

# LA JOLLA LIGHT

Enlightening La Jolla Since 1913

## Ten Questions: Author shares La Jolla stories

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Dr. Linda H. Pequegnat, a retired research scientist in marine biology and biological oceanography, received her bachelor's degree in zoology from Pomona College in Claremont.

She came to La Jolla in 1954 when she was awarded a National Science Foundation Fellowship to study at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography for her M.S. degree in biological oceanography.

She moved to Texas in 1963 where her husband, Dr. Willis Pequegnat, was a professor and she was a research scientist in the Oceanography Department at Texas A&M University, where she completed studies for her Ph.D. in biological oceanography.



Linda H. Pequegnat, retired research scientist and author  
Photo by: Courtesy

After retiring from her research work, she worked in real estate in La Jolla. She thinks that real estate in La Jolla is probably more interesting and exciting than in most any other place.

When she returned to the San Diego area in the 1980s after all those years in Texas, she realized the importance of knowing about the history of the place where one lives, so she began research on her book, "This Day in San Diego History," which has a story for each day of the year from San Diego's past and was recently published by Sunbelt Publications.

### **What brought you to La Jolla?**

I first came to La Jolla in 1954 as a graduate student at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where I received my master's in biological oceanography. I fell in love with La Jolla immediately.

Even though rentals were cheaper in other nearby areas, I "bit the bullet" and rented a one-bedroom furnished apartment in La Jolla Shores that was within walking distance to Scripps for \$100 a month! Yes, that was high rent at that time in 1954 for a single person who was a graduate student. I always enjoyed walking along the beach to and from the Scripps campus every day.

### **What makes La Jolla special to you?**

Its beautiful natural setting on the ocean with beaches, bays, coves and cliffs; the winding streets that follow the topography of the land; its interesting and diverse neighborhoods instead of the look-alike homes that we see in so many of the newer suburban developments; the many small locally owned businesses and restaurants with their friendly attitudes that make shopping and eating in La Jolla such a pleasure.

### **If you could snap your fingers and have it done, what might you add, subtract or improve in La Jolla?**

Keep working on the traffic problems and the parking problems. Keep up efforts to preserve historic structures. Reconsider, yet again, La Jolla becoming a separate city that could be self-determining--like Del Mar--and not dependent on the San Diego City Council for important decisions on our welfare.

### **Who or what inspires you?**

The many generous people of La Jolla who contribute to its welfare such as: creating "The Map" and rebuilding the Children's Playground at La Jolla Shores beach. The generous donations made by specific individuals to restore the beach fire pits and to plant new palm trees at Scripps Park. The fine efforts of the La Jolla Historical Society to bring awareness of La Jolla's past history.

**If you hosted a dinner party for eight, whom (living or deceased) would you invite?**

My deceased husband, Willis Pequegnat; my co-ministers, Tom and Carolyn Owen-Towle; the Dalai Lama; Mahatma Gandhi; Martin Luther King Jr.; Winston Churchill; and Leonardo da Vinci. I'm sure there would be fascinating conversations about science, philosophy, religion, ethics and politics.

**What are you currently reading?**

"Homestretch - The Art of Finishing Life Well" by Tom Owen-Towle, a book full of thoughtful insights into finding and promoting meaning in our lives in our older years.

**What is your most prized possession?**

Family and special friends, and family photos and genealogical information about our family's roots left to me by my mother.

**What do you do for fun?**

Walk on the beach; watch sunsets over the ocean from my roof deck in La Jolla Shores; explore interesting areas of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park; yoga; going to lectures, plays and operas; and travel--especially to southern France once a year and to some of my favorite places in California every few years--like Yosemite, Death Valley and driving up the central California coast to Carmel and Monterey on state Highway 1.

**Describe your greatest accomplishment.**

Describing and publishing on more than 15 new species of deep-sea shrimps and crabs previously unknown to science during my years as a research scientist in marine biology.

Also completing my new book, "This Day in San Diego History," recently published by Sunbelt Publications, my first attempt at historical research about the place I love best - San Diego. There are also many stories about La Jolla in this book, which has a story for every day of the year from past years in San Diego area history.

**What is your motto or philosophy of life?**

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Spread good will and compassion; there is already too much hate, fear, greed and selfishness in the world.