



Autumn 2014  
Volume 19, Issue 2

- **CA History Thru The Eyes of Four Artists**
- **History of Channel Islands Harbor**
- **Point Conception Lighthouse**

### Inside this issue:

- 1 **Music at CIMM**
- 2 **From the Helm**
- 3 **Collection News**
- 4 **Volunteer Page**
- 5 **CI Harbor History**
- 6 **Maritime Happenings**
- 7 **People Page**
- 8 **On The Horizon**

## Quattro at the Maritime a Smash Hit

High energy, fast paced, a broad range of styles, intricate rhythms ..... these are just a few superlatives to describe this quartet of classically-trained musicians that wowed the audience at the Music at the Maritime event on Saturday evening September 27 on the Museum's upper deck. It was a fabulous evening, enjoyed by all.

This was CIMM's major fund raiser of the year, and deliver it did. Sponsors contributed \$42,000. The auction netted another \$6,000 at least, while admissions brought in about \$3,000. After expenses, the Museum will net just over \$54,000, which is wonderful news for the health of CIMM and its proliferation of programs.

Quattro took a break mid-set to allow Jerry Miller to raise big bucks to fund 5th Grade Field Trips to Channel Islands Harbor, the Museum, and the beach, probably what

will be the first time for most of these kids. Jerry did so with gusto, while Captain Juan Cabrillo in his ship the San Salvador (played by Todd Wiggins) advanced a little further up the California coast with each donation, finally reaching Channel Islands Harbor after just under \$10,000 had been raised. The audience thoroughly enjoyed being separated from its money while benefiting Ventura County's 5th Graders.

The surprise of the evening was the naming of the Gary Farr Presentation Gallery, after the Museum's longest-serving Trustee, Gary Farr, who retired after 25 years of service. Gary will tell you that he was there "at the very beginning", and he shared with me after the presentation "we have come a long way, haven't we". Thanks to Gary's patience, dedication and support, indeed we have!

*David Leach*



From left, hosts Kandy & Gene Harter and Co-chairs Pat Hart and Arlene Fraser



Jerry Miller working the crowd



Todd Wiggins as Captain Juan Cabrillo



Pat Hart and Arlene Fraser, flanked by Brenda and Gary Farr



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**From the  
Helm**

**Julia Chambers**  
*Executive Director*

**Thar She Blows...**

Sitting with several Board Members on a recent afternoon during my yearly review (the first annual), I was struck by one question in particular: Had I made a good choice in taking the helm at the Maritime Museum? I was rather hoping that they thought that I was a good fit for the Museum (all went well on that front!). The question gave me a moment to consider the past year through a slightly different lens.

In truth, I had acquired very little actual maritime knowledge before I accepted the position of Executive Director at CIMM. After my initial interview, my husband inquired as to whether they had asked about my maritime knowledge (or lack thereof), and I joked that I had mentioned my seven years in the Merchant Marines (which never happened). The paintings from the Dutch Masters and on through the centuries were familiar genres, having studied art history for many years. However, never before had I seen such magnificent paintings collected and exhibited with such devotion to their subject matter. At CIMM, it is possible to explore almost every aspect of maritime life through these stunning works of art like no where else in the world.

Another true confession in addition to respectfully jesting about the Merchant Marines: I had never been to the previous Fisherman's Wharf CIMM location. Ten years as a Ventura County resident and it had remained a mystery to be discovered in this new, splendid location on Bluefin Circle. Word is getting out in the most wonderful way about the splendid collection of paintings, our education programs, speaker series, exhibits and openings, tall ships and galleons on the horizon, fabulous community gatherings, and extraordinary fundraising galas. At twenty-three years of age CIMM is coming into its own in our new location; and our age, experience, and wisdom are a wonderful combination.

A third truth: despite being the mother of three curious young boys, I never thought that a Museum full of ship models would be all that interesting. I was so very wrong. I recently brought a family through CIMM including two boys about four years of age. They were the perfect height to observe the incredible detail on the Marple models that so many of us taller people miss: the king on horseback stampeding over his unfortunate subjects, the carved golden details so intricate they take your breath away, and the most delicate and fine hand-carved bone models fashioned over two hundred years ago by prisoners of war under conditions we cannot even imagine. A visitor could spend an entire day just learning about ship models, especially if they are fortunate enough to receive a docent tour from Mr. Bob Scott or another of our excellent docents with vast knowledge of the history and artisanship behind these fascinating works of art. CIMM's ship model collection is one of those things in life which requires a person to slow down, absorb, and appreciate the beauty right in front of us. I am now a huge fan of ship models, especially because I can appreciate the months and years that go into creating the awe-inspiring results.

The icing on the maritime cake is that this collection represents our community so beautifully: the paintings, models, artifacts, rich historical and modern educational opportunities, changing art exhibits, and opportunities for our community to gather. All visitors can touch history, be moved by a transcendent detail in a painting brushed onto the surface 400 years ago, or appreciate that most bananas they have ever enjoyed locally are here because a vessel brought them over the water to Oxnard. My answer to the initial question: I am delighted that it is my job to share this maritime bounty with our community and visitors to this gorgeous museum.

*Julia Chambers*



## Collection News

**David Leach**  
Editor

### CALIFORNIA HISTORY

#### Through the eyes of four artists



One would expect museums to have in their collections works which tell the history of their locales; after all, that's what most museums do. And the Channel Islands Maritime Museum (CIMM) collection does not disappoint. In it are five pieces which reflect important milestones in our State's history, as seen through the eyes of these four artists.

First is **The Pilgrim** (left), a watercolor by William Gilkerson, commissioned by CIMM to create a poster and the Museum's logo. The work shows the ship rounding Point Conception under full sail. Built in 1825, the *Pilgrim* carried Henry Dana from Boston to various "dog-holes" (there were no ports then) along the California coast, picking up cow hides to take back to Boston to be made into shoes to be shipped around the horn and back to California. This became the main story in Dana's book *Two Years Before The Mast*. Born in 1935, Gilkerson is considered to be an illustrator, and has done more than 50 posters for museums and other institutions around the world.



Next is Christopher Blossom's oil painting **Challenge Rounding Up, Preparing To Anchor in San Francisco Bay, 1855** (right). The hill and tower and numerous ships in the background definitely link it to San Francisco Bay during the gold rush, when gold seekers left their ships to sink in the mud in a race to get to the gold fields. Blossom, born in 1956, is an experienced seaman known for his historical accuracy



**Claverdon** (left), an oil by David Thimgan, depicts this San Francisco-based grain ship visiting Portland, Oregon. The lumber in the water in the foreground, needed to build the town, was dropped off by a visiting ship, there was no wharf. Thimgan, born in 1955, has built a reputation for painting west coast historical subjects in extraordinary detail.



Closer to home is another Gilkerson watercolor, **Bard's Wharf, 1890's** (right), based on a photograph supplied by Harry Nelson, CIMM's founder. Named after Thomas Bard, a Ventura County business man, the wharf was built by Bard to ship farmers' grain to market and to import materials to build what was to become Port Hueneme. Also shown is a drawing believed to be done by Billie Greenland for the cover of Powell Greenland's book *Port Hueneme: a History* (left).



So there you have it, five examples of California history through the eyes of their artists. Thanks to volunteer Connie Korenstein for her research, without which this piece would have been possible. Connie is developing a curriculum from a grant to CIMM from the Heritage Fund, Smith-Hobson Foundation and Union Bank of California, for students in grades 8- 12 to inform them of the historical development and importance of the Port of Hueneme and Channel Islands Harbor.

David Leach



## The Volunteer Page

**Tom Johnston**  
*Volunteer Chair*

### **The Work by its End is Crowned ...**

Well I never expected to be writing an ultimate article. Sounds rather special doesn't it? Just the word ultimate sounds impressive! Wow.

Of course it is nothing of the sort but is a tongue-in-cheek reference to my penultimate article in the last issue of *Call Pipe*.

And so for the last time I shall be telling you about Volunteer Happenings since the summer issue of this magazine.

We had an evening at the movies. That's probably a 'first' for the museum. Of course it had a nautical theme to it. *The Old Man and The Sea* – buffs will remember the old Spencer Tracy award-winning movie. We had an installation on the UD that featured an old wherry and a stuffed marlin with hidden speakers through which played readings from the book. All terribly cutting-edge but a bit spooky - more than once I looked in vain for someone I could hear speaking. Never found him. A shame really – he sounded a bit like Charlton Heston!

We also 'enjoyed' another evening of overlapping events. Two Chambers of Commerce held a joint mixer – and with a Military Appreciation theme tacked on for good luck we had a very full house. Our docents had a busy time as did the barman! The museum event held on the same evening was another in our very successful Speaker series. Patrick Smith spoke about a deadly collision between two Avenger training aircraft that fell to the sea nearly 70 years ago close to Anacapa and of his numerous dives to the wrecks. Another good one Arlene! So a very busy evening to be sure with the catering under the firm control of Martina our event coordinator who keeps a cool head in spite of the potential for chaos when juggling two events simultaneously!

Then of course just to add a bit of variety to our lives we hosted the Ventura County Economic Development Council meeting and museum tour. You know it is a source of constant surprise to me the number of civic and business leaders who have never visited our museum and know so little about it. And almost without exception they express

astonishment and delight that such a beacon of culture exists within the city limits. It's gratifying of course but isn't it infuriating that we are so easy to overlook? Is it because we're in Oxnard?

I know I've applauded Jerry's training before but he has done a remarkable job in conducting two parallel classes which has added a dozen and a half docents to the museum. Several of them are already on duty. Their confidence is growing and so is our appreciation.

I missed Bob Little's Ship-in-a-Bottle class he did in August. It's a 4 hour exercise in manual dexterity but supposedly fun and well-worth doing – and I bet it is. Me? I'm waiting for the special class for seniors where they promise bigger bottles and smaller ships!

Our September speaker was local author Ken McAlpine. He delivered a very interesting and entertaining talk on Wreckers and wrecks and the advent of lifesaving around the coast – most encouraging to boaters!

Because this is my last opportunity to write an article for *Call Pipe* as Chairman of the Volunteers, I want to pay a huge and unreserved tribute to the absolutely sterling leaders of this wonderful body. They have been an inspiration during my two years in office and truly the museum owes its existence to them. You know who you are. "Thank you."

The words of my school's motto and the refrain of the school song memorized nearly 70 years ago keep coming back to me. *Finis Coronat Opus* which means "The work by its end is crowned." I've no idea why but I have always wanted to include a Latin phrase in an article and now I have. My patience is rewarded. My work is indeed, 'crowned'! And in Latin too! Appropriate for an 'ultimate' article don't you think?

*Tom Johnston*



## Channel Islands Harbor: A History

When historians explore the history of the Oxnard area, they quickly discover that at one time Oxnard wasn't even here. The Pacific Ocean went clear to the nearby mountains which can be viewed from the upper deck of our Maritime Museum.

But the Santa Clara River and other nearby streams went to work, bringing the golden dirt of the local mountains to the Pacific Ocean, eventually creating the alluvial fan which became Oxnard. The Oxnard Brothers settled here with the Chumash Native Americans who had been the area's first residents hundreds of years before European Americans began populating the area.

Because of this rich topsoil, agricultural interests blossomed and the lush fields of strawberries and sugar beets became famous. For a variety of reasons, different ethnic and racial groups turned Oxnard into a delightful multicultural city. In fact, Ferdinand (Jelly Roll) Morton, one of America's main jazz pioneers, visited and declared that Oxnard was a very "fast stepping town!"

In the early days of the cinema industry Oxnard became the site for the film, *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino. The site was chosen because of the sand dunes near the Pacific Ocean. (Going up the coast to Oxnard was far cheaper than traveling clear to the Kalahari or Sahara desert!)

Then in 1958, President Dwight Eisenhower signed an appropriations bill for small boat harbors. In early 1959, Richard Bard, a member of the Ventura County Board of Supervisors, organized the Ventura County Beach Erosion and Yacht Harbor Advisory Committee to search for public funding for a small craft harbor.

Thanks to Bard's efforts and his donation of 112 acres of land to Ventura County, construction of the Channel Islands Harbor commenced. An enormous dredge (*Los Angeles*) operated by the Standard Dredging Corporation commenced dredging the sand which would allow the Pacific Ocean waters to create the small boat harbor. The project also called for the sand to be transported to Huene to salvage their eroding shoreline.

Upon completion of the dredging project a wharf was created at the corner of Channel Islands Boulevard and Victoria. Named Fisherman's Wharf, a number of Cape Cod-style buildings and shops soon appeared. And thanks

to Oxnard's Martin "Bud" Smith, the first Ventura County Maritime Museum was created.

Smith's residence was right across the east channel in a four-bedroom apartment at the south end of the Paz Mar Apartment complex. His boat *The Dry Martini* was anchored in the harbor adjacent to his apartment.

Smith was a visionary developer who also built the Casa Serena Hotel complex next to the Channel Island Harbor's west channel. Also located on land adjacent to the Casa Serena complex was the Lobster Trap restaurant which was opened in 1968 and featured a tasty seafood omelet for breakfast. The Lobster Trap was also the home for meetings and concerts put on by a Ventura county New Orleans jazz club which had monthly meetings and concerts in the western part of the restaurant.

Smith's Lobster Trap restaurant also featured a Sunday brunch which typically included a seafood spread consisting of shrimp, oysters, roast beef, ham, cakes, pecan pies and peach cobbler, as well as the spectacular view of the Channel Islands Harbor.

Eventually a decision was made to acquire additional space for housing the museum artifacts, so the Channel Islands Maritime Museum (CIMM) was moved southwest to its present location. The famous Oxnard restaurant Port Royal was the new site. Having been closed for several years, this restaurant (Named after the old pirate capital of Jamaica) was a perfect site for the Channel Islands Maritime Museum which is alive and well in Oxnard, California.

*Bruce Mitchell*



Welcome sign over the Harbor Patrol office



## Maritime Happenings North and South

The heart of the 19th century lighthouse was the Fresnel lens (pronounced fray-NEL), invented by Augustine Fresnel, a French physicist. Produced in five sizes (called “orders”), the largest measuring more than 12 feet high, they were installed in large coastal lighthouses as well as used as much smaller range lights. Looking like a large beehive, rows of prisms surround a “bull’s eye” which captures more than 80% of the light and bends it into a concentrated beam that can be seen by ships more than 20 miles at sea.

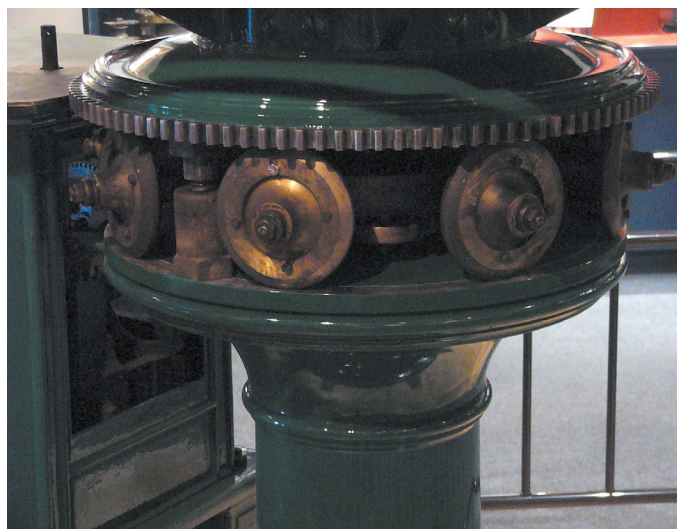
One of those California lighthouses is at Point Conception, marking the west entrance to the Santa Barbara Channel, where the westerly coastline takes a sharp bend north. The lighthouse was constructed in 1854 and the lens was lit in 1856. It burned fuel oil and was turned by clock works. Its signature was two seconds of light followed by 30 seconds of dark. When the lens was replaced by modern equipment in 1973 and taken out of service in 2000, the Coast Guard went searching for a home for it, and offered it to the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum.

It didn’t take long for Executive Director Greg Gorga to say “yes”, but first he had to raise the money for the move, \$400 thousand of it. The Santa Barbarians kicked in, and work to dismantle the lens on the lighthouse site soon began. A video in the Museum documents the project, beginning with a crane to lift the light panels from the lantern room, the building of wooden shipping crates, a helicopter to ferry the crates over the bluff to a waiting truck, and ending

with the cleaning and reassembly of the 160-year-old lens in the Museum. Three “Lampists” had to be hired (there are only 5 USCG-authorized in the country), led by Arizona-based Jim Woodward, It took them five weeks to take the lens apart and put it back together again; three of those weeks in the Museum.

Following a dedication ceremony last autumn, the fully assembled lens stands two-stories tall in the Museum, and after replacing a few critical parts, now turns on its bronze carriage wheels (see photo). Gorga believes it to be “the finest historic maritime artifact in the country”. Venture over to Santa Barbara County and have a look. I think you’ll agree.

*David Leach*



Carriage wheels, on which the massive light turns



The complete assembly as seen from SBMM’s upper deck



## The People Page July – September 2014

### New Members

#### Captain

Donald Mills

#### Commander

Charles & Kathy Volk

#### Lieutenant

Denis Cabral

Nan Drake

Alan Kemp

Harvey and Karen  
Paskowitz

#### Family

Deborah Baber

Weldon & Yvonne Ferris

Sheldon & Gloria Getzug

Alan Marenstein

Gary & Kara Marenstein

Carmen Ramirez

Thomas & Karin

Stiaszowski

Tod Tamberg

#### Individual

Deborah Allen

Ellen Brown

Mary Cassidy

Prudence Faulkner

Garret Kuiken

Roger Poirier

Marcia Ruben

Joan Stephens

Vi Schroder

Michael Ward

Steve Wright

### Renewed Members

#### Commodore

Bob & Pat Hart

Michael & Margaret Miller

Lorrie Marquart

#### Captain

Joanne Berg

Sy Einstoss

#### Commander

James & Mary Baldwin

#### Lieutenant

Edward Cristal

Marti & Diane Dibble

Henry Hottendorf

Thomas & Elaine Jackson

Viette Johnson

Don & Jane Pinkerton

Leonard & Elaine Skaist

Larry Spicer

Capt. Charles Stender

Winston & Joanne Young

#### Family

William Coleman

Arthur Ecker

Richard & Linda Ellis

Mike & Pat Loper

Andy & Mary Sheehan

Andy & Fran Paveley

#### Individual

William Boettcher

Mary Bovin

Beverly Carson

Chuck Carter

Margaret Cody

Theadora Davitt-Cornyn

Stephanie Flu-Martin

Amy Geiss

Jerry Leckie

Maria Langford

Paul Martinez

Linda Rockliff

Robertt Schwemmer

Joyce Swain

Miguel Valdez

Ben Wada

Judy Wood

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Sergio Aragones

Channel Islands

Marine Floating Lab

Union Bank

River Ridge Golf Club

New West Symphony

Rick & Mary Whiting

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>= \$500

John & Diane Flynn

The Ahmanson Foundation

Sidney-Stern Foundation

City of Oxnard

#### General Support

<=\$350

Clyde Wright

Madalyne Esrock

Kay McElroy

Cornelia Baer

Paul Sullivan

Joyce Phaneuf

Karen Harter

Nancy Mitchell

Pat Hart

Audrey Chaiclin

Arlene Westefer

Rose Hazeltine

Sharon Matthews

Eunice Manning

Henry Hurd

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Laura Farrand

D. Candiliere

Fred Shafftner

Richard Walton

#### Music at the Maritime Sponsors Solo

Brusco Tug & Barge

Gene & Kandy Harter

Gloria Mason

Michael & Margaret Miller

The Nelson Family

#### Duet

Tom & Arlene Fraser

Bob & Pat Hart

Nancy Poquette

Ventura County Star

#### Trio

Farr & Associates

Port of Hueneme

Raymond & Betty Swift

Wallenius Willhelmsen Logistics

#### Quartet

Anonymous

CIMM Volunteers

CIMM Model Guild

Bill & Marsha Conroy

Peter & Ann Costigan

Phil Drescher

Farber Hass Hurley LLP

Tom & Phina Johnston

Gilbert Luna

Brad & Marcia Marcus

Lorrayne Marquart

Jerry & Margaret Miller

Don Mills

Mary Schwabauer

Woodcraft

Patricia Vernon Wynhoff

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Services

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the many donors to have contributed to the Channel Islands Maritime Museum with contributions less than \$100, whose names are too numerous to list due to space considerations. Our apologies if your name has been misspelled or omitted from this list in error. Please contact us and we will correct our mistake. Thank you.



## On The Horizon

### Ongoing

US Coast Guard Art Exhibit  
Through March 31

### November 20

Speaker Series, 7pm  
Brian Fagan: "Fish on Friday: How  
Eating Fish on Holy Days Changed  
History"

### December 1

Ship Model Holiday Sale

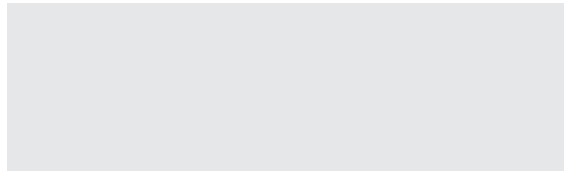
### December 11, 7 pm

Volunteer Holiday Party  
Channel Islands Yacht Club

Channel Islands Maritime Museum, 3900 Bluefin Circle, Oxnard CA 93035

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Executive Director Julia Chambers and  
Hosts Gene and Kandy Harter greeting  
Sergio Aragones



Joyce Nelson, Ann Nelson, Gene Harter,  
Brad Marcus, Marcia Marcus, and  
Kandy Harter

### Leave a Legacy

Please consider including The Channel Islands Maritime Museum in your estate planning. Your contributions are vital to keeping an important legacy alive and preserving a precious resource for future generations. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the many vital ways CIMM will use your gift, please contact Executive Director Julia Chambers at 805.984.6260 or [jchambers@cimmvc.org](mailto:jchambers@cimmvc.org).

**Note:** You can read **Call Pipe** on line at **CIMMVC.org**

### We Are Going Digital

and we need your email address to keep you informed of what's going on at the Museum. Send an email with your name and email address to [VCMMOFC@aol.com](mailto:VCMMOFC@aol.com), and you will be signed up!