Born in 1929, Dick Metz began a life of adventure in a bassinet on the sand at Main Beach. His father, Carl Metz, owned two restaurants: The Laguna Diner, an old railroad car, which was moved to another spot and The Broiler, a popular restaurant and bar. Dick's mother, Edna May, taught school in town.

With two working parents and proximity to the sand, Dicks' parents made sure they could keep an eye on him out the restaurant window.

When Dick was 5-6 years old, his father gave surfers Brennan "Hevs" McLelland and George "Peanuts" Larsen a hamburger and a beer to watch his son. This experience encouraged him to become interested in surfing and being in the water.

The depression era of the 1930s brought Shirley Temple, among other Hollywood stars, to Laguna Beach, Dick could be seen sitting in the sand with a group surrounding the child star like she was just another Laguna kid.

(continued on the following page)
Dick enjoyed many adventures with his local Boyscout Troop. He was not concerned with earning badges as he was more interested in what he considered the adventurous ways of Native Americans and being outdoors.

World War II began when Dick was 12 years old in 1941. Laguna became heavily fortified amid fears of Japanese after the Pearl Harbor attack. He was among many on the school track team that were recruited to a Civil Defense Program as a relay team delivering messages since radio frequency was poor or could be taken out.

This relay team started at Top of the World where there was artillery positioned, and the runners practiced bringing messages down to the school on Park Avenue where Dick would run them to the Police Station.

The war ended in 1945 when Dick was 15-years old.

As a child and pre-teen, Dick was front and center in the goings on of Laguna Beach in the 1930s and 40s and is a gifted storyteller who will share what it was like during that time.

A question and answer session will follow with a chance to view archival items from this time period.

A Message from our President

KAREN LAGREW, PRESIDENT

History and adventure making, they often go hand in hand and with a good storyteller we can all go down the rabbit hole peaking our curiosity and our need to learn more, ask more questions, find more answers.

Dick Metz provides a combination of all of the above and is our next guest speaker. no PowerPoint needed here!

Dick is a storyteller for many generations. In the upcoming program he will focus on his early years in Laguna Beach in a town he loves and knows well. A town that lends itself to adventures and exploration. less so now but imagine the early 1920s through the 1940s!

He seems to have been born in the right place at the right time to develop a life of adventure and tales to tell. It leaves me wondering, did the early days in Laguna form Dick or would this have happened in any-town USA?

Our program coordinator, Jane Petty, was taught by Dick’s mother in grade school and along with Dick, shared a Laguna childhood. It was an era of a different Main Beach boardwalk and downtown.

We hope you can make it, and please come with questions as Dick remembers when Laguna Beach was a very, very small town. We are fortunate to have him back from the big wide world he explored in his early adult and later years.

Karen Lagrew
THANK YOU!

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.

Bootleg History on Display!

1920-1933:
In the United States from 1920 to 1933, a nationwide constitutional law prohibited the production, importation, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages.

Laguna during the Prohibition:
Dick Metz recalls there were two ships off the coast where people could gamble and drink. Whiskey and rum were smuggled by rumrunners onto the beaches of Laguna.

Vernon Murphy and the Trap Door:
Bungalow Legend says that when Vernon Murphy owned the cottage during Prohibition times bootleg liquor was hidden in its basement.

Last month our team finished a functional trap door display for guests. Visitors can locate the hidden stash for themselves. The secret trap door in the hall floor can be lifted to expose the lighted basement and see the hidden bottles below (with docent supervision.)

Come see for yourself on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday afternoon!

Board Member SPOTLIGHT

Nelda Stone
Nelda Stone is part of the fabric of Laguna as a long-term library employee. She considered herself an “information-aholic” starting from a very young age. You can often find her assisting researchers in the Laguna Beach Local History Room.

Why did you choose to serve on the board?
My family has a long history in town and I had always heard stories about Laguna from my mother.

Why do you think your position on the board is a good match for you? I manage the local history collection at the public library and I help a lot of patrons with their research. We get a lot of questions from out of town people also just like what happens at the historical society.

What is your favorite part of working with the LB Historical Society? I love discussing Laguna’s varied aspects. When people think of Laguna they think art. But actually Laguna has so many varied elements including architecture, theater, and most predominantly the environment which includes water sports, as well as ocean environment and open space preservation.

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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!

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