

NEWSLETTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF LAGUNA WOODS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006
VOLUME 7 NUMBER 5

PRESERVING TODAY FOR TOMORROW

CLUBHOUSE THREE THE COMMUNITY'S MOST USED BUILDING

During the first six months of 2006, 106,612 persons attended functions in Clubhouse Three. This included use of all facilities: the auditorium, two dining rooms, the rehearsal room, billiards room and the conference room. 54,377 of these persons attended functions in the auditorium. This issue contains information on the early history of the building.



Construction on Clubhouse Three began in June 1970. This picture was probably made in the late fall, 1970. Note the absolute bareness of the area.



This view, circa 1971, looks more like the 2006 version, but has a parking lot free of obstacles. In 1981, it was one of the busiest auditoriums in Orange County. Over 100 clubs used it for meetings.

The masthead for this newsletter is a temporary one. Hopefully, the next issue will reflect the "final" name of the Society. Your suggestions for changes are always welcome.

PRESIDENTIAL MUSINGS

BOB RING

Clubhouse 3 was the first building constructed under the 1969 amended Community Facilities Agreement between GRF and the Rossmoor Corporation. Under this agreement, GRF was responsible for construction of facilities, not Rossmoor.



Until the 1980's, virtually all of the facilities were financed by monies accruing from new sales. In the beginning, Rossmoor built several facilities under its own financing and were reimbursed by funds received from sales that were made through and by GRF. By means of this process, the old Administration Building, Clubhouses 1 and 2, the Stables, Garden Center 1 and the RV Storage were all built and paid for in full by July 1970. In addition, because of this advanced financing by Rossmoor, the 27 hole Golf course, Aliso Park and the Maintenance Building were built. Each of these was under a special lease to GRF until such time as monies accumulated through sales were sufficient to pay for them. As each facility was paid for by GRF, title was conveyed by Rossmoor.

The costs of the Clubhouse 3 project were: Land, \$76,000; Construction, \$783,000; equipment and furnishings, \$105,000. This facility was financed with \$476,000 from Community Facilities Fund (new sales); \$105,000 from the General Equipment Fund (Reserves); and \$383,000 was provided by a five year, 5% bank loan. At that time, Prime was between 5% and 6% and savings accounts were earning similar rates

Bids were opened on March 31, 1970. Ground was broken for the clubhouse on June 17, 1970. Clubhouse 3 opened Friday night, March 12, 1971. The newspapers reported that 2,500 residents and a few guests enjoyed the three theater performances during the premier of the clubhouse. Nearly 200 residents participated in the show itself and it was indeed a grand beginning for the community's clubhouse-auditorium.

Observations:

It should be noted that the objection, at the time, to CH 3 was that GRF borrowed money so that they could build. The Boards that followed believed that no facility should be built using borrowed funds. In hindsight, GRF actually saved money by borrowing because the cost of money at the time was less than the cost of inflation.

The conclusion that I have reached after researching this Clubhouse is : "No one remembers how much a clubhouse costs or how it was paid for. The long term opinion is based upon whether the clubhouse achieves its objective. Most residents agree that Clubhouse 3 has achieved its goal of providing the community with an auditorium-clubhouse that consistently provides quality entertainment at affordable prices."

CLUBHOUSE THREE

The lead article in the Fall 1981 issue of Leisure World History, the Journal of the Historical Society, covered the story of CH 3. It was authored by Leisure World resident, Elizabeth Arnold. This material is excerpted from her article.

The planning of CH3 was an arduous task. That the resulting building is so admirably suited to its purpose is due to the dedicated committee of residents with a variety of backgrounds. They met every Monday morning for many weeks. An early major decision was choosing between an outdoor amphitheater and an indoor auditorium.

Gen. Edward McGuire was Chairman of the Capital Improvement Committee during the planning stage. A plaque honoring him is mounted on a stone under a Chinese Elm near the front entrance of the building.

Ground was broken on March 17, 1970, with Dr. Tracy Strevey, GRF President, wielding one of the shovels. On March 5, 1971, the building was dedicated. US Representative John G. Schmitz presented the Clubhouse with a flag that had been flown over the Capital in Washington DC. The official grand opening of March 12 and 13 was a Hollywood type production with giant spotlights, and television interviewing arriving guests.

The Production Guild, later to become the Theater Guild, was in charge of the preview with Oscar Kantner as producer. The lobby and stage were banked with a profusion of plants and flowers. The Leisure World Combo provided music in the lobby and the Leisurettes on the flat floor area in front of the stage greeted the audience as it assembled. The program included numbers on the Steinway piano and on the Conn organ. Highlight of the comedy sketches entitled "Life in Leisure World" was a sketch called "Looking for the Manor Numbers."

1700 tickets for the premier were sold out in less than five hours. Over 1000 waiting in line were unable to purchase tickets. A matinee performance was then added. The Guild also presented "This wonderful USA" on March 19, 20 and 21 to full houses.

As of April 15, 1981, Leisure World had 191 organized groups with over a 100 of them meeting in

Clubhouse 3. It had been the focal point for two parades: The tenth anniversary parade in 1974 and a Bicentennial parade in 1976.

The theater, located in the center of the building, seats 834 and is one of the busiest auditoriums in Orange County. Ten to fourteen programs a week are scheduled. These include lectures, movies, dance performances, Broadway-type shows, concerts, political speakers, choral groups, slide shows, organ and piano recitals and animal shows.

On each side of the theater, there is a large dining-meeting room with a fully equipped kitchen. Seating capacity for each is 184 for lectures and 152 for dining. At the rear of the building on one side there is a rehearsal room and on the other side, a billiards room.

As you enter the building, you are drawn to the box office and the Bulletin of Coming events. There are staff offices and a conference room behind the box office. The lobby, which extends the entire width of the building is equipped with attractive furniture groupings which invite conversation. On the wall, a continuing exhibit of the works of the Leisure World artists add color and warmth. Along the corridors between the theater and the dining rooms, display cases house exhibits of several clubs.

A unique feature of the theater is the large flat floor area between the tiers of gold and red seats and the stage. This was for space to play cards and for dancing. Bridge was never played there. Table tennis was set up once. Dancing took place a few times. Now, the space is used for Senior Citizen Tax Assistance. However, this parquet floor area is a boon to those in wheelchairs and those who find it difficult to climb the steps to the tiered seats.



AFFILIATES

(These businesses not listed in our current Directory. Welcome!)

AAA - Laguna Hills
Insurance & Travel Agency
25181 Paseo de Alicia
949 598-3479 Patron

Cass & Johansing Insurance Brokers
24351 Ave De La Carlota # N13
949 837-2800 Sponsor

Richmond & Richmond Law Offices
23521 Paseo de Valencia #115A
949 586-8600 Sponsor

Freedom Village
Continuing Care Retirement Community
23442 El Toro Rd. Lake Forest
949 472-4700 Sponsor

In Lake Forest, Freedom Village Continuing Care Retirement Community offers three levels of care within one community. At Freedom Village, besides all the standard services, a Continuing Care Program is provided, where all levels are available, allowing Seniors to move within the community as their needs change over the years. Residents have a *guarantee of long-term care for life.*

By choosing to move into a Retirement Community like Freedom Village, seniors can enjoy all the comforts of home without the worries of household chores and have a plan for additional care in the future. For more information, visit them online at www.freedomvillage.org or call 949 472-4700.

(Excerpted from material submitted by Linda Methe, Regional Marketing Director)

Do you know a business or professional group who might be interested in supporting the Society as an Affiliate? If so, call Mary Arine-Ber, membership chairman, and she will arrange a contact with them. Or better yet, she will provide the material and you can make the contact!

"EARLY BIRD" ASSOCIATE

(Associates don't usually get newsletter space, but this one paid 2007 dues in July and seemed to warrant recognition!)

Mayflower Congregational Church
Sundays 11 a.m. Ch I Main Lounge
P O Box 2212 Laguna Hills, 92654

According to Ward Payne, Moderator, this congregation was established on Oct. 6, 1967, and has held services in the Main Lounge of Clubhouse One since Jan. 11, 1969. The Church Council and the minister, Rev. Dean Echols, extends a cordial invitation to all Villagers to join them on any Sunday morning.

<<<<<VOLUNTEERS NEEDED>>>>>

The Historical Society has been on a summer schedule for July and August but summer will be officially over by the time this newsletter arrives. In order to resume our normal schedule, we need volunteers. If you would like to know more about this service, please call Holly Williams, our Executive Director, at 206-0510. If you are interested in Archives, talk with Fran Lindburg on Wednesday afternoon, or leave her a message at the same number.

STREVEY AWARD

This award is made once a year and presented at the annual dinner meeting. It recognizes outstanding service to the community and or the Historical Society. Individuals, clubs and other organizations are eligible. Nominations may be made by any member of the Society. Forms are available in the Society Office. Previous winners included Channel Six, Russ Desbro, Dr. Brenda Ross, Leisure World Foundation and Harry Schwartz.

HISTORY PROJECT

If you are interested in researching and writing, you may want to find out more about our History Project. Contact Holly Williams at 206-0150.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

September Community Service Award Honoree, Wilma Hart. An overflow crowd attended the Clubhouse 6 ceremony which was funded by Hacienda de LAS PALMAS. She was honored for her contributions to the Saddle Club and to several dance clubs.

October Community Service Award Honoree, Burt Goldstein, will be honored for his contributions to the Camera Club and to the Computer Club. This ceremony is funded by the Renaissance at the REGENCY and will be held Wednesday, Oct. 4 at 10 a.m. in Clubhouse 6.



ALL THINGS CHANGE!

The Historical Society Board had a male majority over the years. There was one year with no women, with four as the average number. The addition of two women this summer brought the total to seven, and warranted a little publicity!

Back row: Mary Arine-Beer (2nd VP)
2nd Row: Libby Marks; Linda Wilson (Secretary) Fran Lindberg (Archivist)
Front Row: Elaine Morgado; Evelyn Shopp (Editor); Ruth May (Docent Coordinator).

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Born in London during a ferocious WW1 air raid, **Libby Marks** was home schooled by a governess until attending Coburn High School for Girls, followed by Minerva College. She started musical training at age five, and eventually studied piano at the Royal Academy of Music.

She arrived in the USA in January 1951 on the Queen Mary and immediately left for Los Angeles. There, she became a Communication Consultant specializing in Transactional Analysis. She joined the National Leukemia Broadcast Council as Administrative Director, retiring in 1987. She moved to Leisure World in May 1994. She has two children, four grand children and one great grand child.

A native New Yorker, **Elaine Morgado**, earned a B.S. in Education at City College NY and

taught five years in the NYC School System. She spent five years as the Ballet Pianist for the North Carolina School of the Arts.

During the next 20 years, she taught in the Atlanta Public Schools. While there she earned a Masters and a Ph.D. at Georgia State University. For 18 summers, she was a Technical Specialist at the Centers for Disease Control. In addition, she was Ballet Pianist for the Atlanta School of Ballet for 15 years.

Elaine moved to Leisure World in 1997. She has been on the Boards of Directors for Newcomers Club, Village Square Dance Club and Garden Centers Club; also member AAUW, historian for City of Laguna Woods and historian for the Reform Temple of LW. She was pianist for 6 years for the Ballet Pacifica of Irvine; member of Ramblin' Rogues Sq., Dance Club in Mission Viejo and English tutor for Saddleback Hospital.

ARCHIVES CORNER FRAN LINDBERG

In 1976, GRF acknowledged the need for an organized method for collecting and preserving the history of Leisure World. After the incorporation of the Historical Society, it was officially recognized by resolution as the official "archives" for the community. The Society Archives were very limited until the Historical Society building was opened.

Now, we preserve the records of many of the clubs, both active and inactive, and thus chronicle the life of the community. Many clubs have disbanded, changed names, or combined with other groups. That is especially true of state clubs.

The Writer's Club, disbanded in 2005, held its first meeting on May 22, 1974. It had as its original purpose the publication of the 1974 *Rapport Magazine*. Members wrote for magazines and newspapers, both fiction and non-fiction. The Club had writers in the field of sports and travel, as well as poetry, verses for greeting cards, plays, operetta librettos and TV scripts. There are many scrapbooks covering the history of this notable Writer's Club.

The Lions Club meetings began in June 1961, prior to Leisure World. This organization held two major fund raisers a year for Sight and Hearing projects. Aid was given to the blind so that they could write checks and do some type of reading. Their "Orthopedic Equipment for Loan" had wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches and hospital beds for local people. Though they recently disbanded, the history of the Lions Club will not be lost as we store numerous service awards and plaques.

Many other clubs no longer exist. Perhaps some day, there will be an interest in reviving a club. We'll be here to help!

The NOMINATING COMMITTEE is interested in hearing from or about members who would like to be considered for the board, or who have an interest in participating on a committee. Call 206-0150 and leave a message.

Needed: Suggestions for HONOREE OF THE MONTH. Forms are available in the office.

VETERAN'S HISTORY PROJECT

Carly Luetzow, Coordinator

Interviews Start Fourth Year

Those who were part of the home front are added.

Veterans of WW 11, Korea and Vietnam are being interviewed on Video Tape for the American Folklore Project, Library of Congress. Recently, Home Front volunteers were added and several interviews had been completed.

To date, more than 350 interviews had been completed. Biographical information is kept in the Historical Society Archives and sent by computer to the Library of Congress. DVDs are stored at the Society. Participants may order VHS or DVD copies for a nominal fee from the Video Club.

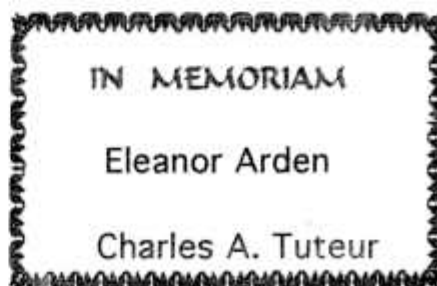
Original tapes are kept, as often when family members see the interview they want to have a copy. Grandchildren are fascinated. Interviews begin with early life history: Birth place, parents, and follows through school and advanced education with emphasis on the contributions to the war effort. The final segment covers work experiences and current activities, becoming a family history.

Since the beginning of the project, I have joined Mike Ayotte, Beverly Glass and Dick Tyhurst who have video taped the interviews. Marge Tyhurst makes many appointment calls. Video Club President Marvin Green is Editor of the Project.

Applications for interviews are available at the Historical Society Office.

* * * * *

Need a speaker on any aspect of the community and its "historical activities"? We can help. Call 206-0150.



BITS AND PIECES OF LEISURE WORLD HISTORY

(Selected from the *Leisure World News*) Mari Jan Vested

Forty Years Ago September 1966

Three hundred residents attend the Lawn Bowling Green dedication. Flags flew and speeches by members dressed in traditional white dedicated the new sports facility. A new Leisure World Club is formed.

Area officials welcome Charles and Virginia Turnbull, 594 C Avenida Majorca, the 7000 and 7001 residents. Col. and Mrs. Fred Zimmerman celebrate being the first residents to move in two years ago. Col. Zimmerman noted, "The #1 virtue of Leisure World is the people you meet here".

People flock to Arts and Crafts Festival; termed "successful".

October 1966

Blood Alley, 6.5 miles of treacherous Laguna Canyon Road, will remain two lanes despite efforts to widen it.

Committee members of the Halloween Costume Ball suggest that women come as black cats and men, wearing dark suits, wear cat like tails tucked into back pockets.

The Fire Station dedication is October 27. Located on Paseo de Valencia, the 10, 522 sq. foot station is officially named Battalion District Headquarters. Will have one engine and a minimum of four men on around the clock duty. Two Dalmations were presented to the station by the Ross Cortese family.

The LW Stables will host the Maverick Junior and Gymkana Horse Show given by the Mojeska Maverick Riding Club.

Twenty Five Years Ago September 1981

Plans are approved to begin construction of the golf course starter building at the 27 hole course. Bids ranged from \$112,000 to \$185,000. Jokingly, Ade Schumacher, chair of the Capital Improvements Committee said, "Some times the cheapest things cost more. for instance, I only paid \$2.00 for my marriage license!"

Fourth Mutual residents are frustrated over water tank construction. They say, "four years in construction is a nightmare."

Annual fee proposed for golf cart owners. \$3.25 a month will be assessed to recharge their vehicles from the LW power source.

Aquadette show is dazzling. Swimmers ages are between 57 and 76.

October 1981

"No Smoking" classes held by American Cancer Society. Logo shows smiling frog saying "Kiss me, I don't smoke."

Improvements planned for Moulton Parkway as intersections are unable to handle future traffic needs.

Ten Years Ago September 1996

Grandkids take over CH 1 Main Lounge for "their day."

GRF budget is ok'd. Carrying charges upped by \$15.29. The 1997 charges of \$133.08 is up from \$117.79 in 1996.

Moulton Parkway golf bridge looms as a Gate 12 option.

Shuffleboard courts eyed by computer users for expansion of PC Club.

October 1996

Fire damages manor at 5307 Cantante; rebuilt in 55 days.

Election puts women in majority on United Board.

Taxpayer opposition plans meeting against more manors in LW. Developers propose new housing next to Third Mutual. Idea is to develop 200-300 new single family homes in the \$200,000 to \$300,000 range on a ten acre parcel of land west of gate 9.

NEWSLETTER
LEISURE WORLD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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