

STORY OF ROSECRANS STREET

by Lee Lipsey

Rosecrans Street is a short road with a long history. First it was an Indian trail. According to an article published in the San Diego Union in January 1972, the trail was discovered by Europeans in 1602 when Sebastian Vizcaino sent an exploring party toward Old Town. After April 1799, when a Spanish brigantine arrived with the advance party of the Portola Expedition, it was in continuous use, linking Mission San Diego to a ship anchorage in La Playa. It came to be called the La Playa Trail. An insert page in this newsletter tells the story of the La Playa Trail, said to be the "Oldest Commercial Trail in the Western United States."

The Rosecrans Street that we know today begins at the U.S. Naval Submarine Base and continues north to Pacific Highway and Old Town. It was named for Union General William S. Rosecrans, who headed west after the Civil War, following visionary developer Alonzo Horton to San Diego in 1867. The dedication of Rosecrans Street, on June 5, 1940, promoted it as a "new modern divided highway," according to the June 6 newspaper account, which also described those in attendance: "army, navy, marine corps officers, city, county and state officials, and business and civic leaders."



Following the dedication, Rosecrans Street remained, officially, State Route 209, which had been added to the state highway system in 1933. Just recently, in July 2001, the California Department of Transportation relinquished the Rosecrans Street portion of Route 209 to the City of San Diego to accommodate the redevelopment of the Naval Training Center. The training base, opened in 1923, was a significant feature of life along Rosecrans Street for nearly 75 years. After the base was decommissioned in 1997, the Navy transferred title to the City of San Diego.

The redevelopment project now under way, called Liberty Station, is implemented by the Corky McMillin Companies under contract with the city. Changes in streetscape and landscape are those required by the redevelopment plan. One new northbound lane has been added, plus Class 2 bicycle lanes. A new sidewalk on the east side of Rosecrans is completed, with 291 trees planted alongside. Trees include jacarandas, fern pines, crape myrtles and Canary Island pines; 59 additional trees will be planted in raised-curb medians.

The changes we see today signal a new era, welcomed by some and deplored by others. Taking the long view, this is just another chapter in the story of Rosecrans Street.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Calabotta



In my last message we reminisced about the character and tenacity exhibited by the early inhabitants of Point Loma as 18 men built the road to the Old Point Loma Lighthouse by working 35 straight days. Today, as this newsletter features the changing face of Rosecrans Street, we are reminded of the character and tenacity of some current inhabitants of Point Loma.

After months of committed efforts by Marty Dine, Klone Kunzel, Dick Lareau and Wayne Rafflesberger, the bus bench program along Rosecrans is about to be enjoyed by the residents and visitors to Point Loma. In October, the PLA Board authorized funding to complete the bus bench purchases.

Earlier, a few benches were placed along parts of Rosecrans as a "test" of the program to allow individuals to enjoy a sampling of the "new" bus benches. If my dog Tillie, while lounging under a bench after our daily walk is any judge, the bus benches will create both a calming and aesthetic improvement to Rosecrans Street. Once again, the ideas of a few improve the quality of life for many in Point Loma.

As we move ahead to the winter months, the Point Loma Association is setting the framework for projects of an even larger scale to be developed and implemented that will enhance the Village. Now more than ever, we encourage our members to become involved in our pledge to enhance the quality of life in Point Loma. There are many opportunities to become involved as a volunteer – joining the Beautification Committee, planning for the 2004 Annual Dinner, or being a part of the long range planning of the future of Point Loma Association.

Last quarter you encouraged your friends and neighbors to join the PLA. This quarter, encourage your friends and neighbors to become active volunteers who embrace and continue the mission of the Point Loma Association.

VOLUNTEER HERE

Annual Dinner Committee

We're ready to pick the date and make plans for the **2004 Annual Dinner and Silent Auction**. This Committee needs volunteers to work on reservations, seating

arrangements, decorations, auction and program. The Annual Dinner, held in May, is our biggest event of the year and the Silent Auction is our major fundraiser. If you'd like to lend a hand, please call **Pat Baker** at 223-9363.

GARDEN AWARDS

PLA Garden Awards go to two homes in the La Playa area with great curb appeal. These owners have maintained lovely gardens and inviting entryways for many years. They do most of the planning, planting and pruning themselves. We thank them for beautifying our community. To nominate a homeowner for one of our coveted Garden Awards, please contact Ardetta Steiner, 224-3977 or ardetta@cox.net.



Home of Mr. Robert Cleator, since 1949, 320 San Fernando Street.



Home of Ms. Mary Lou LoPreste, since 1977, 666 San Fernando Street.

BEAUTIFICATION UPDATES

Welcome to Ann Silliman, newest member of the Beautification Committee. Kudos to committee member Jean Leighton – her "critter-friendly" garden was featured in the November 2003 issue of San Diego Home and Garden magazine.

Mean Green Team crews are on the job every Friday. Jess Walker and Karen Davis planted daylilies around the magnolia at Tennyson Triangle. Bob Simpson, Hugh Story, Bob Sherman and Ed Streicher extended the irrigation system at the West Pork Chop (Nimitz Blvd./W. Point Loma Blvd.). Bob Sherman added holiday lighting to Point Loma entry signs on North Harbor Drive and Nimitz Boulevard.

Five Torrey pines and nine Engleman oaks were installed on Canon Street to replace failing sycamores. Jean Leighton oversees Canon Street Trail improvements. Atlas Environmental trimmed 191 jacaranda trees in and around Point Loma Village this winter at a total cost of \$6,900. PLA has contracted with Miranda's Landscape, owned by Daniel Park, to trim trees and maintain plantings in the Nimitz Boulevard median strip at a cost of \$90 per month.

PLA ON THE WEB

Do check out our web site: www.PLAweb.org. Use the "Contact Us" page to sign up as a volunteer, receive our newsletter electronically, and read about local issues. Use the "Links" section for information on community resources. We refresh the site regularly with project and photo updates and new links. Hugh Story is posting an article on the history of PLA's tree plantings. We encourage other members to share their perspectives on PLA history. Please call Pat Baker, 223-9363, with questions or suggestions about the web site.

BANNER DISTRICT

PLA sponsors a street banner district, initiated in 2000 with a grant from San Diego County. We have two PLA designs – our original light-house banners and the summer daisy banners added in 2003. We have total of 69 banner locations available for lease at a charge of \$5.00 per banner; groups may lease any portion of the district. We have flown banners for groups such as the Mingei Museum, Cabrillo Festival, San Diego Zoo, Super Bowl Committee, and the Port of San Diego. To inquire about PLA banner district, call Maureen Summers, (858) 874-1855.

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Tom LaPuzza, Public Affairs Officer for SPAWAR, tells the story of the Point Loma Navy Lab on Wednesday, January 14, 6:30 p.m., at Hervey Point Loma Branch Library, 3701 Voltaire St. On February 11, Christine Gonzalez, head librarian, demonstrates how to use library resources efficiently. On March 10, Bill Seaton, former public relations director for Sea World, speaks about his new book. For information about library programs sponsored by Friends of P. L. Library, call 531-1539.

GARDEN SEMINARS

Point Loma Garden Club meets at 10:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, at Point Loma Masonic Center, 1711 Sunset Cliffs Blvd. Programs are free and open to the public. On January 14, floral designer David Root presents arrangements relating to the SDMA "Art Alive" show. February 11, Kersten Quellet of the Pen and Petal flower shop, offers tips on container gardening. March 10, Robert Oplinger, with the National Wildlife Federation, offers advice on creating a backyard haven for wildlife. Call 276-0209.

CABRILLO CHANGES

National Park Service officer Terry DiMattio reports two major projects at Cabrillo National Monument. Grounds around the Old Point Loma Lighthouse have been rehabilitated to resemble their 1880s appearance. This project includes a new interpretive exhibit about the life and duties of the lighthouse keepers. Another project involves relocating the park entrance station. The new station is on Cabrillo Memorial Drive, just north of the intersection

with Cabrillo Road. The relocation is designed to bring the tidepools under the protection and the fee program of Cabrillo National Monument and to improve safety of motorists. For information, call Terry DiMattio, 523-4560.

NTC FOUNDATION

Alan Ziter now leads the nonprofit organization charged with creating a civic, arts and cultural district at the former Naval Training Center. As President and CEO of the NTC Foundation, Ziter will oversee conversion of 26 historic buildings and bring in tenants to fulfill the vision of Promenade Centre. Ziter previously served for 18 years as executive director of the San Diego Performing Arts League. The first phase of Promenade Centre is expected to open in 2005. For information, go to www.ntcfoundation.org or call 226-1491.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Barking dogs, construction noise, unpermitted building, open space encroachments, illegal signs, businesses operating in residential zones – these issues fall under the purview of the city's Neighborhood Code Compliance Department. To learn more about Code Compliance, or to file a complaint, call 236-5500. For complete information, go to: www.sandiego.gov/nccd.

Adam Wexler, Council Member Michael Zucchet's representative for the Peninsula, attends monthly meetings of the Point Loma Association to present updates and hear concerns regarding Council District 2. You may contact Adam at (619) 236-7351 or awexler@sandiego.gov. Wexler replaces Craig Casteneda.

NEW BUSINESS

Noble House features Chinese antique furniture, linens, jewelry and accessories. Visit Tracey DeBello's new store at 1095 Scott Street by appointment, (619) 665-2650, or drop by when you see the Chinese lanterns hanging outside.

THINK GLOBALLY ... SHOP LOCALLY.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 13
CHAMBER MIXER
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Fiddler's Green
2760 Shelter Island Dr.
Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Call 223-9767

January 17,18,24,25,31 and February 1
Empty House Tours
January 30
Empty House Party
SHOWCASE HOUSE
NTC Quarters "A"
San Diego Historical Society
Call 226-1414

February 7
10th ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER
4:00 – 8:00
Live Band & Martini Bar
Silent Auction
Donation \$7
Point Loma Masonic Center
1711 Sunset Cliffs Blvd.
Peninsula Lions Club
Marti Klees, 225-8200

February 7
LIBERTY STATION BUS TOUR
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Departing Waterfront Market
at one-hour intervals
Call 224-1302 for reservations

March 7
OB KITE FESTIVAL
Kite Making, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Entertainment, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Parade, 2:00 – 2:30 p.m.
OB Recreation Center and
OB Elementary School
Kiwans Club of Ocean Beach
with OB Recreation Center
Marion Miller, (858) 274-2106
Melanie Nickel, (619) 225-8705

Every Saturday
WATERFRONT MARKET
Produce, flowers, and more
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Liberty Station/NTC
Gate 1 at Lytton/Barnett St.
Megan Conley, 336-3647

Point Loma Association
Meets second Wednesday,
7:30 a.m.
Bali Ha'i Restaurant
2230 Shelter Island Drive
Pat Baker, 223-9363

**Peninsula Community
Planning Board**
Meets third Thursday,
6:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Ramada Limited
1403 Rosecrans St.
Cynthia Conger, 665-3210

**North Bay
Redevelopment PAC**
Meets first Wednesday,
7:30 a.m.
Peninsula Community
Service Center
3740 Sports Arena Blvd.
Alex Greenwood,
533-5458

**Midway Planning
Advisory Committee**
Meets first Tuesday,
2 p.m.
Peninsula Community
Service Center
3740 Sports Arena Blvd.
Leslie Sanguinetti,
297-6113

**Ocean Beach Town
Council**
Meets fourth Wednesday,
7 p.m.
No meeting Nov. and Dec.
OB Recreation Center
4726 Santa Monica Ave.
Jere Battan, 515-4400

**Ocean Beach Planning
Board**
Meets first and third
Wednesdays, 7-9:30 p.m.
OB Recreation Center
4726 Santa Monica Ave.
523-1700



La Playa Marker - Lee Lipsey photo

for the planting of many, many trees in Ocean Beach and Mission Beach.

The upshot of the meeting was a firm commitment by Point Loma residents and the City to construct six concrete markers from Fort Rosecrans to the Mission San Diego honoring the 1769 La Playa Trail, the oldest commercial trail on the Pacific Coast. An integral part of the plan was the planting of trees. Allen Perry of the Planning Commission noted, "...on such a route one has the chance to do something really fine."

The markers, featuring an ox-cart and Indian, were designed by Old Town sculptor Rose Hanks, whose bas-relief work still graces the House of Hospitality in Balboa Park. During the next year markers were placed: (1) at the site of the 1869 Roseville Hotel, at Byron



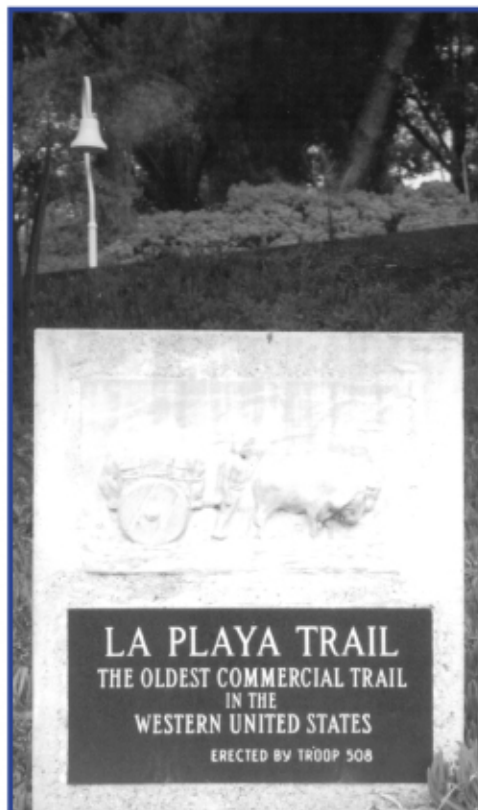
Senator Leroy Wright, of the San Diego Historical Society dedicates the Roseville Marker at the Byron Street site of the 1869 Roseville Hotel. Attending the January 1934 ceremonies were more than a hundred Cabrillo School students.

-San Diego Historical Society photo

The Historic Designation of the La Playa Trail 1933 - 1934

by Charles L. Best

On March 17, 1933, a dinner was held at the Point Loma Assembly, on Talbot Street, to discuss various ideas for the beautification of Rosecrans Street. The affair was chaired by Mrs. Francis G. Heilbron, and attended by representatives of the San Diego Historical Society, the Tree Planting Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, the San Diego Planning Commission, and many interested parties. Also attending were urban beautification activists Mary Near and Mrs. W. B. Hunt, who had been responsible



Mission San Diego Marker - Lee Lipsey photo

and Rosecrans, (2) across from the Navy Golf Course at Lytton St, (3) the foot of Presidio Hill, (4) the Naval Fuel Depot in La Playa, (5) the Mission San Diego, and (6) at Midway and Rosecrans. Three of the La Playa Trail markers have been refurbished, and two have been lost, but the original 1934 marker at Midway and Rosecrans is still there, weathered and worn. Once the markers were in place, an ambitious program of tree planting commenced.

- Charles Best is a local bookseller, amateur historian, and lifelong resident of the Peninsula.

The La Playa Trail 1769

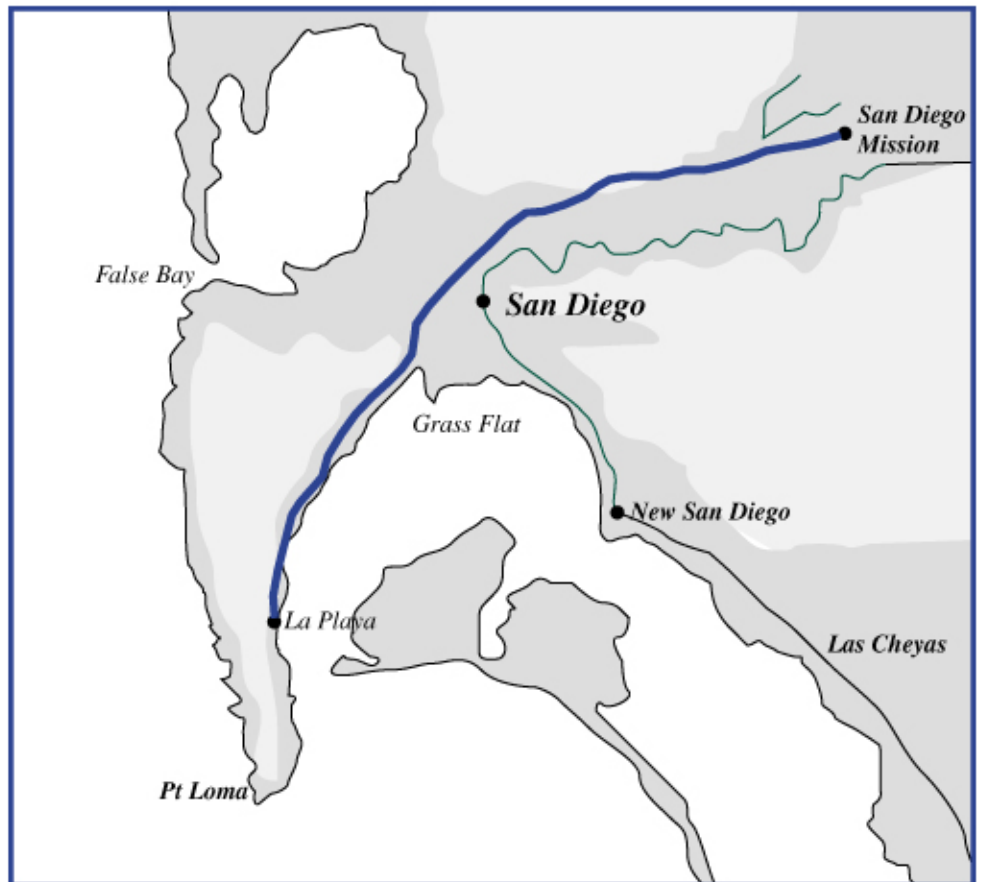
by Charles L. Best

Helen Hunt Jackson, of Ramona fame, when asked what she thought was the most beautiful place she had ever been, easily replied: "Why, the road to the Point Loma Light House, of course." This is part of the La Playa Trail, which in 1934 the San Diego Historical Society and San Diego's planners designated as a historical corridor.

The La Playa Trail has been in continuous use since April 11, 1769, when the Spanish brigantine San Antonio arrived with the advance party of the Portola Expedition. It is the oldest European trail on the Pacific slope and was the main link between the Mission, Old San Diego and La Playa, which served as our port until Alonzo Horton's founding of New San Diego in 1869.

Today the twelve mile long trail encompasses four major planning districts, (Peninsula, Midway, Old Town, and Mission Valley), six major Urban parks and Natural Preserves, ten – yes, ten – historic districts, over sixty Registered Historic Landmarks and more than 350 sites of historical interest. The trail begins at Ballast Point, where Juan, or João, Cabrillo claimed Alta California for the Spanish Crown, and continues through Fort Rosecrans, which will celebrate its centennial in 2004.

Northward lies the hamlet of La Playa, made famous in Richard Henry Dana's Two Years Before The Mast. La Playa was once the embarcadero for all of San Diego



U. S. Boundary Survey 1850.
Courtesy of Charles Best

and Baja California del Norte. Then there is Roseville, with its Portuguese fishing colony, and the yachting haven Shelter Island. About a mile farther north is nestled Loma Portal and the U. S. Naval Training Center and neighboring Marine Corps Recruit Depot Historic Districts. It has been proposed that the stretch of Rosecrans from Lytton to Midway, near the old Loma Theatre, be planted and designated as the La Playa Trail Parkway. Old Town State Historical Park, Presidio Park, and a segment of the 52-mile San Diego River Park are also significant sites along the old Trail.

The La Playa Trail is every bit as relevant to the history of the United States as are the better known Lewis & Clark Trail, U.S. 101, Boston's Freedom Trail or

Tidewater Virginia's Colonial Parkway. In fact it predates them by many score years. There is a strong argument that the Trail should be recognized and treated as a National Historic Site with heroic plantings of trees, monuments, public art, and an air of continual celebration. A living classroom, if you will, to remind us all of our incredibly rich heritage.



PO BOX 60212
San Diego, CA 92166-0212

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 1959
San Diego, CA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



www.PLAweb.org



P.O. Box 60212, San Diego, CA 92166-0212

Officers

John Calabotta, Chair
Pat Baker, Vice-Chair
Bill Johnson, Treasurer
Dan Martin, Secretary

Board of Directors

Patti Adams	Lee Lipsey
Lois Baker	Donis Lovett
Larry Bauman	Tracy Morgan Hollingworth
Jodie Bruhn	Bill Munster
Marty Dine	Larry Pappas
Bonnie Hage	Catherine Perez
Bill Klees	Ray Simas
Klonie Kunzel	Maureen Summers

Chairpersons

Beautification: Jodie Bruhn
Architecture: Larry Pappas
Newsletter: Lee Lipsey

We thank Point Loma Nazarene University
for donating professional design and production
services for the Point Loma Association newsletter.

Who We Are

Point Loma Association was organized in 1961. Originally called "Point Loma Village Beautiful," we were primarily concerned with the aesthetics of the village.

Today, in addition to beautifying the Peninsula, PLA represents the community through direct involvement with agencies of the federal, state and local governments, the Port District, the Unified School District, the Peninsula Community Planning Board and others who directly affect our quality of life.

PLA's membership consists of residents and local businesses working together by donating time, effort and money to make the Peninsula a better place in which to live and work. For membership information, please call Pat Baker, 223-9363.