

# Reflect on the Past, Give Meaning to the Future:

*A Community Discussion Celebrating the  
100th Anniversary of Manhattan Beach*



**Saturday, December 1, 2012**

**9:00 AM to 3:45 PM**

**Joslyn Community Center**

**1601 Valley Drive**

**Manhattan Beach**

[www.citymb.info](http://www.citymb.info)



## Program

### Morning Session 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

**“Reflect on the Past”** A history of Manhattan Beach from its early years to the present.

9:00 AM - Welcome, Acknowledgements, & Overview - Mayor Wayne Powell & Mayor Pro Tem David Lesser

9:10 AM - Multimedia Introduction - Leadership Manhattan Beach Class of 2005 DVD, *Bridging The Generations*

9:35 AM - Keynote Presentation - Jan Dennis

10:00 AM - Break

10:10 AM - Moderated Discussion of Historic Themes & Trends Followed by Audience Q&A - Robert Brigham, Russ Lesser, Beverly Rohrer, and Arthur Verge, Moderated by Steve Napolitano

12:00 PM - Lunch provided by Body Glove International



### Expo 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

**Community Information Exchange** - Learn about our community organizations and what they have to offer.

American Association of University Women	M.B. Coordinating Council	M.B. Resident Association
Envelope of Life	M.B. Cultural Heritage Conservancy	M.B. Senior Resources Committee
Foundation of Local Art	M.B. Education Foundation (MBEF)	Neptunian Woman's Club
Leadership M.B.	M.B. Historical Society	Roundhouse Aquarium
M.B. 100 Coin	M.B. Hometown Fair	Senior Advisory Committee
M.B. 10k Run	M.B. Kiwanis Club	Soroptimist International
	M.B. Neighborhood Watch	

### Afternoon Session 1:00 PM to 3:45 PM

**“Give Meaning to the Future”** Residents will discuss their visions for the future of Manhattan Beach

1:00 PM - Welcome Back

1:10 PM - Discussion Sessions - Nancy Hersman, Judson Grenier, and the Mayor's Youth Council

2:15 PM - Break

2:30 PM - Discussion Groups Report Back and Audience Participation

3:30 PM - Wrap-up and Closing Remarks

*Please note times and schedule subject to change.*



## Introduction of Participants



### **Robert Brigham**

Robert Brigham moved to Manhattan Beach at age 12 in 1939 with his parents, who were active in community affairs. He taught history and coached multiple sports for 38 years at Mira Costa High School beginning in 1952. Brigham's thesis for his masters' degree at USC concerned an inn in Manhattan Beach owned by an African American family in the 1920s. His thesis was an important resource in re-naming the City's park on Highland Avenue in 2007 Bruce's Beach.

### **Jan Dennis**

Jan Dennis is the quintessential author and historian of Manhattan Beach. During her more than 50 years as a resident she has been actively engaged in the community. She has served on the City Council and as Mayor (the second female to hold that post), been an active member of the Neptunian Woman's Club of Manhattan Beach (including as its president) and the Manhattan Beach Historical Society, founded the City's Cultural Heritage Conservancy which recognizes historic buildings, and written seven books and multiple articles on the history, people, and places of Manhattan Beach. Jan was born and raised in Ridgefield, CT, attended Art Career School and pursued artistic endeavors in New York City before making Manhattan Beach her home.

### **Judson Grenier, Ph.D.**

Dr. Judson Grenier moved with his family to Manhattan Beach in 1956 to begin his teaching career at El Camino College, where he taught for 10 years before leaving for a new state university at Dominguez Hills. The first chair of the History Department, Dr. Grenier was active in curriculum development and academic governance at Cal State Dominguez Hills for nearly 30 years until his retirement.

### **Nancy Hersman, Esq.**

A Manhattan Beach resident for over 14 years, Nancy is an active volunteer in the schools and community. Nancy is a former President and Trustee of the MBUSD Board of Trustees, and now serves on the City's Parks and Recreation Commission. In addition, Nancy is on the board of MBEF and MB Coordinating Council, and is the program director this year for the Mayor's Youth Council. Nancy is also involved in the business community as a partner in Chase Hersman, LLP, a business law firm in Manhattan Beach.

### **Russ Lesser**

Russ Lesser lives 100 feet from the Manhattan Beach house his grandparents purchased in 1917. A 1958 graduate of Mira Costa High School, Russ worked for many years as a Certified Public Accountant before becoming president of Body Glove International in 1990. Lesser served eight years on the Manhattan Beach City Council, including two terms as Mayor, and has received multiple awards for his public service. A dedicated runner (he has run more than 50,000 miles), he established the annual Manhattan Beach 10K Race, which is organized by volunteers without corporate sponsors and reinvests its profits in the community.

### **Mayor's Youth Council**

Manhattan Beach Mayor's Youth Council began in 2011 to bring together high school students and community leaders. During the nine-month term of the program, participating students have an opportunity to meet with local leaders in government, business, philanthropy, cultural arts, education, science and technology, and more.

### **Steve Napolitano**

Steve Napolitano was born and raised in Manhattan Beach and currently serves as Deputy to Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe. Steve is a former three-term Manhattan Beach Mayor and Councilmember first elected in 1992 at the age of 26 and he remains the youngest person to have served in those positions. He is a licensed attorney specializing in education and municipal law, received the Field Representative of the Year Award by the LAX Coastal Area Chamber of Commerce, and from 2002 to 2003 served as President of the Independent Cities Association.

### **Beverly Rohrer, Ed.D.**

Dr. Beverly Rohrer began her 56-year career in education as a teacher at Mira Costa High School, from which she graduated in 1955. She went on to have an immense impact on education in the South Bay as Superintendent of the Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, and Hermosa Beach School Districts. Dr. Rohrer is a recipient of multiple local, state, and national awards for educational innovation and leadership.

### **Arthur Verge, Ph.D.**

Dr. Arthur Verge is a professor of history at El Camino College. Born in Santa Monica, his family has roots back to California's Mission period and his classes and research reflect that heritage. An award-winning teacher, Dr. Verge doubles as a Los Angeles County Lifeguard (since 1974) and intimately knows the history and challenges of servicing the beaches and communities of our area.

# A Sampling of Published Works by Event Participants

## Jan Dennis

A Walk Beside the Sea: a History of Manhattan Beach (1987)  
Shadows on the Dunes: An Architectural History of Manhattan Beach (2001)  
Manhattan Beach, California (2001)  
Manhattan Beach Police Department (2003)  
Manhattan Beach Pier (2005)  
Skirts Across the Sand: a History of Manhattan Beach Women (2008)  
Manhattan Beach Chronicles (2012)

## Judson Grenier, Ph.D.

A Capsule History of Manhattan Beach (1976)  
The Streets of Manhattan: Transportation at the Beach (1979)  
California Legacy: the Watson-Dominguez Family, 1821-1980 (1987)  
John Houston: California's First Controller and the Origins of State Government (1999)

## Manhattan Beach Historical Society

Manhattan Beach 90266: A Pictorial History (1995)  
I'll Take Manhattan (Manhattan Beach, CA) (2000)

## Arthur Verge, Ph.D.

Paradise Transformed: Los Angeles During the Second World War (1993)  
Los Angeles County Lifeguards (2005)

## Online Resources for Additional Study

**City of Manhattan Beach General Plan**  
[www.citymb.info/Index.aspx?page=67](http://www.citymb.info/Index.aspx?page=67)

**Manhattan Beach Historical Society**  
[www.manhattanbeachhistorical.org](http://www.manhattanbeachhistorical.org)

**Manhattan Beach Mayor's Youth Council**  
[www.mb-myc.com](http://www.mb-myc.com)

## Other Resources

### Robert Brigham

Land Ownership and Occupancy by Negroes in Manhattan Beach, California (1956) (Master's Thesis On Reserve at Manhattan Beach Public Library)

## Acknowledgments

### MANHATTAN BEACH CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Wayne Powell  
Mayor Pro Tem David Lesser  
Councilmember Amy Howorth  
Councilmember Richard P. Montgomery  
Councilmember Nicholas W. Tell, Jr.

### MANHATTAN BEACH CITY MANAGER

David N. Carmany

### VOLUNTEER ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

This event is underwritten by the City of Manhattan Beach and made possible through the efforts of:

Jan Dennis  
Judson Grenier, Ph.D.  
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Mayor Pro Tem  
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## Partners

