



DANA POINT
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

The News Drogher

January 2021

DPHS Virtual Annual Meeting and Program Wednesday, January 27

The Dana Point Historical Society will hold its annual meeting, along with a historical program, on **Wednesday, January 27**. This will be a virtual event for our members, guests and interested members of the public. An RSVP is required and you can follow this link to respond <https://tinyurl.com/DPHS21>. The 2021 slate of incumbent officers and appointed board members will be sent electronically and also appear on page three. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. with the voting of the membership to approve the slate of board members and appointed directors. Members may vote electronically via the online meeting, or may return the enclosed envelope with their vote and signature. Only members in good standing may vote. Good standing is defined as members whose dues have been paid within the last year. Members may also pay their 2021 dues using the enclosed envelope.



Following the membership vote, **our featured program event will include a presentation about Dana Point county parks by Eric Jessen**, left, a 50-year Laguna Beach resident and longtime board member of the Laguna Beach Historical Society. In 2005, Eric retired as chief of the County of Orange Harbors, Beaches and Parks Department. He has also served as Chairman of the Historic Advisory Board that performed the original survey of historic buildings in Laguna Beach, and was president of the South Coast Water District. He received the Call to Service Award, sometimes called the Lifetime Achievement Award, from President Barack Obama in 2015, which honors those who complete more than 4,000 hours of community service over the course of their lifetime. In 2008, Eric was asked to record his oral history at the Lawrence de Graaf Center for Oral and Public History at the University of California, Fullerton --- the largest oral history collection in the United States. A question and answer session will follow the presentation.

Attendance is open to the public (please come and join our organization --- a family membership is only \$30!). Members who wish to nominate individuals or apply for vacant positions should contact Parliamentarian Joel Bishop at least two days prior to the annual membership meeting at (949) 248-8121. We especially seek individuals who are interested in our museum operations, where currently a vacancy exists in our 1st Vice President position.

Richard "Dick" Dietmeier 1940-2020

Longtime Society member Richard "Dick" Dietmeier died November 15, 2020, after a lengthy illness following a stroke. A retired Lieutenant Colonel with the Marines, he moved to the city in 1992. Over the years he has served on the South Coast Water District Board and was involved with the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment Support Group, as well as many other local organizations. Dick was a strong supporter of the Historical Society and received the Pat Pleplar award from the Society in 2015, which is given each year to an individual in recognition of active citizenship and having made a difference in Dana Point. Dick's life partner, Nancy Jenkins, serves on our board of directors. We will miss his avid participation in many of our city's organizations.

Photo by Andrea Swayne





Happy New Year greetings! We can all agree that the past year has been challenging and one for the history books. However, our loyal members and volunteers deserve a “Well done!” for keeping our Society together in spite of the hurdles. We did have three successful community activities before the pandemic hit: our 2020 Annual Meeting & Potluck Dinner with the City Manager and staff; a private tour of Mission San Juan Capistrano featuring the Lincoln Document; and in the first week of Festival of Whales we had our parade entry, outreach booth and Historic Walking tours. April, May and June the Board met via the Microsoft Teams platform, guided by Grant Earl, Technology Chair, and Joel Bishop,

Communications. We continued to meet museum visitors by appointment, return emails and answer requests for historic information. We awarded two scholarships to high school seniors and we hired graduate student Kurtis Stange as an hourly consultant to archive and digitize our collections using the Past Perfect program purchased earlier in the year. We selected Richard and Geody Deffenbaugh as our Founders Day honorees in May, but due to Covid-19 it wasn't until October that Elizabeth Bamattre could arrange a group to present the Founders Day Proclamation to the Deffenbaughs, which included Mayor Richard Viczorek and Sergio Prince, Orange County Fifth District Community Relations Representative. Tile Chair Jeff Huston coordinated a new Baby Beach Tile Wall installation in July and, in November, Grant Earl used the Teams platform for our first online presentation by guest author and speaker Eric Plunkett.

In December, we sent a “Save Capistrano Beach Park” email to members asking them to support efforts by the Orange County Parks and City of Dana Point by signing a petition, sending emails and participating in the Wednesday, Dec. 9 meeting at which the California Coastal Commission would be asked to allow OC Parks to mitigate beach erosion while OC Parks creates a long-term master plan solution. Because of widespread community effort, the commission voted to allow the permit application but required a master plan within one year, with an option to extend an additional year, if the county demonstrates progress. Thank you for joining Toni Nelson and Capo Cares to preserve Capistrano Beach Park.

We have received some preservation updates from the City of Dana Point staff, reporting that the Seaside Inn is under construction and the contractor anticipates completion late this year. City staff has also been working with architects Lynn and Jerry Muir on the 1920s Woodruff Tract Office building (near Del Prado and Pacific Coast Highway) to rehabilitate the structure and restore many original character-defining features. Tile and other elements will be recreated in the style of the original design, based on detailed photos obtained by Lynn Muir. Currently, no update is available from OC Parks regarding the Blue Lantern Gazebo at the Ken Sampson Overlook.

January's guest speaker, Eric Jessen, has experience as the chief of the County of Orange Harbors, Beaches and Parks Department until his retirement in 2005. His tenure there provides a rich background for his perspective on past, present and future plans for Orange County's parks.

The legacy of Doheny parks is as important to Capistrano Beach history as the Bluff Top Park and the Blue Lantern Gazebo are to early Dana Point history. As OC Parks, both were included in Dana Point Harbor long before the City of Dana Point was incorporated in 1989. The remnants of stone retainer walls and walkways, viewed from today's Bluff Top Park, still remain from the original Scenic Walk, or beach access trail, advertised in 1924 when built by the San Juan Point Corporation. The officers --- Joe Skidmore and Anna G. Walters of Laguna Beach and J. L. Beebe and P. H. Krick --- hired Ed and George Seeman and a small crew to build the stone walkways and the Scenic Inn picnic area. They advertised Dana Point as the natural unspoiled coast described by Richard Henry Dana Jr. in *Two Years Before The Mast*. Sidney H. Woodruff and his investors would build the 1930 foundation of the never-completed Dana Point Inn across the scenic trail now memorialized by the three remaining arches. When the Pulte Corporation purchased the bluff top area to build the Admiralty in the 1980s, members of the Civic Association met with the County of Orange to prevent the loss of public access to the bluffs. Our Historical Society was organized as a result of this effort in 1987. The Bluff Top Trail was re-established, the arched hotel remnants were saved and the Hide Drogher statue was dedicated in 1990 through the efforts of the Dana Point Historical Society, the County of Orange and the Pulte Corporation, as recorded on the plaque at the base of F. Benedict Coleman's Hide Drogher statue.

Eric Jessen will introduce his presentation, “Dana Point's OC Parks,” during our online Annual Meeting on Wednesday, January 27. After the 30-minute video you will be able to ask or write questions via the Teams platform. Eric previously spoke to the Society in April 2013 about Regional Parks and Open Spaces and we know you will be interested in his video.

Barbara Force Johannes

2021 Election of Board Members & Confirmation of Appointed Directors

OFFICERS to be elected by the members in January 2021:

Barbara Johannes (2021-2023)	President
Vacant	1st Vice President, Museum
Marsha LaRusso (2021-2023)	2nd Vice President, Membership
Heidi Hyde (2021-2023)	Recording Secretary
Gary Prenovost (2021-2023)	Treasurer
Joel Bishop (2021-2023)	Parliamentarian

Board appointed directors confirmed in 2021:

Bruce Beal (2021-2023)	Ocean Heritage Projects
Joel Bishop (2021-2023)	Public Relations/Technology
Max Brown (2021-2023)	Editor/Merchandise
Sandy Iverson (2021-2023)	Photo Archive
Keith Johannes (2021-2023)	Preservation
Grant Earl (2021-2023)	Technology/Media

Current Board Members & Appointed Chairs

Officers elected by the members in 2020

Bob Minty (2020-2022)	3rd Vice President, Programs
Nancy Jenkins (2020-2022)	Corresponding Secretary

Board appointed directors confirmed in January 2020:

Elizabeth Bamattre (2020-2022)	Special Events
Judy Henderson (2020-2022)	Sunshine Ambassador, Director Emeritus
Vacant (2020-2022)	Docent Scheduling & Recruitment

Board appointed Chairs:

Jeff Huston (2021-2023)	Tile Wall
Kirsten Reynolds (2021-2023)	Exhibits

-----Cut here / Use envelope to mail dues and/or vote-----

Check one:

I approve the 2021 slate of elections for the Dana Point Historical Society

I **do not** approve the 2021 slate of elections for the Dana Point Historical Society

Signature(s): _____

Print Name(s): _____

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2021 DPHS Calendar

January 27 Virtual Annual Meeting and Program

Membership



Hello to 2021! First, let me welcome new member **Wendy Manning**.

Second, let me thank all of our members for their support over the past tumultuous year. Now, more than ever, we are relying on our membership to support our all-volunteer organization as we try to financially negotiate the upcoming year. As many of you know, the Society had to suspend most of our money-making activities because of the ongoing pandemic. This started with the cancellation of the second week of our Festival of Whales outreach booth and continued on through the rest of the year. We lost financial resources from our Scholarship Fiesta, our booth at the Tall Ships Festival, museum picture sales and a possible home tour. This year our membership dues play a major role in sustaining our financial goals.

We have enclosed an envelope for those of you who have yet to pay your 2021 dues. You may also use the envelope to send in your vote for the annual election of DPHS officers, which will take place on January 27, if you choose not to attend electronically. As a reminder, the annual dues are due every 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 using the enclosed envelope. All contributions are tax deductible as the Historical Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Thank you again for your support of the Dana Point Historical Society --- active since 1987!

Questions? Contact me at rmlarusso@msn.com

Marsha LaRusso