



# COUNTY COURIER

Official Publication of the Orange County Historical Society

[www.orangecountyhistory.org](http://www.orangecountyhistory.org)

## The Romance of Dana Point

### A STEP BACK IN HISTORY

by Doris Walker

Distinguished Boston citizen Richard Henry Dana Jr. published his famous account of his adventure to California, "Two Years Before the Mast," in 1840. He never realized that half a century later there would be a promontory in Orange County named for him, followed by a harbor with his statue and a city named in his honor. Dana's description of that coastal spot would be further immortalized in a book written by an award-winning author who happened to settle there in 1963 – because it was, as he had written, "the only romantic spot in California."

Then author/historian Doris Walker saw and met her challenge: to explain the city's name, its namesake and the "romance" he found in that then isolated coastal spot. She will share her own look at the area's past with the society. Like Dana's book, her illustrated history of the area, "Home Port for Romance," has been in print since its first release.



### THE PILGRIM

Length on Deck: 98' |  
 Beam: 24.6' | Mainmast  
 Height: 98' | Net Tonnage:  
 64 | Built: 1945, Denmark  
 more about the ship on  
 page

County, San Juan  
 Capistrano and Dana Point  
 Historical Societies.

Walker has published seven other books, and currently is finishing "Mission Viejo: the Ageless Land," commissioned by that city. She was also chosen to write the official Orange County centennial history: "Sections of Orange". This was named Best Historical Book of the Year by the National Federation of Press Women in 1990. Walker was public relations manager of Dana Point Harbor, as well as coordinator of the Dana Point Festival of Whales, for 10 years. She produced an award-winning video about the city's history, as well.

She has taught California History for Saddleback and Irvine Valley Colleges, earned more than 100 state and national awards for her various writings, and is celebrating a decade as an appointee to the Orange County Historical Commission. She has served on the boards of the Orange

This program will be presented on Thursday, June 10, 2004, at 7:30 p.m. at Bower's Kidseum, northwest corner of Main and 18th Streets, Santa Ana. The public is invited.

For all our history book collectors we have asked Doris to bring copies of her books for purchasing.

#### LIST OF BOOKS BY DORIS WALKER

1. A Guide Book of Philatelic-Numismatic Covers – 1970
2. Home Port for Romance – 1981, 1982, 1987, 1995 (Editions)
3. The Whales of Capistrano Bay – 1982
4. Sections of Orange (Orange County Centennial) – 1989

*Continued next page*

5. Adventurer's Guide to Dana Point  
– 1992

6. Orange County Adventures With  
Children – 1997

7. The Heritage of San Clemente –  
2000

8. Coastal Reflections: The History of  
Coastal Municipal Water District –  
2001

9. Mission Viejo: the Ageless Land  
(to be published in 2004)



PHOTOS AND INFORMATION FROM DORIS WALKER  
IN ORANGE COUNTIANA II (1980) DANA POINT: HISTORIC EMBARCADERO

**ABOVE**

After the original pier of the 1930s was rebuilt in the 1950s and the breakwaters completed in 1968, the inner harbor was constructed by a unique process. Earth from the cliffs was carried half a mile to sea to create a cofferdam. The damned, drained basins were then dredged and concreted in the dry —a unique engineering project.

**BELOW**

Dana Point Harbor of 1980s . . . Home port to 2,500 private yachts and a major sportfishing-whalewatching fleet. Its sheltering jetties hold two shopping villages, several major restaurants, a motel, complete boating services, picnic parks, and hiking and bicycle trails.





POSTCARD FROM DON DOBMEIER COLLECTION

BLUE LANTERN FOUNTAIN LUNCH, A CAFE AND SERVICE STATION AT THE INTERSECTION OF PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY AND DEL PRADO. THE OWNER WAS ANNA WALTERS WALKER, A LAGUNA BEACH REALTOR WHO WAS THE FIRST LAND DEVELOPER OF DANA POINT.

**The *Pilgrim* is open most Sundays from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm**

The *Pilgrim* is a full size replica of the hide brig immortalized by Richard Henry Dana, Jr. in his American seafaring classic novel *Two Years Before the Mast*. Dana said of the *Pilgrim*, "The vessel I am going on is small, but strong and a remarkably fast sailer having been built for the smuggling trade."

The original *Pilgrim* was built in 1825

at a cost of \$ 50,000. Her length was a mere 90 feet compared to the average 110 feet for other vessel of the same class. The purpose of its 1834 voyage was to participate in the California cattle hide trade for her Boston owners, Bryant and Sturgis. The *Pilgrim* set sail from Boston loaded with England's manufactured goods such as shoes, foodstuffs and ironware. When she arrived along the Alta California coast, The *Pilgrim* would sell or trade her New England wares then procure hides from the missions and rancheros to be transported back to Boston. The *Pilgrim* anchored several times of San Juan Bay (Dana Point). It is not known in what other trades the *Pilgrim* engaged after her voyage to Alta California, Mexico. However, it is recorded that she was lost in a fire at sea in 1856. By this time the hide trade had also suffered its demise.

Today's *Pilgrim* started her life in 1945 as a three-masted schooner

plying the Baltic coastal trade out of Denmark. In 1975, She was sailed to Lisbon, Portugal by Captain Ray Wallace, the noted marine architect, where she was converted to her present rig.

The *Pilgrim* entered Dana Point Harbor in September 1981, amidst tremendous community support, destined to become the Orange County Ocean Institute's largest classroom. Today, the *Pilgrim* provides a national award winning living history program to over 16,000 students a year.

The *Pilgrim* also hosts a variety of dramatic and musical maritime theatrical performances during the summer months.

Aside from acting as a living classroom for students and a theater for the public, the *Pilgrim* actually sets sail annually with her volunteer crew. The skills of sailing and maintaining a historic vessel are kept alive by a

volunteer crew, which musters every spring to learn traditional seafaring skills. Late summer, the Pilgrim sets sail on her sail-training voyage up the coast and around the southern and northern Channel Islands. The brig visits ports along the way as an ambassador of good will for the city of Dana Point. Her return in early September is celebrated with the annual Toshiba Tallships Festival .

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

OUR MEMBERSHIP YEAR IS JUNE 30, 2004 TO JUNE 30, 2005.

If you have already renewed or joined in the last three months your newsletter label will read EXPIRES 6/30/2005.

This year you will receive an envelope for sending in your renewal WHETHER YOU NEED TO OR NOT. Bulk mailing requires that all mail be identical. So if you do not need the envelope pass it on to someone whom you think would enjoy our programs and would like to join.

## SATURDAY

June 12, 2004

10 a.m.

OCHS

### Field Trip to Dana Point

We will meet at **10 a.m.** for a docent led tour of the new state of the art

Ocean Institute,  
24200 Dana Point Harbor Dr.  
Dana Point  
(949) 496-2274

Admission fee is \$5.00. Included is a walk by Dana's ship, The Pilgrim. (No tours on Sat.) The Ocean Institute is a collection of experiences in the form of an educational campus specializing in marine and social sciences.

We will follow this with lunch at the

Wind & Sea Restaurant,  
34699 Golden Lantern, Dana Point  
Phone: 949-496-6500  
Located in Fisherman's Wharf, offers only the finest and freshest foods available, prepared using both traditional recipes as well as deliciously new concepts! [Indoor and Patio Dining](#)

#### DIRECTIONS To Ocean Institute:

If you are traveling from north of Dana Point, take I-5 south to the Pacific Coast Hwy. exit. Stay in the right hand lane of the exit ramp and go north on Pacific Coast Hwy. Turn left onto Dana Point Harbor Dr. and follow it *just past* Cove Rd. . Parking is available in any one of the lots marked "Coastal

## Moments in Time: A 100 Year History of Huntington Beach

**Honoring the Past,  
Cherishing the Present,  
Anticipating the Future**

June 23, 2004 - July 7, 2004

Huntington Beach Art Center  
538 Main St.,  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648  
714.374.1650

Presentation features a display of photographs, paintings, clothing and artifacts that characterize the distinctive periods of development that impacted the personality and direction of the city's growth.

Highlights of the presentation include displays from the Boeing Company, HB Unified School District and the Newland House. There will also be video presentations on the Pacific Electric Railway, beginning in 1872 with L.A.'s first horse car line and continuing through to the last Red Car in 1961 and on the history of Huntington Beach Central Library. Artifacts from the Golden Bear, tools and machinery from the oil producing industries and a photographic history of the Pier will also be included.