


Ocean Beach Historical Society  
P.O. Box 7895, San Diego, CA 92167

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# Sea Scrolls

Notes from the  
Ocean Beach Historical Society

Vol. XXI No. 1  
Published Bimonthly



**CHARLES D. CURTIS**  
*in WWII Navy*

January - February 2015 • President: Pat James • Editors: Susan James & Stephanie Greenwald • Creative Director: Kathy Blavatt

*Ocean Beach Historical Society Presents*  
**TALES FROM THE TRAILS:**  
SAN DIEGO'S RICH OUTDOORS HISTORY  
*Featuring Thomas Leech*  
**Thursday, January 15, at 7 pm**



*at P.L. United Methodist Church at 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., O.B.*

**O**cean Beach Historical Society presents: "Tales from the Trails: San Diego's Rich Outdoors History" by Author Thomas Leech. Leech's program will focus on stories linked to our natural environment and the early colorful characters who played key roles in shaping San Diego. How Father Junipero Serra, Kit Carson, Hatfield the Rainmaker, Ysidora Bandini, and the Cisco Kid fit in? Leech will include many intriguing aspects of local history.

*Thomas Leech is a long-time San Diegan and has attended the OBHS programs for years. For several years Leech was Editor for the Outdoors Forum for San Diego Magazine online. This led him to write OUTDOORS SAN DIEGO: HIKING, BIKING & CAMPING with co-author Jack Farman.*

*Leech will include info. about his latest book "On the Road in '68: A year of turmoil, a journey of friendship". Join us Jan. 15th for an informative evening.*

**HIGHLIGHTS OF O.B.'S HISTORIC BEACH COTTAGES:**  
HISTORY, ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS AND THE MILLS ACT  
*Featuring Kathy Blavatt, Jane Gawronski & Tom Gawronski*  
**Thursday, February 19, at 7 pm**  
*at the P.L. United Methodist Church at 1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd.,*

**M**embers of the Ocean Beach Historical Society board Kathy Blavatt, Jane Gawronski & Tom Gawronski are happy to present this special program about O.B.'s Historic Beach Cottages, a subject that is near-and-dear to their hearts. All three have local planning board experience and been advocates in preserving our historic structures. Tom and Jane own historic Ocean Beach homes including the famous "Red House".

Kathy has interviewed cottage owners, collected photos and written about O.B.'s historic homes.


These presenters will talk about the importance of the Mills Act, the role the cottages play in the Ocean Beach Community Plan (approved at San Diego City Council 2014), and in retaining our beach town character.

*Come join us and learn why preserving O.B.'s cottages is so important.*



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**COMING**



**"TALES FROM THE TRAILS: SAN DIEGO'S RICH OUTDOORS HISTORY"**  
by Author Thomas Leech  
**THURS., JAN 15, 7 PM**  
PL United Methodist Church  
1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., O.B.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF O.B.'S HISTORIC BEACH COTTAGES**  
**THURS., FEB. 19, 7 PM**  
PL United Methodist Church  
1984 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., O.B.

*If you're moving or temporarily changing address*  
Contact: **STEPHANIE**  
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**Ocean Beach Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 7895, San Diego, CA 92167

Please join our OB Blog to tell your favorite OB stories, facts and memories. Visit:  
**www.obhistory.wordpress.com**



**ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE OCEAN BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY?**

We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. DONATIONS MAY BE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.  
*Join and receive our newsletters & announcements.*  
Fill out the form below and mail it with a check to:  
**OCEAN BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
P.O. Box 7895, San Diego, CA 92167

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Individuals-\$15/yr.                       Business, 2 Adults, or Family-\$20  
 Sustaining Member-\$100               Life Member-\$500/1 payment  
 Special Friend of OBHS (includes Life Membership) - \$1,000/1 payment

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address or PO Box \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

NEW MEMBER                       RENEWAL

**SPECIAL OFFER**  
**Receive an 1887 Map Poster FREE with \$100 or Larger NEW Membership**  
*Redeemable at any OBHS 2015 Event or Program*

**Happy 2015**  
2014 was a great year  
for the OBHS.

Our events were packed, the "Ocean Beach" book was released, and we received several awards & grants. Thank you to all who helped make 2014 successful.



©Photo by Steve Rowell

**Thank You**  
Gillian Lancaster and friends for a hilarious and informative November OBHS Program.



The new District 2 Councilmember Lorie Zapf met with several of the Ocean Beach book authors/OBHS book contributors.

Left to right: Stephanie Greenwald, Lorie Zapf, Jane Gawronski & Jonnie Wilson.

**MEMBERS**  
**December:**

**New Members:**  
Mary M.Cairns; P.G. Evans;  
Mary Servais; City Council  
Representative Lorie Zapf.

**Donations:**  
Celia & David Ball; Barbara  
Chrestman; Garnette  
Fletcher & Pat Kipling;  
Kathy Frasca; Marion Lee.

Thank You Blue Vase Donors

**OBHS GENERAL INFO. CONTACT:** Pat James, President  
pjinob@gmail.com or ph. 619-226-8125

**"OCEAN BEACH"**

By the Ocean Beach Historical Society & Arcadia Publishing



Be transported back in time through this fantastic book filled with Ocean Beach's wonderful history, historical photos and fascinating images.

**\$21<sup>99</sup>** plus tax

The "Ocean Beach" book is available at the Ocean Beach Historical Society programs, events and for sale by local vendors.... see sales list at: [www.obhistory.wordpress.com](http://www.obhistory.wordpress.com)

**1887 OB MAP Poster**

The 1887 O.B. Historical map poster (in color) has lovely calligraphy, the old street names and the railroad lines. Also locations and names of the beaches & rock formations, sand dunes and fresh water springs. The map's natural aging, torn edges & stains gives it a wonderful pirate-map quality. \$20 ea. (includes tax) AVAILABLE AT: OBHS Events, Green Store, John Baker Picture Frames, The Newport Avenue Antique Center & OBMA.

Proceeds go to the OCEAN BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY a 501(c)(3) non-profit org.

"It's stunning"  
- Joe Wambaugh

**THE OBHS NEEDS:** • HISTORICAL PHOTOS, ITEMS & DOCUMENTATION  
• CASH DONATIONS • HISTORICAL INTERVIEWS • ARCHIVAL SUPPLIES

**HELP PRESERVE OB'S HISTORY!**

THE OBHS ARCHIVES HELPS PRESERVE OUR COMMUNITY'S HISTORY

The OBHS Archives was founded to preserve the history of Ocean Beach and the peninsula. The Archives Room is housed in space rented from the PLUM Church in O.B., where the OBHS programs are held.

The collection includes: Photos, maps, books, papers, newspapers, letters & artifacts. Also, an extensive biography index and San Diego City Directories from 1926 to 1984 which list people, their spouses & occupations. Residents are also listed by street address. Dedicated volunteers assist with the processing.

**DONATIONS TO THE ARCHIVES ARE WELCOME.**

Many people believe that their lives are of no interest to others, but they are!

Unfortunately, photographs, house plans, business & organization records, and family papers end up in the trash after a death in the family... photographs depicting people, their activities & customs, homes & buildings, and dress. Some O.B. buildings vanish or functions change almost overnight and new ones appear. The cliffs erode and scenery changes. The OBHS Archives provide an invaluable window into O.B.'s past.

When donating photographs to the Archives, please remember to date, identify the people and places in them. Reluctant to give up your photos or papers? The Archive's staff would be happy to copy and safely return items to you with your permission to use the materials.

**Preservation work often needs support & supplies.**

**GIFTS MAY BE DONATED AT MONTHLY MEETINGS**  
OBHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
DONATIONS OF ITEMS & CASH MAY BE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.



**CONTACT FOR ARCHIVES ONLY:**  
ARCHIVIST MARY ALLELY  
TO SCHEDULE A MEETING OR PICKUP: 619-223-7784

The Archives Thanks: John Noble of Coastal Sage, for his donation of the Native Garden scrapbook compiled by Verlaine King.

**FAREWELL TO TWO GREAT MEN**

**Charles Curtis & Bob Wright**

Charles Curtis and Bob Wright had much in common. They are exemplarily examples of men from "the greatest generation". Both men had science backgrounds. They had extraordinary organizational skills, sharp minds and loved working with their hands. They especially loved wood and metal working; and had the skills to build and create what many only dream about. They donated time and help to the Ocean Beach Historical Society.



©Photo by Kathy blavatt

**CHARLES D. CURTIS, 92,**  
**PASSED AWAY OCTOBER 28, 2014**

Born in Connecticut, Charles (Chuck) moved to Point Loma at age 4 to attend Madame Tingley's Theosophical School on the site of the current Point Loma Nazarene College. After his service in WWII Chuck married Margaret Robinson the daughter of Alfred D. Robinson who created the P.L. Rosecroft Gardens and was the famous Balboa Park horticulturist. Chuck built their first home in Point Loma. He worked for the Naval Undersea Research and Development Lab on Point Loma as a Physical Science Technician. In 1970 the Curtis family moved to Ramona. Chuck worked his 20 acres, "Pains 'n Acres", for 45 years. He planted many pine trees, including Torrey Pines started by seeds from Madame Tingley's original pines. Chuck knew the names of every flower, bush and tree, and was an extensive explorer of San Diego County's back country.

He was predeceased by his beloved Margaret Robinson Curtis. He is survived by his 5 children, 3 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.



**ROBERT G. WRIGHT, AGE 86,**  
**PASSED AWAY DECEMBER 26, 2014**

Bob Wright came to San Diego at the age of 13 in 1941. Following his service in the U.S. Army, he worked for General Dynamics for 40 year. He was immensely interested in San Diego history. Bob was a long-time volunteer with the Maritime Museum of San Diego, especially working on the restoration of the historic sailing ship Star of India. For several years Bob lived aboard the Star of India as a caretaker. From 1967 to 2013 Bob did hundreds of oral history interviews.

More recently, he volunteered with the Air and Space Museum, working to restore historic aircraft, at the museum's Gillespie Field site in El Cajon. Bob was an active member of the Congress of History of San Diego and Imperial Counties since 1999. Bob received an 2009 Award of Appreciation from the Congress of History at their annual conference, for his volunteering, doing oral interviews on his own, and assisting so many local-history groups. He is survived by his wife, Joyce Wright, of San Diego, and her adult children.

**2014 OB Holiday Parade**  
**Ocean Beach Historical Society**  
**members joined the "Blue Shirts"**  
**in support of the**  
**Ocean Beach Community Plan.**



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