



# Marina del Rey Historical Society



Volume 3, Issue 1 ~ January, February, March, April 2014

## Marina del Rey, 1964

*A Dispatch from the Marina del Rey Historical Society*

As published in **The Argonaut**, February 27, 2014

by Howard Wenger

The initial vision of a man named Moye L. Wicks was to build a large shipping harbor in the wetlands of West Los Angeles. Lack of funds, bad weather and no breakwater kept his dream from becoming a reality and, although part of his vision ended up south in Long Beach, the idea of a marina for L.A. remained just that --- and idea.

After 75 years and various starts and stops the dredging of Marina del Rey --- at that time the largest man-made small craft harbor in the country --- was completed in May 1962. Winter, however, would bring yet more challenges. Violent storms, on February 9 and 10, 1963, sent nine foot swells into the channel destroying boats and docks. The Army Corps of Engineers later installed seawalls across the channel near Fisherman's Village to prevent any further damage, but this would be just a temporary fix. At an Army Corps facility in Vicksburg, Miss., a large-scale model of the marina was constructed in order to simulate wave action so that a barrier could be designed and developed for the marina. Eight months after, what became known as "the surge" nearly destroyed the marina, funding was acquired to fix the problem. In October



An aerial view Marina del Rey in 1964, shows the early development of the Sheraton (MdR) Hotel (center), construction Pieces of Eight (upper left) now Whiskey Reds, the future site of the California Yacht Club (lower right) and the temporary seawalls/baffles in place during construction of the breakwater (upper right).

of 1963, construction began on the breakwater with rocks from a quarry on Catalina Island shipped to the marina's entrance.

The Marina breakwater was completed

January of 1965, with a formal dedication to follow on April 10. That means Marina del Rey will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2015. A committee has already begun

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# MdR, 1964

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meeting monthly to discuss celebrations next April 10 and and other special events throughout the year.

To see photos of the dredging and "the surge," visit the Marina del Rey Historical Society now located in Fisherman's Village at 13737 Fiji Way, Ste. C3.

Open noon to 4 p.m. daily with validation for two hours free parking. Call (310) 701-1073. ☞



To view the Marina's past and present through books, photos and videos visit the Marina del Rey Historical Society's gallery in Fisherman's Village.

We will begin our fifth month of operation on April 1, 2014. We are open daily from noon to 4 p.m.

The gallery will have its *official* grand opening starting Thursday, April 10, through Sunday, April 13, 2014. A ribbon cutting ceremony will take place on Thursday, at noon, in the Fisherman's Village courtyard near the lighthouse.

We are planning a party with food and entertainment including a raffle which will be held during the weekend.

Our kick-off celebration, on April 10th, is special because it's the 49th anniversary of the dedication of Marina del Rey. And, it's the beginning of all the 50th anniversary celebrations planned for next year in the Marina.

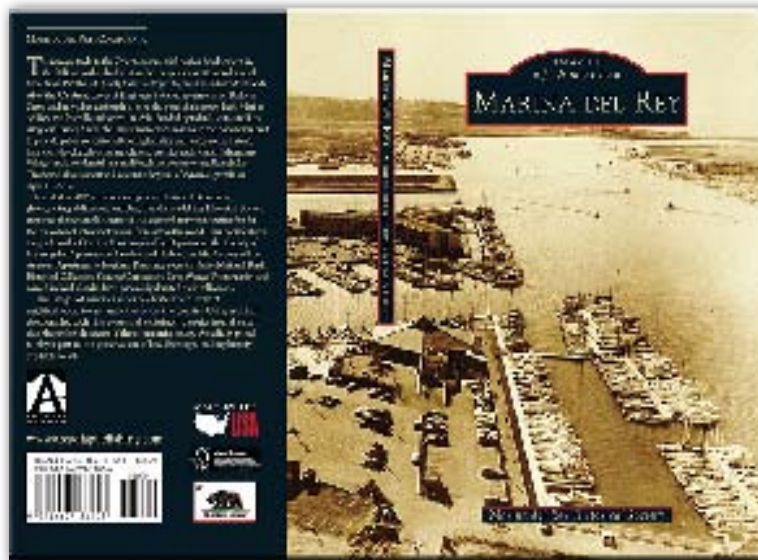
We hope you can join the party. ☞



Construction begins at the California Yacht Club, on Admiralty Way

## "Images of America Marina del Rey"

The Marina del Rey Historical Society Book will be published Summer/Fall 2014



A  
Pictorial  
History  
of  
Marina  
del  
Rey

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# Around the Marina, 1972

by Howard Wenger

Our gallery in Fisherman's Village has been open for a few months and one of the things I am always asked is "Do you remember...?" ...everything from people, restaurants, events, and other trivia.

So here are a few things that were happening around the marina in 1972...

On January 17, Sports Illustrated wrote an article titled *Nothing Like Having Your Boat Downtown*. It was about life in Marina del Rey.

As of January 13, oil wells were being phased out on the marina peninsula. At the time only 25 wells continued to produce. The large derricks that dotted the Venice coastline had been ordered to come down by 1962.

In February, the 9-hole Marina Golf Course, opened in 1967, closed. The increase in property taxes, by 300%, during the five years prompted the closure. Villa Marina East is now located on what was a dairy and golf course.

Bill Durant launched the 70 foot, 40 ton schooner *The Iron Cross*. The original design was found in Nova Scotia. The schooner was moored at Fisherman's Village.

Ground breaking for two important buildings happened that year. First, the Marina Firehouse (next to the former Charley Brown's) a home to fire engines and a fire boat. Later that year, plans for



Here we see the official groundbreaking for Burton Chace Park on August 22, 1972. Dignitaries pictured are: left to right, Supervisor Burton W. Chace; Aubrey E. Austin, Chairman, Small Craft Advisory Commission; Arthur Will, Director of Marina del Rey; and Victor Adorian, Director of Real Estate Management, County of Los Angeles (later Director of Marina del Rey).

the Marina Library (just down the road) were approved and construction was scheduled.

## ***It Cost How Much?***

Finally... in this segment called, *It Cost How Much?* I came across two ads: One, for a *Mammoth Mountain Chalet*. Rental available with pool table, waterbeds,

right in the village, close to stores and night spots...\$5.00 per night. And two, *All American Records*, a record store in the Marina International Center, located on Washington, was selling Neil Young's *Harvest* album for \$3.09 with a coupon. "Ah...vinyl!" They also sold 8-tracks and cassettes. Those were the days. ♪

## ***New MdRHS Board Member/Treasurer***



**Ken Englert** ~ Ken, the owner and operator of *Maritime Communications, Inc.*, a maritime electronics dealership in Marina del Rey since 1967, is a certified Electronics Engineering Technician. He holds an FCC General Radiotelephone Operators License with Marine Radar endorsement.

Ken has contributed articles about marine electronics to several magazines, including *Boating*, *Coastal Angler*, *Marine Electronics Journal*, *Popular Electronics* and *Dockside*.

*Marine Radio Procedures*, *Mayday Radio* and *GPS Users* are quick reference guides that were written and published by Ken. Presently, Ken is the electronics columnist for *Boating Magazine* and has won the *Boating Writers International Award* five times.

As a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for the *Marine Electronics Journal*, Ken also serves as president of its Board of Directors. ♪



**Marina del Rey Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 9550**  
**Marina del Rey, CA 90295-1950**

Stamp

*Visit us...*

**MdR Historical Society Gallery**  
**Fisherman's Village**  
**13737 Fiji Way, Ste. C-3 ~ Marina del Rey**



***Sailing in  
Marina del Rey***



Photos: Greg Wenger Photography

*"If we do not collect, preserve, and digitize the history of Marina del Rey, much will be lost."*

## **Marina del Rey Historical Society Volunteer Staff**

### **Willie Hjorth**

President/Publisher-Editor, 310-822-9344

### **Howard Wenger**

Vice President/Gallery Site Manager/  
Contributing Writer, 310-701-1073

### **Greg Wenger**

Chairman Emeritus, 310-701-1073

### **Debbie Talbot**

Corp. Sec'y/Public Relations, 310-821-5242

### **Rikki Barker**

Director, 310-463-7052

### **David Maury**

Director/Contributing Writer  
310-908-5927; david@mauryres.com

### **Chris Gillum**

Director/Website Administrator, 310-822-9344

### **Pat Reynolds**

Director, 310-397-1887

### **Ken Englert**

Treasurer, 310-821-4958

### **Barbara Slavin**

Graphic Designer-Editor/Director  
BSlavinGRAPHICS@aol.com

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### **For Information & Contributions:**

Call: 310-701-1073 or 310-822-9344  
 Address: P.O. Box 9550  
 Marina del Rey, CA 90295-1950

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## **MdR Historical Society Elects 2014 Board Officers**

As required by our by-laws, annual elections were held and following are the officers elected for the upcoming year.

**Greg Wenger**.....Chairman Emeritus

**Willie Hjorth**.....President

**Howard Wenger**.....Vice President

**Debbie Talbot**.....Corporate Secretary

**Ken Englert**.....Treasurer

**Rikki Barker**.....Director

**Barbara Slavin**.....Director

**David Maury**.....Director

**Chris Gillum**.....Director

**Pat Reynolds**.....Director

