

THE LAGUNA BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LAGUNA BEACH LIFE | PAST PRESENT FUTURE

Work Day 1977 Watercolor painting by David Solomon depicting Moulton Ranch with a building at their property line bordering the Top of the World neighborhood.

NEWS AND UPDATES FOR THIS MONTH:

- *RURAL SCENERY PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT IN LAGUNA SEEN THROUGH THE WORK OF A RESIDENT ARTIST*
- *BUNGALOW: SUNNY DAYS & STREAMS OF VISITORS*

Lost Horizons: Historical Paintings by David Solomon

Tuesday, April 16
Susi Q Community Center
7:00-8:30 pm

Esteemed Laguna Beach watercolorist David Solomon has been living and painting in Laguna Beach for over 50 years. While he spent much time painting our town and beaches prior to his retirement, he also focused on preserving local history through his artwork. He documented the rural areas that bordered Laguna Beach by painting nearby farms and ranches before they were developed into the urban landscape that now surrounds our village.

David's home and studio was located at Top of the World, directly above Moulton Ranch. From his backyard, he watched the development creeping ever closer to Laguna. His effort to paint the aging ranch buildings before they were torn down has left a historic archive of art that captures what the area just beyond Laguna's city limits looked like in simpler times. He also documented happenings within the city such as the construction of Aliso Pier and the toll road in Laguna Canyon.

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David Solomon titled this 1982 painting "Lag Town" because he heard this was the code name used by the FBI when they were searching the town for LSD advocate Timothy Leary. Leary and his family were arrested in Laguna Beach on December 26, 1968 for possession. His conviction was later reversed by the United States Supreme court. The painting was done from a rooftop at Glenneyre & Laguna Avenue.

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A Message from our President

KAREN LAGREW, PRESIDENT

February's program with Dick Metz once again brought a standing-room-only crowd. The program was video recorded and is now hosted on our YouTube Channel. Our goal has been to offer at least three historic programs a year and we appreciate your membership and donations as they help us rent the facilities to do so. Thank you for supporting us by attending these Susi Q Tuesday evening events.

Seeing the community gather to honor our guest speakers and Laguna Beach History is great! Dick Metz gave a presentation full of humor and audience laughter which was entertaining and provided historical information about the early years developing businesses in town. Two more exciting programs are now in the planning stage for fall 2024 and winter 2025.

On our YouTube channel you can also find a few "oldies but goodies" recently located in storage and uploaded: *George Hurell & Pancho Barnes in Laguna Beach*, presented by Dr Lou D'Elia, Part 1 and 2, both from 2006 along with the *Laguna Beach Art Association* from 2010.

Also in February, our organization was presented with the 2024 Community Service Award by the Patience Wright Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution at Legion Hall. What an honor. We share values of preserving history, education, and community service. This came with an opportunity to speak at their meeting and share more about our mission and Laguna Beach's history.

Rachel O'Neill-Cusey of Visit Laguna was a guest at our March board meeting. We send overnight visitors their way and Rachel has offered us the opportunity to post events to their calendar/marketing areas.

April has arrived and summer seems right around the corner - bungalow visitors are increasing. The fence was repainted and next, we will refresh the decades-old paint on our front yard sign. The front garden looks great, now in its second year and work begins on the backyard. Your donations help us "keep the lights on" and with other bungalow items.

Thank you for your continued membership!

Karen Lagrew

(continued from the front page)

Although David is now retired and no longer able to paint, his eldest daughter, Gaylen, works hard to preserve his legacy.

In 2019, she published the book "David Solomon: 50 Years an Artist", and has spent the last five years building a digital archive of nearly 1,000 paintings that can be found at www.DavidSolomonArtist.com.

The April 16th presentation by Gaylen will be accompanied by a slideshow of historical paintings which David referred to as "the Lost Horizons of Orange County".

David Solomon was also an exhibitor at the Festival of Arts for 35 years and has shown his award winning artwork throughout the world. In 1980, he became the first artist ever commissioned to create a painting for the Pageant of the Masters. His artwork even adorns the signs at the three entrances to Laguna Beach.



David next to the logo he designed for the Chamber of Commerce in 1972

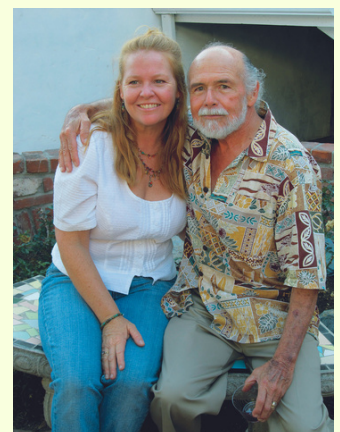


David Solomon paints in watercolor. Paintings will be on display for viewing.

Circa 2017 David at work in Heisler Park

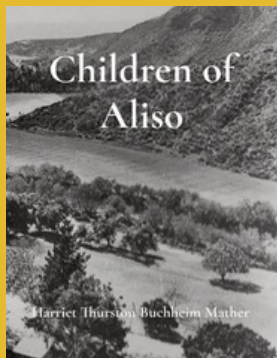


A Solomon watercolor in progress



2016 Gaylen and David in front of Lang Fine Art

Bungalow and Archives



New Book Title: Children of Aliso

Scott Case, a native of Laguna (class of 77), and amateur local historian for many decades came by to gift the Historical Society a copy of Harriet Thurston's "Children of Aliso" book.

This book is long overdue, finally published 75 years after author Harriet Thurston's passing. Harriet started writing her Thurston family memoirs in 1935, ending with her death in 1948. The manuscript story was highlighted at the 1971 Laguna Centennial event in Aliso Canyon, and noted in the 2017 reprint of Joe Thurston's book (Laguna Beach of Early Days). Local historians have awaited its publishing for many years. Ted Cheek (Harriet's great-grandson) and Scott (great grandson of Harriet's sister Artemisia) recently connected and have been working over the past year to get the book formatted, printed and available to the public.



Archive Work Space updated



In Memory of Catherine Ansell Sichenzia

With great sadness, we announce the recent passing of our long-time docent, Cathy, a Laguna native, and regular participant in historical society events. An alumni of the LBHS Class of 1980 Cathy greeted visitors enthusiastically and often "chatted up people" as she often said about the old days in Laguna. She enjoyed playing her favorite '70s music on the retro CD player. She will be missed. She loved walking her dogs, and was a former Rotary Club member in Hawaii where she resided for many years. A Hui Hou Cathy 🌺



Photograph: Glenna on the right alongside BFF NonaLee Gregg; Laguna Beach High School students in the mid-1950s.

Chief Neil Purcell archival donation

Danielle Purcell, daughter of late Chief of Police Neil Purcell visited with archivist, Laurie Sanders in her upstairs "office" at Wells Fargo Bank. She made a nice donation from her collection of historical Laguna Beach items he kept in his long-time role.



Board Member SPOTLIGHT

Glenna Mathews

Glenna arrived in Laguna Beach in 1946: her father was the editor of the South Coast News. The entire family fell in love with Laguna and participated in activities such as The Playhouse and The Pageant. In fact, Glenna was a Velazquez Princess in the 1946 Pageant. Her father's job took them away from Laguna but they had bought property, and never sold it. After having attained a doctorate in American History at Stanford and having taught at several universities, Glenna was able to develop the property and return to Laguna in 2004.

Why did you choose to serve on the board?

I love Laguna and history.

Why do you think your position on the board is a good match for you? I have fifty-plus years of studying American History.

What is your favorite part of working with the LB Historical Society?

I have given historic programs on my special interests: the history of the original Laguna Playhouse located on Ocean Avenue and the illustrious career of Red Guyer.



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Laguna Beach Lawn Bowling Club
The Stand Natural Foods

Thank you!

Go to LagunaBeachHistory.org/support-us to join or renew now!



Laguna Beach Historical Society
278 Ocean Avenue
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

MAY IS LAGUNA BEACH'S HERITAGE MONTH WE HAVE AN EVENT PLANNED - MORE TO COME!



Partnering with No Square Theater the historical society plans to stage a reenactment at the bungalow on a Saturday in May.



Spread the word, bring your kids or grandkids to see firsthand and learn how early Laguna residents lived and contributed to the early decades and unique character of our town. You never know who you will meet!

If you prefer to receive this newsletter by email, drop us a line at info@lagunabeachhistory.org
With your support, we are able to maintain our beloved Murphy Smith Bungalow, present historical programs, send this newsletter, and host other events - thank you!

DO YOU SHOP AT RALPHS?
Did you know you can select an organization to support as you shop?

The Laguna Beach Historical Society is listed and would appreciate your support

Visit Ralphs Community Contribution Page to find out how.

Visit us on YouTube: [Laguna Beach Historical Society](https://www.youtube.com/Laguna Beach Historical Society)

Visit our Website: lagunabeachhistory.org

Contact us at: info@lagunabeachhistory.org



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- HISTORY FRIEND — \$100***
- HISTORY PATRON — \$500***
- PLATINUM — \$1,000***

*Donors at these levels will be listed in our newsletters.