The History of Little League Baseball in Laguna Beach

Presented by Frank Aronoff

Little League Baseball was organized in Pennsylvania in 1939 and arrived in Laguna Beach thirteen years later. The Optimist Club of Laguna Beach researched the program and persuaded three other local service clubs to join them in starting our league, the third league to be chartered in California and the oldest league in Orange County.

Four teams were organized in 1952 sponsored by the four service clubs: Optimist, Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary. Joe Roberts was elected the first league president, Nolan Doss was the first majors commissioner, and Jack Norworth was appointed honorary league president. Tryouts were held and the first teams had players from ages 8 to 12 years of age. The first home game was played on Tuesday, June 3, 1952 where the current high school diamond is located with Lions taking Rotary by a 10-3 score. Steve Ramsey hit the first home run.

(continued on the following page)
A Message from our President

ED STORKE, PRESIDENT

As I write my last column as President of the Laguna Beach Historical Society, I am most thankful for the contributions, memberships, advice, and volunteer work you have given. I have learned a great deal about the history of Laguna Beach and appreciate how many have shared their ideas and talents. This is definitely a wonderful place to live and I hope to continue living in and contributing to our hospitable village for many years.

Much has been accomplished in collecting, disseminating, and preserving our local history. I have consistently relied on you in many ways, especially since I have lived in Southern California only for 17+ years. I came to Laguna with a degree in history and experience teaching U.S. History at a small, private university and a large community college in the Chicago, IL area.

This has given me a chance to delve into local history and practice that vital aspect of history. Although I am pleased with our accomplishments, I am greatly impressed with how we handled the pandemic even though we had to close our Murphy-Smith Bungalow (our museum) doors for a period of time. In fact, our treasury is healthier now than it was four years ago.

We are now approaching full staffing on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 1-4 pm. However, we are still looking for more dedicated volunteers. This is an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax-exempt organization [Section 501 c3] that has flourished despite outside diversions of the last few years and I’m sure will continue to promote local history and appreciation for what we have here.

Thank you every one!

Ed Storke
The Bungalow gets Tented!

During regular check-ins on the bungalow John Hoover began to notice the droppings of termites, especially collecting in the enclosed back porch.

Knowing the house hadn’t been tented for quite some time and with due diligence John got three quotes, the board voted and in April the tent went up. Areas of wood trim were also replaced.

Prepping including pulling items away from the building, opening up the attic and storm cellar for better circulation and cleaning up afterwards, all without disruption to our docent schedule and opening hours.

Thank you John and thank you for your member support in the bungalow upkeep that Wells Fargo so kindly lets us operate from.

In Other Bungalow News:

An easy way to help support:
Listed under the Historical Society tab on our website at: http://lagunabeachhistory.org/ there are links to Amazon Smile and Ralph’s to sign up and donate part of your shopping tab to non-profits like us. We would appreciate your support!

Get Involved by Volunteering as a Docent:
Get Involved by Volunteering as a Docent: Our docent program is up again and we always need regulars or subs. We open from 1-4 pm on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Ceramic Plaque by Peterpaul Ott
Courtesy of Jane Janz

Peterpaul Ott (1895–1992) was a Czechoslovakian artist and sculptor who visited California in 1939 and moved to Laguna Beach the following year. He remained here his entire life living in Canyon Acres and raising five children. 7 year old Alexander Peterpaul Ott designed the Little League plaque shown here marked with an Ott stamp.

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Laguna Beach Greenbelt

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Laguna Beach Lawn Bowling Club
The Stand Natural Foods
Charles and Ann Quilter

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

We want to thank you for your past financial support and encourage you to consider upgrading to the next level of support for the Laguna Beach Historical Society. We are determined to preserve and protect historical archives of Laguna Beach including photographs, quarterly guest speaker events, and an annual scholarship to an outstanding graduating LB high school senior.
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!

Thank you to the Boat Canyon UPS store for printing our newsletters

Visit us on YouTube: Laguna Beach Historical Society
Visit our Website: lagunabeachhistory.org
Contact us at: info@lagunabeachhistory.org

Little League History Inside

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