



HISTORY MATTERS

CHA UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly Coffee & Conversations: Small Businesses

Thursday, December 21
4:00 PM - FREE

Join us at CHA to reminisce about all of Coronado's best businesses and local favorites. Share your stories about your favorite places on the island that are no longer around and talk to fellow community members about their experiences. Conversations will be led by Coronado High School Interns!

Monthly Wine & Lecture Series: The Short and Perilous Career of U.S. Naval Airships

Friday, December 13
5:30 p.m. reception 6:00 p.m. program
\$15 for CHA Members
\$18 for Non-Members

Join us for a night of wine, cheese, and history as CHA presents a Wine & Lecture on Navy Airships and their short-lived history, presented by speaker Karen Scanlon.

R.S.V.P. or Purchase Tickets at www.coronadohistory.org, (619) 435-7242, or by visiting the Museum Store at 1100 Orange Avenue.



GEM AWARD NOMINATION

GEM award nominations are now open! We are looking for nominees for our 2020 Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Award. The Coronado Historical Association awards one local home or business owner the GEM award for their efforts in preserving a historic building or home in Coronado.

The award was created in 2013 to honor the thoughtful efforts of homeowners to preserve and restore, rather than replace existing homes, and turn potential tear-downs into architectural GEMs. The award is presented annually at the Association's Celebrating History Gala. Send us your nominations! If you would like to nominate a building for our GEM Selection and Award Committee please send your nominees to info@coronadohistory.org or call 619-435-7242.

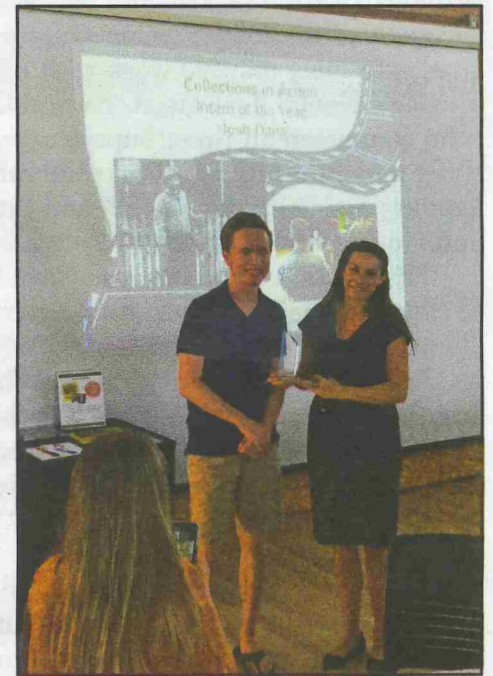
THE COLLECTIONS LUNCHEON

On Thursday, November 14, the Coronado Historical Association hosted a lovely luncheon to benefit the ongoing preservation of the artifact and archive collection. Attendees enjoyed a buffet lunch while learning about highlights of CHA's collection and how the Association cares for the collection. Vickie Stone, Curator of Collections, presented about the importance of preventive conservation so that artifacts can be enjoyed by Coronado residents today through exhibits or educational programs, but also that they are preserved for future generations.

The luncheon was also an opportunity for CHA to honor one of its Coronado High School interns. Executive Director Christine Stokes presented the 2019 Top Intern Award to Joshua Dana, a CHS senior. Joshua completed an oral history internship with CHA in the fall of 2018 and has remained an active CHA volunteer since. While working with CHA, Josh conducted many oral history interviews with well-known locals such as Julia Viera and Tom Rice.

Josh also assisted with the 2018/2019 winter exhibit: Coronado's Golden Hollywood Anniversary. When asked to make a timeline of Coronado films, ended up creating a 143 page document listing every known film, television show/episode, serial, miniseries, newsreel, travelogue, military film, and home movie (up until the advent of the internet) made in Coronado.

At the luncheon, CHA was able to raise more than \$2,500 to purchase archival supplies that will house CHA's rare book collection, historic U.D.T./S.E.A.L. diving equipment, trophies dating back to the first annual Flower Shows in the 1920s, and new acquisitions. The money raised was generously matched by an anonymous local donor.



NEWS FROM THE PAST

Don White Leaps Ahead Of Competition, Reigns As Superfrog Winner

Coronado Eagle, November 1, 1995
by Jeanne Danis

Most folks would imagine a Superfrog would be an amphibian, a Navy SEAL, who jumps from aircraft into the ocean, or, at the least, a combat Marine infantryman wearing "cammies."

Think again. Coronado's 1995 Superfrog, winner of the arduous Triathlon sponsored by Naval Special Warfare this fall, is a quiet, slender sailor who wears a white coat and does extremely delicate work with his hands.

He's Dental Technician Second Class Don White, 30, who completed all three Superfrog events, swimming, cycling and running, in 4 hours, 29 minutes and 20 seconds, topping his age group (30-39) and the entire field of 65 individual entries as well.

His closest competitor was Navy SEAL Lt. Dan O'Shea, in the 18-29 age group, who came in at 4 hours, 29 minutes and 44 seconds.

It did not come as a surprise. White has been entering the Naval Special Warfare Triathlon for several years. It's his favorite race of the many events he trains for and enters regularly, and so he was particularly happy coming in first.

Actually, he almost didn't win.

"I'm not a good swimmer, like the others," he said. "And another biker had a four-minute lead in the cycling event. But he got dehydrated and dropped out."

White completed the 1.2 mile ocean swim in 27 minutes, the 56-mile cycle event in 2 hours and 17 minutes, and the 13.1 mile run in 1 hour and 44 minutes.

He attributes his win partially to the experimental bike he borrowed, a Cronin Cycle "Hot Rod" with a beam suspension.

It was especially helpful over the North Island cycle course, which, he said, is "very bumpy and uncomfortable."

Still, he said that biking is his favorite event, although he also likes running in the sand in the Superfrog race.

Right after winning Superfrog, he flew to Kona, Hawaii, to enter the Ironman World Championship, in which he has competed for the past five years.

This time, however, his luck didn't hold.

He completed the course (twice the Superfrog distances) in 10 hours and 57 minutes. His best time previously was 10 hours and 7 minutes, and he ran the Canadian Ironman in 9 hours and 51 minutes.

"The Hawaii race this year was tough, with 25 mile-per-hour winds and gusts up to 40-50 miles per hour. It was the most difficult race I've entered in the past 10 years."

White was the Navy team captain for the event, with five men and two women competing and paying their own way, incidentally.

Even though his job isn't particularly physical like that of Navy SEALs, White is no lounge-lizard. He trains hard.

A father of a three-month old son, he still manages to hit the road on his bicycle, commuting to work at the Naval Station from his Pacific Beach home, 13 miles each way. The commute takes him about 45 minutes.

He runs about 40 miles a week and during one stretch of his life, he ran 1,240 days in a row. Now, he says he's going to concentrate on swimming more.

At 185 pounds, spread over a 6-foot, 4-inch frame, White has little or no blubber for flotation. Worse yet, he's a redhead with a fair complexion. He always wears a hat and sunglasses, uses lots of lotion and always competes wearing a shirt for protection against the sun.

Currently, he's gearing up for the Boston Marathon next April. He has entered ~ Santa Clarita Marathon in Los Angeles next month and hopes to match his persona 8 best, which was 3 hours and 7 minutes in December, 1994.

White is presently serving as an instructor at the Dental Center at 32nd Street, and the regular hours are helpful to his training program. But during his 10-year Navy career, he has also served aboard ship and with Marines. When asked if shipboard duty interfered with his training, Superfrog replied, "Sure. Everything does."

NOVEMBER'S EVENT RECAPS

November has been an exciting month of learning and celebration for us here at the Coronado Historical Association. We kicked off the month with a Hops & History in partnership with the Marine Corps League on November 1st, just in time to celebrate the Marine Corps' 244th birthday. Everyone in attendance was able to hear directly from members of the Marine Corps League on their own personal experiences and really delve into the League's purpose, which is to strengthen the fraternity of Marines and their families; and to foster the ideals of Americanism and patriotic volunteerism right here in Coronado.

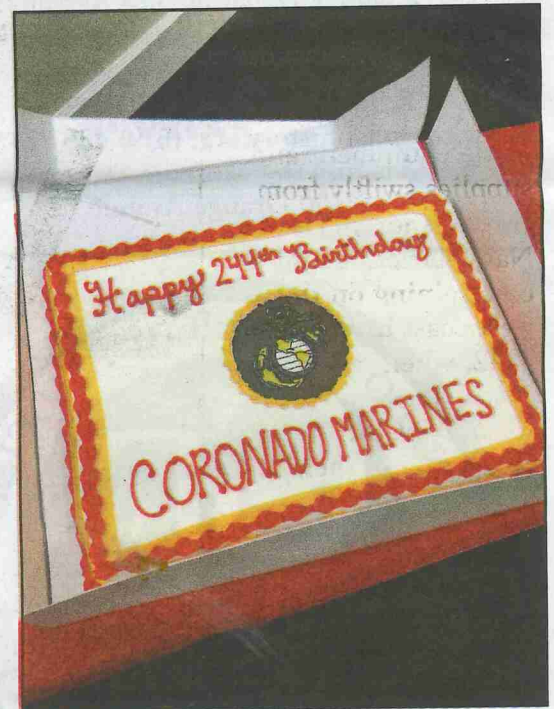
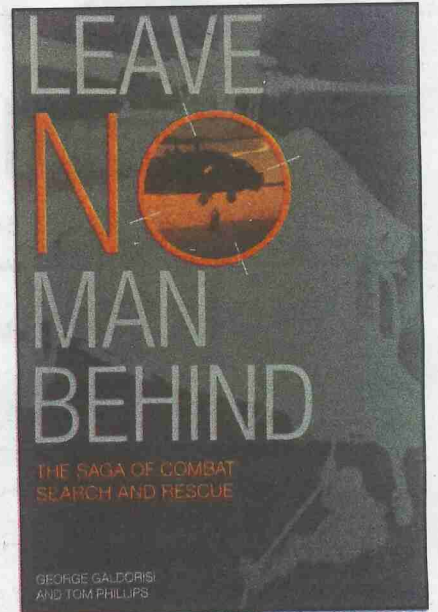
After the event, everyone gathered together and witnessed an incredible tradition. As the Commandant's speech was read, a birthday cake was cut and the oldest and youngest Marine in attendance were able to eat the first piece. While many with a connection to the Marine Corps had seen this before, those of us who had not were truly honored to be part of such a special moment.

The Coronado Historical Association would like to extend a special thank you to the Marine Corps League in Coronado for making the evening such an incredible occasion for everyone in attendance!

The events continued as we invited local Author George Galdorisi to join us and share more about his book *Leave No Man Behind*. This incredible novel dives into the nearly 100 years of Combat Search and Rescue. It begins with the birth of combat aircraft in WWI and chronicles the first attempts to rescue warriors behind enemy lines and spans to the early conflicts in Iraq. Mr. Galdorisi shared about what inspired him and his Co-author Tom Phillips, who are both veteran U.S. Navy helicopter pilots, to extensively researched the heroes who risked their lives to save their fellow comrades. Together they collected the previously untold stories of these service members and were able to bring to life the successes and failures of each mission.

Mr. Galdorisi has participated in a Wine & Lecture before and is always a community favorite. It is always a treat to be able to hear from the author's themselves as to what encouraged them to share the stories of many who would never have the opportunity to do it themselves.

If you were unable to attend the Hops & History or the Wine & Lecture in November, there are plenty of opportunities to participate every month! We have programs later in November, interns from Coronado High School will be holding a Coffee & Conversations on Thursday, November 21 at 4 pm that invites everyone to reminisce about all of Coronado's best businesses and local favorites. This event is free of charge, however, participants must sign Oral History releases to participate. Sign up for any event by going on coronadohistory.org, calling (610)435-7242, or by stopping by the Museum Store.



THE GENESIS OF THE NAVY SEALS

by Zoriada Payne, CHA Volunteer

"It is you whose great responsibility it will be to land not only the men, but the equipment and supplies..."

Coronado's location and environment cemented San Diego's position as a strategic military bastion. In 1911, Glenn Curtis — aviator pioneer — made a deal with John D. Spreckels to use a piece of land in North Island, where started his flying school for training pilots. Therefore, in 2011, the nation celebrated Coronado's centenary anniversary as the "Birthplace of Naval Aviation". Until 1935, North Island equally accommodated the U.S. Army's Rockwell Field in one-half, and the Naval Air Station in the other; at the beginning of the 1940s, the island was solely occupied by Naval forces. Concurrently, the building of the Naval Amphibious Base (NAB) took place on the south and bay side of Coronado. These decisive and solid steps continued to pave Coronado's character as a naval center.

On May 18, 1944, the *Coronado Journal* documented: "Although it was commissioned only four months ago, this gigantic Navy base is contributing thousands of fully-trained, hard-hitting amphibious fighting men who know how to transfer troops, battle equipment and supplies swiftly from ship to shore." The Navy started amphibious training on the west coast in October 1942, when men and instructors reported for duty at the Naval Repair Base, then known as the San Diego Destroyer Base.

The base was officially commissioned on January 15, 1944, with Rear Admiral David W. Bagley, whom observed: "Just a few months ago this area was sandy wasteland, its potentialities still a series of sketches on public works drawing boards. Today, through the splendid efforts of our engineers and workmen, it is a marvelously equipped base, destined to assume a vital role in our expanding offensive overseas." In the commissioning address to the men, Captain Voegeli declared: "In the critical days ahead, American men are going to storm hostile shores under the most difficult conditions... It is you whose great responsibility it will be to land not only the men, but the equipment and supplies without which they are helpless." This citadel was preparing the water for the future training ground for the SEALs.

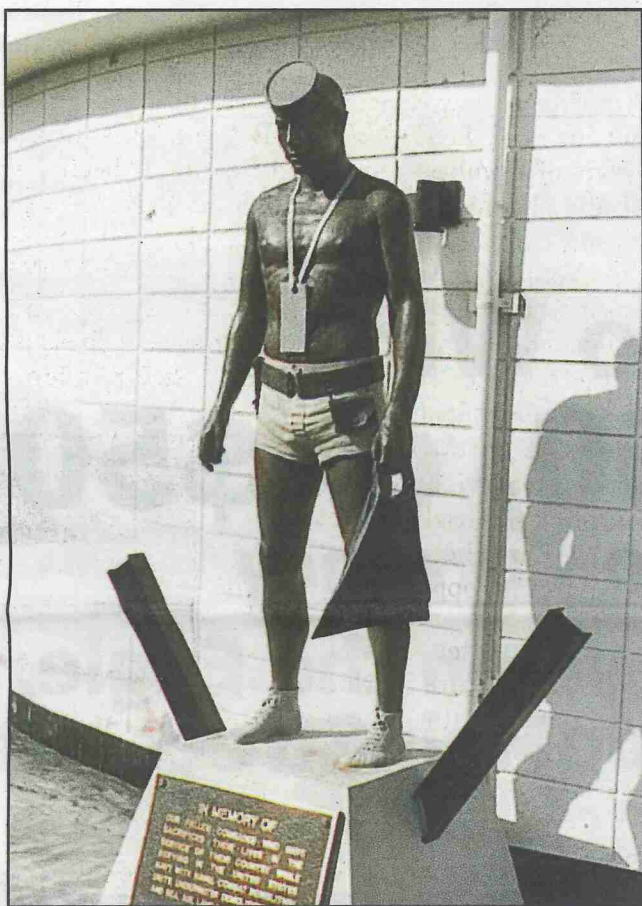
Just the act of writing the word SEAL invokes a respectful reverence, but it deems necessary to explain its ethos and acronym; SEA, Air, and Land denotes its all-round capability and adaptability. In order to briefly and accurately introduce this special force, I'd like to share a summarized version of its genesis from the Navy SEAL Museum: "...History itself has demonstrated that formation of the SEAL Teams was an evolutionary process, which didn't happen overnight or result from the efforts of an isolated few. The concept emerged

largely because of the efforts of many individuals, and also in response to developments surrounding UDT (Underwater Demolition Team) experiences in Korea, post-Korea, and emerging world events; especially in Laos and Cuba... After considerable study it was determined that expanding the UDT mission would hinder their traditional and now doctrinal responsibilities to the Amphibious Force. As a result, it was considered that new units should be established possessing the operational experience of the UDTs, but incorporating the new warfare concepts learned during Korea."

Consequently, different steps were taken in early 1960 because of the crisis in Laos and Cuba and the increasing insurgency in South Vietnam. Admiral Burke directed his staff to prepare options with respect to unconventional warfare. Among other recommendations, the staff suggested that the Underwater Demolition Teams and Marine reconnaissance units were considered organized and capable of expansion into unconventional warfare.

On May 25, 1961, President Kennedy delivered his message to Congress entitled "Urgent National Needs." He said, "I am directing the Secretary of Defense to expand rapidly and substantially, in cooperation with our Allies, the orientation of existing forces for the conduct of non-nuclear war, paramilitary operations, and sub-limited or unconventional wars." Thus, while they began organizing as early as November 1961, two SEAL Teams were officially authorized. SEAL Team ONE was located at the Naval Amphibious Base (NAB), Coronado, and colocated with UDT-11 and UDT-12. SEAL Team TWO was positioned at NAB, Little Creek, Norfolk, Virginia and co-located with UDT-21. Since then, they began to train for their future hydrographic surveys and beach reconnaissance missions at the Amphibious Base and Coronado Shores.

Do you know what movie played a galvanizing power for the Navy SEALs' precursor, the UDTs? I invite you to watch "The Frogmen" released in 1951. After watching this classic, I also would like to entice you to visit the "Naked Warrior" statue in Glorietta Bay Park. I welcome you to admire the legacy of UDT and SEALs through their motto "Never Quit" which is embedded in their tenacious will, team adaptability, and austere origins. These brave patriots were minimally equipped, but luckily CHA has preserved examples of that equipment such as the authentic Duck Feet swim fins, lead line, knife, and small, skin-color shorts, that gave them their name of Naked Warrior. Since its beginning, Coronado intrinsic relation to the water and its ensued activities, postulated as an ideal place for recreation and defense, and in this latter dimension, cemented the strength and growth of the Naval forces on the West coast, and among them its special team, the Navy SEALs.



SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY COFFEE & CONVERSATIONS

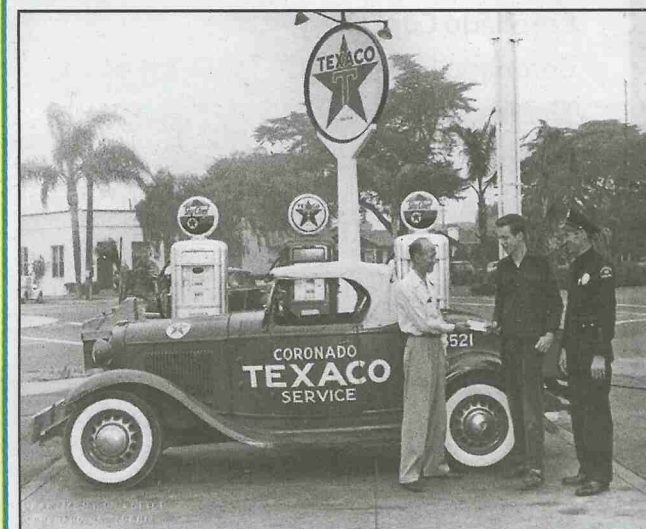
In celebration of Coronado's local businesses both past and present, and in conjunction with Small Business Saturday, CHA is hosting a special Coffee & Conversations on Thursday, November 21. Small Business Saturday is celebrating its 10th year. It's a day to make a BIG difference for Coronado's local businesses and our community.

Look out for your "Shop Small Passport" in the *Coronado Eagle & Journal* on November 27th and stop by the Museum Store at 1100 Orange Ave to show your support!

In the meantime, join us to reminisce about all of Coronado's best businesses and local favorites. This is an opportunity to share stories about your favorite places on the island that are no longer around (or still are!) and talk to fellow community members about their experiences. Current Coronado High School students will lead the conversations.

GIVING TUESDAY

This global giving movement is celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. This year, Giving Tuesday is on December 3rd, 2019. It is a day of global generosity, and we believe that you can help. This year, consider giving back to the organization that cherishes and celebrates your community history: donate directly to the Coronado Historical Association.



HISTORY MYSTERY

Normally, the History Mystery is a monthly photo from CHA's Collection of Coronado's past for residents to guess what it is. This month, we need YOUR help identifying what is going on! Do you know who is in this photo or what is happening? If you have any information about this photo, email us at info@coronadohistory.org or call us at 619-435-7242.