

# SEAL BEACH SBHCS

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL SOCIETY

MARCH/APRIL  
2001  
NEWSLETTER



**NEXT COMMUNITY MEETING  
COMING SOON!**

P.O. BOX 152 SEAL BEACH, CA 90740 + LAURA ALIOTO, PRESIDENT (562) 683-1874

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## New Members

**Lifetime Membership:**  
Julie Quinn

**Family Membership:**  
Jim Caviola

**Welcome!**



(L-R) Rich Harbour, Lloyd Murray, Joan Stegman, and Tim Dorsey

## March Community Meeting:

### Legends of Seal Beach Surfing

On March 22, the society presented its March community meeting, "Legends of Seal Beach Surfing" in the Mary Wilson Library Senior Center. The evening's

guests provided many fascinating and sometimes ribald glimpses into local surfing history.

Joan Stegman told of her single adventure surfing in the waters of a pre-Naval Weapon Station Anaheim Bay in 1935 (See SEAL BEACH'S FIRST SURFER GIRL). Retired Lifeguard Lloyd Murray shared some of his many lively exploits both in and out of the water. Rich Harbour told how having his first surfboard stolen forced him to make his next surfboard ---and ultimately lead to his starting Harbour Surfboards, a local business famous for its well crafted surfboards. Tim Dorsey, another retired lifeguard, read his lively account of his first surfing lesson out on the waves of Seal Beach

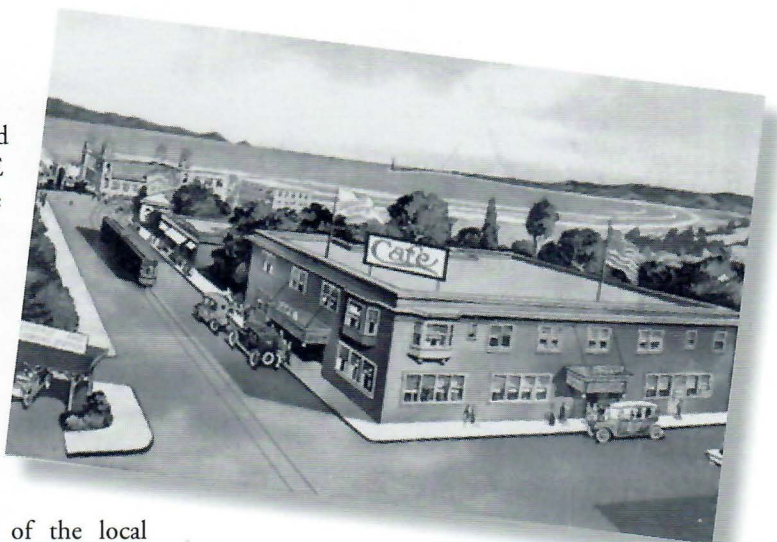
A wide range of topics were covered. Attempting to predict good surfing weather in the days before weather satellites. The changing geography of the beach. How to avoid being stung by a stingray when falling off your board. Practical jokes on other surfers. And, of course, the Surfing Sphinx.

Members who missed the meeting will be able to view a videotape of the event in the Red Car during museum hours.

## Postcards From The Edge

...of the Pacific Ocean This unsent and undated postcard advertised the LODGE CAFE AND HOTEL which stood at the current location of the John's Food King parking lot at Main St. and Central Ave.. The back of the postcard reads: The Lodge Cafe \* BLYER & COMBS, props. \* Seal Beach, California \* Refined Entertainment \* Dancing \* Excellent Cuisine.

The postcard also shows the LODGE SUPPLY AND PARKING STATION in the lower left hand corner. The artist seemed to have a poor understanding of the local geography. He managed to eliminate Long Beach completely between Seal Beach and San Pedro!





## Seal Beach Then And Now

These two photographs were taken 84 years apart from the same spot on Ocean Avenue looking down Main Street towards the hill.

### Looking Closer at 1917

Closer examination of the 1917 Main Street photograph reveals some interesting details. This photo from the society's collection was undated. However, this billboard advertises a Screen Beauties Bathers' Parade on Sunday, July 15th. This gives enough information to pinpoint the year to 1917 when July 15th fell on a Sunday. There is slogan

on the billboard: "Your Country Needs Your Help!" The United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917. It seems safe to assume that this photo was taken between April 6 and July 15th in 1917. Note the graphics of the scintillator rays on the left side of the billboard.

What looks like a automobile in the distance is actually the Red Car on Main St. Letters are mounted atop the building at the end of the first block on the left.

Flipping the letters reveals the building to be the Lodge Cafe and Hotel.



Main Street, Seal Beach, 1917

## Seal Beach's First Surfer Girl

*The following is an excerpt for Libby Appelgate's interview with Joan Stegman for the Seal Beach Oral History Project:*

**J.S.:** Then I met Stanton's son, Jack. I was about fifteen and he must have been seventeen. I was always surprised that he even looked at me because two years difference with kids that age is chasm. But he was the rich kid in town, of course and he had two of the most beautiful surfboards that you have ever seen. They must have been made in Hawaii because

**L.A.:** Now, what year

would that be?

**J.S.:** I was fifteen. It was 1935. One was a racing board, what they called a paddleboard that the Hawaiians used. Not too many Hawaiians surfed in those days. The craze started in California. But anyway, the racing board was blond wood and fairly heavy, curved underneath and with a sharp nose so it would go through the water and it was fairly light. But the surfboard weighed tons! It was flat and I bet it was three inches thick. Of course, it had a curved nose but the back was flat. When you caught a wave and stood up on that thing,

you felt as though you were standing on a tabletop. But if you lost it, look out! It was heavy and it could just kill you! The wonderful thing was that there was a sandbar at the mouth of the bay and the waves came in at low tide just like Waikiki. That's where I learned to surf. He took me out there. The waves were so low and gentle and they just petered out as they hit the deep water. He [Jack Stanton] taught me how to surf there and I surfed on that big board. I couldn't stand on the racing board because it was too tippy.

**L.A.:** So you were surfing in 1935?

**J.S.:** He took me

around this jetty and I surfed some big waves and I lost that board and it scared me to death. I would look up and could see it coming down at me. It was like a house. It was so big and heavy. I couldn't carry it and get it in the water. But that's the kind of boards they made. They were made of wood.

**L.A.:** They used to call them "logs". They weren't made of balsa wood.

To participate in the Seal Beach Oral History Project, please contact the society at (562) 562-683-1874 or PO Box 152 Seal Beach CA 90740

## Wish List

- Docents for the Red Car
- Manila File Folders
- Copier Machine
- Bulletin Boards
- Display Cases
- Paint or Painters for Red Car (exterior)

**If you have any ideas, written pieces, anecdotes, or photos for the newsletter, please contact Michael Dobkins at: (323) 259-8640 or mpdobkins@earthlink.net**



Main Street, Seal Beach, 2001

## Historic Photos

### Can you help?

We are always looking to update our historic photo collection. If you have old Seal Beach photos or postcards, we would love to have a copy. Family photos taken in and around Seal Beach and the stories that go along with them would also be terrific.

## White Elephant Sale

We will still need your donations for the White Elephant Sale, but the sale is going to be re-scheduled due to concerns about this year's unpredictable rainy season. The bad news is that the White Elephant sale will take place a few months later. The good news is that you now have more time to clean out your closets and garages. The date for the next White Elephant sale will be announced in a future newsletter.

### Articles from the Attic



## Any Publicity is Good Publicity

Ever striving to get Seal Beach into the public eye, early city promoters were not above fabricating interesting stories to grab column space in the newspapers. Divers searching for coral reefs just off the shore. Near disasters in mid-air. Young couples marrying only hours after meeting on the beach. Some newspaper stories from the early days of Seal Beach should be taken with a grain of salt. For instance, this story from the August 24, 1916 edition of the Long Beach Press:

### MYSTERY GIRL HAS SEAL BEACH MOTOR POLICE GUESSING

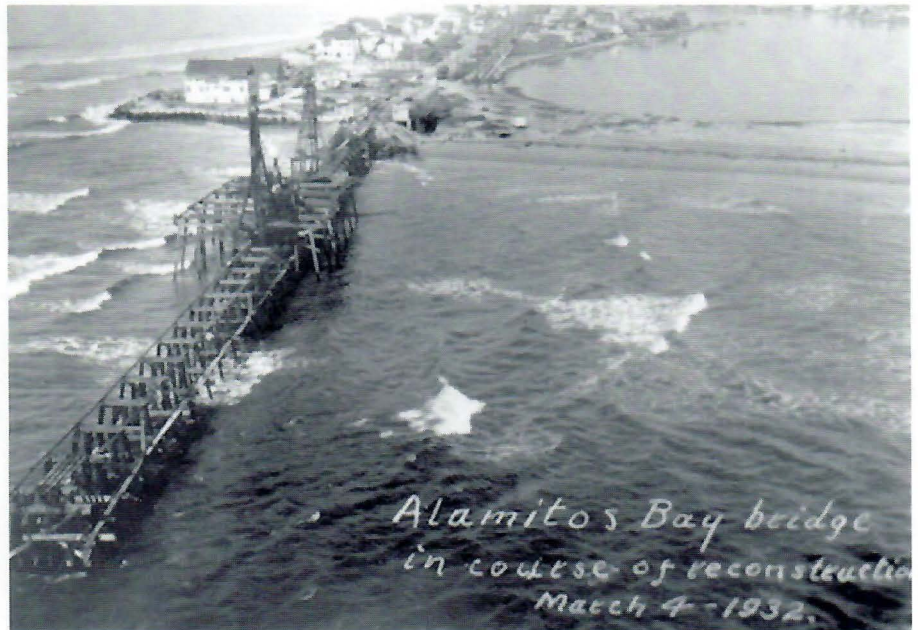
The Seal Beach press agents land in a Los Angeles paper this morning the following yarn concerning which

local police say they know nothing:

"News" Story.

The Orange county and Seal Beach motorcycle police are on the look out for a pretty girl speed violator who has on various occasions foiled attempts to arrest her. Driving a heavy white roadster, the young woman has shouted open defiance at the officers who attempted to stop her.

Driving over the narrow and curving road between Long Beach and Seal Beach she has endangered numerous autoists while running at a speed of over fifty miles per hour. It is said that she has often reached a speed of more than seventy-five miles when hard pressed. Riding



Alamitos Bay Bridge, March 4, 1932

through Seal Beach late Tuesday night, the evasive one was chased by a county motorcycle officer of Santa Ana for a distance of more than twenty miles, and she made her escape by driving over a sandy stretch of the boulevard, and throwing dust clouds into the face of her

pursuer.

The officer said that he had driven his high-power motorcycle alongside of the big roadster which the young woman occupied, and that his demands to stop were met with a smile when she said: "Mr. Man, you'll have to drive

a little faster before you get me."

The automobile has an Illinois State registry, and the police have been unable to locate the young woman. The woman is always alone in her wild rides.

**The Red Car will be open 1-4 p.m. on the following Saturdays in 2001**



<b>April</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>12, 26</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>9, 23</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>14, 28</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>11, 25</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>8, 22</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>13, 27</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>10, 24</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>8</b>

**To Join:**

To become a member of the Seal Beach Historical Society, or for more information on society events, call:

**(562) 683-1874**

- Single* ..... \$15.00 yr.
- Youth w/L.D.* ... \$7.00 yr.
- Family* ..... \$25.00 yr.
- Sponsor* ..... \$50.00 yr.
- Patron* ..... \$100.00 yr.
- Life*..... \$200.00

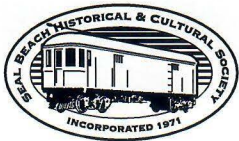
**Merchandise for Sale**

**HISTORY RELATED ITEMS MAKE EXCELLENT GIFTS!**

- RED CAR T-SHIRTS ..... \$15.00
- "A STORY OF SEAL BEACH" (BOOK) ..... \$10.00
- L.B. PIKE (BOOK) ..... \$15.00
- 8" X 10" MATTED PHOTOS (EARLY SEAL BEACH & JOY ZONE) ..... \$15.00

**MEMBERS GET 10% DISCOUNT!**

*Graphics: Rick Murphy*



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