

## Oceanside History

Oceanside has a rich and bountiful past. Its first inhabitants came to this area over 10,000 years ago. Until the Spanish explored the valley for a potential mission site, the Indians were known to themselves as the "People." They lived a simple life as hunters and gatherers. When the Spanish established the Mission San Luis Rey in 1798, the Indians' lives changed forever. The Mission system lasted until the newly established Mexican government secularized the land in the 1830s. Later, settlers from the East and England purchased property in the fertile valley around the Mission to grow crops and raise cattle and sheep. A small town arose called San Luis Rey. In the 1880s, a transcontinental railroad ran through the coastal plain and down the coast to San Diego. Once the terminus near the sea was established in northern San Diego County, many businessmen moved west to what would become Oceanside.



Mission Avenue in 1893



Mission Avenue & Coast Highway circa 1925

1. City Hall and Library building. Constructed in 1934, this building was designed by Irving Gill. The \$100,000 building was dedicated December 19, 1934. The City Hall building remains a testimony to Gill's simple and modernistic approach to architecture.
2. Oceanside Engine House and Police Station adjacent to City Hall was also designed by Gill. It housed the City Court which acted much like a small Claims Court of today. This was the first of two buildings that were designed by Gill in 1929 as part of a larger Civic Center Complex.
3. St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church is an excellent example of Mission Revival architecture. Constructed in 1927, the new building replaced an 1893 church which was moved off the site and restored at 1510 Lemon Avenue in Oceanside.
4. The Bank of Italy building was designed by noted L.A. architects Morgan, Walls and Clement in 1927. The building was finished February 21, 1928. The Bank of Italy became the Bank of America in the early 1930's.
5. This building was constructed in 1925. It was then the Bank of Oceanside. It replaced the first building which was constructed in 1887 and housed the First National Bank which housed the library and city hall as well as private offices on the second floor.
6. The J.E. Jones building was completed in 1913. Mr. Jones moved his business from across the street after moving to town from the valley. He sold farm implements as well as many hardware and household items. The building was later sold to the Huckaby family who ran a successful department store for many years.

7. The 1st Street Post Office was dedicated in January of 1936 as a W.P.A. project. This reinforced concrete building measured 67 x 60 feet and utilized supervising architect Louis Simon to aid in the design. It continues to be one of Oceanside's active Post Offices.

8. This building was constructed by a new church group, the "Congregational Church," in 1886. In 1898 the First United Methodist Church purchased the building. The congregation enlarged the church in 1900 and again in 1958. It is one of our oldest churches.

9. The First Christian Church of Oceanside was constructed in 1928 at a cost of \$36,000. The interior of this church remains as beautiful as it did at completion. A.J. Myers, the founder of Oceanside, was a member of this church since his days as a resident in the San Luis Rey Valley.

10. In June of 1927 the New Keisker Hotel was open to guests. Touting steam heat and hot and cold running water to every room as well as all the conveniences demanded by the travelling public (it was AAA recommended). This hotel now operates as the Dolphin Hotel.

11. The Oceanside Blade-Tribune building was the last project Irving Gill completed before his death in 1936. He was commissioned by the paper's owners Harold and Paul Beck. They wished to make a statement by the design, size and location of their facility. Born into an Iowa newspaper publishing family, the brothers in 1929 became the youngest newspaper publishers in the State of California.

12. The historic name for this building is the Martin Building. It was constructed in 1908. John and Effie Martin built it and ran a sausage factory. The Martins leased a portion of the building to the telephone company from 1909 until 1923.

13. N.J. Pishon, a retired merchant and capitalist apparently constructed this home in 1895. It was later rented by attorney and Oceanside Bank director David Rorick, Sr. and his wife before they designed and built their home one block to the South. The historic name is the Hugo Guenther Residence.

## Self Guided History Tour of Downtown Oceanside

Presented by  
**Oceanside's Oldest  
Restaurant**  
Established 1928



Try the 101 Cafe for  
its great food,  
fun atmosphere and  
great Historical photos.

Open 6:30 a.m. til Midnight  
Everyday

631 So. Coast Highway  
**(760) 722-5220**

14. This home was constructed in 1907 by David Rorick Sr. as a rental. Dr. Robert S. Reid occupied this residence with his wife from 1908 until its sale in 1937. Dr. Reid, one of the city's first doctors, was well thought of by most. It is said that he was the first resident to own a car. The palm trees in front of the home were planted upon completion of the residence in 1907.

15. While the historic name is the Henry Graves residence, most longtime residents refer to this home as the Top Gun House. The property was used in the popular movie starring Tom Cruise. The home was built in 1887. Henry Graves was a retired physician.

16. The Rorick Homes built in 1906 and 1913 are the Craftsman style. The homes were designed by David Rorick, Sr. who housed his family in 110 South Pacific Street. The Senior Rorick was a Kansas attorney who came to Oceanside in 1904. The Rorick family are still leaders in our community today.

17. Oceanside's bandshell is believed to be the fourth shell built close to the pier. This shell sits midway between the first bandshell which was built in the 1920's and those built in the 1930's which were built farther south and at a 45° angle to the stadium seating.

18. You are looking at Oceanside's sixth Pier. Our first Pier was constructed in our incorporation year, 1888, at what is now Wisconsin Avenue. The next five have been built at this same site. We have always provided a pleasure pier for our residents and visitors to enjoy. The approach to this pier was constructed in 1927 while the wooden section was built in 1987.

19. The George P. McKay building was completed in 1908. McKay moved from his previous store location at the corner of Second and Cleveland. He was at that location for fifteen years. The first floor of this building housed general merchandise store carrying a wide variety of household and personal items.

20. Theodore C. Bunker purchased this property from J.C. Hayes in 1885 and erected this 2-story brick structure here in 1886. This was built as a residence originally. It later became the Traveller's Hotel. The building is said to have a colorful history, from the stabbing death of one of its owners to the years of use by prostitutes. It is the oldest remaining brick commercial/residential structure, erected during the 1880's boom in Oceanside.

