

Newsletter of
*Cabrillo National Monument and
Cabrillo National Monument Foundation*

Volunteers: Telling the True Stories

by Terry DiMattio, Superintendent, Cabrillo National Monument

The theme for this quarter's issue of *The Explorer* is "Volunteers: Telling the True Stories." I think some of you know that I started my career in the National Park Service as a volunteer. In the fall of 1972, I was among the first Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs) at Cabrillo N.M. On Saturday afternoons while attending graduate school, I would put on the reproduction U.S. Lighthouse Establishment keeper's uniform, bring out an assortment of objects from the basement, and stand in front of the lighthouse talking to visitors about the lighthouse and its keepers. I had read F. Ross Holland's book, *The Old Point Loma Lighthouse*, as well as the historic structure report for the lighthouse that he had written. At the time, I thought I was pretty knowledgeable about the lighthouse, how it came to be, how the lens worked, and even the lives and duties of its keepers—

in particular Robert and Maria Israel.

How naïve I was! Compared to that conducted by our VIPs today, my research only scratched the surface. I admit that I did not know as much about the lighthouse as I should have. I am repeatedly amazed to learn how much our volunteers know, how impassioned they are about this park and its cultural and natural resources and how excited they are about learning all they can, to satisfy their own interest, but more importantly so they can share this knowledge with our visitors. Underlying this quest for knowledge is their desire to tell the park story as accurately and as truthfully as they can based on the best available information they can find. As you read this issue, I believe this desire and their love for this park and what is being preserved will become evident.

I would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on several projects. I am pleased to



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report that the museum storage facility is finished. For the first time, we have an adequate, environmentally-controlled room in which to properly store our archives and cultural and natural history objects, a work area for treating, cleaning and repairing them, and an office where we can account for the items entrusted to our care. We will begin setting up the office and work area soon. In a few months, after Historian Bob Munson has prepared a collections storage plan and we have inventoried and photographed the items in the existing storage area and updated their records, we will begin moving the collection into the new facility. Once that is done, it will be easier for the staff, and our volunteers, to conduct research and study items related to the lighthouse and the coast defense structures, and the plant and animal species that inhabit Point Loma.

Another project that once completed will improve the

ability of our staff to care for Cabrillo N.M. is the construction of the resource management office. The NPS Denver Service Center is updating and completing the construction drawings and specifications for this building and preparing a current estimate of what it should cost to build. This office will be built southeast of and adjacent to the administration building. It will be 20 feet wide and 40 feet long with a hip roof and vertical ship lap siding. It has been designed to resemble the other buildings in the visitor center complex, and to appear as if it were built in 1965. Once it is built, it will give us a secure weapons and evidence storage area, a separate office for the chief of resource management and visitor protection, and a small training and meeting area for the staff and VIPs. It will also allow us to rescue the chief of natural resource science, marine biologist, and biological technician from windowless

Battery Ashburn and bring them to the administration building where they will be more accessible to the public. This is another Recreation Fee Demonstration Program project, funded by fees collected at the entrance station. With luck, construction could start this fall.

The last project is one that is nearing completion. It is another Recreation Fee Demonstration Program project: "The Lighthouses of Point Loma" exhibit. The firm of Fruland and Boles in Ohio is fabricating the exhibit with installation now scheduled for the week of March 7-11, 2005. This exhibit is an example of the staff and VIPs conducting in-depth research so that we can accurately tell the story of the lighthouse, its origins and use; of the keepers, their duties and daily lives; and of the Fresnel lens and how its prisms captured and magnified the light from the lamp and sent it beaming into the darkness each night.

Thirty-two years ago when I stood in front of the lighthouse and talked to visitors, I was not always sure what I was saying was accurate. Thanks to the detective work and long hours of research conducted by VIPs and staff members past and present, I am confident that the lighthouse stories we will be telling will be true to the best of our knowledge.

Know thyself: directed schizophrenia

Living history interpreters at Cabrillo National Monument

by Bob Munson, CNM Historian

There is an old Chinese proverb which proclaims: "What I hear, I forget; what I read, I remember; what I do, I understand." In many respects this is the underlying principle of Living History for both the interpreter and the public.

People usually do not remember specific facts except the trivia. This is why interpretation concentrates on imparting concepts and understanding. Living History interpreters understand their subject because they have done it. To the extent possible, Living History takes the visitors out of the lecture or electronic context and puts them in a human context by directly involving them in something they can relate to in their own lives. Even if they can't handle the equipment, wear the clothes, or do the activity, they are directly interacting with a real live human being who does. They become involved and they understand.

Living History depends on a wide variety of conditions: environmental, equipment, clothing and activities, among others. Too often, expense and availability limit the interpreter, and there is usually no control over the surroundings and other activities. A jet aircraft roaring overhead is incredibly dis-

ruptive to both the period ambience and even the ability to make oneself heard. Except for the lighthouse, we are presenting in a largely non-historic setting. Even the very spectators that we try to educate and entertain are constant reminders of the present century. Thus, the Living History Interpreter must work all the harder to maintain the historic illusion, using

what tools are available. The most easily accessible and powerful of these tools are authenticity and the interpreter's self confidence.

Living History can be as simple as merely wearing the correct period clothing and discussing the topic or material objects from a 21st - Century perspective. This is



Volunteer Living History Interpreters
Bill Doyle and Nancy Walton with
Historian Bob Munson (right)

the Living Museum approach, usually done in the third person. It is very effective in enabling historic hard data to interact with modern questions and discussion. The Living Artifact approach is where interpreters in effect project themselves as

Continued on next page

actual individuals from the period. This first-person approach is most effective where the goal is to give the visitor an insight into the mind and feelings of a person who lived in another time and place. While it can deal with demonstrations of equipment, it is most effective in drawing the visitor into another world and relating that world to the visitor's background. Done properly, it can set aside the visitor's sense of time and place. Visitors relish the chance to ignore the modern surroundings, accept an interpreter as being what they subconsciously know cannot be: a person out of time. It is this willingness to set aside their instinctive disbelief and accept the interpreter as reality which gives the Living History Interpreter an impact beyond any static display or formal presentation.

Whether the Interpreter chooses first- or third-person interpretation, a firm and consistent impression is able to overcome many of the uncontrollable elements of presentation.

A fully developed impression is essential. The very name "Living History" implies that the interpreter is so familiar with all aspects of the period that it becomes his or her life. This depth of knowledge gives the interpreter the all-important sense of self-confidence which impresses the visitor with a sense of reality. Just

as you can respond conversationally about your 21st-Century life because you know it in every detail, your 16th- or 19th-Century life will become real only when you know it in equal detail.

In many instances the best way to learn something, or teach it, is by getting out and doing it yourself. The keystone of Living History is LEARN BY DOING. Having done something yourself is the best confidence-builder there is. Wear the clothes; eat the food; use the tools and equipment. Interpreters are merely 21st-Century persons in funny clothes until they are able to explain why they act or react in certain ways, and cite period research.

Cabrillo National Monument's Living History Workbook was designed as a workbook to increase awareness of the world in which the interpreter is learning by doing. To assist our Living History interpreters, the monument has designed a series of questions to fill in the background about their alternate self, and let them think about aspects of that life which they never bother to think about in their 21st-Century life. By posing these questions we hope to help our Living History interpreters THINK about their impression.

Following is the opening page of the Cabrillo National Monument Living History

Workbook to show how a person begins to become a 21st-Century dropout into another life:

Some of these questions may seem too foolish or too trivial to bother with. Your impression, ideally, exists to enhance your participation in Living History. If answering a particular question does not increase your sense of self, or improve the accuracy of your impression, ignore it. Feel free to add other questions and information.

THIS IS NOT A TEST; YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO WILL EVALUATE YOUR ANSWERS. BUT THE PUBLIC WILL EVALUATE YOUR PERSONA.

JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Why have you chosen this persona as an interpretive device?

How does it further the intended interpretive theme?

Does this persona realistically fit your sex, age, and physical appearance/condition?

What sort of clothing do you wear?

What are your parents' names and occupations?

What sort of small personal possessions (combs, knives, etc.) do you regularly carry?

What meals do you eat during the day?

What is your trade or occupation? Who taught you your trade/occupation?

Describe your home.

Making history come alive at the Old Point Loma Lighthouse *by William Doyle*

I had been portraying San Diego's Honorary First Citizen and Merchant Prince George Marston's (look-alike) character for various historic groups for a year and a half when I read a notice in *KPBS On Air Magazine* last December about the upcoming celebration of the Old Point Loma Lighthouse re-opening. (The lighthouse and surrounding grounds had just been restored to look as they did in 1887.) I thought this might be a good opportunity for an early George Marston to meet and greet the public while supporting the festivities at this wonderful historic setting. I telephoned Cabrillo National Monument and was put in touch with Historian Robert (Bob) Munson. At first, Bob said that he thought George Marston might not be right for the time period, as Marston is more known for his accomplishments in the 20th century. I said I thought it could work because George Marston had a successful dry goods store in San Diego at 5th and F Street in 1887. Also George's wife Anna had written in her book, *Records of a California Family*, "Excursions to... the Spanish Lighthouse ... gave us long days of pleasure."

Fortunately, Bob granted me an interview and I appeared as Marston might have looked in 1887, dressed in wool frock coat, pants, vest, bow tie, and top

hat. During the interview I showed Bob my thick binder of research on George Marston. I also reviewed my years of experience portraying various characters for renaissance fairs and for the San Diego Opera (as a supernumerary). I was happy to hear Bob say that, not only was I welcome to participate in the re-opening festivities, but I was also welcome to come back weekly as a VIP (Volunteer in Park)!

Thus began my weekly visits to Cabrillo National Monument. Before I officially began to meet and greet our visitors, I wanted to have thorough background knowledge of the park. Historian Bob Munson and Volunteer Archivist Nancy Walton were instrumental in orienting me to the wonderful library and archival materials in the Administration Building. I borrowed books and videos, watched films in the auditorium, visited the historical displays, and took hikes on the Bayside Trail and throughout the park.

I view myself as a historical actor. Establishing a historic persona to portray a character for living history requires researching the character and his historical milieu. I first find out as much as possible about the character and setting by using my computer and the Internet. Much local history is recorded in the San Diego Historical Society's *Journal of San Diego History*, and most articles are available for free on-line. For further



information I visit the San Diego Historical Society's Archives and our own library here at Cabrillo National Monument. Once I have enough information, I begin to interpret the information so that the facts make sense to me. I begin to make judgements regarding the individual's experience, personality, and motivation. In so doing, a historical persona or character emerges and comes alive.

For my interpretation at the Old Point Loma Lighthouse, I developed a tool for bringing history alive to our visitors. I assembled an album of pictures of the lighthouse, George Marston and his family, and various local sites as they appeared in 1887. This fits inside my coat and is brought out when I want to illustrate a point as I talk to our visitors.

Dressed as George Marston of the 1880s, I was now ready to interact with our visitors— first at the re-



Parents with shy three-
to four-year-old children
were delighted when I did
my George Marston Magic
Watch Trick

opening celebration, and then once a week on a continuing basis. People of all ages told me that they enjoyed what I did. Parents with shy three- to four-year-old children were delighted when I did my George Marston Magic Watch Trick. (His employees had presented him with a gold pocket watch. He delighted his children by inviting them to blow upon it and enjoyed watching them burst into smiles and laughter as the watch cover would "magically" spring open.) This "magic" is often repeated when I am at the lighthouse (see photo above). Visitors have told me that this was their best National Park experience because I helped bring history alive in such a positive, delightful way. They said they enjoyed seeing me in period attire and seeing the vintage photos. Many said that I was key to their understanding of what life was like at the Point Loma Lighthouse in 1887.

It was mid-Spring and my George Marston visiting-the-lighthouse character was well established when I showed Bob Munson a vintage naval officer's uniform that I had acquired. Bob

then showed me historic photos and illustrations of the first lighthouse keeper's uniform of the 1880's. He then suggested that my body frame is similar to that of Capt. Robert Decatur Israel, who was the first keeper to wear the official lightkeepers' uniform at Point Loma in 1888. My uniform went to my tailor with copies of the historic photos and illustrations. I then began a second round of extensive research, this time on Robert Decatur Israel. Again I received invaluable assistance from Bob and Volunteer Archivist Nancy Walton as I utilized the library's resources. I borrowed a copy of *Robert Decatur Israel—San Diego Pioneer and Keeper of The Light*, a Masters Thesis by Patricia Klenner Ravits. I continued my weekly portrayal of George Marston while also receiving guidance from Bob and Nancy as I continued to delve into the history of Robert Israel and the lighthouse. I borrowed and studied Cabrillo National Monument Oral Histories, conducted by our first park historian F. Ross Holland, along with Historic Structures and Furnishings Reports, and *Instruc-*

tions to Lighthouse Keepers 1881.

Researching Robert Israel also led me to his interesting 21-year history in Old Town (1850-1871) where he met his wife, Maria Arcadia Alipás Machado. There he interacted with other historical San Diego pioneers such as Thomas Whaley, Ephraim Morse, Cave Johnson Coutts, Lewis Franklin, Francis Hinton, Philip Crosthwaite, Mary Chase Walker, and Agoston Haraszthy. Nancy informed me about the Descendents of Old Town Research Workshop which I then attended, thereby gaining valuable genealogy information.

By mid-summer my naval officer's uniform had been transformed into a period-correct, 1884 lighthouse keeper's uniform. Lee Radzak, Historic Site Manager for Split Rock Lighthouse, and Bob Munson helped me to find the appropriate hat and insignia to complete the uniform. Cabrillo National Monument Foundation assisted by providing the appropriate U.S. Light House Establishment (USLHE) buttons.

Bob and Nancy also allowed me to closely exam-

ine newly acquired lighthouse keeper's tools and records that will go on display in the Assistant Keeper's Quarters next spring. I also viewed the re-assembly in the Assistant Keeper's Quarters of the 3rd order Fresnel lens from the New Point Loma Lighthouse, also scheduled to go on display. Firsthand exposure to these items facilitated my understanding and helped me to better tell the lighthouse story to our visitors.

I then updated my own teaching tool, the mini-photo album. Now it contained photos of Robert and Maria Israel, townsfolk visiting the lighthouse, the lighthouse grounds of 1887, and plants that the Israel family grew at the lighthouse.

Now each week people recognize me as the lighthouse keeper as I walk up to the lighthouse to meet and greet visitors from all over the world. Each visitor gets a unique greeting depending on what I hear them discussing as they approach. Sometimes I hear them say,

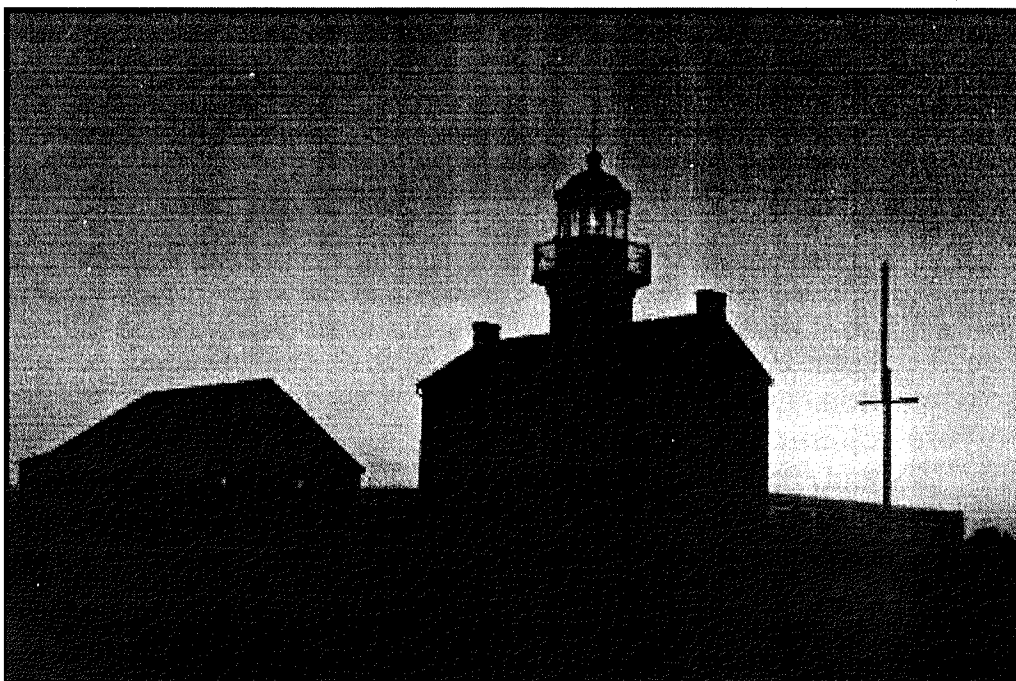
"This wasn't here when I was here before!" or "Why is all this concrete here? They didn't have that back then." I smile and politely say that they indeed had Portland Cement "back then" and that this is how the lighthouse and surrounding grounds looked in 1887. I then pull out my photos of the lighthouse grounds in 1887 and watch the visitors smile in amazement. I then explain how adequate fresh water was always a big concern for the lighthouse keepers and their families. I explain how rainwater was caught and saved and how fresh water was obtained when the cisterns ran dry.

Some visitors were so impressed that they asked me to give a lecture to their local historical society. So I developed the lecture Captain Israel and the Pt. Loma Lighthouse. This lecture was well received at the San Diego Maritime Museum Docent's Meeting in August and the Ocean Beach Historical Society in October. The next presentation will be on

February 3, 2005 for the Lemon Grove Historical Society.

Researching Robert Israel has led to researching others who he had contact with at the time such as Thomas Whaley, whose character I portrayed this Fall for the Whaley House production of "Spirits of the Past." The fun of this ongoing research is that as more of the pieces of this historic jigsaw puzzle fall into place, the whole picture becomes more understandable and easier to bring joyfully alive for the enlightenment and enjoyment of others.

Our visitors have told me that they leave with a better understanding of the important work that we do at Cabrillo National Monument. They say that they are impressed by our good work of preserving our historic treasures (the lighthouse and grounds), and also in bringing history alive and giving people an appreciation of what life was like in this part of the world in 1887!



Sunset at the
Old Point
Loma
Lighthouse

Photo by
Peter Fay

What do I enjoy about research as a volunteer at CNM?

by Kim Fahlen

I enjoy the perfect mess I make.

I love the total collapse of my orderly beginning to a project. I adore the books piled, especially when the card table wends its way into the room and notes and papers collect under, over, and within the heaps of references. I like the immersion into a subject to the distraction of all else.

My penchant for the confounding challenge made by facts that contradict each other gives lively mental discourse; settling the matter (or attempting to) is engaging.

And *words*—words themselves are delectable. Take a new favorite: anorak. What originated in Greenland to mean a foul-weather garment is now accepted as referring to a person who is ultra-interested in a subject that most *reasonable* people would find wholly boring.

In the library at CNM there is a book by Susan Collins Lehmann that discusses the Park's history and assets. I've often thought of the pretty illusions conjured by the curious, subtle, and "so-true" title—*An Embarrassment of Riches*. Though appreciative of the many *riches* at CNM, the Old Point

Loma Lighthouse is why I volunteer here. And, admittedly, my interest in research is limited to lighthouses and related topics (anorak).

San Diego offers a number of resources for "salty" history. Historical research is a great consumer of time (and cash for making copies). Learning where to locate information is critical; the hunt is engrossing. It is always gratifying to come upon a paragraph or photograph relating to the subject at hand, often in unexpected places! One bit of information leads to another, places connect to names that connect to other places and other names....

Today's computer searches may be credited for material in general, but not so much for local history and the details found by searching books, documents, letters, newspaper accounts, government reports, etc. The San Diego Historical Society is a valuable resource for Point Loma-related information, especially for insights offered by the microfilm of early San Diego newspapers. These give accounts of activities that would otherwise never be known today. Think about excited San Diegans in 1891 craning their necks



Volunteer Kim Fahlen has made important contributions to our knowledge and interpretation of lighthouses and their history. She is also a living-history interpreter at the Old Point Loma Lighthouse.

to watch the red and white beams circling from the new lighthouse on the lower end of Point Loma!

Misinformation is inevitable—in fairness, a newspaper reporter of the 1880s could not be expected to have explored every detail of every assignment—but I *have* rather enjoyed one reference to a "Fresnel" lens as being a "Fresno" lens. The real fun of historical research occurs when factual discrepancies present themselves: this even within several books by one author, let alone from one author to another. (It happens frequently within the plethora of new lighthouse books of

the last few years.)

Some issues may never be settled—even should a person have a year or six to spend at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. or the U.S. Coast Guard archives in Virginia. Perhaps we shall never learn (though continue to lose sleep over, no doubt) for certain how the red-and-white flashing character was given to the Point Loma Lighthouse in 1889. Some sources say an occulting mechanism was placed within the lens itself; the newspaper reported an exchange of lenses—hardly

likely within one day's daylight hours.

For information about the early lighting of San Diego's harbor and channel, the *Annual Report of the* (Lighthouse) *Board to Congress* is a trusted source; The U.S. Lighthouse Society in San Francisco is generous about sending copies requested. The *Description of Lighthouse Tower, Buildings, and Premises* of the U.S. Lighthouse Establishment is another valued government report, but while answering one question, may lead to more. The Nautical Research

Centre in Petaluma, California, offers a wonderful listing of government documents and publications—even out-of-print, rare, or out-of-copyright books—that they will copy to order. There's a fee but it's not unreasonable.

Believe it though you may not, I shall make a point to this dialogue. Simply: have fun with research; be fussy; be interested. Settle only for facts; if they conflict and cannot be settled, then say so. Love your subject. *Be an anorak.*



Volunteer Al Wolfing, in the persona of Lorenzo Hernández, pilot on Cabrillo's ship *Victoria*, explains sixteenth-century navigation techniques to a young visitor.

The Explorer Editor, Ranger
Patricia Heusner, below, in
sixteenth-century attire



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The odd case of the camera-shy stable at Fort Rosecrans

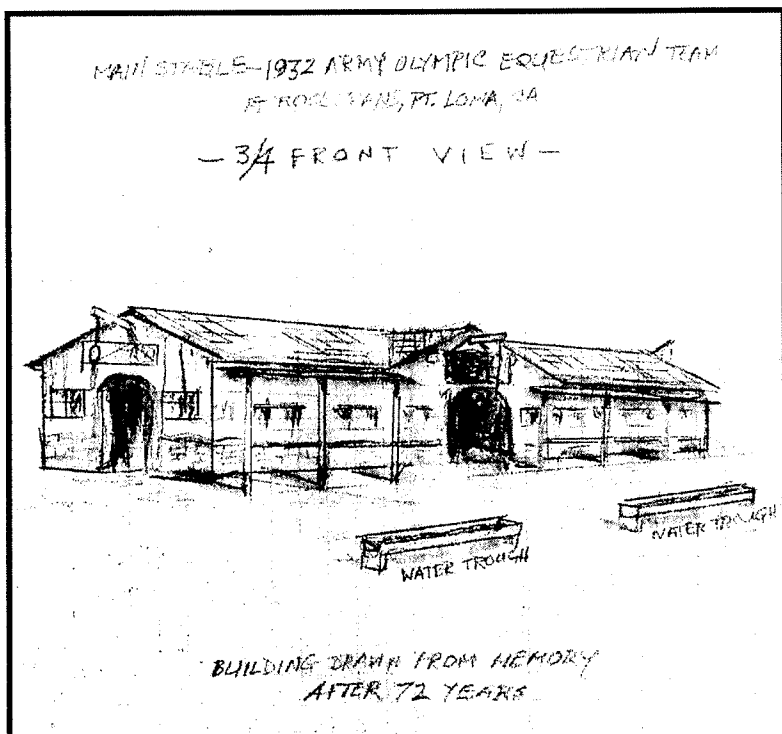
by Nancy Walton

One of the more pleasurable, if at times frustrating, aspects of historical research is that it is usually a detective story to rival anything of Sherlock Holmes. It also develops from and leads into curious pathways of serendipity as the following example from Cabrillo National Monument reveals.

Several years ago, as I was talking to a family friend about his association with horses, he casually mentioned the time he spent at San Diego when his father was on the 1932 US Olym-

pic Equestrian team. I perked up when he mentioned this was at Fort Rosecrans, so I pressed him for more detail. Yes, there was a stable, ring, jump arena and cross-country course all at the Fort! I thought this a rather tantalizing piece of info and left a message for the history staff here at the park. Park Historian Bob Munson, (with great trepidation, I learned later) returned my call and determined I was not a crackpot. Instead, he decided to inter-

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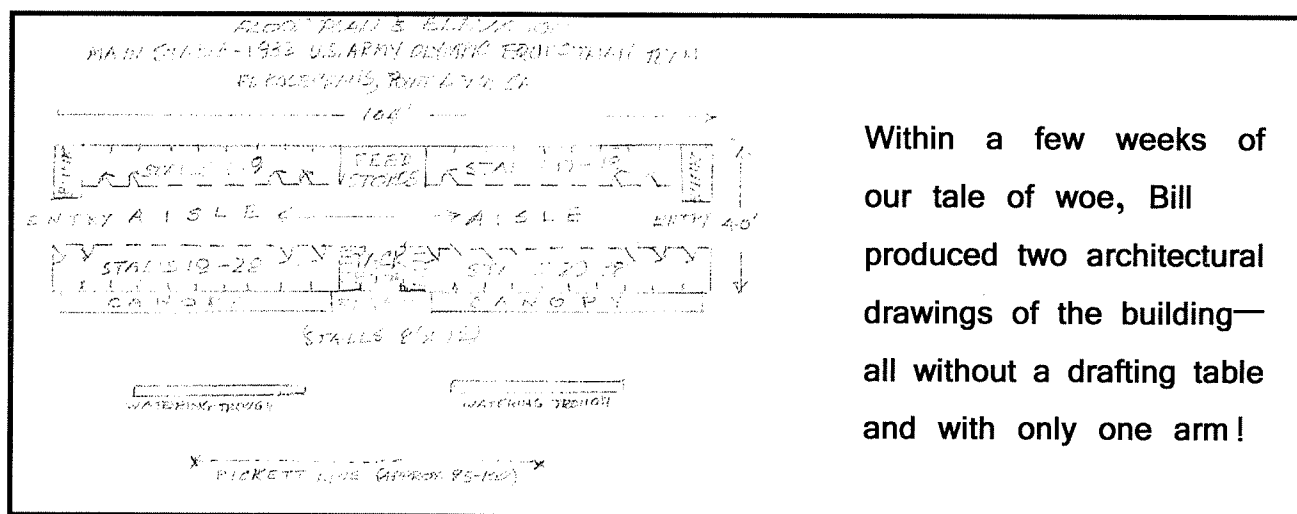


Bill produced two architectural drawings of the building— all without a drafting table and with only one arm!



The authenticity of the style of Nancy Walton's 1880s dress is confirmed by comparison with the period photograph of Assistant Lightkeeper Maria Israel, below.





Within a few weeks of our tale of woe, Bill produced two architectural drawings of the building—all without a drafting table and with only one arm!

view Mr. Bill Koester with me in the Anaheim area. The interview turned out to be a gold mine of little-known information about Fort Rosecrans and the Old Point Loma Lighthouse in 1931-1932. The interview also began a cherished friendship between Bill Koester and Bob Munson.

Bill's father, Captain F. W. Koester¹, was at the time the assistant coach of the US Equestrian team and proud owner of a mare named "Show Girl." Because Fort Rosecrans was largely abandoned and in caretaker status in 1931, it was decided to put the team there for practice. Fort Rosecrans was near the Olympics to be held in Los Angeles, and it would provide the perfect venue for both horses and riders to acclimate to the Southern California climate. A company of the 10th Cavalry "Buffalo Soldiers" was brought in to care for the horses, team, and family members. Bill remembered having virtually

free rein over the entire point, and for an 11-year-old, 1931 was a memorable time to be at Point Loma.

Bill reminisced about Mrs. Cook, caretaker and entrepreneur of the lighthouse from 1921 to 1934. Due to an old eye injury, she was affectionately known as "One Eye" by the soldiers, but Bill remembered her as having a tea-and-souvenir shop in the lighthouse, and her kindness in giving him and the other children cookies and sweets.

One of Bill's more intriguing memories was that of the barn that housed these very special horses for the Army. He described it in great detail, and felt it had been built there specifically to safely stable the priceless team.

Bill Koester had suffered a stroke in 1996, and because of his care needs, most of his personal possessions were in storage, including his and his father's photographs. So, after our initial interview with Bill, Bob

and I started looking here at Cabrillo National Monument for photographs and information covering the early 1930s at Fort Rosecrans.

Very rapidly it became clear to us that pictures of Fort Rosecrans in the early 1930s were few and far between, and what we did find had the incredibly consistent habit of cutting off the picture just to the right or left of where the stable should be! Point Loma bookseller and local history aficionado Charles Best was kind enough to provide us with a published picture of what appears to be the stable, but it is too distant for detail. We discerned that Bill Koester's stable was one of three at the Fort: the first being the Quartermaster Barn, which housed the mules and horses that moved goods and supplies into and around the base. Later, on the hill road rising toward the south was the row of Non-Commissioned Officer's (NCO) houses and

nearby was built a stable for their horses.

Our own archive resources here at Cabrillo failed to produce any plans, drawings, writings or photographs that contained the stable building. On three different occasions, events at the base allowed us the chance to examine the site and question naval personnel about the buildings, but all to no avail. Research journeys to the San Diego Historical Society's photo archive, and several other institutions around town have all proved fruitless. Periodicals were checked, as well as manuscript sources in local libraries and universities—all drew a blank. The National Archives in Washington, D.C. might contain the engineering drawings or photographs of the stable (if they were preserved by the Army), but they could not be examined without personally traveling to Maryland to examine vast quantities of records. The alternative of hiring a researcher there was financially impossible. We also confirmed that the maps for almost any given period at Fort Rosecrans had the annoying little habit of excluding buildings and fortifications, for obvious security reasons.

So, we again turned back to Bill Koester, and told him of our frustration in trying to locate some photos or evi-

dence of the stables. Please bear in mind that this man had suffered a stroke previously and had no use of his left arm at all. Yet, within a few weeks of our tale of woe, Bill produced two architectural drawings of the building—all without a drafting table and with only one arm!

As with most history, the quest is never-ending, thus there is no end to this article. From Bill Koester's wealth of knowledge and vivid memories, we know a great deal more about the fluid nature of buildings at Fort Rosecrans. And as with most research, pursuing one item always expands your knowledge acquisition, much to our delight. But we still have no photo of a building we know existed, and no confirmation of its exact location. Sadly, Bill passed away recently and what will happen to his collections is not known. For that reason, this article becomes part of the quest to fill in one piece of the local history jigsaw puzzle.

With this article and Bill's drawings, we now turn to you, Gentle Reader, as yet another source for local history research. If any of you have information about this era at Fort Rosecrans, or



Volunteer Mike Love, in the garb of a sixteenth-century soldier, gives a weekly presentation to visitors on arms and armor of the period

perhaps photos, we would be most delighted to hear from you! Bill did say that one of the officers on the Equestrian team married a girl from Point Loma—what stories there might be in her

¹ Colonel Koester went on to be the Commander of the Western Remount Area headquartered at the Kellogg Arabian Ranch, Pomona, California during World War II. He also created the K-9 Corps War Dog Program.

A consultation with Cabrillo's armor keeper

by Patricia Heusner and Howard Burdett

Each time I see volunteer Howard Burdett, he vanishes within a few minutes and then reappears at the end of the day to sign out. After he's gone, one usually finds that some piece of armor is missing from, or has been replaced on, one of the Cabrillo exhibit models, or that some unfamiliar object has been placed on Bob Munson's desk with a note about its condition.

Howard comes to the monument weekly to care for the historic artifacts and replicas in the collection at Cabrillo National Monument. I've often wondered what kinds of mysterious tests are necessary, and what must be done in the critical care of this collection, so I consulted Howard to learn more.

The Terrible Two

Mold and Rust are the two major enemies of artifacts at Cabrillo. According to Howard, "Cabrillo is a beautiful park, but it exists in one of the harshest environments known to man—a maritime environment. We have a very corrosive atmosphere with the sea air and salt. Ask deck seamen (like I used to be) what their main occupation is and they will probably tell you 'dealing with rust' or 'painting.' The environment aboard ship is identical to the environment at Cabrillo. If I had to rank them, I would say that at Cabrillo rust and corrosion come before mold. I spend quite a bit of time dealing with the effects of rust on the replica armor which is used in the exhibits."

Mold Tests

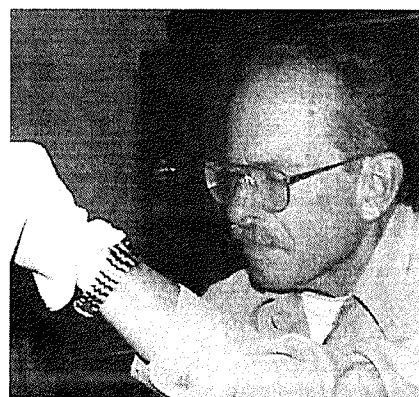
Howard reports, "Testing for mold involves exposing a prepared medium in a Petri dish, sealing it, and observing it over a period of time for mold growth. Any organic material such as wood,

cloth or paper can be damaged by mold, and we're not just talking stained, we're talking actual damage. The presence of mold indicates that environmental conditions must be changed and any damaged artifacts treated."

Aha! Thus the need for dehumidifiers in the light-house!

...And More Tests

Howard explains further, "I test for temperature and relative humidity on a routine basis. Mold grows best in a warm, humid environment with poor air circulation so we have to be alert to those conditions. We are especially vulnerable during the monsoonal season, when we have warm, moist air flowing in from the south. We have added a new meter to our bag of tricks which measures the moisture content in walls and structural wood as well as the air temperature and relative humidity. On a routine basis, we have data loggers which record temperature and relative humidity



"When we clean things, we are not just making them pretty for the visitors; we are doing our best to control the environment of the artifact."

Howard Burdett

conditions over time. I read these out every month and prepare a report so Bob knows what's going on. As well as all the 'weird science' stuff we do, we also need to visually inspect the artifacts to see if any damage has occurred.

"Routine maintenance involves just keeping things clean. When we clean things, we are not just making them

pretty for the visitors; we are doing our best to control the environment of the artifact. For instance, when we clean the rooms, we are removing an environment that might be conducive to pests—insects love dirt and moisture. Insects of certain types could damage some of the artifacts. Therefore, keep the place clean and the bugs won't like to live there."

Preserving History

What on earth do you like

about Petri dishes, cleaning, and humidity control?

"Actually, I like everything I do down there. What gives me the most satisfaction is being a small part of the historic preservation movement. As a retired sailor, I have a strong interest in our maritime history, and being able to work on the lighthouse gives me a chance to preserve a part of that history. After the lighthouse, I think caring for the

replica arms and armor is next. Every once in a while I get a chance to make minor repairs; evaluating how to make a repair without compromising the historic value of the piece can be quite a challenge."

Thanks, Howard, for the inside look at this essential work. And thanks for all your help!

Living History at the Lighthouse



Linda Masys

Linda and Gen talk with visitors about life in the Old Point Loma Lighthouse in the 1880s.

Sandra portrays an 1880s visitor to the lighthouse

Sandra Turner



Genevieve Wolfe



Luke Bjerk

Luke has adopted the persona of a late-eighteenth-century newspaper reporter (and con man).



Cabrillo National Monument Foundation

Calendar

January 22 & 23, 2005
Whale Watch Weekend

The holidays are here and we have a great idea for those people on your list who are hard to shop for—A Cabrillo National Monument Foundation membership! Just contact us by phone, e-mail, website, or in person and let us know that you would like to purchase a gift membership and we'll do the rest. The membership package will be sent to the recipient with a card announcing your gift. Individual memberships are only \$35.00 and include a Cabrillo pass that is good for one year.

For those of you who are already members, don't forget that your membership entitles you to a 15% discount on all your purchases in the bookstore in the CNM Visitor Center. We have a wide selection of gifts for all ages and interests including games, calendars, puzzles, note cards, posters, books, toys and framed prints. Also available are models of the Old Point Loma Lighthouse, lighthouse lens ornaments, Old Point Loma Lighthouse ornaments, compasses, and hourglasses.

A popular item recently is the collection of plush Audubon birds that sound authentic bird calls recorded by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Several species are available, each coming with an informational booklet.



What a great gift for a bird watcher or child on your list for only \$6.95!

Cabrillo National Monument is the perfect place to bring your out-of-town guests, so keep us in mind during the holiday season; we hope to see you here.

Karen Eccles, Executive Director

New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined CNMF between September 1 & November 1, 2004

Bonnie Becker
Tom Geoffrey
Stacey Halboth
Carla Phillips
Peter Selkin
Don Szalay
David and Susan Telliard

Please visit our website at

www.CNMF.org

*Make a
Lasting
Legacy*



The CNMF Endowment Fund, established in 1997 with the San Diego Foundation, is another way you can support the endeavors of Cabrillo National Monument. Interested donors can contact us at (619) 222-4747 or by e-mail at CNMFKaren@aol.com



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