

## HUNTINGTON BEACH

### NEWLAND HOUSE HISTORY

William Taylor Newland was born in Camp Point, Illinois, in 1850 and Mary Juanita DeLapp was born in nearby Jacksonville in 1859. They were married in 1875 and moved to California during the great land boom of the 1880's. After residing in various California locales, they settled down for nine years on the Irvine Ranch where Mr. Newland was a foreman and met with such success growing barley that he earned the sobriquet "Barley King of Orange County."

In 1897 William purchased 500 acres of prime farm land which, until then, had been the open range of a vast Spanish land grant. He arranged to have his house constructed on the mesa, paying carpenters \$2.50 a day -- the going rate at the time -- and began the arduous task of clearing and draining the bottom land below the bluff. This land was a tangled mass of willow-choked, swampy peat bogs but once cleared it yielded excellent crops of celery, sugar beets, lima beans and chili peppers. Barley was grown on the mesa.

When the Newlands moved into their new home in the summer of 1898 the area was one of cattle ranches and a few scattered farms. The nearest town of any size was Santa Ana -- a full day's trip by horse and buggy. There was an obvious need for a townsite closer to the developing agricultural region in Western Orange County so Mr. Newland and other business men in the county formed a company for the purpose of answering this need. The West Coast Land and Water Company purchased 40 acres of beachfront land (today's Oldtown Huntington Beach) from Colonel Robert Northam and on August 5, 1901, formally inaugurated the new town. It was named Pacific City in the hope that it would become a populous and successful resort town emulating Atlantic City on the East Coast. In 1903 Mr. Newland and several other members of the company sold their holdings to a group of Los Angeles business men. These men prevailed upon Henry E. Huntington to extend his Pacific Electric Railway from Los Angeles to the nascent community and the first "Red Car" entered Pacific City on July 4, 1904. At that time the town's name was changed to Huntington Beach in honor of the railway's owner.

Although no longer holding a financial stake, the Newlands retained an abiding interest in the growth and improvement of the new community. They were progressive, visionary people who realized the value of a thorough education and constantly stressed this fact to their ten children (7 girls and 3 boys). In view of this it was natural that both the Newlands were instrumental in establishing the city's first grammar school and the first high school. Mary served for sixteen years on the primary school board while William served for eighteen years on the high school board. Mrs. Newland also founded the first PTA in 1908, was a charter member of the Women's Club, and in 1939 she was named "Woman of the Year" in recognition of her lengthy and devoted service to the community.

William Newland started the first bank in the city and the first newspaper. For twelve years he served on the Highway Commission which fought for and finally won state approval to extend Pacific Coast Highway from Long Beach to Dana Point and to construct a highway through Santa Ana Canyon.

As the soil of Newland Ranch yielded to the plow, many Indian artifacts were uncovered and this stimulated in Mrs. Newland an avid interest in Indian art. In particular she admired the beautiful hand-woven Indian baskets. These she began collecting on her many trips to Palm Springs which were made to visit one of her daughters who was in a tuberculosis sanitarium there. She purchased the baskets on the local Indian reservation and eventually amassed a large and valuable collection which is housed today at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana.

After her husband died in 1933 Mrs. Newland took over the reins of Newland Ranch and continued a successful solo management until well into her eighties. She died in 1952 at age ninety-three while still residing in the stately white house on its windswept hill.

#### THE HOUSE AND THE RANCH

Newland Ranch was practically a self-contained unit, having vegetable gardens, orchards, berry bushes, milk cows, chickens, turkeys, goats, horses, and even pet peacocks. Originally there were a number of out-buildings such as barns, stables, corrals, and bunk houses for the ranch hands. During the first few years water was obtained from a natural spring near the corner of today's Beach Boulevard and Adams Avenue. Later Mr. Newland drilled a well in the backyard and built the water tower that is still there today. Lighting was by kerosene lamps and Mrs. Newland cooked for her family and the ranch hands (who numbered as high as fifty) on a wood-burning stove. Modern conveniences were added as they became available in the area.

The house is a Mid-west adaptation of the Victorian style and originally contained nine rooms. The sun room, where Mrs. Newland kept her Indian basket collection, and the sleeping porch upstairs were added in 1915. The breakfast room was made from part of the back porch in the early 1920's, bringing the room total to twelve as it stands today.

Prior to the existence of any hotels in the immediate area, visitors often stayed at Newland House. The guest bedroom was used by such luminaries as Henry E. Huntington, James Irvine, P. T. Barnum, and Mark Twain. On one occasion it was occupied by an Indian chief who traveled from Navajo country to assist Mrs. Newland in the cataloguing of her basket collection.

The most outstanding feature of Newland House is the unique second floor tower room with its magnificent wide-ranging view. This warm, cozy corner was originally Mr. Newland's office and later became an ideal sewing room.

The rest of the house includes kitchen and dining room which were the only rooms with heat, front parlor, master bedroom and adjoining nursery, the boy's bedroom and an upstairs playroom. The parlor was used only to entertain important guests or on special occasions. Such divergent events as an appendectomy, two weddings, and a funeral took place in this room.

Newland Ranch survived the devastating flood of 1916, the destructive earthquake of 1933, and the financial stresses of the Great Depression. Its long success and stability are a tribute to the man and woman who came to California cherishing a dream and with faith, hard work, and tenacity turned that dream into reality.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY

The high mesa on which Newland House rests was for thousands of years a favorite campground of the local Indians. In the 1930's the WPA (Workers Progress Administration) took part in an archaeological excavation. During these digs twenty-two wagon loads of Indian artifacts were removed from the mesa and then housed in Santa Ana. Also numerous artifacts, cog stones, shells and fish bones have been unearthed in more recent excavations. Some of these "finds" have been radio-