

# HISTORY ABOUT Redondo Beach



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Surfing was first brought to the United States from Hawaii in the early 1900's. Crafty real estate baron Henry Huntington brought George Freeth from Hawaii to demonstrate surfing for guests of the Hotel Redondo.
- In the later 1800's city dwellers regularly traveled by train to holiday at the seaside tent resort community known as Redondo Beach.
- Christ Episcopal Church (located on Broadway), was originally built in the late 1800's and was used as a mission until the 1930's.
- The only halibut fish hatchery in California is located in Redondo Beach.
- Marine life muralist Wyland, painted the Whaling Wall located on the AES building in only 11 days. He had lots of volunteer help.
- Redondo Beach is the largest, small boat marina on the west coast.
- The area is known worldwide for its Lobster Festival held annually in the Seaside Lagoon.
- The internationally known "Baywatch" has filmed many of its television episodes within King Harbor
- The new Redondo Beach Pier features 70,000 square feet of open area.
- The Pier and Boardwalk has something for everyone. It combines a wide variety of dining, water sports, arcade style amusement and entertainment opportunities.
- The Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce draws over 10,000 participants and spectators, as it hosts the annual Super Bowl Sunday 10K Run/5K Walk. This event is a hallmark tradition that includes baby-buggy-joggers and costume contest.
- Award-winning professional live theatre producers are presented at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center. The 1,400 seat venue hosts a distinguished speaker series, light opera and jazz festivals.
- Redondo Beach has over 200 restaurants nightclubs and entertainment locations.
- Demi Moore attended Redondo Union High School. Her name at the time was Demi Guynes.
- Fred Claire, who later became general manager and vice president of the LA Dodgers worked at Foster Freeze on the northwest corner of Knob Hill and DPCH from 1952 to 1955.
- George Freeth, whose statue is on the Redondo Beach Pier, was the first man to ride a paddle board from Catalina Island to the mainland.
- Leo Carrillo, who played Poncho on the Cisco Kid, owned a liquor store on the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> and PCH in the early 1950's.



REDONDO BEACH  
**RICH IN  
HERITAGE**

For over a hundred years, Redondo Beach has captured the imagination of travelers from around the world. Modern surfing was born here. Boards, baggies, and bikinis became industries, and the Beach Boys pounded out a surf beat that lured a whole generation to enjoy the West Coast promise of freedom.

Redondo Beach has hosted many colorful visitors including natives, wranglers, ranchers, railroad barons, rum runners and a gangster or two – not to mention the beach revelers who rode the Pacific Electric Railway Red Cars for a weekend away from the heat of the Los Angeles Basin.

The destination was first inhabited by California coastal natives. They made encampments along the beach, to take advantage of the incredible harvest from the sea; the salt for trading with other tribes, fishing, and the very hospitable climate.

The written history of the Redondo Beach area begins in 1542 when Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo discovered the

beautiful, sweeping Santa Monica Bay. It remained a sleeping native village for more than 200 years. As a part of the 43,000 acre Dominguez Rancho (a Spanish Land Grant of 1784) Redondo Beach was a rich farming and grazing area until the end of the century.

The establishment of Redondo Beach was not by chance. In the late 1800's a race was on to establish a seaport for Southern California.

Incorporated on April 29th, 1892, the City was already well served by rail and steamship lines and was an early Port of Los Angeles. The lumber and shipping industries preceded the entrance of Pacific Electric Big Red Car Line. This contributed to the reputation of Redondo Beach as a resort recreation area for Southern California's rapidly expanding population.

The opening of the Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro ended the City's shipping trade. The city grew slowly during the Great Depression and World War II. During the 50's and 60's Redondo Beach came into its own. Once again it became a popular resort city, as well as a great place to live, work and play.



# TOURISM

## A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Not only is Redondo Beach a nice place to visit, it's also a great place to live — thanks to our visitors. Tourism creates jobs, stimulates the Redondo Beach economy, and enables our city to bask in the glitz of international glamour as one of the most desirable places to live in Southern California.

Tourism in Redondo Beach brings in millions of dollars annually with related jobs adding additional millions to our local economy. Tourism helps diversify and stabilize our local economy. These revenues play a very important part in maintaining and improving our quality of life here in Redondo Beach.

The primary way new visitors hear about our community is through the efforts of the Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, which promotes Redondo Beach as a travel destination for families, outdoor enthusiasts, history buffs, and anglers. The Bureau attracts travelers to the city by advertising in regional and national travel publications, World Wide Web, developing and distributing informative brochures, and by working with a network of outdoor and freelance writers to distribute information.

The Visitors Bureau is funded by a portion of the occupancy fees paid by guests at hotels and motels in our city. Funding does not come out of local citizens' pockets. The Visitors Bureau, in turn, spends this money to attract more tourists to our beautiful area. It also helps sponsor events such as our annual Lobster Festival and Super Bowl Sunday 10K Run.

Tourism brings several other benefits beyond the direct economic impact, so we see it as a key to our success in adding to the city's economy. Obviously, when visitors come and spend money in motels, restaurants and stores, it creates opportunities for people to start new businesses. Many of these businesses need to hire managers and other workers, and all of these businesses and their employees buy other goods and services in the local economy.

In addition, the amenities that attract tourists also improve the quality of life for people who live here. Our heritage sites offer cultural and educational programs, and our outdoor recreation facilities provide terrific family opportunities and help people relieve stress and stay in shape.

Our surveys show that many of our tourists are friends and family of local residents. Welcome them with open arms; these visitors ultimately benefit our community and our quality of life.

# A CENTURY OF HISTORY

*The information on Redondo Beach history is provided courtesy of Pat Botsai and the Redondo Beach Historical Museum and the Redondo Beach Historical Commission.*

## 1892

The City of Redondo Beach was incorporated, its population 688.

## 1900s

By the early 1900s the City had three commercial piers and was the foremost shipping point between San Francisco and San Diego. Redondo Beach, in addition to the lumber and shipping business, was becoming a major tourist attraction with the Pavilion; its Mandarin Ballroom and the Plunge, the largest salt water plunge in the world. For those unable to afford the Hotel, there was Tent City. Pacific Light and Power had constructed a steam generating plant and a new City Hall was built.



## 1910s

During the teens Union High School was opened and a Municipal Pier was constructed. Amusements along El Paseo, in addition to the Pavilion and Plunge, by now included dodge-em cars, shooting galleries, restaurants, a roller coaster and Loeff's Hippodrome, which was later moved onto the Pier.

## 1920s

In the '20s, Villa Tract (North Redondo) was annexed, the Hollywood Riviera area was developed and the City purchased the Hotel Redondo and its grounds. The Hotel, which had been unprofitable for many years, was torn down in 1924 and the area was dedicated as a City park. Monstad Pier was built.

## 1930s

The '30s brought a new library to City Park and the Horseshoe Pier was rebuilt. It was during this time that gambling was becoming a thriving business along the deteriorating El Paseo. For a short time toward the

end of the decade, the gambling ship "Rex" was moored a few miles off the coast. A water taxi from Monstad Pier made the trip in 20 minutes. The state closed this operation in 1939 and in 1940 gambling along El Paseo came to an end.

## 1940s

The '40s saw the beginning of World War II, the end of the Red Cars and the demolition of the Plunge. The old steam plant which had been abandoned for years was also demolished, leading to the start of construction of a new generating station by the Edison Company.

## 1950s

Aviation High School opened and South Bay Shopping Center was dedicated. Construction was completed on the breakwater extension. The breakwater built in 1939 was totally inadequate for the fierce storms which had caused havoc on occasions dating back to the 1800s.

## 1960s

During the 1960s Space Technology Labs (later to become Northrop Grumman) came to Redondo Beach and South Bay Hospital was dedicated, as was King Harbor.

## 1970s

Seaside Lagoon came in the '70s, as did redevelopment of the old downtown district along with the Municipal Pier improvements.

## 1980s

In the '80s Aviation High School was closed, Clifton Heights was annexed, the old South Bay Center was transformed into the Galleria at South Bay and the Pier suffered destruction from storms and fire.

## 1990s

The '90s provided a new library located adjacent to City Hall and a new Municipal Pier. The height of the breakwater was also increased.





## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

REDONDO BEACH STREET SIGNS TELL STORIES OF FAME, FORTUNE

By Dirk Broersma Staff writer, *The Daily Breeze*, © *The Daily Breeze*, August 23, 1981  
Reprinted courtesy of *The Daily Breeze*

What a place, this Redondo Beach. On almost every street corner you can find precious stones, tycoons, or the lovely females of a Spanish baron's family.

In south Redondo, you can find a Diamond, Ruby, Topaz, Opal, Sapphire, Garnet, Pearl and even Amethyst.

Want to meet the Spanish girls? They're waiting for you also on the streets of south Redondo. Girls from the Dominguez family like Anita, Lucia, Guadalupe, Helberta, Juanita and Francisca, to mention a few.

Want to cut a deal with the big boys? Head up to north Redondo. Vanderbilt is here. So is Carnegie. And Rockefeller, too. Don't forget Morgan - J.P. Morgan that is.

Well, OK. Truth is they're only the names of streets. It's doubtful these people ever visited Redondo Beach much less lived here. But the local developers and city officials apparently wanted to stay away from the boringly familiar names like Main or Pine or Central. And the themes they chose weren't based on the uninspiring number system.

Usually streets are named by developers of the tracts, according to Paul Connolly, city planner. "They usually name it after themselves or buddies of theirs," he said. For reasons unknown, the developers of north Redondo chose 19th century business tycoons after which to name their streets.

But one has to wonder why somebody would name a street after a shady character like James Fisk. This flamboyant financier conspired to corner the gold market with another man, Jay Gould, who used to have a street named after him in the city. (It's been changed to Artesia Boulevard.)

Their ploy led to the collapse of the market on a day that is known as Black Friday.

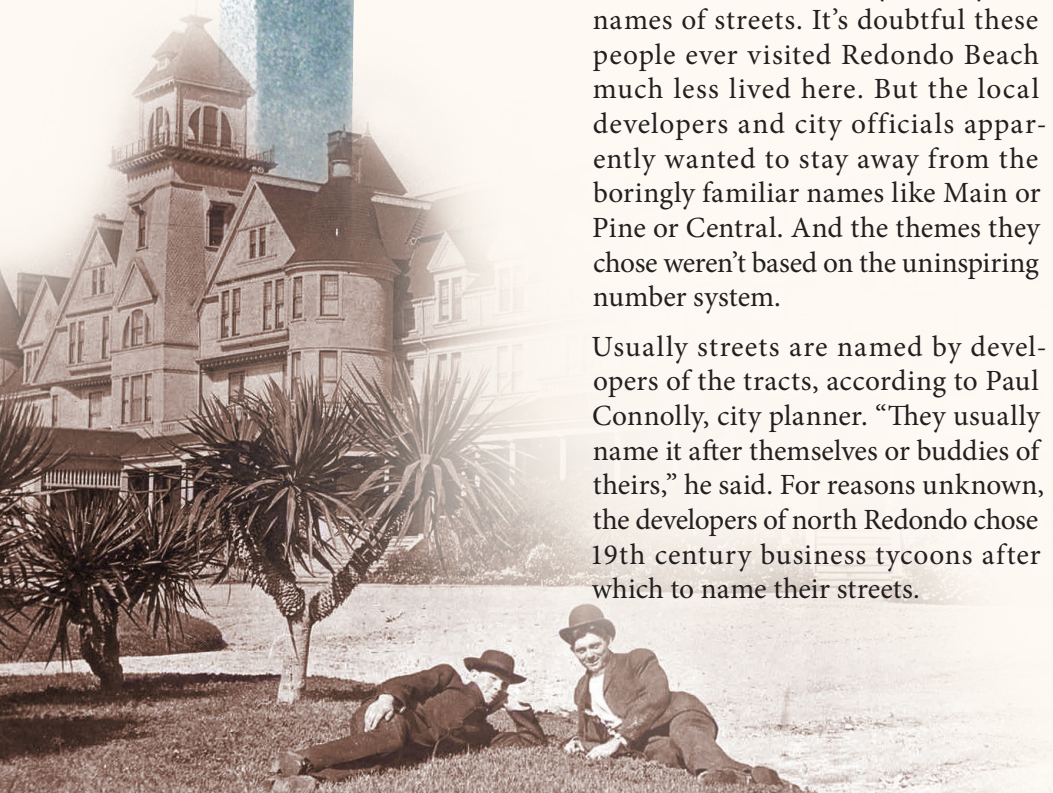
Besides corrupting public officials with it, Fisk also used his money to win the affections of Broadway showgirl Josie Mansfield. Fisk, however, was shot to death by a partner during a quarrel over the delightful Ms. Mansfield.

Gould, too, came into some bad luck. It seems the railroad man was forced out of his company after he issued fraudulent stock.

Then there's Phillip Danforth Armour, the famous meat packer who made nearly \$2 million by buying pork at depressed values in the Midwest and selling it for far more in New York.

Armour Lane residents may be interested to know the name of their street is tarnished by the "Embalmed Beef" scandal of the 1890's. Although nothing was proven, Armour's firm was accused of selling tainted meat to the U.S. military.

The man who claims to have received the first traffic ticket in the United



States also has a street named after him in north Redondo Beach – Elwood Haynes.

He built one of the first automobiles in the country and alleges that in 1895 he was stopped by a policeman who ordered him and his auto off the streets of Chicago. Haynes also discovered stainless steel.

George Mortimer Pullman, inventor of the Pullman sleeping car, is also immortalized in north Redondo. Unfortunately, his name also is associated with something unpleasant – one of the most violent labor strikes in this country's history.

The panic of 1893 forced Pullman to cut the wages of his employees by 25 percent. The workers were so outraged that 2,000 federal troops had to be sent in by President Grover Cleveland to quell the unruly mob.

And although Henry M. Flagler also has a street named after him in sunny Redondo, his real interest was in sunny Florida. Thanks to his association with John D. Rockefeller, Flagler was able to amass a considerable fortune which he used to pioneer the development of Florida as a vacation center. He built a chain of hotels along the coast and all of them were conveniently served by his railroad line.

The privilege of returning merchandise to department stores is credited to Marshall Field, who went from errand boy in a dry-goods store to entrepreneur extraordinaire. The famous Chicago department store which bears his name was a pioneer in customer service, liberal credit and the first department store restaurant. A lesser famous street in north Redondo also bears his name.

Close to Armour Lane is Van Horne Lane, named after Sir William Cornelius Van Horne. He directed construction of Canada's first transcontinental railroad and was knighted in 1898.

Other tycoons immortalized on streets in north Redondo include sugar magnate Klaus Spreckels, New York financier and speculator Perry Belmont, department store man John Havemeyer, and railroad men Leland Stanford, Henry Huntington and Edward Henry Harriman.

Local men of considerably less wealth also have been honored with streets named after them in Redondo Beach. Usually they were large landowners like Charles Dow, Campbell Johnston, L.T. Garnsey, H.B. Ainsworth, and Emil Meyer.

Oldtimers may remember streets in Redondo that don't exist anymore like Onya, Felicia, Prudencia, Benita, Commercial and Chautaugua. These streets were either subdivided into oblivion or erased by the redevelopment of the downtown.

Then there are streets that have been renamed for a variety of reasons.

Krutchmitt Lane was changed to Ford Lane because residents there thought it too long and hard to pronounce, according to City Clerk Fred Arnold. Bataan Lane was Voorsanger Lane until it was changed because of anti-German sentiment during World War II. Broadway used to be Dominguez Street, but was changed because it was hard to spell. For reasons unknown, Marguerita Street was changed to Knob Hill.

Because of the many churches along Knob Hill, proposals to name it Church Street or Brotherhood Lane have been made over the years, but have been rejected by councilmen.

The Esplanade used to be called Ocean View. Gould was changed to Redondo Riverside Boulevard before it was renamed Artesia Boulevard, according to Arnold. And Prospect used to be called Tulita and Ramona streets.

There are some streets that show on the map but don't exist anymore – or

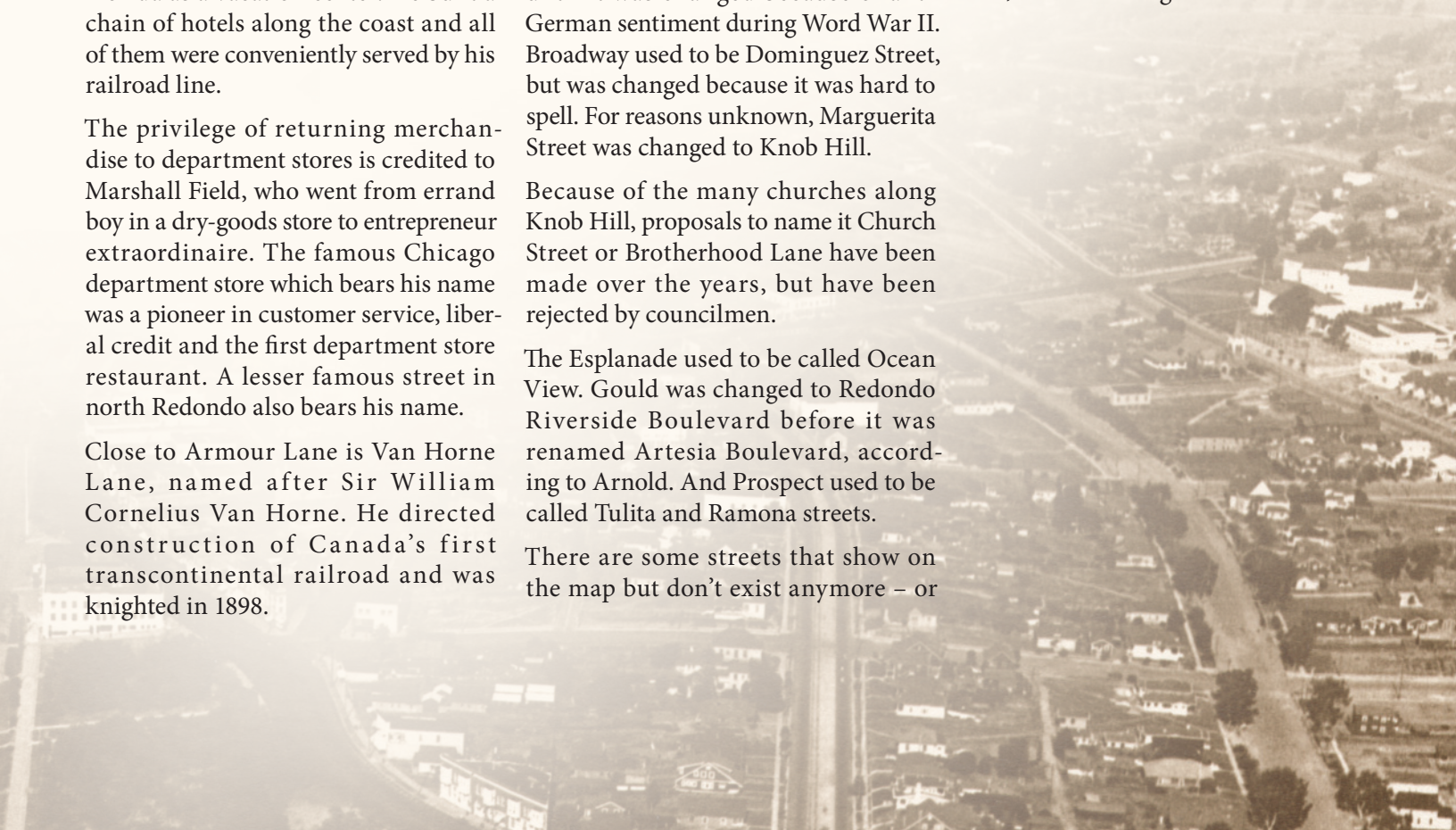
never did. Like 10th street. It sits under the generating plant of the Southern California Edison Co.

Or Cheryl Street, named after the daughter of former Mayor David Hayward and wife of former City Councilman Robert Westerfield. Cheryl Street was once planned to be built through the Brookside Village apartment complex but never went in because the complex was redesigned. Hayward can't explain why it is on the map.

Another former mayor, however, had better luck getting a street named after his daughter. Right after his daughter Mary Ann was born, then-Councilman Bill Czuleger got approval from his fellow councilmen to name a street in north Redondo after her. But the mayor at the time vetoed the approval.

But Czuleger was persistent, continuing to raise the issue. Each time, however, the reluctant mayor thwarted the effort. This continued until the mayor went on vacation and the resourceful Czuleger raised the issue once more in his absence.

"He stayed away too long and it became law," boasts Czuleger.



# FAST FACTS

WEATHER  
(average)

**63°F TO 73°F**

POPULATION  
(as of January 1, 2007)\*

**67,495**

SIZE

**6.35 square miles**

NEIGHBORING CITIES

Torrance, Hermosa Beach, Manhattan, Beach, Hawthorne, Lawndale

MEDIAN PRICE OF HOMES SOLD\*\*

**\$835,000**

HOUSING UNITS\*\*\*

**30,478**

EMPLOYMENT\*\*\*

Management

**53.1%**

Sales/Office

**27.1**

Construction/Maintenance

**6.9%**

Production/Transportation/  
Material Moving

**4.7%**

Service

**10.3%**

LABOR FORCE\*\*\*

**39,914**

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Beach Cities Health District, The Cheesecake Factory, City of Redondo Beach, Crowne Plaza Redondo Beach, Nordstrom, Northrop Grumman, Target, U.S. Post Office

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME\*\*\*

**\$82,744**

CENSUS & DEMOGRAPHIC  
INFORMATION (1900-2000)

## Population Growth

Year	Population	% Increase
1900	855	---
1910	2,935	243.3
1920	4,913	67.4
1930	9,347	90.3
1940	13,092	40.1
1950	25,226	92.7
1960	46,986	86.3
1970	56,075	13.0
1980	57,102	1.8
1990	60,167	5.4
2000	63,261	5.1