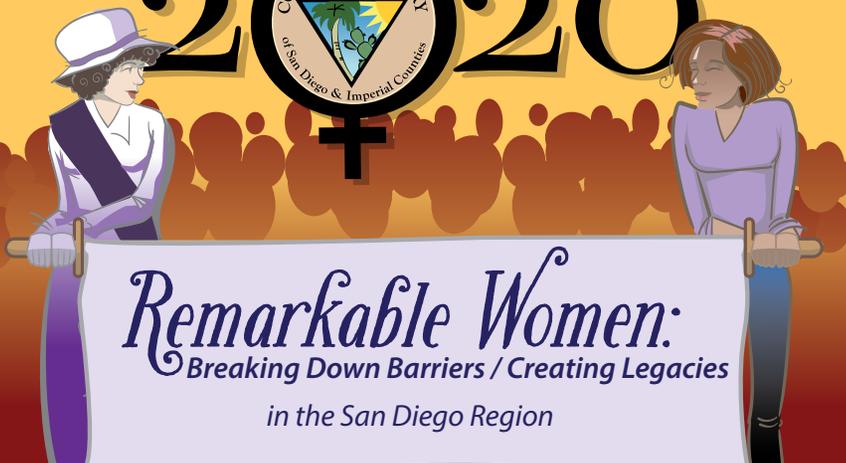
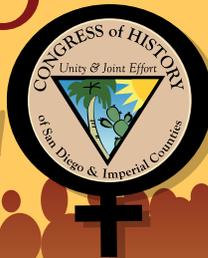


55<sup>th</sup> Annual History Conference

1920

March 13 & 14, 2020



**It's been 100+ years since all the women in the United States got the right to vote. Learn about some remarkable women in our region.**

**February 26 and 27, 2021**

**The Conference you waited a year to see!  
CongressOfHistory.org  
info@CongressOfHistory.org**



*Welcome to the 55th Annual Congress of History Conference celebrating 100+ years since the approval of the 19th Amendment, & highlighting remarkable women of our region.*

*Hi, everybody! My name is Christopher Milnes. As the President of the Congress of History I would like to welcome you to our 55th (somewhat) Annual Conference. 55 Years! We planned this conference for the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. But a pandemic happened, delaying this conference by 11 months and making us meet virtually. Our conference recalls the American Women's long march to equality – Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, and a time when riding a bicycle, by a female, was a revolutionary act. So this year's topic, "Remarkable Women" within the San Diego Region, is especially relevant.*

*Thanks to those who made this Conference possible.*

- To the Portuguese Historical Center for their continued sponsorship and help in securing the physical location of Portuguese Hall (where we hope to meet again, in person, next year in February 2022).*
- To the Conference co-chairs Rosanne Goodwin and Helen Halmay and the Conference Planning Committee for the exciting program we are about to see.*
- To the Exhibitors and Vendors for their understanding of the need to have a virtual conference. Please support our sponsors!*
- And to you and everyone who attends our virtual Conference, for your support.*

*Now, from your own home, sit back, be amazed, and enjoy two days of presentations on "Remarkable Women."*

*Chris Milnes, Congress of History President*

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*The Portuguese Historical Center  
joins the Congress of History in celebrating  
the Remarkable Women of our area!*

*The Portuguese Historical Center (PHC) was founded in 1977 by the late Basil Freitas and others whose vision was to preserve our Portuguese culture and traditions for future generations. It was founded to encourage civic and community involvement in the preservation of Portuguese culture, folklore and history.*

### ***Our Mission:***

*To honor, promote, and preserve our Portuguese culture, heritage, and history.*

***What we have planned after the pandemic - All are Welcomed!***

### ***Community Walking Tours***

*A 2-hour walk through our neighborhood,  
learning about the Portuguese influence.*

### ***Christmas Home Tours***

*Walk through Portuguese homes to enjoy  
Christmas decorations and traditions.*

### ***Cultural Symposiums***

*Presentations on Portuguese traditions, customs,  
Immigration, and homeland.*

*Please check our website for upcoming events: [www.phcsandiego.com](http://www.phcsandiego.com).*

*We're located at 2831 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego, CA 92106.*

*We look forward to when the museum can be open again.*

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**THANK YOU TO OUR CONFERENCE CO-SPONSOR  
THE PORTUGUESE HISTORICAL CENTER**

**THANKS TO ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE SPONSORS**

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San Diego Floral Society • Sunbelt Publications  
San Diego Museum of Art Artists Guild  
Vista Historical Society & Museum at Rancho Minerva  
Thanks to our vendors and members.  
Thank you to the 2020-2021 Conference Committee.

Conference logo design: Ray Blavatt  
Program Design: Steve Veach ([www.SVeach.com](http://www.SVeach.com))

## 2021 Conference Speakers Schedule

### Friday, February 26, 2021

- 9:00-9:15 **Conference Opens • COH President's Greeting • Conference Chairpersons Introductions**
- 9:15-9:45 Susan Diamond  
**Dr. Charlotte Baker: Pioneer for Women in San Diego**
- 9:45-10:15 Anne Hoiberg  
**Lydia Knapp Horton: Women's Rights, THE Library, and Woman's Clubs**
- 10:15-10:30 **Morning Break**
- 10:30-11:00 **Thanks to our Sponsors, and Special Promos for COH Members**
- 11:00-11:30 Beth Brust - Friday  
**Belle Benchley: How The World's First Woman Zoo Director Made the San Diego Zoo World Famous**
- 11:30-12:00 Jody Abssy  
**Ruth Hayward and Manuelita Brown: Awesome Sculptors You Should Know**
- 12:00-1:15 **Lunch Break**
- 1:15-1:30 **Announcement of COH Awards**
- 1:30-2:00 Russ Low  
**Sue Leong: The First Mother of San Diego's Chinese Community**
- 2:00-2:30 Adrienne Berlin  
**Casa de Paz and the Battered Women's Collation: Creating a Safe Space for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence**

## 2021 Conference Speakers Schedule

### Saturday, February 27, 2021

- 9:00-9:15 **Conference Day 2 Opens • COH President's Greeting • Conference Chairs Welcomes**
- 9:15-9:45 Alexander D. Bevil  
**"Anyone Talk History, Today?" Mrs. Winifred Davidson: The Founder of San Diego's "Lost History"**
- 9:45-10:15 Susan Hunter Bugbee  
**Mary Fitzgerald Ward: First County of San Diego Historian**
- 10:15-10:30 **Morning Break**
- 10:30-11:00 Steve Lech, Riverside County Heritage Association  
**Susie Keef Smith's California Desert Photography – "Postcards from Mecca"**
- 11:00-11:30 Jonnie Wilson  
**Florence Chadwick: Record-Smashing Distance Swimmer**
- 11:30-12:00 Maria E. Garcia  
**Mary and Helen Marston: Founders of Neighborhood House – The Heart of the Mexican-American Community**
- 12:00-1:15 **Lunch Break**
- 1:15-1:30 **Presentation of the 2021-2022 COH Board**
- 1:30-2:00 Evelyn Barandiaran  
**Mary Moniz: Bringing Portuguese Dance to San Diego/Reinforcing Portuguese Traditions**
- 2:00-2:30 Christine Stokes  
**Sybil Stockdale: How a Local Woman Created a National Movement during the Vietnam War**
- 2:30-2:45 **Summation and Announcement of 2022 Conference Theme**

## KNOW YOUR HISTORIANS! • Friday Speakers, February 26, 2021

Friday, 9:15 a.m.

### **Dr. Charlotte Baker: Pioneer for Women in San Diego**

*Susan Diamond*

The first woman physician in San Diego was Dr. Charlotte Johnson Baker (1855-1937), who made a huge impact in so many women's lives. Born in Massachusetts, this Vassar-educated woman attended medical school at the University of Michigan. A residency at a woman's penitentiary started her quest to improve conditions for women and girls. As an Obstetrician she delivered over 1,000 babies without the death of the mother. As a suffragist, Dr. Baker campaigned heavily for the women's right to vote in California in 1911, served as the president of the local Equal Suffrage Association, and spearheaded the San Diego Women's Vote Amendment campaign. She was part of the Committee of 19, who spearheaded the raid on the Red Light Stingaree district in downtown San Diego. One of her civic projects was co-founding the YWCA in San Diego. She also founded the Children's Home which was located in Balboa Park at the time. Dr. Baker served on the school board and the Civil Service Commission. Dr. Baker was inducted into the Women's Museum of California Hall of Fame in 2009.

**Biography:** *Susan Diamond is a former board member of the Point Loma Assembly (Dr. Charlotte Baker was a founding member). Susan grew up in Point Loma and graduated from Point Loma High School. She is a member of the San Diego History Center and the Friends of Balboa Park. She will be sharing information and memorabilia from the Baker family thanks to the generosity of Jim and Bob Baker, Charlotte's great grandsons.*

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Friday, 9:45 a.m.

### **Lydia Knapp Horton: Women's Rights, THE Library, and Woman's Clubs**

*Anne Hoiberg*

Lydia Knapp Horton (1843-1926) first settled in San Diego in 1869 with her first husband. When his job ended, they moved to San Francisco in 1873. Lydia traveled back east to her home state of Massachusetts with their sons. She and her husband permanently separated, and Lydia went to art school and supported her children with her artistic talent. With the passing of her husband in 1885 and the settling of his estate, Lydia returned to San Diego in 1888. In 1891, Lydia, age 47, married the widowed Alonzo Horton, age 77. Lydia began her extensive civic engagement. Some of her accomplishments: convincing Andrew Carnegie to provide \$50,000 to build a library, promoting the establishment of women's clubs, and fighting for the right of women to vote and be paid equally for equal work. As a woman who worked hard all

her life, Lydia understood the issues of women and is much to be admired.

**Biography:** *Anne Hoiberg is a retired research psychologist (25 years at the Naval Health Research Center) and the author of two books and more than 100 scientific articles and reports. Anne has created conferences and workshops for and about women in locations around the world. She has fought against human trafficking and violence against women. She served eight missions with the U.S. Department of State as an election supervisor in emerging countries. In addition to her many accomplishments, Anne is a past president of the League of Women Voters and the United Nations Association of San Diego. She currently is Board President of the Women's Museum of California in Liberty Station; the Anne Hoiberg Women's Center at the Women's Museum of California is named for Anne. Anne's book on The Women of the Gaslamp Quarter notes important women of the area. Soon-to-be published is her book, "Tears of War: Stories of Refugee Women."*

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Friday, 11:00 a.m.

### **Belle Benchley: How The World's First Woman Zoo Director Made the San Diego Zoo World Famous**

*Beth Wagner Brust*

Kansas born but San Diego raised Belle Jennings Benchley (1882-1973) grew up in Point Loma, graduated from what is now San Diego High School, and then studied at the San Diego Normal School (now SDSU). After her divorce in 1925, she moved back to San Diego to find a job to support her teenage son. Belle was randomly sent by the Civil Service to the San Diego Zoo for a two-week temp job that turned into a 28-year career. "Executive Secretary" was her title for 26 of those years (known as "Zoo Director" at any other zoo). Belle was the right person for the job. She has an "animal instinct" that enabled her to spot an illness or injury in an animal before the keeper noticed it. Animals trusted her. Her business savvy allowed her to negotiate better food contracts for the animals. Belle was a media star as the face and voice of the San Diego Zoo from 1930 through the 1940s. She eventually served as the president of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (the first zoo director west of the Mississippi to be voted its leader). Belle distinguished herself as a successful leader in an all-male field, and she made the San Diego Zoo world famous long before her retirement in 1953.

**Biography:** *Beth Warner Brust grew up in La Jolla and graduated from Stanford University with a BA in international relations. She is the award-winning author of 13 children's books, including seven ZOOKBOOKS and "The Amazing Paper Cuttings of Hans Christian Anderson," as well as the adult nonfiction book "Quirky, Yes - Hopeless, No" about how to help children*

on the autism spectrum be more socially accepted. Three years ago the San Diego Zoo Global Press commissioned Beth to write about their beloved but forgotten zoo director, Belle Jennings Benchley, in a new book to be published sometime in 2022, titled "THE EXTRAORDINARY ZOO LADY: How Belle Benchley Made the San Diego Zoo World Famous."

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Friday, 11:30 a.m.

## **Ruth Hayward and Manuelita Brown: Awesome Sculptors You Should Know**

Jody Abssy

As we think about and celebrate the accomplishments of women in this 100th anniversary since the passing of the 19th Amendment, we can better appreciate the contributions and influence of women artists. This talk will showcase the work of two important women who (lucky for us!) are still living. Ruth Hayward (b. 1934) followed a highly successful career as an engineer with General Dynamics when she took up bronze sculpture. One of her many local works is the sculpture of Kate Sessions that welcomes visitors to Balboa Park. Manuelita Brown (b. 1940) has broken down barriers with her celebration of Black Americans such as Sojourner Truth, whose life-size sculpture is on the Thurgood Marshall College campus of UCSD. The public will also recognize her dolphins at the UTC shopping mall and the iconic King Triton on the UCSD campus. These women have made San Diego a brighter place through exercising their unique gifts.

**Biography:** Jody Abssy is an artist and arts educator. During Covid she has self-isolated in her studio painting contemporary goddesses, remarkable women who are revered around the globe for possessing some quality that all women have but amplified in that goddess. On exhibit in Spanish Village in Balboa Park from March 2 through 21, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. will be 33 life-size paintings. All that female energy on the walls and among the visitors will be something to experience! International Women's Day on March 8 calls for a celebration – and you are invited!

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Friday, 1:30 p.m.

## **Sue Leong: The First Mother of San Diego's Chinese Community**

Russell N. Low

The story of Thomas Ah Quin, the unofficial mayor of San Diego's Chinatown, is well documented. The story of Sue Leong, the mother of their 12 children, is even more powerful as she overcame tremendous hardship to survive and make a life in America. Sue Leong was a teenage girl when she was brought here as a slave in the 1870s. She refused to be held by the slave owner and

escaped to find a new life at the Presbyterian Mission Home, which rescued, sheltered, and educated many Chinese women. The heroic role of these bold and courageous Chinese women like Sue Leong is often overlooked. Sue Leong's story includes the themes of immigration, discrimination, human trafficking, and romance - themes relevant today as they were 140 years ago.

**Biography:** Russell Low is a California-born 4th generation Chinese-American physician who is a great-grandson of Hung Lai Wah, a Transcontinental Railroad worker, and Tom Ying, a rescued child slave. His story sheds light on the trafficking of young Chinese women in the 1800s as part of the illegal slave trade. The story of his great-grandparents and their descendants has been featured on the History Channel, BBC Radio, National Public Radio, the Voice of America, and is included in the California State Railroad Museum and the Smithsonian Museum of American History. Russell's passion for research, family history, and story telling come together in a recently published novel entitled "Three Coins."

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Friday, 2:00 p.m.

## **Casa de Paz and the Battered Women's Collation: Creating a Safe Space for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence**

Adrienne Berlin

In 1978 the YWCA of San Diego organized a volunteer group of pioneering women who wanted to create a safe space for victims of domestic violence and their families. Known initially as the Battered Women's Coalition, they wrote a grant that provided for three years of funding for Casa de Paz. They rented a duplex in Golden Hill to make living space for 30 people, created a 24-hour hotline, and had an on-site school for the children. When the kids started drawing pictures of their families showing knives, guns, and blood, these volunteers hired a children's counselor and started a kids program. Other needs became evident: a legal services center and victim support services started to assist clients with temporary restraining orders and other comprehensive services. Casa de Paz was an innovative approach to helping women leave a violent situation.

**Biography:** Adrienne Berlin is a firm believer in resilience and personal choice. She's been a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) for over 30 years, and currently works with homeless, seriously mentally ill adults in supportive housing. She is a field instructor for the Masters of Social Work (MSW) programs at SDSU, USC, the University of Denver, and the University of Michigan. Adrienne trains MSW's working for the County, providing clinical supervision for them to qualify to sit for their exams. She is currently in private practice in La Jolla, specializing in Women's Health.

## KNOW YOUR HISTORIANS! Saturday Speakers • February 27, 2021

Saturday, 9:15 a.m.

### **"Anyone Talk History, Today?" Mrs. Winnifred Davidson: The Founder of San Diego's "Lost History"**

Alexander D. Bevil

"One of San Diego's most eminent and best-loved local historians," Mrs. Winnifred Davidson's contributions to our understanding of our city's pioneer history had once been described as "monumental." The leading authority on San Diego County History from 1924 to 1964, she wrote numerous poems, newspaper and journal articles, as well as a well-received book chronicling San Diego's forgotten or "lost" pioneer history from its Spanish Colonial beginnings through its transition from a Mexican pueblo to an American city. A founding board member of the San Diego Historical Society, she served as its first historian, laying the groundworks for its current museum and archival collections. In addition, as a founding member of the California State Landmarks Committee and Chairperson of the San Diego County History and Landmarks Committee, she played a key role in identifying, interpreting, and preserving over 48 City and County-wide historic landmarks. Among these were the Fort Guijarros, the Derby Dike, and the Serra Palm. Sadly, nearly sixty years after her death, hardly any one even knows her name, even among current members of the San Diego History Center or Congress of History.

**Biography:** Alexander D. Bevil is deeply grateful for Mrs. Davidson's work, and is determined to bring her contributions to light. A past recipient of the Congress of History's prestigious Ben Dixon Award, Alex is a former board member and past two-term president. As a planning committee chair and participant of numerous Congress of History conferences, as well as numerous articles, he has expanded our understanding of our county's history. A retired California State Parks historian, among his proudest accomplishments was the historic designation of a WWII bomber crash and grave site at Lake Perris State Recreation Area (the first WWII-related military historic site listed in a California State Park and within the State of California). As a local preservationist, he was responsible for the saving of the Georgia Street Bridge, the San Diego State Normal School Teacher Training Building, Temple Beth Israel, and (hopefully) the University Heights Water Tower. Now happily retired, he recently completed a pro bono report for California State Parks on locations within Old Town associated with San Diego's pioneer Jewish merchants.

Saturday, 9:45 a.m.

### **Mary Fitzgerald Ward: First County of San Diego Historian**

Susan Hunter Bugbee

Mary Ward (1925-1999) served as County Historian from her appointment in 1986 until her death in 1999. No one could match Mary's energy in the field of history. She volunteered innumerable hours. Her love of research resulted in stellar publications which have contributed greatly to the body of knowledge for the region. A Congress of History award is named after Mary. This is a remarkable woman that you should know.

**Biography:** Susan Bugbee graduated from Immaculate Heart College with a BA in English Literature and graduated from USD with a Masters in history. She co-authored with Kathleen Flanigan "San Diego's Historic Gaslamp Quarter: Then and Now," and, more recently, authored "South Park, San Diego California," which provided the groundwork for South Park's local historic district designation. Susan was Conference Chair for the Congress of History for three years (1988-1990). Susan recently retired as Registrar from the University of San Diego after 35 years, and serves on the Greater Golden Hill Planning Committee. When the pandemic is over you'll also find Susan serving as a docent at the House of Scotland in Balboa Park.

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Saturday, 10:30 a.m.

### **Susie Keef Smith's California Desert Photography – "Postcards from Mecca"**

Steve Lech

Susie Keef Smith was seeking escape from a troubled home life and the havoc of childhood polio when she and her cousin, Lula Mae Graves, set out to photograph the last of the prospectors, burro packers and stage stops in the remote desert east of California's Salton Sea. They traveled by burro, foot and Ford through sandy washes and roadless canyons, armed with a .38 revolver and a large format camera. While making postcards for the PO spinner rack, the women were remade in the wilderness and wound up creating an unparalleled portrait of one of the lesser-known deserts in the West. Susie's photos were nearly lost to history when, upon her death, they were tossed out by a county administrator. A savvy archaeologist jumped into a dumpster and rescued many of the photos that were used in this book "Postcards from Mecca The California Desert Photographs of Susie Keef Smith and Lula Mae Graves, 1916-1935." Learn about Susie's portraits of a mysterious land along with the story of its heroic self-taught documentary photographers of the 1920s and '30s.

**Biography:** Steve Lech is a native Riversider who has been interested in the local history of Riverside County for more than 40 years. He has written ten books on various topics related to Riverside County history, including "Along the Old Roads – A History of the Portion of Southern California That Became Riverside County, 1772-1893," considered to be the definitive history of Riverside County. He co-authors the weekly "Back in the Day" column for the Press-Enterprise newspaper in which he explores many aspects of local history throughout western Riverside County. He has been a docent at the historic Mission Inn hotel for 30 years and is the chair of the Riverside County Historical Commission and of the City of Riverside's Cultural Heritage Board.

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Saturday, 11:00 a.m.

### **Florence Chadwick: Record-Smashing Distance Swimmer**

Jonnie Wilson

Florence Chadwick (1918-1995), a native of Ocean Beach, learned to swim when she was six years old. At the age of 10 she "made waves" locally by becoming the youngest person to swim the mouth of San Diego Bay (Ballast Point to the foot of Broadway). In the 1950s she gained international fame by becoming the first woman to swim the English Channel both ways, breaking a record in each direction. She also was the first woman to swim the 21-mile Catalina Channel, again breaking a 27-year record (set by a man) by two hours. She went on to accomplish many other swimming feats, and in 1970 was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

**Biography:** Jonnie Wilson is a San Diego author and historian with more than 40 years experience as a researcher, writer, and editor. She serves on the boards of both the Ocean Beach Historical Society and the Congress of History. In 2012 she received the Local History Award presented by the San Diego Historical Resources Board for her book "A Bright Light on a Dark Street." She also served as editor and primary writer for "Ocean Beach," an Images of America book released by Arcadia Publishing in 2014.

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Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

### **Mary and Helen Marston: Founders of Neighborhood House – The Heart of the Mexican-American Community**

Maria E. Garcia

Many people are not aware of the role that sisters Mary Marston (1879-1987) and Helen Marston (1892-1982) played in the daily lives of the Logan Heights Latino community ("Logan Heights" was the term used then,

not "Barrio Logan.") The sisters were deeply involved in the Settlement House movement. When Neighborhood House became the only settlement house on the border, Mary served as president. Mary and Helen understood the issues and needs of the continuous flow of immigrants coming to San Diego. Both sisters taught classes at Neighborhood House, and both were ingenious at fundraising. The Marston Sisters selected staff of high quality to work with the Latino children, and made strong lifelong commitments like their decision to bring Laura Rodriguez to live with the family at the Marston House.

**Biography:** A retired school principal and longtime activist, Maria has been fighting for equality and teaching about the history of Mexican-American accomplishments. She turned her series of articles in the San Diego Free Press into her award-winning book, "La Neighbor: A Settlement House in Logan Heights" (2016), about Neighborhood House in Logan Heights. Her extensive interviews and in-depth research created an outstanding work. Maria was honored with the Governor's Historic Preservation Award in 2017 for this. Her soon-to-be-published new book is entitled "We Made San Diego," which tells about the lives of Latino "firsts" in the region.

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Saturday, 1:30 p.m.

### **Mary Moniz: Bringing Portuguese Dance to San Diego/ Reinforcing Portuguese Traditions**

Evelyn Barandiaran

Mary Moniz was born on the island of Madeira. When she moved to San Diego, Mary missed the dancing – not just the dances of her island, but all the dances of Portugal. In 1948 Mary started the Portuguese American Dancers in her Point Loma backyard, with musicians playing live music. Dancing helped connect the children of immigrants to the culture and customs of their parents and grandparents. Not only were people able to "take a tour of Portugal through the dances of folklore," it kept the kids busy and out of trouble! Unique to this dance troupe: they learned all the many dances of Portugal, not only the dances of one region, and you didn't have to be of Portuguese descent to dance. Mary understood that sharing culture is preserving culture.

**Biography:** Evelyn is descended from immigrants who came from the Azores and the Madeira Islands in Portugal. A lifelong resident of Point Loma, Evelyn joined Mary Moniz's dance troupe at age six. Today Evelyn serves as a director of the Portuguese American Dancers, where she has had many roles: as a teacher for the junior group (under 13 years old), as a fundraiser, and as a costumer for the 35 dancers. Evelyn also serves as the executive secretary of our Conference co-sponsor, the Portuguese Historical Center.

Saturday, 2:00 p.m.

## Sybil Stockdale: How a Local Woman Created a National Movement during the Vietnam War

Christine Stokes

Coronado local Sybil Stockdale played an essential role in the formation of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. This story is an example of the transformative power of grassroots effort to change U.S. government protocol and the story of women's empowerment. As early as 1964, American servicemen were taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese. Wives of those prisoners of war were told to stay at home in silence. After learning of the mistreatment and torture of their husbands, then took matters into their own hands. They first organized privately, then demanded international action to improve the men's conditions as well as have them returned home. Without these efforts, the POW/MIA situation in Vietnam would have been kept quiet and gone unnoticed. Sybil Stockdale's husband was the highest ranking POW, which led her, as the highest-ranking Navy POW wife, to be the first to speak publicly about the situation. Her tireless, fearless spirit inspired POW/MIA wives nationwide and set the tone for the National League.

**Biography:** Christine Stokes has a BA in history with an emphasis in Public History from UC Santa Barbara, and an MA in History Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program, State University of New York. Christine has extensive professional experience in the museum field and serves on the board of the California Association of Museums and the San Diego Museum Council. Three years ago she joined the Coronado Historical Association, where she is the executive director and curator.



Meet us in  
FEBRUARY 18 AND 19, 2022  
FOR OUR  
CONFERENCE ON

**COMMUNITY  
CELEBRATIONS!**

**WHAT CELEBRATION OR  
COMMEMORATION HAPPENS  
? IN YOUR AREA ?**

**IT COULD HAVE BEEN A ONE-TIME EVENT  
OR TURNED INTO AN ANNUAL BASH.**

Think of what story **YOU** can contribute  
to the **Congress of History** for our **2022 conference!**