUAL PROGRAM WITH Q&A FOLLOWING*

## Suite Alice of Riverside, Tahoe and Laguna

**California Hotel Pioneer 1874-1938  
Meet the Author, Guest Speaker  
Barbara Ann Burns**



**Wednesday, April 28th  
Zoom Webinar**

**7:00-8:00 pm**

**Visit [LagunaBeachHistory.org](https://LagunaBeachHistory.org)  
for a link to join the webinar**

Alice Miller Richardson was a Laguna pioneer. Orange County Archives show she bought 400 acres in Arch Beach in 1904.

Alice made her money managing Riverside's Historic Mission Inn for her brother Frank Miller, its owner. He always said she was a better hotel man than he was, and he paid her generously. Nine months a year, she charmed kings, presidents, movie stars, authors, and Laguna artists at the Mission Inn with her world-famous hospitality. She was known as Riverside's first career woman. During Riverside's hot summers—when Mission Inn business was slow—resorts like the legendary Tahoe Tavern, the Palomares Hotel, and the Long Beach Hotel hired Alice to bring her unique brand of hospitality for their busy summer seasons. When she wasn't working, she vacationed at her cottage on the bluffs in Laguna.

Alice Richardson made the Mission Inn what it is. She saved the Tahoe Tavern.

(continued inside)

**Detailed image of original work showing Alice Richardsons's cottage:**  
Frederick Melville DuMond, *Laguna Beach*, 1911.  
Oil on Canvas, 24 x 36 in.  
The Irvine Museum Collection at The University of California, Irvine.

# A Message from our President

ED STORKE, PRESIDENT

During these challenging times, we continue to pursue our mission of the collection, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Laguna Beach by using emails, phone calls, and Zoom to carry on these activities (no carrier pigeons yet.) We appreciate all your support in this endeavor.

Recent activities include the historical society's selection of a Laguna Beach High School senior to receive our annual scholarship. Scholarships are usually made public in a spring convocation at the high school Artists' Theater with winners, families, friends, and donors present. For the second year, it will be a virtual ceremony. When our scholarship is finalized we will highlight the student to whom it is awarded.

On March 18th we hosted a special webinar with Miss Shelby Anderson, a U.S. History teacher at Laguna Beach High School. An audience of students and the general public were invited to participate for the purpose of educating future generations on the history of our town, along with making a connection to the younger generation in our community.

The webinar, featuring vignettes of Laguna Beach history, was thoughtfully prepared by board member Carol Lloyd spoke about her mother who created an early homesteaders map and whose family was one of Laguna's earliest settlers in the 1870s. Museum art detective Eric Jessen highlighted Laguna's art history accompanied by pictures and profiles of some leading artists. Anne Frank taught us about St. Francis by the Sea American Catholic Church, one of only two structures in Laguna Beach listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Glenna Matthews, an alumna of LBHS, revived memories of her high school days including her yearbook image where she also served as editor-in-chief. I wrapped up the show with information about our society and opportunities for viewers to become involved as members, visitors, volunteers, and supporters.

We thank Ms. Anderson, for all her diligent work and promotion. Around 70 people tuned in during the webinar which is now available on our YouTube page.

*Ed Storke*

## Become a DOCENT

Our board of directors is now planning for the reopening of the Murphy-Smith Bungalow. In order to open after more than a year of being closed, we will need volunteers to staff the bungalow (museum) on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday afternoons. Please let us know if you will be willing to help.

**It's fun, easy, and we will train you!**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(continued from front cover)

She was an important figure in early Laguna's real estate business and art community. Yet historians in Riverside, Tahoe, and Laguna know little or nothing about her.

I'm Barbara Burns and I've been a docent at the Mission Inn for more than 20 years. I knew very little about Alice I wondered how could she have lived at the Mission Inn for 65 years and there be no stories about her? I made it my business to find out about her. I spent hours researching old newspapers, property records, Mission Inn archives, and ephemera. What started as curiosity about the woman "they said" helped her brother run the Mission Inn turned into the story of an amazing, lovable, and very successful woman who was really the one in charge of the Mission Inn.

That's how *Suite Alice of Riverside, Tahoe, and Laguna, California Hotel Pioneer 1874-1938* by Barbara Ann Burns came to be. It wasn't my plan to be an author, but her story had to be told. The first reader who wrote to me said it is an "interesting, engaging, and well-written book." Another wrote, "I am reading your book and loving it."

Tune in to the Laguna Beach Historical Society's Zoom presentation to see photographs and hear readings from *Suite Alice of Riverside, Tahoe, and Laguna, California Hotel Pioneer 1874-1938*.

It's an inspiring story, that I love telling. I hope you'll be watching.

The book can be purchased online at <https://www.missioninnmuseum.shop/>



**Portrait of Alice Miller Richardson:**

Hovsep Pushman,  
*Alice Miller Richardson*.



## The People's Choice Award Winner

Although we missed seeing everyone at Laguna's traditional Hospitality Night this year, our elves worked hard to keep the spirit of the season alive by fashioning the Murphy Smith Bungalow as a gingerbread house with candy canes, peppermints, and holiday decorations.

As a result, our submission was selected as a People's Choice Winner in the Window Decorating Contest held by the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce. We were awarded a spot on KX FM Radio, a Laguna Beach-based radio station, which included this warm message:

*"Laguna Beach Historical Society is a treasured keepsake of a bygone era, preserving every aspect of our town's history, including artists, the homestead evolution, architecture, and iconic characters. The Murphy Smith Bungalow on Ocean Ave is a step through a time capsule of Laguna Beach's treasured past. Visit the Laguna Beach Historical Facebook page and website for more fun historical facts and information about upcoming events."*



During February Google Analytics reported that 1.7k users visited our website: [LagunaBeachHistory.org](http://LagunaBeachHistory.org) (an increase of 225%)

\$22.20 was received through Ralph's Community Contribution Program between 12/1 and 2/31



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\$36.43 was received through Amazon Smile purchases during the last quarter



## Board Member SPOTLIGHT

**Anne and Dick Frank**

**Photographed by Douglas Miller**

Anne Frank has served on the board of the Laguna Beach Historical Society for 29 years.

*Why did you choose to serve on the board?*

Years ago the society was sort of dying and along with others we thought it important to keep the cause going, so we did. Now I would like to keep the younger generation interested in our history.

*Why do you think your position on the board is a good match for you?*

I am a retired University of Ca Irvine librarian. *What is your favorite part of working with the LB Historical Society?* Over the years I've really enjoyed my time as a docent down at the bungalow.



# HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS LIST

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Caduceus Medical Group  
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*Thank you!*

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Go to [LagunaBeachHistory.org/support-us](http://LagunaBeachHistory.org/support-us) to join or renew now!

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We want to thank you for your past financial support and encourage you to consider upgrading to the next level of support for the Laguna Beach Historical Society. We are determined to preserve and protect historical archives of Laguna Beach including photographs, to provide quarterly guest speaker events, and an annual scholarship to an outstanding graduating LB high school senior.



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



11/3/2019 \$150  
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 949-499-0577  
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*If you prefer to receive this newsletter by email, drop us a line at [info@lagunabeachhistory.org](mailto:info@lagunabeachhistory.org)*

**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 YouTube:** [Laguna Beach Historical Society](https://www.youtube.com/LagunaBeachHistoricalSociety)  
**Visit our Website:** [lagunabeachhistory.org](http://lagunabeachhistory.org)  
**Contact us at:** [info@lagunabeachhistory.org](mailto:info@lagunabeachhistory.org)



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