

# THE ISLAND BRIDGE

OCT-DEC  
2021

*The Only Official Balboa Island Newsletter - Published by the Balboa Island Improvement Association since 1919*





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Terry Janssen*

I feel a sense of freedom and I'm sure you do as well now that we are mask free. By the time you read this we would have had our Townhall meeting at the Fire House; the first in two years. What a great turn out. It was interesting to hear that construction of the underground utilities vaults on the west end will commence in September with a competition date of early January, 2022...that will be a huge Island improvement with some disruption. Then comes the new drainage system and not to be missed the balance of Balboa Island will get underground utilities, followed, by resurfaced streets and alleys. I want to thank all of you that worked so hard to assure that the underground utilities district passed...and that it did with a landslide of a 2 to 1 win. It doesn't get much better than that. This is a perfect example of one word in our Association's name "Improvement" that rings loud and clear. I am proud to say that your Association Board of Directors unanimously voted to support this effort.

The Sandcastle Contest in July was a huge success.

**Chris Crosson**, Sandcastle Professor, lead the charge with more participation than in any previous year. There was all kinds of creativity from the little squirts to adults. Each participant had their own ideas including the parents with their helping hands. Not only did we have a record number of participants the bay front sidewalk was packed with on-lookers like a neighborhood social.

There were five Concerts at the park this year and all were standing room only. I thought I'd be tricky by putting my chairs out at 8:30 am Friday Morning, to my surprise there was already little room left on the basketball court or grass. This is another Balboa Island Improvement Association sponsored event designed to get neighbors reconnecting and making new acquaintances. As many of you know this series is a product of **Penny Rodheim** and **Lee Pearl**. Your host for our concerts as you may know was **Jack Callahan**, yes Coconut Jack and he even sang a duo and was dressed as a Beatle for the British Invasion. In my opinion both his wig and black sport coat were a Salvation Army reject.

Recently, the City of Newport Beach sent all property owners on the Island(s) information on the Flood Insurance Rate Map Determination. On the reverse side of the City's letter are instructions how to obtain the FIRM Determination. If you have a lender on your property it is important for you to complete the request to determine if your property is outside the flood zone which could cause your lender not to require you to purchase Flood Insurance saving you big \$\$\$\$\$\$.

**Happy Fall!**

# THE ISLAND BRIDGE

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Photo: Jon Remy

North Bay Front Morning

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## MERCHANT LIAISON

Jack Callahan

## Featured Pot —Betty Christy



CATHLEEN FRITZ

Agate Avenue and North Bayfront

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# SUMMER 21 FUN





*Christine, Sandy, Hostess Witch Cynthia, Judi, Paula, Chris*

## Fall on the Island

by Cynthia Shafer

Sitting outside enjoying lunch at the VI with my Dad the other day, I was looking down Marine with its beautiful Eucalyptus Trees and newly refurbished benches, watching people happily coming in and out of Irvine Ranch Market, people coming over the bridge from a walk on little Island, people riding by on their bikes and people stopping to look at the BIA community board on the side of Arbor Realty. I was reminded what a special community we live in. I had started my day with an island walk and a great cold brew at Succulent Coffee, went to an exhilarating Pilates hour at Gerda Pilates, stopped to look at a painting at Huse Skelly Gallery, bought some décor pumpkins at the BI museum, dropped some mail off at our quaint Post Office and it wasn't even noon. How lucky we are to be able to do all this without even leaving our beautiful Island. Fall is the time we locals get our Island to ourselves, and it is the time our local stores need our support more than ever. In order to keep the luxury of being able to shop, dine and live within a few blocks of our homes, we need to shop and support local as much as we can.

We have some great news this month as after 34 years **Just Basics** will be expanding and moving into the Island Home space at 313 Marine in November. Owner **Debbie Nelson** says this beautiful new space will have “everything you love about Basics and more!”, and I am so excited to welcome them as our new Royal Hen neighbor. Their space at 308 Marine will be filled by the expanding **Hjom** store in January. Owners **Rachel Morrison** and **Katie Lange** will be gifting “The Little Book of Hygge” with every \$50 purchase in January as a thank you for all the Island’s continued support. Two great additions to our 300 block! Coffee!! I know we are all eager for **Huskin’s Coffee** to open and pending equipment deliveries, their owner **Kent Huskins** hopes to be open mid November. Can’t wait to meet you all there and get our coffee buzz on!

# Merchant UPDATE

On Agate great things are also popping up as **Kim Rossall** has opened **Balboa Island Gallery**, with a grand opening planned Thursday, November 4th at 6:00. She plans to have art and jewelry and hold lectures, demonstrations and classes in this light airy space on 121 Agate. Across the street, **Heather Burbich** and **“Once Upon an Island”** mermaid fame will open up “Once Upon a Christmas” with Santa, his elves and more. I got to see a sneak preview and it is truly magical, please read her feature on page 9 and take advantage of this magical holiday pop up. The Balboa Island Merchant’s Association will be holding a Halloween promotion with safe trick or treating for local families in stores and restaurants on the 31st, please check our Instagram @VisitBalboaIsland for details. Lastly, we will happily welcome **The Golden Rabbit** Vietnamese restaurant next to Basilic towards the end of the year. We have so many unique businesses on Marine and Agate and I encourage you to explore and enjoy them all this holiday season. In closing, please support our Museum by attending or sponsoring the great event below held at the historic FUN ZONE across the bay. **Book now!**

BALBOA ISLAND MUSEUM NEWPORT BEACH

**FUN ZONE**  
FESTIVAL  
IT'S GOOD TO BE A KID AGAIN

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2021  
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

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SCAN ME FOR TICKETS

# BALBOA ISLAND CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES

*by Penny Rodheim*

Classical concerts will resume performances at St. John Vianney's Chapel on Balboa Island. The season opener will be the multi-talented **Aviara Trio**. Comprised of pianist, Ines Irawati, violinist, Robert Schmitzky and cellist, Erin Breene, this ensemble has delighted Balboa Island concert goers since their initial Balboa Island performance several years ago. With credentials from the Juilliard School, Yale University, Cleveland Institute of Music, the trio commands a mastery of chamber music compositions. We are so very honored to have them return to open our 2021 Classical Concert season.

**OCTOBER 19, 2021** – Tuesday; 7:00pm-8:00pm; St. John Vianney's Chapel; \$15/per person. Tickets: Balboa Island Museum or online: [balboaislandnb.org](http://balboaislandnb.org)

**The Le Van Family Musicians** return for a Holiday Musical Celebration. This much loved and incredibly talented family will delight us with holiday music from past and present.

**DECEMBER 21, 2021** – Tuesday; 7:00pm-8:00pm; St. John Vianney's Chapel; \$15/per person. Tickets: Balboa Island Museum or online: [balboaislandnb.org](http://balboaislandnb.org)



## 4th Edition Cookbook

*by Annette Gierman*

**A Taste of Balboa Island** is our 4th edition of our Balboa Island Cookbook. We received 212 recipes from neighbors and friends of Balboa Island. We are hoping to receive our new cookbook about November 1st and it will be sold at the Balboa Island Museum at 210 Marine Ave. as well as other locations to be determined. Our new cookbook would make a wonderful holiday gift. Thank you to the **Balboa Island Improvement Association (BIIA)** for funding our cookbook project.

A Taste of  
Balboa Island





# Seymour BEEK

— *a lifetime of sailing*

*Friendly Sail: Beek sails on the Peresphone, a Farr-40 owned by Jack Woodhull. Also onboard Rick Orhmer and Irwin Stawicki, circa 2000 off Newport, Rhode Island.*



## Harbor life is synonymous with sailing. And so is Seymour Beek.

By Pete Weitzner – Co-Producer,  
“The Golden Age of Newport Harbor”



Sure, Seymour and his family have run the famous Balboa Island Ferry for 102 years, longest continuous running business on Balboa Island. But Beek’s sailing exploits and devotion to the sport for 80 years and counting, are on par with the famous family business.

When we spoke, Beek, 87, had just competed in the 85th annual Flight of Newport Beach. He didn’t compete in the first one – but close.

Here are edited excerpts of our conversation about a life spent sailing:

**Balboa island Museum:** July was Flight of Newport. You’ve raced in a few of those.

**Seymour Beek:** First real involvement, summer I was six, 1940. Was brother Bart’s regular crew in Snowbird—dominant class in Newport Harbor, two-man boat, great system because crew would learn from skipper. By the end of that summer, I could sail a boat by myself. In fact, there was a race for crews, I think I got 2nd...next summer I was a skipper – raced in all the Snowbird races I could till 15.

**Museum:** Snowbirds race was a big deal.

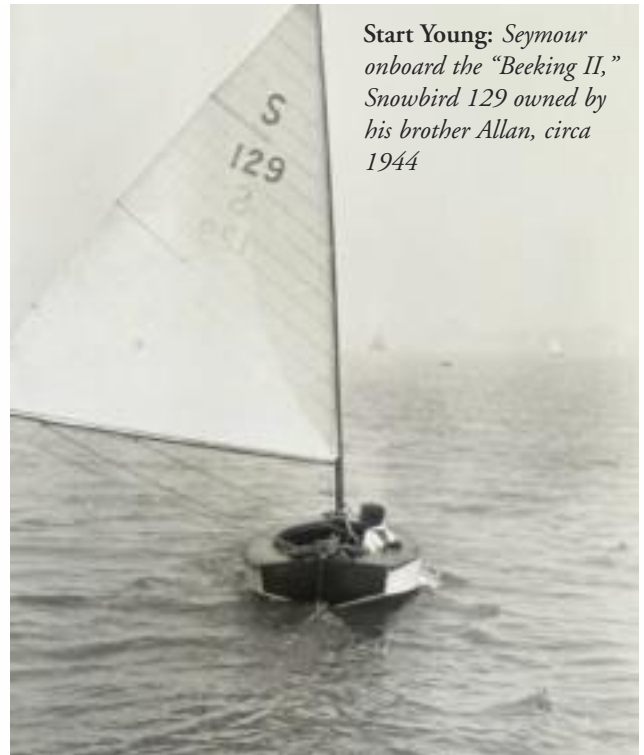
**Beek:** Spectacle. Weren’t as many things to attract the public...people came from all over Southern California. Became Flight of the Lasers, now Flight of Newport Beach. Starts in Eastern part of Bay...finishes roughly off South Bay Front and Diamond.

**Museum:** Late 40s, 50s, seem like a special time for sailing here.

**Beek:** After the War things came back in a hurry. 1946, big fleet started cropping up. Good fleet of Snipes, boat called the Falcon that’s now extinct, there are some PCs in San Diego and only one Rhodes 33 still sailing. PCs were bigger boats, a lot more classes than nowadays. What’s sad is the way so many classes have come and gone. Stars were very active at one time...just a handful of clubs that have guys with Stars anymore, just the Harbor 20s. Was a big deal for Newport Beach, Walt Hubbard I believe in 1927 won the Star world’s, the event was then held in Newport in 1928. First boat I raced after I was a kid was a Star. My family bought a Star in 1950. Raced against a sea of veterans. I did okay. My brother Bart was a star with Stars.

**Museum:** You’ve sailed, raced a lot of boats.

**Beek:** Lido-14s, Lasers, had a lot of fun sailing Lehman dinghies, Lehman 12s. I did a whole lot of windsurfing, won a World’s Championship 1974. Windsurfer class was in its infancy then. I sailed in Lake Ontario, New York. A lot of people came from overseas. One year race was in the



Start Young: Seymour onboard the “Beeking II,” Snowbird 129 owned by his brother Allan, circa 1944

Mediterranean. Then sport took off to become high speed, wave jumping. I got into some of that too. A lot of fun.

**Museum:** Any long races?

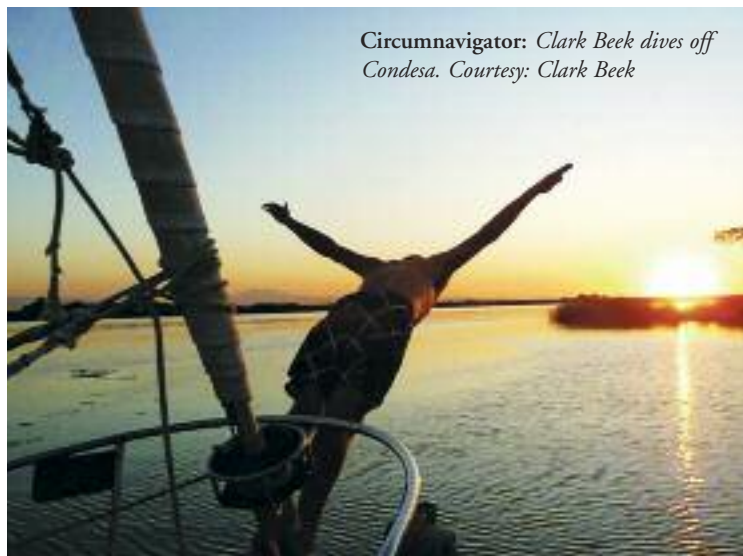
**Beek:** Sailed one Transpac, a lot of overnights like San Clemente-Catalina, the Cal Coastal SF-LA, Newport-to-Ensenada race...a lot of ocean racing.

**Museum:** Your son Clark, he took a long trip.

**Beek:** Clark circumnavigated, took about 10 years—joined him about seven times...South America, Malaysia, sailed down coast of Patagonia—had some harrowing experiences—not in trouble but scary, risky undertaking. Wind blew 60-70 miles an hour. Didn’t have a good chart. Real relief to get the anchor down. It’s time consuming to sail around the world, takes a big chunk out of your life, a lot of arrangements to make. Big commitment. Clark had a 40-ft boat, the “Condesa,” a 1966 Salar 40 Ketch. Was comfortable – good boat to do that kind of trip, generally had one person with him, was alone when he sailed up West Coast of South America. And a lot of time, he had me. Met him in Bora Bora and sailed with him to Tonga and met him in Cabo San Lucas for his final leg home.



Docked at Dad’s: Clark and Seymour with globesailing Condesa in background



Circumnavigator: Clark Beek dives off Condesa. Courtesy: Clark Beek

**Museum:** What makes a good sailor?

**Beek:** There's good sailors today. They're more computer nerds. So much instrumentation on big boats, lot of aids to being a good sailor. Small boats still pretty much seat-of-the-pants, compass and a wind guide. Instinctive.

Experience helps, some people just have a knack, starting early in life helps. Most people don't even know what direction wind is coming...to be a good sailor you better know the wind at all times. Depending on the kind of boat you don't have to be big, like the Harbor 20 is designed so you don't have to be that physically fit, about as hard as sitting on your couch, but still a lot of skill, shifting the sail, steering it.

**Museum:** You've seen some great sailors, even a few Hollywood types could sail, race competitively, belonged to the local yacht clubs.

**Beek:** Of the celebrity guys, **Humphrey Bogart** was a good sailor, raced dinghies, raced the Santana. good sailor. And he was a lot of fun. I did race against him...beat him a few times. More than he beat me. He wasn't a superstar, was good at it. **Errol Flynn**, **James Cagney** had nice boats, they could sail. Cagney was an active member of BYC. **Sterling Hayden**, **Donald Douglas** (Founder of Douglas Aircraft) and his sons were good sailors, I think LA Yacht Club.



Who needs a Boat: Beek was a formidable windsurfer, 1st at 1974 World's

Overall, **Bill Ficker** is first that comes to mind...won America's Cup with the Intrepid, I think 1970, also was a Star-class world champion. Sailed against Bill many times, seldom beat Bill Ficker. Other great sailors from around here, **Hook Beardsley**, guy named **Don Idler**, both won Star Worlds. Star races always around a closed course - about ten miles.

**Museum:** What's Newport Harbor's allure?

**Beek:** Main thing is weather, rarely strong winds...even in the ocean it's very safe, seldom blows over 20 knots—not likely to get in trouble like you would in San Francisco. But good sailors, it's more fun to sail in Los Angeles, San Francisco, even Long Beach. They like more wind.

**Museum:** Yacht Clubs play a huge role?

**Beek:** The key to having a successful harbor for sailing. My father **Joe** was an early member of Newport Harbor, Commodore in 1926, 60 years before I held the same office. He helped found BYC and was the founder of BIYC. My mother **Carroll** was very supportive of BIYC over a period of almost 60 years. Almost all racing is sponsored by yacht clubs, major stuff is all Balboa, BCYC, Newport and Lido. But nobody has a monopoly on sailing, great skippers from all over.

**Museum:** What's next on the water for Seymour?

**Beek:** Even two years ago I went out every week—now I go kayaking quite a bit. I plan to go shopping for a new Lehman 12 next year. It's just a lot of fun.



Couples Sail: With girlfriend Bobbie on a Lehman 12 in 2015, prior to a race in Newport Bay

**Writer's Note:** This is the first in a series of Museum stories paying homage to Newport Harbor's sailing legacy. Visit Balboa Island Museum Newport Beach - discover the Harbor's rich sailing history and much more. Monday - Thursday 10am to 5pm, Friday - Sunday 10am to 6pm. Free general admission. Become a member. [balboaislandmuseum.org/become-a-member/](http://balboaislandmuseum.org/become-a-member/)





Presents

# Once Upon A Christmas!

*by Jessica Anne Petaford*

Have you ever caught a glimpse of mermaids flipping their fins on the beaches of Balboa Island? Well you weren't imagining it; mermaids are real, and they have a home right here on Balboa Island! If you've ever strolled down Agate Ave towards the Ferry you've surely noticed the magical, mermaid storefront, Once Upon an Island. Their adorable mermaids grace our shores daily entertaining young and old alike! Inside their Agate Ave storefront, you will find a magical wonderland offering daily mermaid, princess and even pirate experiences for little ones. This charming little store has been with us on Balboa Island since 2015 and boasts a novelty "under the sea" themed salon, adorable mermaid retail & characters each day. If you haven't stopped in to visit, you're missing a world of magic!

In 2020, there were few, if any options to visit Santa Claus. So, when one of the neighboring shops became vacant, Heather, Owner of Once Upon an Island had an idea! Once Upon a Christmas offers an ode' to the classic feel of Balboa Island cottages in this immersive, 3 room Santa experience, not to be missed!

Can you imagine taking your children on a journey straight to the North Pole, traveling through magical portals & hidden doors where you're treated as Santa's VIP guest? What if all of that could be found



right here on Balboa Island? Upon entering Once Upon a Christmas, you're greeted by an Elf in Santa's barn where you can talk to Comet the reindeer! Be prepared to believe in magic as a hidden portal appears to lead you into Santa's workshop, where children have the opportunity to make a real toy with Santa's Elves! Finally, and only with enough Christmas magic, the next portal magically appears and opens straight into Santa's cozy living room! Even parents will be left amazed at the spellbinding and unexpected elements packed inside this experience, but the true magic lies in the secret of booking with a company like Once Upon An Island! Information about children





is collected before arrival. As children enter Santa will call upon them by name and talk to them as if he's known them their whole lives! Cozy up by his fire-place for magical photo opportunities, and story book readings to conclude this one-of-a-kind experience that your family will carry as a memory for life!

**Heather Sossaman-Burbich**, owner of Once Upon an Island lives on the island with her family. Her passion for entertaining children began when she was hired as Ariel at Disneyland, and later cast at Disneyland in Paris. After performing in Paris for a year, she boarded a prestigious cruise liner where she



worked as an Entertainment Director before returning home to pursue her career in acting. Success came with roles on popular network shows like CSI, NCIS and even Hawaii 5-0 before landing a major role in a Universal Pictures film released in theaters worldwide. It was 2015, the same year that Once Upon an Island was debuting on Balboa Island.

Heather and business partner, **Briana Baker** conceptualized the shop through performing together at Disneyland. They both wanted a more intimate experience between the characters and children. "There's no question for me that I've found my calling in both Once Upon an Island and Once Upon



a Christmas. Not having my 2-year-old meet Santa just wasn't an option for me last year. Creating magic and family memories is what we do by nature at Once Upon an Island, so the idea for this seasonal pop up shop just seemed like an amazing opportunity to add to the magic that already is a "Balboa Island Christmas". It's only right that one of the best Christmas destinations in California should also hold a magical portal into Santa's own 'Balboa Island cottage'! To say I love what I do would be an understatement. Bringing joy to families and showing children the power of imagination has always been wonderful, but when the pandemic hit, it really felt like a necessity. So many children, like my own, spent the better part of their entire lives locked inside without so much as a playground. You would think that would hinder their imaginations, but what we are learning right now, in both of our shops, is that they are the most excited and eager generation we have ever encountered!



They're deserving and so grateful to experience these little moments. And I know, as a mom myself, that their parents feel the same way! It's an emotional experience to see your children believe in and experience magic, whether it be Christmas magic, or the magic of making a real-life mermaid experience, we're here to make it happen. A parent once said to me that it may sound silly to let your little girl believe in mermaids, but if you tell her she can be a mermaid today, then she will believe tomorrow when you say she can be a doctor, an astronaut or whatever she imagines herself to be. That hit home for me. That is where the power of imagination lies. It builds confidence and it's a special part of childhood! We can't wait for our neighbors, and local children see what we have created this year at Once Upon a Christmas, and we hope to continue seeing everyone at Once Upon an Island as well into 2022 and beyond. We're thankful to call this little island both work and home."

— Heather Sossaman-Burbich



Visit the mermaids at 118 Agate Ave any day (not just for parties!) & book now for Once Upon a Christmas at 114 Agate Ave, tickets are expected to sell out! To book visit [www.OnceUponanIsland.net](http://www.OnceUponanIsland.net)



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