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# Celebrating Fifty Years of the International Center: 1961-2011

—by Ruth Newmark



1. Did you know that in 1961 a group of 17 executive and professional women, members of the local chapter of **Zonta International**, founded our International Center in downtown La Jolla?
2. Did you know that the first campus student organization was the University International Association, founded in 1961?
3. Did you know that the first major contributor to the International Center building fund was a former President of Mexico?
4. Did you know that the present site of the International Center was a former Marine Corps archery range?
5. Did you know that in 1970, disturbed by Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations on the UC San Diego campus, the president of the San Diego Gas and Electric Company declined to make a gift of utility poles for the planned International Center on political grounds, suggesting that the administration, professors, and students at the University of California, San Diego take steps to get their house in order before asking for further contributions from a disenchanted tax-paying public?
6. Did you know that the initial group of buildings that constitute the present International Center was constructed in a mere six months and was completed in September 1971?
7. Did you know that the University Lutheran Church housed the International Cooperative Nursery School for seven years until, in 1971, the school finally found a home in its planned-for campus facility? And did you know that the children of **Mary Dhooge** (the former Director of the International Center) and of Prof. **Joseph Watson** (the former Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs) attended ICNS?
8. Did you know that Professor of Bioengineering **Geert Schmid-Schoenbein** (husband of Friends Vice President **Renate Schmid-Schoenbein**) was once a student resident of the International Center?
9. Did you know that in 1974 community groups could rent the lounge and kitchen for \$25? For larger groups of 50-100 people, the cost climbed to \$45.
10. Did you know that a 1986 International Center expansion—jointly sponsored by the Friends, Oceanids, and the University—provided, among other things, for enlarged new quarters for our Resale Shop, three tutor rooms, an office and meeting room for the Oceanids, storage space for the Kitchen and Baby Furniture Rental, office space for the Opportunities Abroad Program, and a conference room for Undergraduate Affairs?

These and many other illuminating facts about the International Center are discussed in a Friends' publication: *Celebrating Fifty Years of the International Center: 1961-2011*.

The 80-some page book pairs a large collection of reminiscences with a considerable amount of factual material that together describe the Center's fifty-years history, from its inception—traced back to a January 26, 1961 article in the *La Jolla Light* (unearthed by **Betty Shor**) that refers to the need of a meeting place for foreign students of the University of California's La Jolla campus—to two subsequent rental facilities in downtown La Jolla, through years of planning and fundraising for a campus facility that was ultimately realized in 1971, to a need for a substantial expansion completed in 1986, and ending with hints of what a much-anticipated new building complex is likely to entail. In between, you will find much about what goes on within the walls of our beloved International Center, "for the International Center is so much more than a set of buildings," to quote, among others, Friends President, **Eleanor tum Suden**.

Says the book's editor: "I have enjoyed reliving my 48-year-long association with the International Center, and I look forward to more exciting years to come."

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