

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet Sib Garner —

Our community is gifted with so many talented volunteers. One unique visitor from South Carolina (her husband was temporarily working in the area and they rented at Promontory Point) came in to see **Bill Stewart's** *Arts of the Ancient Mariner* exhibit and decided to make the Museum part of her weekly experiences. **Sib Garner** became a lead volunteer in the Museum Store this past year. Her Southern charm made our guests feel welcomed and appreciated within seconds. She helped teach the Scout programs and assisted with special events. Sib has now



Southern charm at its best - Sib Garner in the Museum Store returned to her home state, but we are sure to see her on future visits to the area. When you come to Balboa Island, you certainly feel this strong

sense of community. Thank you, Sib, for your commitment to helping us grow!

The dedicated volunteers who help the Museum are crucial to our well-being. There are many ways to get involved and to contribute your time. From assisting in the day-to-day operation, and keeping the doors open, to greeting visitors and sharing the history of our community, to helping at special events and working behind the scenes, volunteers complete a full range of tasks that are invaluable.

If you are interested in becoming a docent or volunteer at the Museum, please contact Sue Sibley suesibley55@yahoo.com or 916-799-6053.

Retail Therapy

The Museum Store is the perfect destination for your holiday shopping! We offer a full array of gift items, including vintage photographs, jewelry, apparel, toys, model boats, home decor, books and more.



We are delighted to feature our exclusive Balboa Island and Newport Beach charms during this centennial year, when Balboa Island observes its 100th anniversary of being incorporated into the City of Newport Beach. What a perfect time for you to celebrate our local history and live a "charmed" life by collecting these lovely keepsakes, that can be attached to a bracelet, necklace or key chain. They make a perfect gift.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Welcome to **Sandra Davis** and **Tony Guanci**. Sandra has more than 25 years of experience in healthcare administration and joined Beecher Carlson as the Senior Vice President, Risk Management and Claims in April 2012. She is currently involved with the Advanced Studies Committee of the Orangewood Foundation, and her previous board experience includes serving on the board of the Shakespeare Center in Los Angeles. Tony has lived on Balboa Island for 30 years. You may have seen him "running the Island," something he does on a daily basis whenever he is in town. Tony is an entrepreneur and consults for some of the world's biggest entertainment organizations. He has a great deal of experience with museums and is very active with the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, MA.



The impressive map, "Newport - Harbor: All-Year-Round Playground," was created by illustrator **Claude G. Putnam** in 1939 for the Newport Harbor Chamber of Commerce. This beautiful 20"x24" print is available framed (\$100) or unframed (\$50).

Visit the Museum Store soon or shop online at:
www.balboaislandmuseum.org/store

SAVE THE DATE

Friday, December 2
5pm-9pm
Holiday Champagne Shopping Event at the Museum Store

Sunday, December 11
11am-4pm
BIIA Holiday Home Tour

Saturday, December 17
10am-12pm
Gingerbread House Decorating

2016-2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Hours:
Wednesday through Sunday
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Message From The President

Shirley Pepys

Happy Anniversary!

It is an exciting time at the Museum, as we are about to celebrate our five year anniversary! The Museum was established in 2000, but opened on Marine Avenue on December 11, 2011. The inaugural reception attracted more than 100 people, and they haven't stopped coming. In fact, since moving to Marine Avenue, we have had over 40,000 visitors, from local residents to international travelers. Their comments have been the same since the day we opened: "This is the best little museum we have visited."

We believe that the historic buildings on Marine Avenue are a resource for the community, and we are proud to showcase the 1947 home that was built and lived in by the Pulaski family and now houses the main Museum. The charm of the Island is captured in our wall-to-wall displays that celebrate the history of our community and the pioneer families responsible for its development.

It is a great honor for me to serve as President, and I am proud to work with a board that supports the Museum's mission. I am pleased to announce the addition of two new board members, Sandra Davis and Tony Guanci. Both are passionate about Balboa Island and bring their vast experience to our board. It has taken hours of hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm from our Board of Directors and volunteers to make our Museum what it is today.

I am especially grateful for the commitment and support of our donor members and the City of Newport Beach. It is the time for membership renewal, and we hope you will continue your involvement with us, helping to create a lasting legacy while preserving the past, present and future of Newport Beach and the Balboa Island Museum!

Cops Recount Their Early Days at Historical Society Celebration

Richard Simon

Balboa Island's Historical Society celebrated the island's 10-carat Diamond Anniversary by honoring the Newport Beach Police Department last Friday evening at the society's museum on Marine Avenue.

For nearly two hours, three retired Newport officers figuratively captured the nearly 100 attendees with memories of how law enforcement was when they started their careers.



Balboa Island Museum and Historical Society President Shirley Pepys and Newport Beach Police Chief Jon Lewis in front of a classic Ford police cruiser.

Audience laughter ricocheted around the tightly packed forecourt as the three shared their memories.

Newly selected Police Chief **Jon Lewis**, who started his career as a Newport police cadet at age 18 when he was a freshman at California State University, Long Beach, spent the final 15 minutes explaining the qualities required for today's crop of cops, as well as the operational procedures insisted upon in today's law enforcement environment.

It could best be described as the difference between an old, iron-sighted six-shooter and a laser-aimed, polycarbonate semi-automatic pis-

tol. Clearly, however, despite operational differences, policemen of yesterday served with the same intensity and purpose as those patrolling our streets and investigating crimes today.

Retired Officer **Stan Bressler**, Sgt. **Mike McDonough** and Chief **Neil Purcell** (who ended his career as head of Laguna Beach PD), all grew up in Newport, and served on the department as soon as they turned 21. They learned from their predecessors that when on patrol, they were their own management - a necessity, because radio communications then were less dependable than a homing pigeon, and often there were only two on patrol for the entire city on any given shift.

Newport Beach remained a quiet beach community in winter, but changes were coming. The kids in the 1950s and 60s would sit on the curb when you asked them to. In the 70s, the kids would ask you "Why?" Chief Purcell recounted.

Until there was more civic accountability, knuckles and nightsticks were part of every officer's weekend conversation. After all, there often were only two cops on duty at one time. Sometimes, even Marines on liberty would come to the aid of a cop in a tussle.

Sgt. McDonough recounted the time that he had to arrest a troublesome Marine, who was a hand-to-hand combat specialist. That fight lasted more than 10 minutes. The radio wouldn't reach Dispatch, which was only 30 yards away. Finally, a citizen called on a traditional phone.

"Police poured out of the station like Keystone cops, and finally subdued the Marine," McDonough said.

Newport has always had its favorite drunks. There was one cirrhotic legend named Corning, "the training drunk" for the department. Whenever the station needed painting, the duty cops would arrest Corning. The local judge would determine how many days it would take to paint the jail, then sentence Corning for the required time.

Their “biggest” drunk bust involved a seven-foot-tall, 300-pound man whose wrists were as thick as thighs. When five cops finally subdued him, they couldn’t put on the cuffs. Physically drained from the wrestling match, the giant quit abruptly, agreeing to be placed in the squad car sans cuffs.

Then there were the encounters with famed drug proponent **Dr. Timothy Leary** and his “high” family. Purcell, then in Laguna, arrested Leary shortly after the LSD proponent had returned from self-exile in Europe, two years after he had escaped from prison.

Those stories could have gone on for as long as their careers, but Chief Lewis wanted to let the audience know about modern policing, underscoring that the public expects today’s cop to be all things: brave, fit, experts in mental health and law, be good decision makers – all while performing under stress. “We are under scrutiny, and we’re held accountable,” Lewis said.

But the Department doesn’t act by itself, it operates in tandem with other city departments, from public works to library, and in cooperation with the community at large, he explained. “Real community policing.”

Although policing has changed from the patrol days of Bressler, McDonough and Purcell, “Today we’re considered a world class police department. But know that we all stand on the shoulders of these giants,” Chief Lewis concluded, gesturing toward the three men who were smiling in remembrance.

Reprinted by permission from the Newport Beach Indy, 23 Sep 2016

2017-The Best Is Yet To Be

Renew or become a member today!

The Museum has become what it is today through the generous donations of those who have shown their support by becoming members. Donate today and join in the fun. Meet your neighbors at members-only special events, receive discounts at the Museum Store, and help preserve the history of Newport Beach. Your donations are 100% tax-deductible.



Fashion Island Before Black Fridays

Jamboree is More than Just the Name of a Street...



It never occurred to local **Stan Bressler** that he was a part of history in the making when, in 1953, he joined over 45,000 Scouts for the National Scout Jamboree in Newport Beach. Situated on 3,000 acres where Newport Center and Fashion Island are now located, this international seven-day gathering was the third of its kind, and Scouts from all 48 states and 16 foreign countries were in attendance.

Campsites were established, and over 30,000 tents were pitched in what was called “Jamboree Town.” Over the seven days, Scouts did what Scouts do. In addition to preparing all of their meals, tending to the campsites, and enjoying campfires, they participated in programs including field sports, hiking, crafts, archery, swapping (trading and bartering items they brought with them from home with other Scouts), and ocean swimming in the Pacific Ocean. Just imagine what it must have been like for thousands of boys to see the Pacific for the first time!



In 1953, the National Scout Jamboree was held on Irvine Ranch land in the area of what is now Fashion Island Shopping Center. (Image courtesy of Irvine Company)

From the Museum Director’s Desk *Jennifer Keil*

Every day someone tells us how magical this beachside community is to them, and they retell their stories about experiences on Balboa Island. These past few months I’ve received hundreds of priceless photos that showcase the beauty and allure of the area.



Where would we be without the families that literally paved the way from Los Angeles to this sandbar developed by **W.S. Collins**? The Pavilion, built in 1906, was designed to attract visitors, many of whom traveled on the Red Car, which stopped on the Peninsula. They would wander onto the Island via the ferry (a small boat that could carry a few passengers) and discover that there were lots for sale. I hear from families who share stories about their grandparents who were fearless as

they invested in these empty lots. Dan Dinsmoor recently provided a family album



Jennifer Keil with Jim Jennings Jr., son of the author of “Old Balboa Island Stories”

from the 1920s which has photos depicting their visits from Pasadena, not unlike many of the original Balboa families. They built darling cottages, many of which are now a part of the Museum’s Historic Plaque Program.

These bungalows became gathering places where countless holidays were spent and traditions were created, such as the Boat Parade.



The Museum desires to preserve these stories by writing them down, conducting oral histories, and digitizing the priceless photos. **Jim Jennings Jr.** has shared some of his personal perspectives of growing up in the area and remembers the days when his dad ran the local gas station. He gave us photos, newspaper articles, and his dad’s book for our reference library. These items have been scanned for all to see in our online archives. Visit our website at: www.balboaislandmuseum.org/archive, and begin to explore the changes that occurred over time.



Original National Jamboree poster is on display at the Museum. (Courtesy of Stan Bressler)

President **Dwight D. Eisenhower** prepared a recorded message that was played to the masses in an outdoor arena. Vice President **Richard Nixon** was actually in attendance. He spoke before a religious convocation and stayed overnight, helping to prepare breakfast for his hometown troop from Whitter the next day. Several movie stars made an appearance, including **Bob Hope**, **Roy Rogers**, **Debbie Reynolds**, **Danny Kay**, **Jimmy Stewart**, **Mitzi Gaynor**, **Irene Dunne**, **Bill Holden** and **Andy Devine**. Hope served as the master of ceremonies for a big Hollywood-type variety show. And fireworks closed out the evenings.

The final activities included singers **Bob Crosby** and the Sons of the Pioneers, and the scouts themselves staged a pageant called “Scouting’s Train to the Future,” the story of the jamboree on this vast California ranch.



Bob Hope clowning around with Jamboree Scouts.