



The
News

DROGHER

May 2019

CELEBRATING FOUNDERS DAY 2019



The Dana Point Historical Society will celebrate its annual Founders Day on **Wednesday, May 22, 2019**. We are pleased to announce that we will have two honorees this year. DPHS lifetime member and former Dana Point mayor **Scott Schoeffel** (left) will be honored with the 2019 Founders Day award. Scott is a decades-long resident of Dana Point and has performed many years of service as both an appointed and elected public official in California. He served as a member of the City Council of Dana Point from 2008 to 2016 and has served as Director, President and co-founder of the Dana Point Symphony Orchestra since 2012. He also has been on the board of the Dana Point Yacht Club since 2011. Scott was a member of our city's Planning Commission for over a decade, where he served as Chairman multiple times. Additionally, he was appointed as a Director of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency Board of Directors and as Director of the Foothill/Eastern Transportation Corridor Agency Board of Directors. Scott is



currently a senior attorney for Theodora Oringher and serves as a member of the Board of Directors of CalOptima, the public agency plan that provides healthcare to many OC residents.

Longtime member **Rod Howorth** (right) will also be celebrated in memorium for all of his past work with the Society and as a community advocate in Dana Point. The event will take place in **Bankson Hall at Gloria Dei Church** at Selva Road and Stonehill Drive. A reception will greet members and their guests **beginning at 6:30 p.m.**, followed by our program at 7:15 p.m. The public is invited to join us on this very special night.



Wednesday, June 26, at Doheny Beach !

**DANA POINT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP
Fiesta Dinner Fundraiser**

Join in support of our scholarship program again this year by reserving your tickets (see form inside) for our annual Fiesta Dinner to be held on

Wednesday, June 26, at 6:00 p.m. at Doheny State Beach. Jack Saunderson, of Lucy's El Patio Café, will once again serve up his delicious Mexican fare. Last year's turnout was tremendous! Be sure not to miss out on this festive event, which supports the \$1,000 Doris I. Walker Scholarship and the \$1,000 Lucy Chavarrias-Saunderson Scholarship, given annually given to two deserving high school seniors headed for college. Members and businesses are invited to contribute prizes for the opportunity raffle. Items such as gift baskets, show/sports tickets and gift or restaurant cards are appreciated. Metered parking is available or you may use the city trolley service. Please contact us at 949-248-8121 with any questions. You can get the reservation form here: <http://www.danapointhistorical.org/files/2019/05/Fiesta-Registration-2019.pdf> OR on **page three** of this newsletter.

President's Message



Lorraine Passero and Jon Seeman presented a fascinating program for our April meeting. Members and guests were inspired by Lorraine's book, *Distant Indigo*, the story of Clara Mason Fox, who had been an Orange County artist and storyteller of a past era. Lorraine, an artist and retired teacher, was able to create her story based on the contents of a large box found in a family attic. Clara's life is the true story of a woman born in 1873 who moves with her family from Illinois to homestead in Orange County. In 2010, Clara's botanical watercolors were discovered at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont, California. Some of the 150 works were dated as

early as 1894, when Clara lived in Silverado Canyon, and became part of the "When They Were Wild: Recapturing California's Wildflower Heritage" exhibit at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. We have several copies of Lorraine's book available in the museum if you would like to know more about this pioneer teacher, poet and artist of Orange County. Author Lorraine Passero is married to Clara Fox's great-great nephew, Laguna Beach sculptor Jon Seeman. Jon is a fourth-generation Laguna Beach artist whose sculptures are well known. Jon spoke to us about Ed Seeman and George Seeman, his grandfather and great-uncle, who were hired to build the Scenic Inn and scenic bluff walkway in 1923-24 Dana Point. George lived in a Dana Cove cottage at the time with his family. Jon brought amazing photos of lobster trapping, fishing and a high-powered boat capable of rum running. A special Seeman family film clip included family friend and surf filmmaker Bruce Brown in Dana Cove. Our members and guests had lots to talk about at the reception afterward (pictured above).



Please thank (shown right to left) Elizabeth Bamattre, Bob Minty and Keith Johannes for representing the Dana Point Historical Society at our outreach booth at the Irvine Ranch Jamboree in the Irvine Historical Park on April 13. The event was enjoyed by a steady stream of families with children in perfect weather. Saturday, June 8, is the Orange County History Roundup at the Heritage Museum in Santa Ana and Richard Henry Dana Jr. will be there --- reenacted by Bob Minty. Several of our Board members will be volunteering at our booth and we would love to have you join us! There will be free tours of the H. Clay Kellogg House, historic exhibits and Orange County Historical Society archives will be open to the public. Check the article on page four of this newsletter and call if you can attend and/or volunteer.

Our Founders Day Program is always memorable. Join us in Bankson Hall at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church on **Wednesday, May 22**, for a tribute to the late Rod Howorth and a program honoring DPHS Life Member Scott Schoeffel for his past and current contributions to our community.

Barbara Force Johannes



**DANA POINT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP
Fiesta Dinner Fundraiser**

Wednesday, June 26, 6:00 PM
Reservation Form for Doheny State Beach

Come and join us for a fun time, good food and support our annual mission to enhance the college experience of our two scholarship winners!

Mail by **Thursday, June 20** to: **Dana Point Historical Society**
PO Box 544
Dana Point, CA 92629

(You may also pay at the museum during open hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays 1-3 p.m.)

Number of Society member adults: _____ @ \$25 each (enclose check/money order)

Number of Society member children (12 & under): _____ @ \$10 each (enclose check/money order)

Number of NON-Society member adults: _____ @ \$30 each (enclose check/money order)

Number of NON-Society member children (12 & under): _____ @ \$15 each (enclose check/m.o.)

Parking is available for \$2 per hour at Doheny Beach parking meters.
City trolley service is also available to Doheny Beach from your nearest trolley stop.

If you cannot attend, and/or you would like to donate money to the scholarship fund in addition to ordering ticket, please enter the amount of your donation: \$ _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____

Questions? Please call the museum office (949) 248-8121 or email events@danapointhistorical.org

“Mid Mod”

By Keith Johannes

Mid-Century Modern architecture is historically significant. This architectural style started after World War II and continued into the 1980s. The Getty Conservation Institute has created an initiative recognizing the international historic significance of this style of architecture. This project is called *Conserving Modern Architecture*: https://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/field_projects/cmaj/

May is National Preservation Month and many activities are happening nationwide. One event was the California Preservation Foundation’s annual conference in Palm Springs, May 8-11. The city of Palm Springs cherishes and celebrates the “Mid Mod” style with an annual Modernism Week each February. For those interested in seeing some excellent examples of the architectural style, next year the event will begin on February 13. For more information go to: <https://www.modernismweek.com>.

Locally, *Preserve Orange County* (<https://www.preserveorangecounty.org>) is having a home tour in the City of Orange on May 18 & 19 featuring the renowned architecture of Joseph Eichler. Orange has three historic districts that feature Eichler mid-century modern homes. The standards of these recently designated districts were approved by the homeowners to preserve the architectural style while providing a window into Orange County’s past.



The recent *Historic Resources Survey* commissioned by the City of Dana Point from *Architectural Resources Group* has identified a number of buildings in the Mid Mod style. These include several current examples, both commercial and residential. However, Dana Point has already lost historic Mid Mod structures either through demolition or through poorly planned renovation. The building at the corner of Amber Lantern and PCH (last known as the Bella Bazaar store) was demolished for the large downtown Raintree project. Another example, the building in which Jack’s Restaurant and the District salon are located will soon be demolished. The

question concerning these and other buildings in any historical style is, are they historically significant? There are local, state and national guidelines for considering if a site is “historically significant” and there are also measures that property owners and developers may or may not use when sites have the potential for being designated as historically significant. Historic designation helps the planning department advise the homeowner how to make desired renovations and still retain the economic benefits of designation.

Typically, improvements are only monitored for the exterior of registered historic properties, and it does not necessarily preclude modernization. On the flip side, the financial benefits of historically designated properties result in decreased property taxes and reduction or elimination of fees. Not all older homes can be designated historic. Much depends the determination of local and state agencies.



If you are interested in finding out if your 50-year-old-plus building may qualify as a historic structure and what some of the economic benefits are, please contact our Society at 949-248-8121.

(Pictured, three examples of mid-century modern buildings found in Dana Point. Top and bottom are photos of private homes. Center photo is of the Chart House Restaurant.)

Helen Pierce 1926-2019

We are mourning the loss of our beloved Matriarch of Dana Point, Helen Pierce, who passed away on Palm Sunday, April 12, 2019. Born Helen Lucille Blankenbaker in Kentucky on January 29, 1926, her family moved to California in the 1930s where she attended school in Alhambra and earned her teaching degree at the University of Santa Barbara. In June 1947, Helen and her friend, Mary Nicholson, two young teachers looking for summer work in Laguna Beach, were referred to the new Dana Point Hotel on Del Prado where they were hired as waitresses in *Noel's Galleon Restaurant*. It was suggested they contact Mrs. Ralph Pierce on Chula Vista Avenue to rent a room for the summer. Helen's "Hallmark" love story began when Mrs. Pierce invited Helen and Mary to drive with her to San Francisco, before it was time to return to their teaching positions. Mrs. Pierce's son Mel, a WWII veteran, met Helen when he came home from his work at the San Bernardino Air Depot to drive his mother and "her guests" to San Francisco.



Thereafter, Mel visited Helen on weekends at her parents' home in Alhambra until they were married in the Pasadena Wedding Chapel in 1948, toured the United States on their wedding trip in Mel's 1933 Dodge and returned to their first apartment in Dana Point. Mel worked in the family pottery business, then started a laundry business while they began their family of four children. Helen returned to teaching in 1953 in Laguna Beach, moved to the Serra Elementary kindergarten in 1954 and joined the staff of the new Richard Henry Dana Elementary School in 1966, teaching there until she

retired, and then returned some three decades later to speak at the school's 50-Year Anniversary in 2016.

Helen was predeceased by her son John and her husband Melvyn R. Pierce. She is survived by her son David, two daughters, Sandy and Rebecca, their families and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Until her death, she continued to reside in the home built by Mel and the volunteer firemen of Doheny Station 29 on a lot they purchased from Woodruff-era realtor Jack Macart. Together with Mel, Helen was a founder and member of the South Shores Baptist Church and has contributed to Dana Point Historical Society programs as a speaker and Life Member.

Mel and Helen's remarks are recorded as speakers on the 1991 Dana Point DVD *I Remember It When*. Helen recalled, "When I moved to Dana Point there were no boats—nothing on the ocean! What a shame to have all that water and no boats. My husband's father said it would be a perfect spot for a small craft harbor. ... When I started teaching here there were only enough students for one session of kindergarten. Now there are many schools with two or three classes."

The 2007 Founders Day meeting featured life in the early days of Dana Point when Helen and Mel were the honorees. Mel recalled the 1930s and the 1940s except when he was away during WWII and Helen remembered her first impressions in 1947. Mel and Helen often attended our meetings and were the source of answers for local history questions. The Society named Mel Pierce the first Patriarch of Dana Point in 2015 but sadly, he died of pneumonia shortly thereafter. Helen rode along with other Founders in the society's "A Whale of a Fire Engine," provided by the California Fire Museum, as our entry in the city's 2016 Festival of Whales parade. The Society named Helen Matriarch of Dana Point in May 2017. As Matriarch of Dana Point, Helen attended our meetings and Scholarship Fiestas at Doheny State Beach and had planned on riding in a convertible in the 2019 Festival of Whales parade to celebrate the society receiving the Dana Point Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit Excellence Award --- until storm warnings canceled the parade. Helen's most recent contribution was prompted by a 1947 photo of the Dana Point Hotel and our questions regarding the future redevelopment of the building on Del Prado (where Jack's Restaurant is now located). Helen emailed back, "Wow! To see this picture of the hotel as it was really brings back memories! *Noel's Galleon Restaurant* was a very pleasant place to work. Mr. and Mrs. Corlett ran the business office (for the hotel) at the center of the building, and I also did office work for them. I think the hotel was built in 1946-1947 because it was very new when my friend and I worked there."

It was only a few days after we learned Helen had passed away that we received a question about a restaurant across the street from Cannon's in the 1950s, but Helen was no longer there to ask. A chapter of Dana Point's history has closed and everyone who knew Helen will miss her.



Helen and Mel Pierce. Pictures courtesy of the Pierce family.

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2019 DPHS Calendar

May 22 Founders Day Program

June 8 OC Historical Society Centennial

June 26 Scholarship Fiesta

Membership

Please welcome new members **Colonel Del Morris and Brigit Morris.**

As a reminder, the annual dues for 2019 were due in January. The membership categories are:

Individual	\$25 annual
Family	\$30 annual
Business	\$50 annual
Patron	\$100 annual
Life	\$500 lifetime

Please remit your dues at this time either via mail at P.O. Box 544, Dana Point, 92629; at the museum Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays, 1-3 p.m., or at our Founders Day meeting on May 22.

All contributions are tax deductible as the Historical Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Questions? Contact me at rmlarusso@msn.com

Marsha LaRusso

Orange County Historical Society Centennial

The Orange County Historical Society, in cooperation with the Heritage Museum of Orange County, presents the **Orange County History Roundup** on **Saturday, June 8**, from **11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** This **FREE** event is part of the 100-year celebration of the Orange County society.

Join **Dana Point Historical Society** members at our booth at the Heritage Museum of Orange: 3101 W. Harvard St. in Santa Ana. Phone: (714) 540-0404. Activities:

- Interact with costumed interpreters, reenactors, historical societies and genealogical societies
- Tours of the H. Clay Kellogg House
- Orange County history talks
- Live music, presented by *Lilies of the West* string band
- Open House at the OCHS Archives
- Nature Tours by Orange County naturalists
- Food trucks
- Fruit and vegetables from the Museum's Farm

DPHS welcomes volunteers to assist at our booth with outreach, membership and merchandise sales. Call us at 949-248-8121 to volunteer!