



# THE HISTORY OF MARINERS

part I

## AN AFTER-SCHOOL LIBRARY STATION BEGINS IN THE 50'S

- The Mariners Branch story began in the 1950's.
- Hoag Hospital, Beckman Instruments and Philco Ford personnel moved to Westcliff, Dover Shores and Bay crest. Families moved into the Back Bay area and Newport Heights and a need for a library developed.
- A library "station," was housed in Horace Ensign Junior High School. This was the nucleus of the Mariners Branch Library.

## COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING LAUNCHES NEW LIBRARY PLANS

- In 1961, a two-year fundraising effort spearheaded by the Friends of the Library began for a 6,000 square-foot library building with the attached Vincent Jorgensen Community Room.
- Major contributors included the Friends of the Newport Beach Public Library, the Assistance League, the Business and Professional Women's Club, Ebell and Junior Ebell Clubs, Ford Motor Company, Kiwanis, Soroptimist, Thursday Club, Woman's Civic League, Chamber of Commerce's Women's Division, the Merrill Butlers, Richard Beesom and the Mariners School Parent Faculty Organization.

## THE LARGEST BRANCH IN NEWPORT BEACH OPENS IN 1963

- Mariners Branch Library was dedicated on April 1, 1963 and became the largest branch in Newport.
- The total cost of the Mariners Branch Library was \$100,000.
- Branch Librarian Adele Manell stocked 10,000 titles in the collection.
- The Friends of the Library presented the Mariners Branch with a special gift of \$15,000.
- City Librarian Dorothea Sheely and the administrative staff relocated to Mariners.

## CITY GROWTH OVERWHELMS LIBRARY SPACE AND FACILITIES

- In time, library patios were enclosed to provide additional working space. One patio became the City Librarian's office. In 1987, another patio was remodeled to become a children's area for story times and picture books.
- In order for the Mariners Branch Library to grow, a special election was held in 1966 that increased the library tax from the established \$.10 maximum per \$100 assessed property valuation to \$.15. It passed overwhelmingly.
- Soon after the completion of the Mariners Branch Library, the Newport-Mesa Unified School District came into existence. Both cities wished to have intercity library cooperation.
- In 1970, parking became an issue and a small area was designated as off-street parking to facilitate use of the Mariners Branch Library, the Vincent Jorgensen Community Room and Mariners Park.
- The public's use of the Mariners Branch Library continued to grow and demand for services overwhelmed the capacity of the building.



# THE HISTORY OF MARINERS

part 2

## PLANS FOR A NEW MARINERS LAUNCHED

- In 1999, the Newport Beach Board of Library Trustees appointed a community-wide Library Planning Task Force which determined that the Mariners Branch was inadequate to serve the surrounding population.
- At the same time, the Newport-Mesa Unified School District was conducting its strategic planning.
- In 2000, a Public Library/School District Committee formed and developed the goal to build the Mariners Joint-Use Library. They envisioned a library serving both schoolchildren and the general public.
- On March 7, 2000, voters passed Proposition 14, the Library Bond Act which funded joint-use libraries.
- Led by co-chairs Theresa Chase and Chris Wilkerson, the committee established the “Build a Mariners Library Fund” in Spring 2001 to raise the money needed to qualify for a 3.2 million dollar grant from the California State Library’s office.
- Marian Bergeson, former California Secretary of Education joined the fund-raising committee as Honorary Chair and was a featured speaker at a rally in Mariners Park held to generate support.
- Between March 1 and May 31, 2002, the community came together for car washes, bake sales, fund-raising parties and other activities in pursuit of the \$1,000,000 fundraising goal.
- Local philanthropists Donna and John Crean contributed \$500,000 to the burgeoning effort, and the city was successful in its bid for the grant.
- In Fall 2004, construction on the new Donna and John Crean Mariners Branch Library began.
- On April 20, 2006, the new Donna and John Crean Mariners Branch Library was dedicated. Mayor Don Webb made opening remarks for the ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Closing remarks were by the Honorable Marian Bergeson.

### NEWPORT BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

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