

TRACKS

A Publication of the Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends

June–August
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The Legend and the Legacy

Goodbye, Frank. Hundreds knew you as a man of principle, a man of good humor. We mourn your passing deeply. Thousands more mourned after reading your life's achievements in newspaper accounts following your death in April. We relived the journey of your battles to preserve Upper Newport Bay. Those early battles in a long war that consumed so much of your time back in the 1960's and 1970's.



Above: Supervisor Tom Wilson shares his memories about Frank and the importance of what the Robinson's accomplished. Right: This collage, part of a display set up for Frank's memorial service, speaks for itself.

We have all benefited from the fruits of your labor. I shudder to think what might have happened to our Bay had you not married Frances or moved to Newport Beach in 1962; had you not made the decision to follow through when your son reported that

access to the Bay was being restricted, instead of shrugging it off.

The rest of us thank you again for giving so much of yourselves to a cause, for drafting so many others to take notice and join the dedicated few. (And make dozens of lifelong friends to boot.) Thank you for having the spunk, the intelligence, and the congenial personality that converted many skeptics during a time when others passed on helping because a battle appeared to be lost. The tide turned, didn't it? As you'd hoped it would.

Thank you for serving as the ultimate role model to your children, your friends, your co-workers, your community, and the nation. In a time before we celebrated an "Earth Day," you demonstrated so beautifully how to affect change within the system by immersing yourself in the process.

Thank you for leaving us the ultimate legacy, and the perfect mechanism to remember you and your wonderful wife for the rest of our lives. We can each choose to enjoy a visit to the Back Bay in our own ways. We can wonder at the multitude of wildlife existing so close to our doors, and realize how precious a commodity open space has become. Thank you for helping to preserve that open space, on behalf of generations of resident and migratory wildlife from Central America to Alaska.

Thank you for showing us how a few volunteers can transform the world we live in. You inspired me to reach inside myself and find parts of me I never knew were there.

Thank you for cautioning us that the work to save the bay is never done. Each year new volunteers join seasoned veterans to lead tours, restore degraded habitat, and tackle the multitude of tasks at hand. The ones who join next year, and from now on, will not have the pleasure of meeting you, Frank, and seeing that smile, or hearing one of the many jokes you often shared. But they will have the pleasure of helping to preserve Upper Newport Bay.

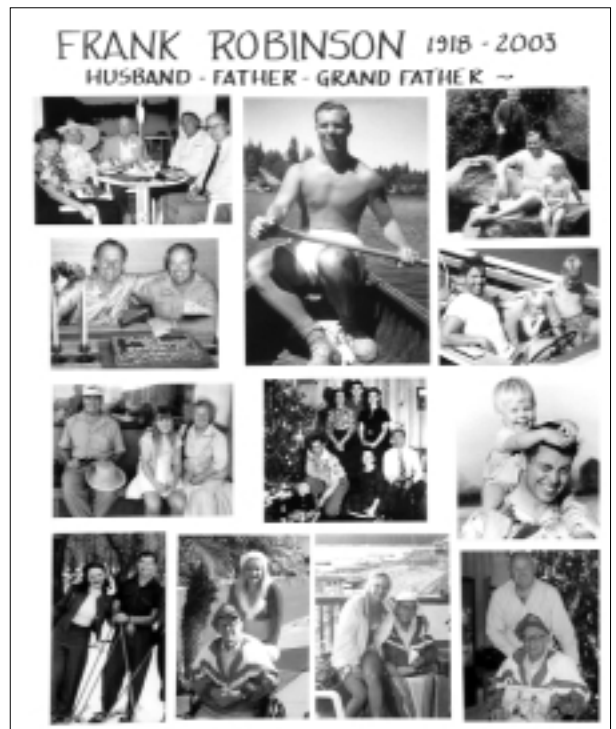
Your spirit lives on, Frank, in ways too numerous to recount. Thank you for sharing your journey with us in so many ways and for so long. We'll miss you.

"I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days in trying to prolong them. I shall use my time." Jack London, *Jack London's Tales of Adventure*.

Amy Litton

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The Peace of Wild Things

by Wendell Berry

When despair in the world grows in me
and I wake in the night
at the least sound
in fear of what my life
and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down
where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water
and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief.

I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light.

For a time I rest in the grace of the world
and am free.

Tern photo © Russ Kerr, majestyofbirds.com

Restoring the Peace of Wild Things

My work with the Back Bay grants me the peace of wild things. Yesterday I enjoyed one of those classic Bay sunsets—brilliant rose sky and orange flecks dancing on still waters—I found myself in the company of wild things. Endangered California Least Terns snuggling on their island (NBNFs made it sandy for nesting in April), endangered Salt Marsh Bird's Beak growing a glorious field of white flower puffs near the Big Canyon restoration site, threatened Belding's Savannah Sparrows zipping across the bike path and chattering in the pickleweed, and to top it off, I saw my first Light-footed Clapper Rail (UNB hosts 80% of this endangered bird's national population) coily weaving its way through the cordgrass. Being in the presence of wild things is a gift to cherish

Fish and Game Senior Volunteers Welcomed

A graduation ceremony was held at Shellmaker Island on March 21, 2003 for the twenty Orange County residents enrolled in the third Senior Volunteer Academy of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The Senior Volunteer Program was conceived by Mervin Hee, Assistant Chief, South Coast Region, just over a year ago and is already working well in San Diego.

The program is the first of its kind in California to focus on the use of trained Senior Volunteers to provide countywide wildlife and environmental resource education to local communities. The program will target assessed environmental education needs of communities throughout Orange County.



Senior Volunteers add value through their maturity in character, wisdom and life experience. They are a minimum of 50 years old and serve 24 hours or more each month. They have no powers of arrest or law enforcement authority. They will focus on educating the public regarding the importance of ethics in natural resource conservation. One of the mottos of the program, is "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." The program emphasizes the importance of

and share, one that many of us seek out during troubled times.

Thankfully, the Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends are doing their part to restore the "peace of wild things" by conserving the beauty and biodiversity of ecosystems native to Upper Newport Bay. With over 1,000 wonderful volunteers and strong community support, we have removed 21,000 pounds of invasive plants, planted 400 natives, and propagated 300 seedlings. Monitors have received training to record our successes and document problems that we can solve in the future. I encourage you to get involved, but most of all I encourage you to take time to experience "the peace of wild things."

Kristina Finstad
California Coastal Commission

the public coexisting with wildlife and natural resources. Equally important is the role of the Senior Volunteers in networking with other volunteer organizations and the public to achieve mutual conservation objectives. Some of these Volunteer Organizations include Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends, Bolsa Chica Conservancy, California State Parks, Crystal Cove and the County of Orange Coastal Facilities Operations, Harbors, Beaches and Parks (Marine Life Refuge Program). The DFG program will also be working with other senior volunteer programs that may have wildlife or resource related issues in their cities.

The DFG Orange County Senior Volunteer chapter looks forward to basing its operations at Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve. Satellite offices are currently being set up at Laguna Woods City Hall and Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. The program wishes to thank all the DFG personnel and organizations that participated in the academy curriculum and supported this program. A special thanks to the City of Laguna Woods for providing office space.

Trained to observe and report, the Senior Volunteers are an extra set of eyes and ears for DFG wardens, biologists and public officials. Senior Volunteers increase field time for warden investigations and patrols. They additionally free up more time for biologists to do management and research, and for other volunteer organizations to focus on their core activities. The Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends have welcomed the Senior Volunteers as partners in educating the public about the ecological value of Upper Newport Bay and how to protect it.

Lt. Kent Smirl
Department of Fish and Game



Upper Newport Bay Calendar of Events

June–August 2003

SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Kayak Tours — Every Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Join a trained naturalist for a guided kayak tour of the Back Bay. Meet at the Newport Dunes Resort. Fee is \$20 per person. NBNF members pay \$10. For kayak reservations call (949) 729-1150 or (800) 585-0747. Location Code: NDR

Steward Days — Every Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.

Green thumbs welcome! Encourage the Bay's unique genetics to move-in at our restoration sites by collecting seeds & propagating plants. Meet on Shellmaker Island at the exotic hut. For information call (949) 640-0286. Location Code: MSC

Canoe the Back Bay — Every Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Join a trained naturalist for a guided 2-hour canoe tour of the Back Bay. Fee is \$10 per person. For reservations call (949) 923-2269. Location Code: MSC

Monthly Naturalist Meeting — June 5, 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Join the Naturalists for a 3-projector slide presentation on butterflies and insects of the Bay. Refreshments at 6:30 p.m., presentation at 7:00 p.m. Free. For information call (949)923-2269. Location code: MIC

Walking Tour — June 7 & 21; July 5 & 19; August 2 & 16, 9:00 a.m.

Join a trained naturalist for a 2-hour walk along the bay. Bring binoculars and sun protection. Information (949) 923-2269. No reservations needed. Free. Location Code: MSC

Train for a Day, Be a Volunteer — June 7 or August 9, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Volunteer at Upper Newport Bay and be a part of this dynamic estuary! Please call (949)923-2295 to reserve a spot and find out how you can get involved. Location code: MIC

Astronomy Night — June 7; July 5, 8:00–10:00 p.m.

Join members of the Orange County Astronomers for an inspirational tour of the night sky. Open to all ages and includes observation with telescopes. Suggested donation of \$2. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Toddler Time "Birds" — June 18, 9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

Join a Park Ranger for this parent and child playtime, with a bird theme. \$5 per child. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Electric Boat Tour of the Bay — June 21; July 12; August 9, 11:00 a.m.

Join a naturalist on a 2 hour guided tour of the bay on our comfortable electric pontoon boat. Fee is \$10 per person. For reservations call (949) 923-2269. Location Code: MSC

Fishing for Science — June 27; July 25; August 29 Sorry SOLD OUT.

Fish for rays, sharks and fish off our dock after a barbeque dinner and a quick preparatory lesson. Fee \$15 per person. For information and registration contact the Sea Base at (949) 642-5031. Location code: MSC

Marine Life Inventory — June 28; July 26; August 30, 8:15–11:30 a.m.

High school and college students will participate in a variety of marine life monitoring programs in Newport Bay. Reservations (949) 642-5031. Free. Location Code: MSC

Evening Marsh Prowl — June 28; July 26; August 30, 7:30 p.m.

Join a naturalist on a guided tour of the bay at dusk on our electric pontoon boat. Use spotlights and binoculars to search for owls and other night creatures. Fee is \$15. Reservations (949) 923-2269. Location Code: MSC

Restoration Teamwork — June 28; July 26; August 23, 9:00 a.m.

Volunteers are needed to help remove invasive non-native plants and plant coastal sage scrub in order to promote native wildlife. All ages welcome! Meet at the Interpretive Center parking lot. Call (949) 640-0286 for more information. Location code: MIC

Shark Camp at the Bay—June 28; July 26; August 30 Sorry SOLD OUT.

Learn about the lives of sharks and rays while eating dinner around the campfire. Then help catch, tag and release them right off our dock. Fee is \$18. Call the Boy Scout Sea Base at (949) 642-5031 for information and reservations. Location Code: MSC

SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Twilight Canoe Tour — June 28; July 26; Aug. 30 Sorry SOLD OUT.

Join naturalists and the Sea Scouts for a beautiful tour of the Reserve and dinner around the campfire at Shellmaker Island afterwards. Fee is \$18. Call (949) 642-5031 for information and reservations. Location Code: MSC

Mysterious Water World — July 12, Aug 16, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Have you ever wondered what animals live in the saltwater freshwater mixture we call estuary? Explore the mysterious water world of the Upper Newport Bay and the unique creatures that live here. Ages 5 and up. \$5 per person. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Toddler Time "Butterflies"— July 16, 9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

Join a Park Ranger for this parent and child playtime with a Butterfly theme. \$5 per child. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

The Lizard Wizard — July 19, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

Come touch the scales of a python, stroke the spines on an iguana's back, tap the shell of a giant tortoise, tickle the feet of a millipede and more. Learn many facts and myths surrounding these important Reptiles. Ages 6 and up, \$10 per child. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location: MIC

Twilight Picnic Dinner Cruise — July 19; August 16, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Join a naturalist on a guided tour of the bay at twilight on our electric pontoon boat. A picnic dinner will be provided, donated by Chamagne's Market of Newport Beach. Fee is \$25. For reservations call (949) 923-2269. Location Code: MSC

Snakey Scales and Snakey Tales — July 26, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Join us for a fascinating look into the snake world at Upper Newport Bay. Dispel the myths of the Gopher Snake, learn about the easy-going Rosy Boa and more! Ages 6 and up, \$5 per participant .Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Predator and Prey — July 30, 10:00–11:15 a.m.

Predators have special adaptations for capturing their prey and prey species have special adaptations to avoid being captured. Fun games and activities! Ages 6 and up, \$5 per participant. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Toddler Time "Hungry Animals" — August 13, 10:00–10:45a.m.

Join us for story time, hands-on fun and movement in this parent and child (3–4 year olds) exploration of the food chain. \$5 per child. Prepayment and pre-registration required two weeks prior. Call (949)923-2295. Location code: MIC

Dr. Sue's Traveling Insect Zoo "Silkworms" — August 13, 7:00–8:30p.m.

Learn all about the lifecycle of the fabulous silkworm, Bombyx mori, a very special moth species. Make your own wonderful lifecycle diorama using real mulberry branch and a real silk cocoon! Ages 5 and up, \$10 per child. Call (949)923-2295 to register. Location code: MIC

Toddler Time "Native Americans"— August 20, 9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.

Join a Park Ranger for this parent and child playtime with a Native American theme. \$5 per child. call (949)923-2295. Location code: MIC

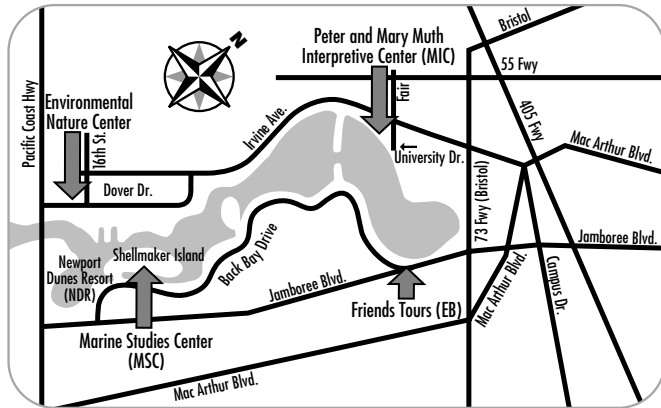
SPECIAL EVENTS

Ocean Discovery Day 2003 — June 14, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Join the Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends, City of Newport Beach, Orange Coast College and Orange County Sea Base in a day of ocean and wetlands discovery. Activities include touch tanks, water tours, shark and ray exhibit, ocean tide pool exploration, and estuary mud discovery. Free. For information call (949) 923-2269. Location code: MSC

Cleanup Day — September 20th, 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Join Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends and other local volunteers to help clean trash from the Back Bay. Meet at the Interpretive Center. Transportation provided to other sites around the bay. Donated refreshments provided to all participants. For information call (949) 923-2295. Location code: MIC



LOCATION KEY

Interpretive Center (MIC)
 Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center
 2301 University Drive
 Newport Beach, CA 92660

Marine Studies Center (MSC)
 600 Shellmaker
 Newport Beach, CA 92660

WEB SITES

Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends: www.newportbay.org
 Peter & Mary Muth Interpretive Center:
www.ocparks.com/unbic www.newportbay.org
 Department of Fish & Game: www.dfg.ca.gov
 Environmental Nature Center (ENC): www.ENCcenter.org
 County of Orange: www.ocparks.com/uppernewportbay/
 California Coastal Commission: www.coastal.ca.gov

TRACKS CREDITS

Contributing Writers: Jim Cokas,
 Kristina Finstad, Amy Litton, Lt. Kent Smirl
 Design & Layout: Debora Brown
 Event Calendar: Sue McIntire,
 Candice McIntyre, Grace Yick,
 Marilyn La Bolita

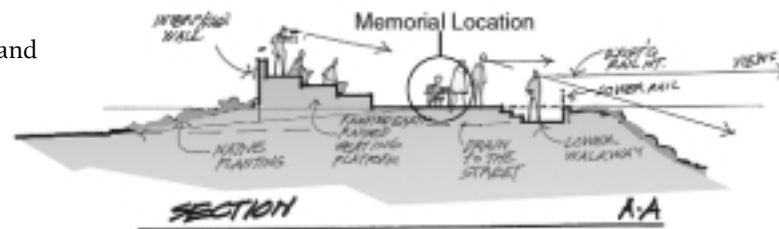
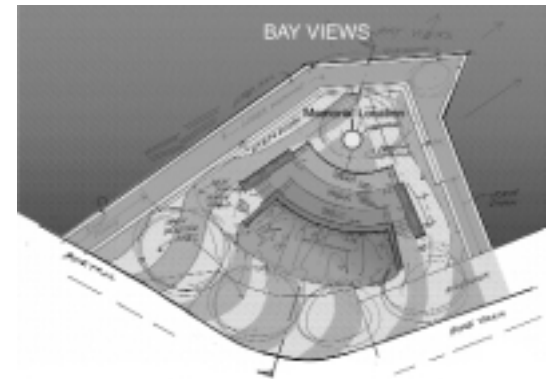
Contributing to the Robinson Memorial Fund

Honoring Frank and Frances in a Memorable and Lasting Way

Plans have been developed by Ron Yeo FAIA Architect to restore the 1/2 acre Vista Point site at the junction of East Bluff and Back Bay Drives. This site has served for over 25 years as the main staging area and entry point for guided tours offered by the Friends of Newport Bay. Located at that site will be a permanent display with a plaque of appreciation for Frank and Frances Robinson (designed by Jim Cokas).

These plans were developed in consultation with Frank and his son Jay over a 12-month period prior to Franks passing. He wanted the site to be enhanced to serve the recreational, educational and aesthetic needs of the surrounding community.

We need your help to make this dream of Frank's come true. Funds are needed now to complete the planning, restore the site and construct the seating platform and display plaque. We urge you to contribute to the Robinson Memorial Fund and help us make this important project a reality. For a more detailed description of this project, please visit our website at www.newportbay.org.



Top: This illustration is an aerial view of the Vista Point. It shows the location of the appreciation plaque, the seating platforms and landscaping concepts.

Above: This illustration shows a cross section of the site designed by Ron Yeo. It depicts the construction of a small raised seating platform to be used for nature talks and casual seating for bird watching.

Please mail your contributions to:
 Newport Bay Naturalists & Friends
 PO Box 10804
 Newport Beach, CA 92658-5008.



This is a rendering of the permanent display that will be installed at the Back Bay Vista Point Site. It shows the circular plaque of appreciation and the support stand that will hold it.

