

Seen Around Town

by Lynda Millner

Viva La Fiesta!



Old Spanish Days segundo vice presidente David Bolton social distancing with La Presidenta Stephanie Petlow at the Santa Barbara Club

Yes, it's time to think about that 97 year-old fun fest, Old Spanish Days (OSD). To start the Fiesta year off La Presidenta 2021 was just announced, **Stephanie Petlow**. She has lived here for many years and served on the OSD board for 20 years. Her leadership team is primer **Alex Castellanos**, vice presidente; **David Bolton**, segundo vice presidente and el secretario; **Casie Killgore**, treasurer; and division chiefs **Janice Howell** (celebrations), **Maria Cabrera** (dance and entertainment), and **Gary MacDonald** (pageantry).

Fiesta is run by a volunteer board of directors with only one full-time staff member which is unique among festivals. Their office is at the Carriage Museum. The OSD board of directors oversees operations, fundraising, and planning.

It all began in 1924 when the city fathers (and mothers) decided they needed something to draw people to Santa Barbara in the summer. In those days it was popular to come here for the winter, especially if you were well-to-do, but business lagged in the summer. The Fiesta would also tie in with



Ms Millner is the author of *The Magic Makeover, Tricks for Looking Thinner, Younger and More Confident - Instantly*. If you have an event that belongs in this column, you are invited to call Lynda at 969-6164.

the opening of the Lobero Theatre by Jose Lobero and so Old Spanish Days was founded. It celebrated our state's Rancho Period, a time of romance and hospitality displayed through pageantry, dance, music, costumes, and cuisine. In 2021 Old Spanish Days will take place August 4-8.

"I am extremely honored to lead OSD in our 97th annual Fiesta," Stephanie told me over lunch. "Our founding families have left and continue to leave an amazing and unique legacy for our beautiful city and for future generations to enjoy." Her goal is to educate our children and each other to preserve our culture by learning our history.

One of the focuses is dance and music, which is a year-round activity



Drummer Boy greeting members at the Santa Barbara Club

for many of our youth. Some of them have gone to Jerez, Spain for their flamenco dancing and to buy authentic Spanish dresses and traje cortos (suits). That's where my family lived for seven years and our fiesta wardrobes grew with the years and the kids, including an Andalusian horse name Alagria (it means happiness and our daughter was).

OSD is a platform for a variety of

local nonprofits to raise their necessary operating funds at the annual Mercado. Hopefully by next August there will be the usual food booths for the thousands of visitors as well as the arts and crafts at West Beach.

"2020 has certainly made all of us realize the importance of family, friends, and our special community of Santa Barbara," Stephanie said. "We are thankful for the continued support during this pandemic from our sponsors, the City of Santa Barbara, the County of Santa Barbara, and our community collaborators. The entire Board of Directors and past presidents are committed to presenting a safe and wonderful Fiesta 2021 to continue our rich history and traditions."

Pre-auditions for the Spirits of Fiesta will be held on January 9. La Prima Vera, the spring party, will be on May 15.

For information call 805-962-8101 or check out sbfiesta.org.

Art of the Sea

There is a wonderful art exhibit of 55 naval paintings at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum awaiting

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After Pearl Harbor Beaumont's work supported the U.S. war effort and reflected dramatic life or death struggles in the Pacific



Greg Gorga, the executive director of the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, which is exhibiting 55 naval paintings until May 2021

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The naval paintings by Arthur Beaumont chronicle accomplishments of the U.S. Navy



Beaumont did three assignments as a correspondent for the Navy in the 1950s and '60s, painting frozen landscapes in Alaska and Antarctica

your visit as soon as lockdown is over and executive director **Greg Gorga** can unlock the doors. The exhibit was scheduled to open December 3, 2020 until May 30, 2021.

It's sponsored by George H. & Olive J. Griffiths Charitable Foundation, Mimi Michaelis, Alice Tweed Tuohy Foundation and Wood-Claeyssens Foundation.

"We were one of ten museums in the United States asked to participate and we are one of the top ten maritime museums in the United States," Greg said of hosting the naval paintings.

Obviously this is a proud accomplishment for the museum's 20-year history. In normal times, the museum has more than 40,000 visitors annually and provides year-round maritime history and marine science education for local youth. The First-Order Fresnel Lighthouse Lens from Point Conception is especially impressive. It took several world experts months to clean the lens and ready it for exhibition.

The exhibit artist is Arthur Beaumont and his paintings chronicle accomplishments of the U.S. Navy, from the *USS Constitution* to atomic bomb tests and expeditions to the North and South poles. This is the last show on the West Coast before its departure to the East. Beaumont uses impressionist techniques in painting the stunning images, capturing the majesty of the oceans and the vessels that sail them.

Arthur Beaumont (1890-1978) was born in Norfolk County, England and came to the U.S. in 1908 to study art at Berkeley, before moving to Los Angeles and opening his first commercial art studio in 1917. After studying more and teaching art and watercolor painting, he received a commission as a lieutenant in the Navy and became the "Artist of the Fleet" by 1933. After Pearl Harbor his work supported the U.S. war effort and reflected dramatic life or death struggles in the Pacific. In 1944 he was given the official title of war correspondent.

After World War II, Beaumont became the official artist for Operation Crossroads, documenting the Navy's first tests of the nuclear bomb and continued to travel and paint for the Navy on missions to China and Japan. He also did work during the Korean War, in movies, and private and personal painting. He did three assignments for the Navy in the 1950s and '60s, painting frozen landscapes in Alaska and Antarctica.

Toward the end of his life he painted the *RMS Queen Mary* as it arrived in Los Angeles. He did a series of Revolutionary War-era sailing vessels and operations along the Mekong River during the Vietnam War.

My late husband was a carrier pilot, so my favorite paintings were showing the carriers launching airplanes off their deck - a small deck rolling in the waves and add night landings in the mix. Scary stuff. Many years ago my husband's squadron invited the wives for a Powder Puff Cruise from Coronado, California. A rare treat! Sadly I was in his stateroom being seasick the whole day and never got to see the "show."

In addition to the paintings there will be a book of Beaumont's life and art written by Beaumont's son **Geoffrey Campbell Beaumont** and published by the Irvine Museum. On January 21, 2021 the author will give a presentation about the exhibit and his father's life.

Santa Barbara Maritime Museum is located in the Santa Barbara Harbor at 113 Harbor Way, Suite 190. For details visit sbmm.org or call (805) 962-8404. Hope to see you there soon.



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