



# Laguna Niguel Historical Society

**June 2016**

VOLUME 4 Number 2

Phone: 949-495-3974

lagunaniguelhistoricalsociety.com

## General Membership Meeting

Thursday, June 23, 2016, 5 PM

**Laguna Niguel Library**

at Laguna Niguel's Library Community Room, Laguna Niguel, CA

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings Members,

Since our March General meeting, your Board has pursued a number of activities to accomplish our 2016 goals. Among those is improving our website which is ongoing. Your suggestions for changes or improvements are welcome so please take a moment to review and comment. The website address is: [www.lagunaniguelhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.lagunaniguelhistoricalsociety.org)

Our Archives committee has initiated the Laguna Niguel Oral History Project under the direction of Archives Co-Chair **Carl Schulkin**. Carl has filmed several residents who have shared their stories of life in Laguna Niguel which will be archived and available for future generations to view. If you want to tell your story we want to film it so don't hesitate to contact Carl or membership Chair, **Solveig Darner**, for the filming schedule.

Unfortunately this Month City Councilman and our founding Historical Society Treasurer, **Jerry McCloskey**, passed away. Through Jerry's tireless nine month effort working through the State Government bureaucracy we received our charter and non-profit status in 2010 allowing us to formally establish and build our organization. Jerry's contributions, not only to the Historical Society, but as a volunteer and leader in many of our community's organizations, remains a lasting legacy ensuring our residents of today and tomorrow experience the unparalleled quality of life we all enjoy living in this great city. We thank you Jerry, rest in peace.

Our next General Membership meeting will be held Thursday, June 23, 5 P.M. in the Laguna Niguel Library Community Room. This will be the last meeting before our summer break in July and August so plan to attend and hear about the history behind the design of our City's logo by artist, **Rick Morgan**.

*Regards, Pat Bates, President*

**Hon. Pat Bates**



President  
**Pat Bates**

Vice President  
**Bruce Rasner**

Secretary  
**Cher Alpert**

Treasurer  
**Jerry McCloskey**

Newsletter Edited by  
**Betsy Sater**

### Calendar

Board Meeting - 4th Thursday  
of each month.

General Membership Meeting -  
June 23 - 5 PM



**Preserve the Past . . . . Enrich the Present . . . . Promote the Future**

**June 23 - General Meeting**  
**Program Speaker - RICK MORGAN,**  
**ILLUSTRATOR AND GRAPHIC ARTIST**

Members and guests will not want to miss June's general meeting to hear and meet Rick Morgan, a free-lance illustrator and graphic artist for 35 years. Rick is the designer and creator of the Laguna Niguel City Seal, Laguna Niguel's logo. This City 'logo' Seal identification is plastered over City events, vehicles, and documents.

Rick will share with us what went into his thought development of this distinct Laguna Niguel City Seal which serves as something of a coded visual history and elements of Laguna Niguel touching on the basic view of the history and modern changes within the elements of Laguna Niguel paying homage to the area's ranchos in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The seal incorporates the lariat. Or a lasso, for roping cattle unlike the rope used in surrounding City logos. The Seal ensures both historical elements and has a contemporary feel to



stand the test of time. All of this original artwork completed by hand before computer availability.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes in Laguna Niguel schools are using the City Seal as a base for teaching our city's history. The curriculum material provide courtesy of the LNHS.

Rick considers himself an amateur historian and his hobby is collecting flags combining 3 of his favorite interest and vocations; history, geography and graphic design. His hobby has lead him to create flag designs for family and friends. Rick is currently living in Dana Point and very proud of being selected to develop his first City Seal & flag for Dana Point, his hometown, soon followed by Laguna Niguel and Rancho Santa Margarita's City Seals.

Hoping to see a big turnout for a good attendance to hear Rick and thank him for all he has provided to help preserve awareness of Laguna Niguel's history.



**Betty Pequet**  
**Citizen of the Year**



Our congratulations to LNHS Board Member, **Betty Pequet**, for being selected Citizen of the Year. Thank you, Betty, for your 37 years of volunteer service to our community.

*Linda Bayme*  
*LNHS Program Chairman*



**A Note From the**  
**Membership Committee**

**W**elcome to new and returning members: Chamber of Commerce (**Debbie Newman**), **Monty McDivitt** and **Maggie Avila Griffin**. We appreciate your membership and participation. Hope to see you at our General Meeting later this month.

Also, if your friends and neighbors are interested in our efforts to collect and preserve documents/memorabilia that add to the story of Laguna Niguel, please invite them to join us. Membership applications are available on our website at [www.LagunaNiguelHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.LagunaNiguelHistoricalSociety.org)

And...if you know anyone interested in receiving information about speakers and other meeting programs, please let me know so we can add their name to our e-mail announcement list.

Any questions - give me a call at 949 495-1438 or send me an email.

**Solveig Darner**  
**Membership Chairman**  
[solveig.darner@gmail.com](mailto:solveig.darner@gmail.com)

## The Laguna Niguel Oral History Project

by Carl Schulkin

The Oral History Project committee, consisting of **Solveig Darner**, **Sheryl Bailen** and myself, have officially begun filming interviews with long-time residents of Laguna Niguel and community leaders in an effort to preserve the history of Laguna Niguel. After experimenting with a preliminary interview with long-time resident **Dennis Devine**, who returned to Laguna Niguel for a visit in 2013 after moving to Oregon, we began regularly scheduled interviews on May 23, 2016. Our first interviewees were **Kathleen Lechner**, an artist, long-time resident and active member of the Laguna Niguel Woman's Club, and **Carol Merker**, another long-time resident who still lives in the one of the first developments built in Laguna Niguel that is still within the current boundaries of the city. The following day we interviewed long-time resident **Sheila Benecke**, a former member of the School Board and a past president of the PTA and the Laguna Niguel Woman's Club. On Thursday, May 26, our guest was **Tim Casey**, Laguna Niguel's first City Manager, who served the city in that capacity for more than twenty-three years. Finally, on Friday, May 27, we heard from **Carole Allen**, a long-time resident and former elementary school teacher, who taught at Crown Valley Elementary School for thirty-seven years. During that time, she also founded the California Junior Light Opera Company, which she directed while she taught at Crown Valley Elementary.

Videos of our oral history interviews will become part of the historical record, being stored on our MacPro computer recently donated by architectural historian and Historical Society member, Ted Wells. We will also be uploading copies of the interviews to YouTube, to permit our interviewees to share their videos privately with friends and relatives.

Our Oral History Project will continue indefinitely until everyone who has played a role in the history of Laguna Niguel and wishes to be interviewed has had the opportunity to do so. If you or someone you know is a long-time resident of Laguna Niguel and/or has been a community leader and wishes to be interviewed, please contact or have them contact Solveig Darner at [solveigdarner@gmail.com](mailto:solveigdarner@gmail.com) or by telephone at 949-495-1438.



**Dennis Devine**



**Kathleen Lechner**



**Carol Merker**



**Sheila Benecke**



**Tim Casey**



**Carole Allen**

# Laguna Niguel Historical Society

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## OBJECTIVES & PURPOSE

*The primary objectives and purpose of  
The Laguna Niguel Historical  
Society shall be the promulgation  
of historical information  
about the Community of Laguna Niguel  
and its surrounding area.*

*This will include the gathering,  
storage and display of historical  
documents and artifacts and  
sponsoring of activities and events  
that will celebrate our history*

History is made every day and as every day passes more of it is lost to memory. The Laguna Niguel Historical Society has been formed to preserve the record of Laguna Niguel's past and of its new history that is constantly being created. Even though the City of Laguna Niguel was incorporated as recently as 1989, there is a rich past preceding cityhood that needs to be preserved for this and future generations. The native American population, the Spanish explorers, the mission fathers and the ranchers all had a part in our history that needs remembering. The Laguna Niguel Historical Society intends to preserve this history for future generations.

### Laguna Niguel Historical Society

*30025 Alicia Parkway #190*

*Laguna Niguel, CA 92677*

*lagunaniguelhistoricalsociety.org*

### Founding Directors

*Patricia "Pat" Bates*

*Linda Bayme*

*Gary Capata*

*Solveig Darner*

*Jeanette Krembas*

*Gary Kurtz*

*Nancy Kurtz*

*Jerry McCloskey*

*Betty Pequet*

*Bruce Rasner*

*Carl Schulkin*

*David Weiss*

*Judy Whitelock*

*Paul Whitelock*

*Marc Winer*