

HISTORY-BUILDINGS  
City

Community Information File  
Regular Loan

**THE  
NEWLAND  
HOUSE**



**HOME OF  
MR. & MRS.  
W. T. NEWLAND**

Compiled by Joel Blank under the auspices of the Huntington Beach Historical Society, President, Elaine Craft; City Historian, Delbert Higgins, and the city of Huntington Beach.

## INTRODUCTION

Situated on a bluff overlooking the lowlands of Huntington Beach, William and Mary Newland built their house on the ancient campground of the Gabrieleno Indians in 1898. The house located on Beach Boulevard (then known as Hampshire Avenue) and Adams is the best preserved and most historically significant example of this period within the city of Huntington Beach. The house is now an official Orange County historical monument (Orange County historical site No. 9).

Here on this one time 1000 acre ranch (purchased from Abel Stearns on July 17, 1897 which was formally part of a Spanish land grant), the Newlands helped pioneer the city of Huntington Beach through their work in the fields of education, business, the social scene, and countless other areas.



## HISTORY OF THE FAMILY

William Taylor Newland was born in Campion, Illinois in 1850 and Mary Juanita Delapp was born in nearby Jacksonville, Illinois in 1859. They married and settled in Quincy, Illinois. They, then, migrated to California for they heard of the good farm land that was available. From 1880 to 1897 they lived in numerous places, ranging from Half Moon Bay south of San Francisco to the Irvine ranch in Rattlesnake Canyon. Here Mr. Newland became a very successful farmer raising barley for feed grain and became known as the "Barley King" of Orange County. In 1898 they settled in the city now known as Huntington Beach.

When the Newlands arrived in 1898, the community was known as Shell Beach. With the help of Phillip Stanton (who later became speaker of the assembly in Sacramento), Mr. Newland formed the West Coast Land and Water Company. 40 acres of land purchased from Colonel Northam. This land was surveyed and a map of Pacific City formerly called Shell Beach was recorded on August 5, 1901. The city was called this in hopes of it becoming a successful summer resort like Atlantic City on the east coast.

On July 4, 1904, the Pacific Electric Railroad was completed to Main Street, Pacific City. Thus, the name of the city was changed to Huntington Beach in honor of Henry E. Huntington, owner of the Pacific Electric Railroad.

William and Mary Newland were constantly interested in the city and as a result their contributions were numerous and considerable. Mr. Newland not only organized the first bank but was a stockholder and director. Through his efforts the first Methodist Church of Huntington Beach was formed and located on 11th Street and Orange. Mr. Newland also started the first newspaper in the city.

Since the Newlands had ten children of their own, they were continually interested in school programs. There were seven girls and three boys. Through their help the first grammar school was started in the city in 1903. They were also instrumental in having the local grammar school districts – Oceanview, Westminster, and Springdale – to agree to a high school district. Thus a bond issue resulted in the completion of Huntington Beach Union High School in 1908.

Mrs. Newland who found time in her unbelievable schedule of running a house of ten children and helping run a ranch, served 16 years on the local grammar school board and helped start the first P.T.A. in Huntington Beach in 1908. She was also a charter member of the women's club and was Woman of the Year in 1939. This grand lady lived to the age of 93 and died in 1952. Because of her great interest in the city of Huntington Beach, a special award called the "Order of the Newland Rose" is presented by the Huntington Beach Historical Society in memory of Mary Juanita Newland to citizens who have done commendable service in preserving the heritage of this city.



Mr. Newland was interested in a tremendous amount of things that would benefit this new and prospering city. He served on the high school board for 18 years. With about a dozen other men he helped organize the South Coast Improvement Association with representatives from Belmont Shores to Laguna Beach to work on shoreline problems. As a result he was appointed to the State Highway Commission and served for twelve years. During these years from 1912 to 1923 he and Phillip Stanton against much odds fought for two major highways in Orange County. The Coast Highway from Long Beach south to Dana Point and the State Highway through Santa Ana Canyon. Mr. Newland died in 1933 at the age of 83.

During the early 1900's this area of Orange County was primarily one of agriculture with Huntington Beach and Fountain Valley farmers producing millions of pounds of vegetables for the cities of San Francisco and San Diego. The Newlands did their part in raising alfalfa, lima beans, chili peppers, corn, tomatoes, barley, and many more crops on the ranch surrounding their house.

## THE HOUSE

The Newland house was dedicated as our city's "Heritage" contribution to the 1976 Bicentennial celebration. It is an example of simple Victorian architecture. The house is two stories and contains 13 rooms. Also constructed on this site but now gone was a large barn for 36 horses, corrals, and several small bunk houses for the field hands. Also on this spot a smaller house was built to the rear of the house for the boys, when they got older.

Mr. Newland arranged for construction of the house by paying carpenters \$2.50 per day, the going rate at the time. Gravel for the foundations was scooped from the ocean at low tide and leached of salt by the winter rains. Then a layer of bricks were put in. The lumber was hauled up the beach from Newport Beach's McFadden Wharf where it was unloaded from sailing schooners. Eucalyptus trees were planted along the bluff area for a windbreak and firewood.

The most dominating feature of the house is the Tower room. It was Mr. Newland's study. However, it was later changed to a sewing room for Mrs. Newland and that is how it is being restored.



The house has five bedrooms, the nursery for the two youngest girls who were born in the house and the upstairs sleeping porch which was later added on where the older girls slept. The boys all slept in one room located downstairs at the rear of the house. The other two rooms were the master bedroom and the guest room. Many noted personalities of the day stayed in the Newland's guest room, such as the famous western literature author Mark Twain, the circus man P.T. Barnum, James Irvine, and even an Indian chief who helped Mrs. Newland catalog her Indian basket collection.

Other rooms in the house were the dining room and the kitchen which were the center of family life, since these rooms contain the only sources of heat, a fireplace and a wood burning stove for a long time.

Another addition to the house after it was built was the sun room. It was added on when one of the daughters was seriously ill with a kidney infection and needed the added warmth. The room was enclosed with windows on all three sides from the ceiling to the floor. This is where Mrs. Newland kept her Indian basket collection. The baskets are now on display at Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. However, they will be restored to the house when it is finished.

## RECENT HOUSE HISTORY

In 1952 when Mrs. Newland died the house was leased to Signal Oil and the company rented the house out to various employees until 1972. In 1972 the house was turned over to the city and it stood vacant until 1974. During this time it was heavily vandalized and a fire upstairs destroyed most of the roof (this has since been restored). In 1974 the city gave permission to the Huntington Beach Historical Society to restore the house to its original Victorian style.

## RESTORATION

The house is being restored mainly by volunteer labor and donated materials sponsored by the Huntington Beach Historical Society. Through the help of the city and rooms being sponsored by individuals and/or organizations in which they are responsible for the restoration of their room the house is steadily being restored. Much of the interior has been unaltered except for the refurbishing of the wood, new wallpaper and paint. However, these materials are as close to the original as possible. When the House is completed it will be restored with Victorian style furniture.

The gardens around the Newland house will include an old-fashioned rose garden and an herb garden. It is hoped formal ceremonies will be held in them representing the history, the present and the future of Huntington Beach.

Also the site around the Newland house which is an archeological deposit are being preserved.



## HUNTINGTON BEACH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Huntington Beach Historical Society is an organization open to all individuals, organization, and businesses. The organization is interested in the history of Huntington Beach, to stimulate interest in the resources of Huntington Beach, to receive and encourage gifts. It is to support and develop historical facilities for the community and to save and preserve building, artifacts, documents, and other objects of historical significance.

The Newland house is open every third Sunday of the month and by reservation. For further information concerning the Huntington Beach Historical Society and/or the Newland house write to the "Huntington Beach Historical Society, 525-A Main Street, Huntington Beach, California 92647.