

SILVER SPRAY APARTMENTS, HOTEL, PLUNGE, AND CAMP HOLIDAY

William Dougherty built the hotel in 1919 on the legendary site of the 1800's shack of OB's first "homeowner" Captain Thomas.

The hotel hosted its Grand Opening May 1, 1919 and thrived during the resort days of the 1920's as guests and locals alike enjoyed the spa, skating rink, dance hall, and hot salt water pool that drained to the ocean.

The pool featured high vaulted ceilings and 2 diving boards.

While the general public enjoyed the hot salt water plunge, some serious athletes trained here: Famous English Channel swimmer Florence Chadwick, first female surfer in San Diego Faye Baird, and one of the first water ballet groups in San Diego.

In November 1919 Camp Holiday, the vacation bungalows next to the hotel, opened up and advertised rooms for \$1.25 a day, \$6 a week, and \$16 a month.

In its early days the row of bungalows served as an auto camp for the newly popular car travelers. Visitors simply pulled their cars right next to their rental cabins for their stay in OB.

In 1927, single apartments rented for about \$35-\$40 a month and included free use of the saltwater pool, where swimmers occasionally encountered some wildlife accidentally pumped in.

Today, the building serves as residential apartments. Some of Today's residents say they keep the lights on in the old ballroom to "keep the ghost quiet".

(Legend says the ghost of Joyce Swindle, a young bride in 1964 who was shot along with her husband of 3 weeks on the walk near the hotel, haunts the halls with her cries and footsteps, looking for her husband.)



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OCEAN BEACH LIBRARY

Originally built on Abbott Street in 1916 after the principal of OB Elementary raised \$200 at a meeting, this Ocean Beach branch of the San Diego Library opened as the fourth of its kind in San Diego on October 5, 1928.

Robert W. Snyder, who studied under renowned architect William Templeton Johnson, designed the building in the Spanish-Monterey style popular among designers at the time and won an award for his work.

Margaret Rankin, an Ocean Beach Elementary graduate, became this branch's librarian in 1921 and remained until her retirement in 1959.

In 1962 the branch expanded to its current size and currently boasts a circulation of about 136,000 books a year.

The two large urns you see out front contain time capsules with items from the 1990's. They replaced earlier urns that were damaged, and are scheduled to be opened sometime in the 2040's.

The San Diego City Council designated the Ocean Beach Library "Historic" in 2002 for its architecture and contribution to OB's cultural landscape.



BANK OF ITALY

The Bank of Italy opened in March 1927, and became Bank of America by 1930, introducing chain branches to San Diego.

Renowned architect William Templeton Johnson designed the building in the Spanish-Eclectic style popular in OB at the time.

During the 1970's this building served as housing for the Left Bank bookstore, meeting places for activists, and offices for the OB Rag, an alternative newspaper still around today.

During the 1990's this building served as open-mic coffee shop Java Joe's, where many musicians got their start.

KRAFT BUILDING

The Kraft building was built in 1927 and housed medical and dental offices upstairs, with the Kraft Drug Store and a soda fountain downstairs.



Fred Kraft, owner and operator of the drugstore, later became a state senator.

During the 1960's and 1970's the Kraft building was home to The Seaside Grill, and was rumored to serve the best pies in town.

Local legend states Charles Lindbergh ate sandwiches at Kraft while waiting for his plane, the Spirit of St. Louis, to finish at near-by Ryan Aviation (near the site later dedicated as Lindbergh Field).

OCEAN BEACH ELEMENTARY



D.C. Collier, deemed by many as the true father of Ocean Beach, built Ocean Beach Elementary in 1909 as a 2-room school for students grades 1 through 8.

The first class (of one student, Arthur Hansen) graduated in 1910.

In 1912 three more students graduated, including long-time Ocean Beach librarian Margaret Rankin.

When first built, some parents expressed concern about the school being too far away from the 100 or so residences in OB at the time.

The building was renovated after the Long Beach earthquake in 1934 to the style you see today.

On November 19, 2009 the Ocean Beach Historical Society gathered former students to commemorate the school's 100th anniversary (their ages ranged from 5 to over 100 years old).

Today local families continue to take great pride in their connections with this school, and still attend OB Elementary reunions. In fact, many students have parents who attended the school a generation ago.



STRAND THEATER

The 600-seat theater opened its doors November 6, 1925.

The Strand showed silent films until 1927, when The Jazz Singer, the first "talkie" (a movie with actor conversations, music, and other sound effects), wowed audiences worldwide. Audiences flocked to the Strand, excited to hear the actors and sing along to the accompanying piano.

Later in the 1950's, the local theater of Ocean Beach catered to children and grownups alike: the children enjoyed serial matinees every Saturday, always trying to guess the next cliffhanger. Grownups enjoyed Saturday nights with a new movie billed every week.

While the movies varied, everyone enjoyed "black and white" sundaes (chocolate sauce on vanilla ice cream) for 10 cents at the Strand Sweet Shop downstairs, run by Alan Belmont and Clifford Harrison.

As the audience changed, so did the theater. The Strand counts among the first theaters in the country to feature The Rocky Horror Picture Show, and later evolved to show films such as Woodstock, Endless Summer, Gimme Shelter, and Rust Never Sleeps.

After a run of seedier films in the 1980's the Strand officially shut down in 1998.

Many local citizens and organizations tried to save the Strand and turn it into a community art center or an establishment with its original character intact.

PEARL HOTEL

In the 1890's, during a real estate bust, a local maid visited Ocean Beach on her day off and bought seven lots for \$35. To this day, the identity of that maid-turned-entrepreneur remains a mystery.

By 1900 the unlikely landowner opened Pearl Hotel (turned Newport Hotel around 1914), which served as OB's first (and for a while, only) place for visitors to stay while checking out the local dance halls, merry-go-round, skating rink, and saltwater plunge.

Many who stayed at "the Newport" ended up moving to OB, and used the hotel as a base while shopping for a home to call their own.

With the fall of OB's "Resort Era," however, dwindled the number of newcomers. The hotel fell into a state of disrepair and became "home" to Hell's Angels during the 1970's. (The 1980's marked another dark time for this building with frequent police raids.)

True to its original character, though, the hotel bounced back in 1995 when John Asher purchased the building, cleaned, and refurbished it. He then reopened it as the Ocean Beach International Hostel.

This historic site now hosts travelers from all over the world attracted to our little beach town on the Pacific.



**MANY THANKS TO THE
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