



The Historian

Preserving Today for Tomorrow

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The Leisure World Orchestra



The Leisure World Symphony Orchestra, 1992, William Hollenbeck, conducting.

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James Tsutsui

Excluded

My name is James Haruo Tsutsui. My parents were immigrants from Japan. They decided to settle in the Los Angeles Area in the early 1900's. They raised a family of seven children. We were all born in Los Angeles and we all attended school in Los Angeles.

On December 7, 1941 I was a 16 year old high school student. I was working on the weekends in the produce market that was part of a supermarket in Long Beach. That fateful morning found me working on a fruit display in the produce section.

A couple walked up to me and the gentleman, with an odd look on his face, said, "I hear you guys were bombing at Pearl Harbor!"

I looked at him and I said, "No. . . I wasn't bumming around! I don't even know where Pearl Harbor is."

His wife said, "Come on Hon, let's get out of here" and they walked away.

I was mulling in my mind what he had said and I was trying to place where Pearl Harbor was. Just about then, one of the butchers was listening to the news on the radio. He turned the volume up real high and we heard the news: "The Japs are bombing Pearl Harbor and attacking Hawaii."

See Tsutsui - Page 6

MUSINGS

This Month's Stories

I hope that you enjoy this month's "people" articles. I have modified and abridged **Terry Baker's** original document in order to meet focus and space requirements of this newsletter. If you visit the Society, you can read the original articles at the Society as well as view **Jim Tsutsui's** three California of the Past videos. All of the Society's California of the Past videos, which were made possible with the assistance of the Orange County Public Library, can be viewed online at <http://orangecounty.blip.tv>.



Bob Ring

Edward & Janice Watson

The Society recently received a large bequest from the estate of Edward (Ed) and Janice Watson. Ed and Janice purchased their Leisure World home in 1988. However their association with the community commenced in 1965 when Ed's mother purchased her manor. Ed was the Society's Honoree for the Month of February 1997. As Ed put it at that time, "You could say I've been a Leisure Worlder eight years going on 32 years." The Board of Directors has voted to add the Watson's names to our Wall of Honor. The Wall of Honor means that Ed and Janice Watson will be remembered for generations to come.

Society's Wall of Honor

The Wall of Honor was erected as part of the Society's building campaign during 1996-98. People who made significant donations to that campaign were rewarded, in part, by having their name added to the plaque. Recently the Board of Directors voted to add the names of more recent donors who have made contributions to the Society of at least \$1,000. If you would like to be memorialized on the Wall of Honor, please stop by the Society's office.

New Affiliates

I am pleased to welcome another new Affiliate to the Historical Society:

Atlas Home Design Center
Featuring Atlas Tiles, Stone & Wood
 23581 Moulton Parkway, Suite 110
 Laguna Hills – Telephone 472-8453

Sculptor of a Star



Jackie Robinson

By Terry Baker

April 15th was the 61st anniversary of Jackie Robinson enduring unimaginable hardships to break the color barrier that existed for more than 100 years in America's professional baseball leagues.

Robinson was an African American born of humble means in Cairo, Georgia. He was the son of a sharecropper and one of five children.

Possessing the ideal human traits to accomplish what he did, historians have credited Robinson with that singular personality which contained the crucial combination of integrity, humility and courage. *Jackie Robinson credited Berle Haney Redford for instilling those values in his life.*

One fateful day at the outset of her 35 year career in primary education, as a first grade teacher in Pasadena, she met a shy little black boy named Jackie. From that moment on, Jackie Robinson endeared himself to her for the rest of his life. She would live her later years in Leisure World.

Quick to recognize his loneliness and special needs in those first early days, "Miss Haney" continued her support of her special student and kept in touch with him long after he was promoted through the upper grades.

Born in Hampton, Iowa, she graduated with her education degree from Drake University in Des Moines. She began her teaching career in Southern California when she moved here to join her sister. She would marry and enjoy a life of her own outside the classroom, but she never forgot Jackie. And he never forgot her.

Robinson's Tribute to Haney

Robinson offered the following affectionate tribute to her when he was honored on one occasion at a banquet in Los Angeles: "Whatever success I have achieved in baseball and football, I owe directly to one person. She was my primary teacher. She built up my confidence. She encouraged me, inspired me to do my best."

"So confident was she that I could and would succeed in life that this small black pupil, the six year-old Jackie Robinson, just could not let her down."

"She kept in touch with me for years after I left her grade, encouraging me, renewing my confidence. Yes, had it not been for this primary teacher, whom

Dream Comes True for Peace Maker



Dr. Philip Ellison

Dr. Philip Ellison, resident, retired dentist and Army Air Corps Captain has been trying to make peace in the world since after World War II. That's when he linked up with Battalion 442 veteran "Sparky" Matsunaga in promoting the idea of a world peace academy, where, unlike the service

academies, people could learn the art of peace, not war. In 1962 Matsunaga was elected to represent Hawaii in the U.S. Congress and in 1976 he was elected to the U.S. Senate where he served until his death in 1990.

"A place where the best brains in the world could get together and come up with ways to put an end to wars between nations," says Ellison. He says he believed the United Nations was doomed from the start because the Big 5 nations didn't get along. He says that's why he was part of a grassroots movement that

became known as the *National Peace Academy Campaign* and wrote a manifesto of sorts that was published in Hawaii where he lived for nearly 20 years.

The Campaign was founded in 1976 as a public service organization, with the objective of establishing a federally chartered educational institution, dedicated to peacemaking and conflict resolution. By 1984, the Campaign had grown to 45,000 members.

U.S. Institute of Peace

Through the efforts of the Campaign, Congress established a bipartisan commission in 1979 to study the feasibility of creating a U.S. Academy for Peace and Conflict Resolution. The Commission was chaired by the late Senator Spark M. Matsunaga of Hawaii.

After holding hearings throughout the United States in 1980, the Commission submitted a preliminary report to President Carter and the Congress in September 1980, recommending the establishment of the Peace Academy. In 1981, the final report was submitted to President Reagan, and a bill with bipartisan sponsorship was introduced in both Houses of Congress to carry out the provisions of the Commission



U.S. Institute of Peace Headquarters, designed by World-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, has received approvals from the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission. The headquarters will meet sound environmental standards and earn the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED[®], certification.

Picture USIP

Peace (from Page 3)

report, which was passed as the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) Act in 1984.

In 1985, the Foundation undertook a lead role in a public education program about the USIP and the following year the Foundation began to play its new role in public education on conflict resolution.

In 2001 Ellison supported Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich (Ohio) who introduced legislation that would have created a Cabinet-level Department of Peace dedicated to peaceful nonviolent conflict resolution at both domestic and international levels.

A Happy Surprise

“What a glorious hope that at last we are moving toward world peace,” recalls Ellison. He found, however, that after that initial enthusiasm nothing happened. “For 26 years, I thought the project was dead.”

Then, quite unexpectedly, he learned that it was anything but, via a letter he received in May 2006 from Betty Bumpers, the wife of United States Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas.

In the letter he learned that in 2002, Congress finally did earmark the funds needed for the construction of just such an academy on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Ellison also learned that he was being singled out as one of the founders of the National Peace Academy Campaign.

Groundbreaking Ceremony

This year, on June 5th the USIP held a groundbreaking ceremony for its permanent headquarters and Public Education Center located at the Northwest corner of the National Mall, just north of the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, in Washington, D.C. President George W. Bush, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid spoke at the event. Ellison was invited to the ceremonies but was unable to attend.

USIP’s 20,000 square foot Public Education Center will be a center for the study and practice of international conflict management, as well as a prominent symbol of America’s commitment to building a more peaceful world.

Construction is slated for completion at the end of 2010. The project is being funded through a public-private partnership: the U.S. Congress provided the initial \$100 million, and the remaining \$85 million is now being raised from private sources. Congress funds 100 percent of USIP’s programmatic work on an annual basis.

“I’m so proud to be part of this movement,” said Ellison. He surmises his support documentation of the



More than 500,000 visitors are expected to visit the Public Education Center each year. Picture USIP

initial campaign was lost when Matsunaga and the executive director of the campaign died. That’s why the letter telling him of the academy in 2006 was a “happy surprise.” Finally, at age 94, Phil Ellison’s dream will become a reality.

Note: Much of this article was taken, verbatim, from Cheryl Walker’s article “A Place for Peace” published in the January 15, 2006 edition of the Laguna Woods Globe.

Haney (from Page 2)

we knew as Miss Haney, I would not be standing here tonight.”

Robinson’s Achievements

The adulation that night reflected a sports career attained by very few athletes. Among many other accomplishments, during his college days, Robinson became the first athlete at UCLA to letter in four different sports; football, baseball, basketball and track.

As a professional baseball player, he earned the first-ever Rookie of the Year Award in 1947, and was named baseball’s Most Valuable Player in 1949. He gained baseball immortality when he was elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

On April 15, 1997, the 50th Anniversary of his entrance into the league, Major League Baseball permanently retired Robinson’s number. That night more than 200 players on the teams around the country wore his number 42 in tribute, including the entire rosters of seven different teams. This salute was repeated again on April 15, 2008, the 50th Anniversary of the Brooklyn Dodgers moving to Los Angeles..

His own “*most valuable mentor*,” Berle Haney Redford, died quietly and humbly on February 2, 1987, at Saddleback Community Hospital. She was the unassuming lady, who, in her own simple way, also left an indelible mark in the world.

Berle’s life was aptly described by one of her famous young protégé’s more notable quotations: “*A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.*”

LEISURE WORLD ORCHESTRA (see Page 1)

The Leisure World Orchestra, the first organized musical group in Leisure World, had its start early in 1965, when Russell Kimbley stopped by the Art Studio to listen to Betty Smith and Gigi Madsen playing the organ and piano. He asked if they would like to have someone join them.

They said, “Sure, what do you play?”

He replied, “Violin, trumpet and saxophone. What do you like?”

They said, “All three.”

They started rehearsing for their own amusement under the direction of Russ Kimbley. They were soon joined by Ann Wayland, who became the group’s pianist, which allowed Gigi Madsen to move to the accordion. Shortly thereafter, Fred Pierce joined on violin, and became assistant director. Finally vocalists were added.

Leisure World Entertainers

The Recreation Department wanted programs which the group was delighted to provide. Eventually, their audience grew so large that tickets had to be printed to control attendance. By November 1965, the group had 22 members and named itself, “The Leisure World Entertainers.” They gave programs in Clubhouse I until Clubhouse III was completed in 1971. Through the years members have come and gone.

As the years progressed the number of musicians in the orchestra increased. They advanced to playing marches and familiar waltzes, such as “I’m Forever Blowing Bubbles.” The music in their library was ragged, torn, turning brown with age, parts were missing, and it was kept in a dilapidated suitcase.



Last year Juanita Tsu, Bill and Jana Hollenbeck celebrated Tsu’s 2001 performance of Grieg’s Concerto in A Minor for Piano.

In 1979 the orchestra had close to 40 members and its name was changed to the present “Leisure World Orchestra.” Director Russell Kimbley died in 1980. Fred Pierce replaced him. In 1981 Pierce became ill just one week before a scheduled concert. Hazel LaBelle, the concert mistress, stepped in and got the orchestra through the program, and remained the orchestra’s conductor for ten years.

LaBelle brought a fine musical background to Leisure World from Chicago. While still in high school she played violin with the Chicago Women’s Symphony; later she entered the Chicago Musical College where she developed into a professional violinist. Hazel also played, sang and danced on the RKO vaudeville circuit. Later she served as principal violinist with the Oak Park Symphony.



Hazel LaBelle

With the help of the Golden Rain Foundation, Hazel built a respectable library of symphonic music, acquired large instruments such as a string bass and kettle drums, recruited musicians to balance the instrumentation of the orchestra, and brought organization and order to the orchestra.

Hazel LaBelle was the Society’s Honoree for April, 1985. She was honored for her volunteer work for the Orchestra, the Leisure World Library and the Clubhouse I Drop-in Lounge.

Bill Hollenbeck

In December 1991, after leading the orchestra for ten years Hazel LaBelle stepped down from the podium and turned the baton over to William (Bill) Hollenbeck, who had been playing trumpet in the orchestra for about five years.

Before moving to Orange County, Bill had been a member of the Los Angeles County Music and Performing Arts Commission for 23 years. He served as president when the commission moved their offices to the new Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in 1965. He also served as a director of the Men’s Glee Club at Loyola University. Bill conducted the Leisure World Orchestra until December 2002, increasing membership to over 60 musicians. Among his memories are Juanita Tsu’s performance and that of a harmonica soloist.

Orchestra (from Page 5)

Bill was 85 years old when he turned the baton over to Frank Carr in December, 2002. In May 2008 Bill and Jana Hollenbeck moved into the Village.

Throughout the years, one of the most influential members of the orchestra was Hazel Bullock, who retired to Leisure World in 1965 after serving many years as a music supervisor for the Los Angeles City Schools. She played in the orchestra for 34 years until the age of 94.



Frank Carr

Frank, the Society Honoree for October 2005, conducted the orchestra for a year and then succumbed to an illness. Frank and Marlene Carr moved to Leisure World in 1999. Once here he joined and then took over the role of conductor of the orchestra, organized the Lovers of Music Club, and became co-president of Leisure World Community Concerts.

Donald Ambrosion, a teacher at Saddleback College, became the orchestra's conductor for the next 18 months. In 2007 Valerie Geller, a professional violinist, was invited to conduct the orchestra.

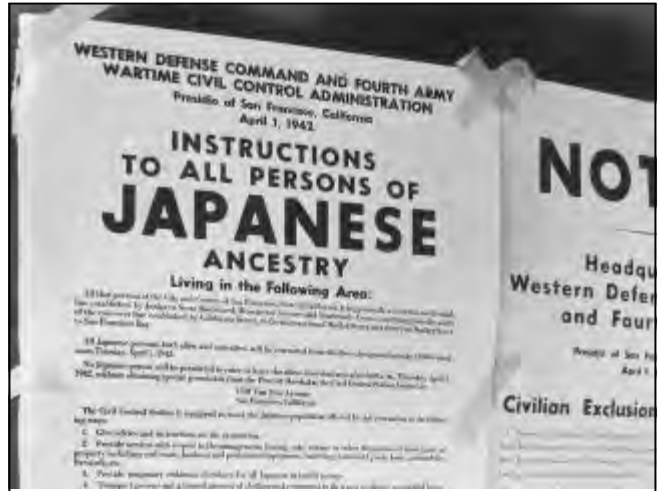
This article was compiled from material written by: Russell Kimbley, July 10, 1979; Robert Halley, Aug. 16, 1993; Hazel Bullock; Jim Shaffer in Leisure World News, 2001; Orchestra Tuning for New Season, Leisure World News, Aug. 20, 1987; Presentation to Hazel Labelle, Dec. 7, 1991; and Bill Hollenbeck, June 28, 2008.



Santa Anita Racetrack was converted to a temporary internment camp for persons of Japanese ancestry. It was used between March 27 and October 27, 1942. Peak population was 18,719. Picture bookmice.net

Tsutsui (from Page 1)

When the impact of the news hit me, I sat on the floor and covered my face with my hands, and I wondered, "What's ever going to become of us?"



Executive Order 9066 authorized the federal government to incarcerate nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans, without due process, in internment camps throughout World War II. Picture Bancroft Library U.C. Berkeley

It wasn't too long before we found out. In February 1942, an Executive Order was issued by President Roosevelt. The order said that all persons of Japanese Ancestry are to be excluded from the West Coast. And that included American Citizens as I was.

In April, we were given two weeks notice to get ready to leave our homes. My father had a gas station and he was forced to leave. The inventory of the station and all his equipment and tools were left in the care of a neighbor. As I remember it, his name was Vasquez. Well, that was the last time we saw Mr. Vasquez.

On the day of departing our homes, we gathered at St. Mary's Episcopal Church where I went to Sunday School. We gathered at St. Mary's in a motorcade. The motorcade was about two blocks long. We were escorted by military police through the streets of Los Angeles to Arcadia where the Santa Anita Racetrack is located. On the way to Santa Anita, we would see groups of people jeering at us as we drove by.

We drove through a large barbed wire gate at Santa Anita. Then we saw row upon row of barracks which turned out to be our homes. We were there until later in that year. Then we were shipped to more permanent quarters, which were called relocation centers.

Note: This is a transcript of Laguna Woods resident James Tsutsui's video for the California of the Past Project.

BITS AND PIECES OF LEISURE WORLD HISTORY

(Selected from the *Leisure World News*) Evelyn Shopp

40 Years Ago — July - August 1968

24 Danish persons, guests of People to People, were welcomed at a dinner in Clubhouse I. Other activities planned included luncheons with the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, and trips to the Joplin Boys Ranch and Disneyland.

Ground breaking ceremonies launched the new St. George's Episcopal Church. More than 300 people attended the services.

The directors of the Christian Science Church announced that construction on their church on Moulton Parkway was underway.

A new agreement between Rossmoor Corporation and GRF would set aside \$600 from the sale of each condominium for construction of Clubhouse III. Construction would start after 700 condos were sold.

Members of the Iowa Club held a picnic in the bandstand area of Clubhouse I.

A Kentucky Fried Chicken dinner cost \$1.10.

A four-hour Defensive Driving course was offered to members of AARP at a cost of \$1.00 per person.

A long article in the food section indicated the watermelon season was in full swing. The article stated that, "thumping" was not a good way to select a melon. The melon's surface should be dull, not shiny, with a yellowish, not white, underside.

Advertised bargains: Bacon 19¢ a lb.; Folgers Coffee, 29¢ a lb; TV dinners 45¢; dust mops 87¢ cents.

25 Years Ago — July - August 1983

The Post Office proposed a clustering of mailboxes with elimination of most individual boxes

A three month trial program of Dial-A-Ride Shuttle Service to local supermarkets was approved by GRF.

The community spent over \$500,000 defending a lawsuit brought by the Laguna Publishing Company who claimed that it was denied the right to distribute its newspaper in Leisure World. The Supreme Court decided the case in favor of the plaintiff. (As a direct result of this case, current residents must subscribe to newspapers and periodicals in order to receive them.)

Historical Society had 400 members, 48 of them were Life Members. Life Memberships were discontinued

soon after this. (Today there are 6 Life Members.)

A 75 year-old resident was booked on a charge of murdering his 95 year old wife.

Several banks offered 9.1% APY with Lincoln Savings offering 10.55%.

Advertised specials: Nectarines 39¢ a lb; seedless grapes, 59¢ a lb; cherry tomatoes, 49¢ pint.

10 Years Ago — July - August 1998

Flood victims in cul-de-sac 67 rejected an offer for binding arbitration and elected to go to small claims court.

A "cat burglar" entered an occupied manor and took a purse containing \$270. A newly installed security system had not been activated and the windows and sliding door were left open. Security warned residents to lock doors and windows.

Pros and cons of incorporation were heatedly discussed at a meeting of the Community Association.

A "Letter to the Editor" suggested that the proposed city could tailor its services to meet the unique needs of senior citizens. Another letter suggested that the real advantage to cityhood was it would be possible to recall council members.

In a poll to select a suitable name for the proposed new city, "Leisure World" was the first choice. Trademark disputes with Heidi Cortese prevented use of this name. In a second poll for a city name, Laguna Woods, Laguna Heights, Laguna Verde and Laguna Laurel were the favorites. (Laguna Heights and Laguna Laurel were withdrawn by the chief petitioners because of name conflicts with nearby communities. On March 3, 1999 65% of the voters favored Laguna Woods.)

Leisure World Duplicate Bridge Club held a bridge tournament to raise money for the new Senior Center.

Gate redesign was proposed by a sub-committee of the GRF Facilities and Land Committee. Another suggestion was to replace barbed wire on Leisure World's walls with wrought iron pickets.

A male resident was the subject of an intense search since his disappearance on July 15th. His body was found less than a mile from his abandoned car on August 22nd. He apparently left his car after hitting a tree.



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“Leisure World Entertainers” pose for picture with Director Russ Kimbley for their full page article that appeared in the November 4, 1965 Leisure World News. In 1979 the group changed its name to “The Leisure World Orchestra.”
 Picture: Leisure World News

Opinions expressed by authors in *The Historian* do not necessarily reflect those of the Historical Society of Laguna Woods.