

San Clemente Historical Society

"Forward with the Dream"



WHAT'S HAPPENING

October 1, 2020



Board of Directors

The traditional Annual Meeting of the Historical Society was not convened this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The election of Members to serve on the Board of Directors was carried out via email.

Four of the seven positions on the Board were up for election this year. Mary Ann Comes, Marilyn Wigglesworth, Tom Marshall, and Jim Hamilton were elected on September 20 by unanimous consent of our Membership. Congratulations!

The newly seated Board of Directors selected their Officers for the coming year at the September 21 meeting of the Board. Results were as follows: President, Larry

Culbertson; Vice-President, Carla Blanco; Treasurer, Marilyn Wigglesworth; Secretary, Mary Ann Comes. Congratulations!



City Council Candidate Forum

The Candidate Forum on September 20 was a success. Eight of the ten candidates for the four-year term participated. Six of the eight candidates for the two-year term participated. Each of the groups was questioned separately for one and one half hours. We were able to get in nine and 12 rounds respectively, so a lot of ground was covered. Some good insight into the candidates was gleaned. A big Thank You to those of you who sent in questions for the candidates!

If you would like to see the Forum, it is available on YouTube. Input, "**San Clemente Historical Society**" in the search bar and it pops right up.



The San Clemente Veterans of Foreign Wars asked the Historical Society to participate in a ceremony dedicating the placement of a plaque at Park Semper Fi for George Edson Smith who was the first San Clementean killed in action in WWII. Below is the dedication speech we delivered:

George Edson Smith



George Edson Smith was the first San Clementean killed in battle in World War II. He gave his life for his country on December 21, 1944. Our local Veterans of Foreign Wars honored him by naming the chapter "George E. Smith Post 7142."

George Smith was born on May 23, 1925 at Sierra Madre. He came to San Clemente in 1928 – the year the town was incorporated – as a 3-year old boy. His father, Leo Smith, played an important part in the development of the town. He was an architect and building contractor of commercial and residential buildings. He later spent 12 years on City Council, three as mayor. The Smith's lived at 210 Avenida

Rosa, a beautiful Ole Hanson home that stands to this day.

Young George, known as "Smitty" by his many friends, was also active in the community. In September of 1934, as a Boy Scout, George won First Place in the summer garden contest along with his friend Bob Longbotham. They were awarded prizes of one dollar each.

George was also a musician. In 1937, at age 12, he and Bill Morehouse played trumpet for the school play, "The Blackbird Pie."

In 1939 George, at age 14, earned his Diploma from Las Palmas Elementary School. The class "Prom" was held at the Casino San Clemente, according to the Santa Ana Register.

George went on to Capistrano Union High School in San Juan Capistrano where he was an exceptional athlete and popular student. He graduated high school in 1942 and entered the U. S Navy at San Diego on March 3, of that year.

He last visited his home in San Clemente on June 29, 1942. The following day he shipped out to the South Pacific. He was assigned to the USS LST-460.

According to Navy Department Service record, during 1943, LST-460 participated in the consolidation of the Solomon Islands with amphibious landings at New Georgia, Vella Lavella, Treasury, and Bougainville Islands.

In early 1944, George Smith received the rating of Coxswain. His ship took him on to New Guinea, with landings at Hollandia and Morotai, before moving on to the Philippines.

After landings on Leyte Island, LST-460 participated in its last battle at Mindoro, December 13-16.

On December 21, 1944, a group of 40 kamikaze planes attacked Navy ships off Mindoro. LST-460 took a direct hit. An eyewitness account reports that the plane hit the bridge and went down through the mess hall and quarters, all the officers where having supper and were killed or wounded. Over 100 men died. LST-460 earned six battle stars for her World War II service.

George Edson Smith was declared dead on December 26, 1944. He served his country proudly for almost three years in the United States Navy before paying the ultimate price. Non sibi sed patriae – Not self but country

The plaque that the San Clemente Veterans of Foreign Wars has placed here at Park Semper Fi will be a permanent reminder of our fallen hero.

Historical Society Board Member Jim Hamilton has been doing research for our Historic Walking Tours, which we hope to resume soon. He had the idea of showcasing some of the shops and people who help make our historic downtown so interesting. This month we have.....

Denise O'Donnell - Three Dog Bakery



By Jim Hamilton

San Clemente is a community made up of residents and business owners who invest in this town. Denise O'Donnell is both a resident and a small business owner. We met largely as a result of the San Clemente Historical Society's Avenida Del Mar walking tour.

Her business, Three Dog Bakery, is in the historic mid-century Plaza Mar Vista building at the northwest corner of Avenida Del Mar and North Ola Vista. Tucked in at suite 174B, her shop is shaded and convenient. She and her daughter, Lauren, along with manager Tristene, greet people and their dogs. They provide fresh baked dog treats of all kinds that are handmade in their shop. Three Dog Bakery also carries American-made human consumption quality dog foods & other dog supplies.

Denise fulfilled her desire to go from an international executive IT professional with Toshiba, to being a San Clemente resident and small shop owner on Avenida Del Mar. She has made this transition a reality over the past six years. Denise has accomplished what so many have desired to do. Live, work, and shop in San Clemente.

Ms. O'Donnell's community activities include being on the board for the Downtown Business Association. One area of interest is the Promenade concept for Avenida Del Mar on Sundays to encourage walking, shopping, and dining in this Spanish Village by the Sea.

Her charities are the Pet Project Foundation, Camp Pendleton's Animal Shelter, & Canine Companions of Oceanside. Denise O'Donnell is a devoted dog owner with an ongoing passion and investment in her community for people and their dogs of all breeds.

The Historical Society salutes Denise for providing a great service for the residents of San Clemente!

Honorary Chair for Toast To The Casa - 2020

Lois Divel



Congratulations to our Matriarch Lois Divel for being chosen as Honorary Chairwoman for the Toast To The Casa on Sept. 19, 2020. Lois was not able to attend because of a recent fall, but thanks to the wonderful video interview recorded by our own Tom Marshall, the guests were able to see and hear Lois. Lois' support of Casa Romantica as a preservation archivist has been pivotal in ensuring its legacy as a historic destination and culture Center.

Last Quarter we had only 13 participants, yet we took in over \$80! Please help your Historical Society by signing up for the program.



Community Contribution Program

Did you know that if you shop at Ralphs Supermarkets in San Clemente you can direct a portion of your bill be donated to The San Clemente Historical Society? It will cost you nothing. As a participant in Ralphs Community Contributions Program, the supermarket chain will automatically contribute a portion of your check out amount to the S.C.H.S. If you do not have a Ralphs Rewards Card, go the Ralphs website and click on "Create Account." Follow the easy steps to create your account.

To register in the Ralphs Community Contributions Program, just log into www.ralphs.com. Click on "Sign In." Enter your email address and password. Click on "Welcome Valued Customer" (In the top right hand corner.) Click on "My Account." Scroll to the bottom of your account. Link your card to the Historical Society by clicking on "Community Rewards" and typing in San Clemente Historical Society. Then press "Search." If you have forgotten your Ralphs Rewards Card number, you can use your phone number.

Once enrolled, your contributions will be automatically made by Ralphs. You do not have to tell the check out person to do so. You can check on the contributions you have made by accessing your account on line at www.ralphs.com.

Ralphs assures us that all of your information will kept confidential. They will never sell, trade or rent their customers' personal information to outside companies. It will not even be shared with us.

The money raised will be used entirely for our worthy programs of protecting San Clemente's historical and cultural heritage. No money can be used for administrative, political or legal purposes.

