

The First 100 Years



Hotel Redondo.

Redondo, Cal.

The information and photographs on Redondo Beach history are provided courtesy of the Redondo Beach Historical Museum and the Redondo Beach Historical Commission.

1892 The City of Redondo Beach was incorporated, its population 688.

'00s By the early 1900s the City had three commercial piers and was the foremost shipping point between San Francisco and San Diego. Redondo Beach, in addition to the lumber and shipping business, was becoming a major tourist attraction with the Pavilion; its Mandarin Ballroom and the Plunge, the largest salt water plunge in the world. For those unable to afford the Hotel, there was Tent City. Pacific Light and Power had constructed a steam generating plant and a new City Hall was built.

'10s During the teens Union High School was opened and a Municipal Pier was constructed. Amusements along El Paseo in addition to the Pavilion and Plunge by now included dodge-em cars, shooting galleries, restaurants, a roller coaster and Loeff's Hippodrome, which was later moved onto the Pier.

'20s In the '20s, Villa Tract (North Redondo) was annexed, the Hollywood Riviera area was developed and the City purchased the Hotel Redondo and its grounds. The Hotel, which had been unprofitable for many years, was torn down in 1924 and the area was dedicated as a City park. Monstad Pier was built.

'30s The '30s brought a new library to City Park and the Horseshoe Pier was rebuilt. It was during this time that gambling was becoming a thriving business along the deteriorating El Paseo. For a short time toward the end of the decade, the gambling ship "Rex" was moored a few miles off the coast. A water taxi from Monstad Pier made the trip in 20 minutes. The state closed this operation in 1939 and in 1940 gambling along El Paseo came to an end.

'40s The '40s saw the beginning of World War II, the end of the Red Cars and the demolition of the Plunge. The old steam plant which had been abandoned for years was also demolished, leading to the start of construction of a new generating station by the Edison Company.

'50s In the '50s Aviation High School opened and South Bay Shopping Center was dedicated. Construction was completed on the breakwater extension. The breakwater built in 1939 was totally inadequate for the fierce storms which had caused havoc on occasions dating back to the 1800's.

'60s During the 1960s Space Technology Labs (later to become TRW) came to Redondo Beach and South Bay Hospital was dedicated as was King Harbor.

'70s Seaside Lagoon came in the '70s as did redevelopment of the old downtown district along with the Municipal Pier improvements.

'80s In the '80s Aviation High School was closed, Clifton Heights was annexed, the old South Bay Center was transformed into the Galleria at South Bay and the Pier suffered destruction from storms and fire.

'90s The '90s provided a new library located adjacent to City Hall and a new Municipal Pier. The height of the breakwater was also increased.

— Pat Botsai

