A t long last, with our gallery closed for over a year, we are thrilled to announce the opening of a new exhibition. Starting June 5, the Society will present Our Ocean’s Edge in the Wisteria Cottage gallery. By exploring the beautiful essence of California’s 1,100 mile long coastline through photography and prose, Our Ocean’s Edge is an exhibition featuring black and white images from LA-based photographer Jasmine Swope’s quest to capture the essence of California’s marine parks. Accompanying the images, author Dwight Holing’s prose contributes narrative interpretations of these important seascapes. California made history with the creation of the nation’s first statewide system of ocean parks – a network of 124 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) stretching from Oregon to the Mexican border. Like national and state parks on land, MPAs are environmental benefits that provide protection for wildlife, solutions to climate change, and recreational resources for all. Our Ocean’s Edge is a photographic documentary project that celebrates these fragile seascapes while increasing awareness about their natural benefits and promoting ecological conservation. The project was made possible by the following people and organizations: League for Coastal Protection, Resource Legacy Fund, Wishtoyo Foundation, Katlin Gaffney, Kevin Garrison, Annie Northoff, Chirk Picher, Mark Swapp, and Mari Waeya. We are extremely grateful to the donors whose funding made the local presentation possible: Weston Anson, Dave and Sandra Erickson, Barbara Freeman, Anna Palmer | Palmer Design Inc., and ArtWorks San Diego. There are also projects presented virtually you can view on our website. The Unfinished Story of Viejas - Original is a small outdoor exhibition exploring a modernist commercial gallery operating in La Jolla in 1959-60 featuring furniture and decorative arts by local artisans and craftsmen. You can also read new stories by San Diego authors written during the pandemic and published as part of the San Diego Decameron Project, a venture we did in collaboration with the San Diego Public Library, San Diego Writers Ink, and Write On Local.

This summer, we have a full house of youth programs and are looking forward to having students back in the Wisteria Cottage campus. Our partner organization, Outside the Lens, will present three one-week photography camps for middle schools and high school students.

I would feel remiss if I didn’t take a little space to thank all of our members, supporters, and others in our community for your help, patience, and encouragement as we navigated through the pandemic. Your continuing financial support has helped keep us afloat and us left well-positioned to resume a more normal schedule of exhibitions, educational programs, and community events. These times are full of challenges and trying, and we are eternally grateful to the community who stood with us. Thank you! Lastly, I’d like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Society’s Board of Directors for their steadfast leadership and determination to see us through the pandemic to the better times ahead. Please join me in recognizing and thanking our terrific Board! With thanks and good cheer to all our members, we look forward to seeing you in our gallery and at our events starting again this summer.

Heath Fox
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Letters to the Editor

Cover: Curmudgeon line a rocky outcrop looking toward La Jolla Cove is the background in one of photographer Jasmine Swope’s series featuring Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) along the California coast. Photograph is included in “Our Ocean’s Edge” exhibition opening June 5 in Wisteria Cottage.

Roger Sammon

Originally from the Chicago area, Roger studied classical architecture at the University of Notre Dame and spent a year of study in Rome, sketching and learning from traditional masters. He returned to San Diego in 2015. Since then, he has been a partner in Mithun, a San Francisco firm, and has authored a number of publications on architecture and design. In 2018, he completed a residency at the American Academy in Rome.

Marouane Abdouni

My passion for architecture developed while living in Santa Barbara where I moved for my college education. As I discovered historic buildings there I was reminded of the Moorish architectural heritage of my native Morocco. After graduation, I moved back home in Morocco. Upon moving to San Diego in 2015, I began my career at Marriott Murray Architects, before joining Island Architects in 2018. My professional interests have been influenced by local La Jolla architects, and my enthusiasm for this community and its architecture grew immensely. As a resident of La Jolla and a member of La Jolla Community Planning Association I am honored to help preserve our community’s history.
Swope’s photographs have the soft look of richly worked, large-scale graphite drawings. In addition to her chosen printing technique it is achieved through lengthy exposure that blur contours, enhance atmospheres and blend the motion of waves and birds into gentle near abstraction. One result is to re-cast familiar sights, recorded in millions of snapshots of tourist scenery, into something alien and almost extraterrestrial.” – Christopher Knight

Shortly after California became the first state to set aside a network of 124 ocean parks as Marine Protective Areas (MPAs), photographer Jasmine Swope travelled the 1,100 miles of coastline from Oregon to Mexico to document and interpret them in a series of black-and-white photographs using her special eye to record what she encountered. The result is “Our Ocean’s Edge,” a book and travelling exhibition which opens June 5 in the La Jolla Historical Society’s Wisteria Cottage and runs through the summer. Swope, a native of Serbia now working out of Santa Monica, is a graduate of Brooks Institute of Photography and has worked in the commercial arena of photography in London and the Los Angeles area. “Our Ocean’s Edge” was published in 2015 by Nazraeli Press containing 96 pages with 55 duotone plates. The exhibition will feature 21 of those plates, plus dioramas, and include a study of Matlajuayl State Marine Reserve (La Jolla Cove). In her photographs Swope states she seeks to “merge tonal elegance with the underlying substance of a visual record.” She believes “black and white photographs evoke an element of mystery and encourage the mind to wander with imagination while exploring the nuances in the various shades of gray.”

Our Ocean’s Edge was made possible by the following people and organizations: League for Coastal Protection, Resource Legacy Fund, Wiiguye Foundation, Katie Geftkar, Karen Garrison, Anne Northoff, Chris Pichler, Mark Swope, and Mati Waiya. Local funding generously provided by Western Amour, Dave and Sandra Erickson, Barbara Freeman, Anna Palmer | Palmer Design Inc., and ArtWorks San Diego. Institutional support provided by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture and by the Members of the La Jolla Historical Society.

Goleta Slough State Marine Conservation Area (right) is captured in dramatic black-and-white photograph by Jasmine Swope. Other Marine Protective Areas (MPAs) Swope photographed for a book and exhibition include (top inset) the Cambria State Marine Park and Conservation Area and (bottom inset) Point Bouchon State Marine Reserve.
Editor's Note: When Wallace J. Nichols, Ph.D, wrote the foreword to “Our Ocean’s Edge” he took an unorthodox approach. He asked readers to open the book and, at each image, to “very slowly inhale and exhale,” contemplating how “our coastal waters not only drive our economy and ecosystems, but also sculpt our deepest emotions.” In his own book, “Blue Mind,” published in 2014 by Little, Brown, Spark, Nichols, a research associate at the California Academy of Sciences and co-founder and director of Ocean Revolution, SEE the WILD and sparks of inspiration that enable us to think of water in a new way.

When you ask people why they like to spend time by water, the usual responses are “It feels good.” ‘I like looking at it’ and ‘It makes me happy.’ (The most common answer: ‘I’m not quite sure, that’s a very interesting question!’) But what exactly is the water premium, and why are so many people willing to pay for it? This isn’t a question only for those home-shopping in Del Mar, a version of this premium is added to the bill of every water view restaurant, hotel room, or recreational facility. But because the cognitive benefits of being by the water aren’t named as such on the balance sheets of many communities, economists, lacking a clear way to calculate these non-market values (‘externalities’) often don’t bother trying. Yet, by re-considering such premiums in a different context, such qualities can become transformed from invisible to visible, from vaguely understandable to precisely calculated, from fuzzy ideas to cells in a decision matrix. How we think about how we think about water has begun to evolve, Blue Mind style. . . water is changing all the time, but it’s also fundamentally familiar. It seems to entertain our brains nicely with novelty plus a soothing regular background. Envisage yourself being by the water: the sounds, the sights, the smells, all changing moment to moment yet essentially staying the same. It’s regularity without monotony – the perfect recipe to trigger restful involuntary attention. It’s also the inverse of our current condition of monotonous suffocation . . .

“Surfing has always been a part of the water studies at our annual Blue Mind conferences. I think it’s because surfers probably exhibit more Blue Mind than anyone. They are attuned to the water, used to watching it carefully for hours on end, reading its changes, looking for the smallest indication that the next wave will be, if not the perfect wave, at least rideable. They are in the water as well as on it — they know the power of a wave to slam them down to the bottom, leaving them scraping the sand, rocks, or reef, holding their breath for dear life, fighting upward against the whirling energy to break through, gasping — yet still looking seaward for the next chance to hop on their boards and take the ultimate fifteen or thirty or sixty second ride . . .

“We need some different strategies to deal with the stresses of modern life. So what if Ishmael (‘Moby Dick’) was right and Blue Mind is a better cure for what ails us? What if time spent in or around water was as effective as (and more immediate than) an antidepressant? What if we could treat stress, addiction, autism, PTSD and other ills with surfing or fishing? What if your doctor handed you a prescription for stress or ill health that read, ‘take two waves, a beach walk and some flowing river, and call me in the morning?’”

La Jolla’s Windan Sea beach (left and below) epitomizes the “blue mind” concept of the ocean’s timeless healing powers. Spiritual waterman Woody Brown was the first to seriously surf Windan Sea in 1936 inspiring decades of future surfers to enjoy the water for both sport and mindful experiences.
They have only one direction to look – and this is out...

Editor's Note: Max Miller's book, "The Town With the Funny Name," a collection of essays about the people and places the author experienced along the La Jolla shoreline, was published by E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., in 1948. It was written almost a decade after Miller’s "I Cover the Waterfront" became a bestseller and movie starring Ben Lyon and Claudette Colbert. In "The Town" Miller offers keen and evoking insights into living at the ocean’s edge. His observations seem as discerning today as they were in the post-World War II era. Timekeeper offers these excerpts from the first and last chapters:

"Saturdays and Sundays are the days here when our shoreline becomes heavily sprinkled with people we have not seen before, and I am wondering how long it has been since this has been the case. Four years, five years, seven years perhaps, but the crowds of visitors become ever thicker from Saturday to Saturday, from Sunday to Sunday, and they have only one direction to look – and this is out.

So it may be with the most of us, who have our homes here all the time, we may have only one direction to look too, almost as if we were trying to sneak in a peak of eternity ahead of time.

And in a sense this really may be symbolical of so many of us here. We are unaware, and which even now may be in homes in Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Wyoming.

But we may be the most of us, who are looking out at all this for the first time, and seeing it as we at one time may have seen it, everything new, everything with a seemingly news-value to it, each low-tide stuff a remarkable discovery.

The strangers, so many of them from far inland, arrive and take pictures of each other standing on some barnacle-covered rock. The strangers arrive and take pictures of each other standing beneath a palm and with this Pacific again as a background. And the visitors take a long time in posing, in arranging their smiles, in fixing their hair, in wanting to look – simultaneously – both happy and noble.

Then the strangers switch around. Those who took the first pictures now do the posing, and there is much ado about last-minute camera instructions, much hurrying back and forth from posing spot to camera, from camera to posing spot.

All during Saturdays this goes on, and all during Sundays, until it is almost impossible on such days for the rest of us here to walk along our own shore or along our own cliffs without walking between photographer and subject matter. As a result we most likely are in a lot of pictures of which we are unaware, and which even now may be in homes in Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Wyoming.

In these pictures we will be those figures which, though slightly out of focus, are the ones remaining inexplicable. John can be recognized in the snapshot, and his girl Myrtle can be recognized. But the rest of us, as in all life, merely are the passer-by, the shades, the wrinkles, the shadows.

And in some mysterious way we may be envious also (although this is problematic) of all these people who are looking out at all this for the first time, and seeing it as we at one time may have seen it, everything new, everything with a seemingly news-value to it, each low-tide stuff a remarkable discovery.

But the lands of the world are so insignificant in volume to the oceans of the world that these water-creatures, if they wished to become cynical about us, certainly could assume that the earth had been constructed for them rather than for us, and that if Creation had wanted more people Creation would have made more land. And, as it is, maybe Creation prefers fish to people.

Yet this is not our concern, nor is there anything we can do about it. But as we roam around the never fringe of these reefs, partly in our own world and partly in the sea world, even the conclusions about ourselves, or even about our town, can be different when we make them from out there. For we are not a regional people in this sunny cul-de-sac. We cannot be labelled or typed. We are not in the Blue Ridge, nor people in the Everglades, nor New Englanders. We are everybody, and we cannot say that such-and-such a person is typical of the region, unless we mean that such-and-such a person is typical of everybody. Nor can we say that any of us here is an influence to the town. For the town itself, the locality, these reefs and this water, do what influencing in done, and sooner or later the rest of us just go along.

We are not a ‘colony of artists and writers,’ as some outsiders state that we are. We even have seen the statement in print. But, not knowing just what is meant by a ‘colony of artists and writers,’ we do nothing about the statement.

When the tide is out, the minus tide laying bare the parous reefs around our town, and when during such tidal days of the month we can go far out upon the reefs, walking upon them, a new extension has been given to us. Yet even so, we can feel almost that we are roaming about where we do not belong.

Some portions of the reefs will be covered with mossy carpets, and there will be little lakes high upon the exposed rocks, and miniature waterfalls will be tumbling back down from up there, and we will wonder why we do not know more than we know about what we are seeing, the strange sea animals and sea plants, the peculiar plateaus with their crater-like indentures, and with living things all around and in them. But momentarily it is their turn to be up in our own world now as if wanting to visit us, as if wanting to know for themselves how it must seem to live on land, how it must seem to be people.

But if technically we leave our footprints in the sand, then technically too we also leave the imprints of our whole bodies, especially on sunny days. We are not important people. Some who are here may have been important once – elsewhere – but they outlawed it. Some of the younger ones here may hope some day to become important, whatever that means, but most likely they will have to leave to do so. Our attitude, anyhow, is that the people who strive for importance the world over are likewise the ones who cause so much trouble the world over, and the rest of us would just as soon that history should stop occurring for a while. How this would be we do not know.

Nobody knows. But we do know that our mossy reefs, open and splendid and mysterious for an hour or so, are sure to get covered up again."
HAROLD G. SHRINER:
La Jolla’s Phantom Painter

by Carol Olten

Wilde said that we are all in the gutter but some of us are always looking for the stars. Harold G. Shriner, an illusive artist who had a studio and home in La Jolla for nearly 30 years, was one of those stargazers. For most of his life here his main subjects were the deserts and back country of San Diego County which he painted in the first light of dawn, filling his canvasses with soft palettes of deep lavenders and muted blues suggesting the new days owed something to the twilights of the past evenings. His paintings were mainly small oils, each exquisite in compositions of desert landscape with Southern California mountains often in the backgrounds. Shriner seldom, if ever, had gallery exhibitions. He sold his paintings at his own price – sometimes in the four figure range – to private collectors, providing he liked the person. If he didn’t, tough luck. While his plein air contemporaries of the same period in San Diego County such as Charles Fries, Alfred Mitchell and Maurice Braun shared the limelight, Shriner seemed to revel in his own aloofness. He lived the life of the eccentric artist: reclusive, visionary, mysterious – and an egotist to boot! But, even today, his paintings remain unique, catching the mystery of light and color of desert dawns and twilights rather than showing the obvious landscapes of shimmering white heat. A maverick, he painted Southern California deserts – mauve-ish!

HAROLD G. SHRINER: La Jolla’s Phantom Painter

Born in Fairfield, Iowa, in 1871 Shriner already was an accomplished artist when he and his second wife, Stella, came to live in La Jolla in 1910. He was 40 years old, a child prodigy born into a Midwestern family of Irish descent. When his family was too impoverished to send him to art school, the townsfolk of Fairfield took up a collection for a small stipend for study in Paris in 1891. His teachers there included Leon Bonnat and Carolus Duran, both French portrait masters working in a naturalistic style. (Bonnat was especially encouraging of his students to paint portraits in a less formal manner and had among his students John Singer Sargent who became one of the master portraitists of the late 19th century.) Finishing his training in Paris and completing a number of European studies, Shriner went on a painting expedition to the Ireland of his ancestors, recording village scenes, cottage life and landscapes in Kerry County. He also met and married a tempestuous young Irish woman named Henry Josephine Revington. Their marriage in 1895 was the last ceremony to be performed in the historic Parish Church Ballynahaghish overlooking Tralee Bay and the vast Atlantic – scenes Shriner quickly put on canvas and brought back to America while Hetty remained in Ireland.

Returning to Fairfield, Shriner embarked on a career as a portrait painter. He painted many of the ancestral patriarchs and matriarchs of the community, their faces stern with religion and their sins stowed in trunks of their Victorian attics. He also painted a multitude of pioneer scenes, including one large canvas of a blacksmith shop scene, now restored and on display at the Fairfield Library. (One of the horses in the painting became a legend around Fairfield for its brainy-ness, herding other animals out of danger when a barn caught fire.) In 1900, Hetty came to join him in Fairfield and he opened a log cabin studio where he painted, sketched and taught, meanwhile selling some of the 250 paintings he had executed in France and Ireland. That same year he was hired by the nearby Parsons College as director of an art school with 45 students. In 1902, he illustrated the book by John Williamson called “Hardscrabble,” an account of the arduors of pioneer life in America. In 1904 a body of his work came to critical attention at the St. Louis World’s Fair. By 1905 his marriage to Hetty – who had joined Shriner to live in Fairfield – was dissolving and she and his daughter went back to Ireland, never to return.

And so began Shriner’s years of wanderlust through the Midwest, the Rocky Mountains and the West Coast of California that eventually landed him in La Jolla and a new career with a new muse—the desert. Sometime around 1907 he had begun courting Stella Enone (Wagner) Keene, a New York divorcee living in Los Angeles whom he married in 1908 in Cheyenne, WY, after an in absentia divorce from Hetty in Denver. The new couple established a home in Los Angeles, but Shriner was discontent with city life. A niece (Helen Getsinger), already living in La Jolla, suggested he move here. In an oral history recorded with the La Jolla Historical Society in 1964, Helen recalled: “So I said, ‘Uncle Harold G. Shriner who lived and worked as an artist in La Jolla from 1910-1941, appears beside one of his signature Southern California desert paintings, part of many of his major works today in private and museum collections in his native Iowa. Inset, a portrait of a white horse painted earlier in his life in Fairfield, IA and elsewhere.
Harry G. Shriner, art instructor at the Bishop's School, has purchased a painting by Emme Brooker Weaver, who painted nature in action. He fell in love with the desert.

The Shriners in the museum’s collection also represent initial work painted in and around Fairfield as well as European studies and canvases on the anti-social side and secretive – not a monster, just prickly.”

Harry, why don’t you come to La Jolla? It’s the most beautiful, loveliest place in the whole world.’ So he came down. . . . He was not only a wonderful, nice looking mellow, to which he loaded paints and canvases and headed for the back country, sometimes making roads as he went. A popular destination for painting trips was Mesa Grande, the ruggedly beautiful landscape now between Lake Hinsdale and the Cleveland National Forest, where he stayed at Powan Lodge, the rustic craftsman style of the time, it was demolished sometime in the 1970s and would have been where a present-day residence stands at 7919 Prospect.

The Studio hung precipitously over deep ocean canyons with the Pacific surf pounding the shorelines and La Jolla’s legendary Seven Caves in full view, a drop-dead piece of scenery that the Shriners must have admired although Harry seldom painted it. The desert and back country called instead. He soon left his teaching job at Bishops, purchased a nice looking jalopy into which he loaded his paintings.
and consider in retrospect. He made sincere efforts to find seeds and plants – Jethro Mitchell Swain’s diary entry of Nov. 15, 1910, as he prepares to leave the mining outpost of Johnnie, NV, to start

Because he kept an on-going diary of daily farm activities, from 1910 to his

land – like regular prairie “sodbusters” right here on beach property now valued in the millions. It wasn’t easy, but most of them made small, but decent, livings. The Swains average income from selling their farm crops, prided to the local community by horse and wagon, was about six dollars per day. They sold eggs for 40 cents a dozen and received 20 cents a pound for their honey harvested from nine swarms on the property. Potatoes earned four cents a pound. On Nov. 5, 1914, Swain records receiving $1,200 off Westbourne Street, Swain became one of a handful of early La Jollans who made a farm in La Jolla.

The Hollidays were Midwesterners from Indiana who first settled in La Jolla in the late 19th century, living first in the original house built by La Jolla’s early European settlers like George Hurd at Exchange Place and Boulevard Avenue (Mr. Hurd legendarily loved farm animals so much he constructed a barn for his horses under which he built his own house). They grazed their first dairy stock around the house and then moved the herd to Long Beach (now La Jolla Shores) where it remained for many years, providing milk and milk products to the La Jolla community. Cows from the Holliday dairy serendipitously graced the Shores beach gained prominence in 1906 when they were photographed on the sand by San Diego photographer Herbert Finch, later becoming the most popularly reproduced image in the La Jolla Historical Society’s archival collection of more than 90,000 photographs. The dairy farm in the Shores, run by Jermiah Lee and Ben Holliday with other family members, covered about six acres of open grazing land and included sheds and barns to shelter and milk the animals. It remained in operation until World War I when the land was plowed and planted with Lima beans to produce gunpowder for the war effort. The Genters also were in the dairy farming business in the early 1900s, operating on five acres of land purchased by German immigrant Windlys Genter (including the site of the present-day La Jolla Elementary School). Windlys was Bernhardt “Ben” Genter’s father and, as the only boy in the family, Ben inherited most of the farm work. In oral histories Ben tells of rising at daybreak each morning, sending his father’s 15 cows and delivering their milk to local residents by horse and wagon. The milk was poured from three gallon cans and laded into containers and pans left on porches using a quart measure. The histories do not mention the price per quart. Later, the elder Genter (for whom Genter Street is named) acquired a larger parcel of land bound by Draper, Pearl, Eads and Genter streets. He raised crops there as well as hogs and chickens and in 1929 built a small house at 736 Eads Ave which became the family home. Today all that remains of the Genter farm is the house which has historic designation from the City of San Diego. The land was gradually sold off – some of it early on. The acre that Swain purchased for his farm in 1918 was purchased from the Genter family.

David Watson Rannels arrived in La Jolla from the Midwestern prairies in the late 1880s when the first La Jolla Lark subdivision was being plotted. He bought land here and in the Serrano Valley where he operated a produce ranch and raised a large family, including sons Nathan and Charles, both of whom figured prominently in La Jolla’s pioneering agricultural life. Charles operated the La Jolla Dairy, Nathan had a livery stable on Giraud Avenue where he kept and rented horses and carried for tally-bag trips into the countryside before settling into a position as postmaster at the La Jolla Post Office. His horses being taken over early dairy streets and pathways through the village in the early 1900s readily attest to La Jolla’s rural life of the past. In an address to the La Jolla Conservation Society in March, 1936, Nathan captured the essence of what it was like to live in a small community of farm animals and growing crops. “You may pull up the weeds, you may plant flowers, you may supplant the grasseweed with a mighty forrest, but you will not have attained your full measure of success unless you conserve and perpetuate the pristine and kindliness and neighborliness that was ‘the spirit of old La Jolla.’” That spirit lived in the everyday – the everyday of living on and off the land with planting and harvesting, milking cows and stabling horses. It filled like a wrath by the 1920s when the place became “civilized.” Swain sold his house and land off Westbourne and opened a lodge for rentals at 7354 Fay Ave. before he died in 1917 with $305 in the bank. The Hollidays’ dairy and land planted with lima bean fields in La Jolla Shores was obscured by the Rose family development dream of creating “Newport of the West” and the building of the La Jolla Beach and Yacht Club. Windlys Genter died and his son turned to work in the construction trades, meanwhile, accumulating local honors as a sportsman adept at baseball, basketball and tennis. The Rannels sold their horses and cows and became “respectable” La Jolla business people, readily attentive to civic responsibilities.

The construction of resort hotels and the coming of expensive subdivisions such as the Muirlands and Lower and Upper Hermosa signaled the end of the country town. The land was gradually sold off – some of it early on. In one of Swain’s last diary entries of Aug. 1, 1917, he records that he is “weary of life’s journey.” He was 74 years old and had worked hard most of his life. He died 19 days later at the rural La Jolla home he had created. Pard records on Aug. 20: “J.M. Swain buried today at 1 o’clock. God bless his heart, bless his dear old heart in my prayer, how I do miss him.”

The farm was deserted and she returned again to Michigan.

down on the farm: small ag in old La Jolla

“Picking up and packing freight for La Jolla...I think I need a sea breeze” – Jethro Mitchell Swain’s diary entry of Nov. 15, 1910, as he prepares to leave the mining outpost of Johnnie, NV, to start a farm in La Jolla.

S

cient on a desolate acre of land purchased for $1,200 off Westbourne Street. Swain became one of a handful of early La Jollans who made their living as farmers. They planted the not-so-good earth (eday!) with beans, berries and fruit trees. They raised chickens, hogs and cows along with alfalfa to feed them. They built barns and sheds for horses, mules, plows and cultivators. They lived on the land. They sold the land – like regular prairie “sodbusters” right here on beach property now valued in the millions.

It wasn’t easy, but most of them made small, but decent, livings. Because he kept an on-going diary of daily farm activities, from 1910 to his death in 1917, Swain’s efforts in rural agriculture are the easiest to study and consider in retrospect. He made sincere efforts to find seeds and plants

compatible to the climate, contacting Luther Burbank and the Berkeley Agricultural College about vine culture and subscribing to a journal known as Gentleman Farmer from the state bureau of agriculture. Mostly, he worked from dawn to dusk plowing, planting, plucking weeds, building sheds and fences and handling the murex shovel, all the while taking an acceptable attitude toward manual labor. At the end of the first summer’s growing season in 1911, a journal entry reads: “Swung a gate. Had a pea dinner, took a buggy ride in p.m. down to the Holliday dairy. Come home via Mr. Wroe’s to see his house and barn, everything nice and we came on home to take care of our own chicken and pigs. Guess we are as well off as could be expected for the present.”

Swain shared a portion of the farm work with his wife, Alice (identiﬁed

immigrant Windlys Genter (including the site of the present-day La Jolla Elementary School). Windlys was Bernhardt “Ben” Genter’s father and, as the only boy in the family, Ben inherited most of the farm work. In oral histories Ben tells of rising at daybreak each morning, sending his father’s 15 cows and delivering their milk to local residents by horse and wagon. The milk was poured from three gallon cans and laded into containers and pans left on porches using a quart measure. The histories do not mention the price per quart. Later, the elder Genter (for whom Genter Street is named) acquired a larger parcel of land bound by Draper, Pearl, Eads and Genter streets. He raised crops there as well as hogs and chickens and in 1929 built a small house at 736 Eads Ave which became the family home. Today all that remains of the Genter farm is the house which has historic designation from the City of San Diego. The land was gradually sold off – some of it early on. The acre that Swain purchased for his farm in 1918 was purchased from the Genter family.

David Watson Rannels arrived in La Jolla from the Midwestern prairies in the late 1880s when the first La Jolla Lark subdivision was being plotted. He bought land here and in the Serrano Valley where he operated a produce ranch and raised a large family, including sons Nathan and Charles, both of whom figured prominently in La Jolla’s pioneering agricultural life. Charles operated the La Jolla Dairy, Nathan had a livery stable on Giraud Avenue where he kept and rented horses and carried for tally-bag trips into the countryside before settling into a position as postmaster at the La Jolla Post Office. His horses being taken over early dairy streets and pathways through the village in the early 1900s readily attest to La Jolla’s rural life of the past. In an address to the La Jolla Conservation Society in March, 1936, Nathan captured the essence of what it was like to live in a small community of farm animals and growing crops. “You may pull up the weeds, you may plant flowers, you may supplant the grasseweed with a mighty forrest, but you will not have attained your full measure of success unless you conserve and perpetuate the pristine and kindliness and neighborliness that was ‘the spirit of old La Jolla.’” That spirit lived in the everyday – the everyday of living on and off the land with planting and harvesting, milking cows and stabling horses. It filled like a wrath by the 1920s when the place became “civilized.” Swain sold his house and land off Westbourne and opened a lodge for rentals at 7354 Fay Ave. before he died in 1917 with $305 in the bank. The Hollidays’ dairy and land planted with lima bean fields in La Jolla Shores was obscured by the Rose family development dream of creating “Newport of the West” and the building of the La Jolla Beach and Yacht Club. Windlys Genter died and his son turned to work in the construction trades, meanwhile, accumulating local honors as a sportsman adept at baseball, basketball and tennis. The Rannels sold their horses and cows and became “respectable” La Jolla business people, readily attentive to civic responsibilities.

The construction of resort hotels and the coming of expensive subdivisions such as the Muirlands and Lower and Upper Hermosa signaled the end of the country town. The land was gradually sold off – some of it early on. In one of Swain’s last diary entries of Aug. 1, 1917, he records that he is “weary of life’s journey.” He was 74 years old and had worked hard most of his life. He died 19 days later at the rural La Jolla home he had created. Pard records on Aug. 20: “J.M. Swain buried today at 1 o’clock. God bless his heart, bless his dear old heart in my prayer, how I do miss him.”

The farm was deserted and she returned again to Michigan.

Related story on page 18 (Corn in the Moon)
**LA JOLLA’S BLACK COMMUNITY: MID-CENTURY & FORWARD**

by Diane Kane

**Site for SOFA's Community Center (right) is graded for construction, mid 1970s**

**Architect Russell Forester’s model for design of SOFA’s project in the mid-1970s**

Due to the Post-War boom, Black La Jolla experienced tremendous growth and increasing prosperity. By 1950, the community’s 3,500 residents comprised around 10% of La Jolla’s total population. Increasingly skilled and well-educated, Blacks now worked in civil service, the military and defense industries, and non-profits that provided new career opportunities beyond La Jolla. Self-employment included independent trucking, real estate, auto service and repair, and personal services. Other employment as butlers, chauffeurs, maids, domestics, janitors, porters, cooks and laundromen continued, with wages higher than comparable jobs elsewhere in the region. The community had two churches, St. John’s Church of God & Christ, and Greater Prince Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Compared to life in San Diego’s other minority neighborhoods, La Jolla’s Black community was relatively well-off. Approximately half of the households owned their homes and most individuals were employed. Blacks children were admitted for college degrees, thanks to their quality education at La Jolla High School. As noted by Sociologist Cristin McVey, La Jolla was “re-tooled for the late 20th century.” In 1967, La Jollans, Inc., a private organization revising La Jolla’s Community Plan, re-zoned the neighborhood for further unit reductions. Although eight units were eventually built, the project was sabotaged before it could be occupied. Intentionally cut wires interrupted electricity between the main circuit panel and individual units. If the damage had not been fortunately discovered by the electrical contractor, the entire project could have “gone up in flames,” according to a report to the City of San Diego from the contracting firm. The building, completed at 7410-12 Conver, remains today and is operated as lower income housing facility.

What is the legacy of La Jolla’s African American community and La Jolla’s attempts to accommodate low-income residents? SOFA continued providing programs for low-income minorities in La Jolla until 1991, when funding ran out and the director resigned. By 1998, even the Mexican community had been gentrified out of existence. Prince Chapel’s 150 members continued to attend services through the 1980s, but they no longer lived in La Jolla. Instead, they arrived from Rancho Penasquitos, University City, Pacific Beach and Clairemont. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, only 537 individuals identified as black or African American in the 92037 ZIP Code. Although close to the 1950 Black community’s numbers, they represented a mere 1.2% of La Jolla’s total population of 46,781. The initial African American community became the subject of nostalgic neighborhood history, scholarly doctoral dissertations and photographic exhibitions.

In July 1973, SOFA received a check from San Diego Housing for $7,665 to shepherd a new 10-unit affordable apartment project at Conver & Marine. Meanwhile, eighteen La Jolla families contributed $25/month to assist families evicted for construction of a luxury condo minimum complex. Other fund-raising activities included annual “community walks,” and church-related chicken dinners. In early 1974, SOFA launched a campaign to raise $100,000 to purchase housing to rent to low income families.

Meanwhile, the La Jolla Community Plan was criticized for “maintaining, even increasing La Jolla’s exclusiveness,” despite the recently adopted Council Policy 600-19 fostering ‘balanced communities.’ Site for SOFA’s Community Center (right) is graded for construction, mid 1970s

In 1977, a SOFA-sponsored affordable housing project at the corner of Marine & Conver was reviewed by the Coastal Commission. The original 10 units proposed in 1972 had been reduced to eight, while neighbors pressed for further unit reductions. Although eight units were eventually built, the project was sabotaged before it could be occupied. Intentionally cut wires interrupted electricity between the main circuit panel and individual units. If the damage had not been fortunately discovered by the electrical contractor, the entire project could have “gone up in flames,” according to a report to the City of San Diego from the contracting firm. The building, completed at 7410-12 Conver, remains today and is operated as lower income housing facility.

Meanwhile, the La Jolla Community Plan was criticized for “maintaining, even increasing La Jolla’s exclusiveness,” despite the recently adopted Council Policy 600-19 fostering ‘balanced communities.’ Did Redlining “kill” La Jolla’s African American community? No. That was accomplished by housing discrimination, land use conversion and stigmatizing coastal property values.

Kane is a former board member of the La Jolla Historical Society and serves on the Preservation Committee and is actively involved in La Jolla and San Diego planning issues.

Kane is a former board member of the La Jolla Historical Society and serves on the Preservation Committee and is actively involved in La Jolla and San Diego planning issues.

Kane is a former board member of the La Jolla Historical Society and serves on the Preservation Committee and is actively involved in La Jolla and San Diego planning issues.

Kane is a former board member of the La Jolla Historical Society and serves on the Preservation Committee and is actively involved in La Jolla and San Diego planning issues.
of Hamuld with his mother’s family name, Gobble, as a middle signature but giving himself his new first name of Herbert. Growing up in Fairfield, he was known as “Pat Shriner,” but he tossed that name to the wind by the time he was 20 and left for Paris.

In Fairfield, Shriner continues to be remembered as a native son whose talent took him far and who is repeatedly remembered as “Fairfield’s greatest artist.” In La Jolla, although his work was highly regarded by a chosen few (private collectors willing to pay his prices and ignore his erratic personality), Shriner became a phantom of his own opera—he hit the high notes like a true virtuoso, but couldn’t bear the chorus—a common malady, perhaps, of people who are stargazers.

LA JOYLLA HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

Now you can donate your unwanted vehicle to the La Jolla Historical Society—it’s easy and safe. We’ll use the proceeds from the sale to support the Society’s exhibitions, educational programs, archival research, social events, and historic preservation activities.

Here’s How It Works:

1) Call 855-500-7433 or submit the Online Vehicle Donation Form at https://careasy.org/home#NP-donation-form. Our Vehicle Donation Support Team will contact you to complete the donation and confirm your pick-up information.

2) Schedule Your Free Pick-up: In most cases, your vehicle pick-up can be scheduled within three business days once the donation record has been completed. Our vehicle donation program requires drivers practice safe and secure interactions with donors, including minimizing contact.

3) Receive a Donation Receipt: Vehicle donations are tax-deductible! An initial donation receipt is provided at the time of the pick-up. If the vehicle sells for $500 or less, donors are also mailed a thank-you letter within 30 days of the sale of the vehicle, which serves as a tax receipt. If the vehicle sells for more than $500 and the donor has provided their tax identification number, an IRS Form 1098-C will be mailed to the donor within 30 days of the sale stating the amount of gross proceeds (the maximum amount of your tax deduction) received from your donation. For specific tax-related questions, please consult your tax advisor.
Click, Call or Come See Us
Scripps Care On Demand

Scripps is open, safe and ready to care for you — in person or virtually. Now it’s more convenient than ever before to get the care you need through our expanded telemedicine services, including:

Video Visit  ✔  Symptom Checker  ✔  E-Visit

Download the free MyScripps app to get started. Learn more at Scripps.org/Telemedicine.

Financial Support Provided by the City of San Diego

Visit: https://www.sandiego.gov/arts-culture

Safeguarding San Diego's Cultural Heritage
Thousands of archival pieces have accumulated through the years in the La Jolla Historical Society archives. Many, such as the photographic portraits of the Scripps half-sisters and iconic Irving Gill buildings, have been repeatedly reproduced over the years, thus developing an easy familiarity. This last page of The Timekeeper is devoted to those archival pieces in the collection that have remained largely outside the public eye.

Early on La Jolla’s “bels” (the belvedere structures perched along the coastline) became popular little nests for picnics. Much later, the beach party movies of the 1960s, when La Jolla locals sometimes joined Annette Funicello and Frankie Avalon in “what happens when 10,000 kids meet on 5,000 beach blankets,” became legendary history. Beach parties of early times, lacking the fanfare of pop culture iconography, are recorded in numerous snapshots randomly clicked on La Jolla beaches when cameras were an amusement, not a full-time text and photography device. Sometimes the parties were singular affairs with duos or small groups cozied up in one of the iconic belvederes, the little green structures that started being built along the cliffs at prime view sites as early as the late 19th century. The majority of beach party photographs show people doing silly things in the sand. They stand on their heads. They bury themselves. They wear bathing suits that seem impossible to swim in. Sitting in the belvederes they often appear contemplative, staring out to sea in moods of deep indigo. The bels — perched in preciosity — invite the gazers. “Life is a picnic on a precipice,” as W.H. Auden once remarked.