

STORIES

THE U.S. NAVY DROPS ANCHOR IN SAN DIEGO

The nation's warships, early aviation, and military personnel find a home in San Diego

The military's presence in the San Diego region can trace its origins to President Theodore Roosevelt early in the 20th century. That is when, during the final years of his administration, he ordered 16 U.S. Navy battleships to circumnavigate the globe – a show of United States military might and of good will. On Dec. 16, 1907, the battleships, their hulls painted white as a sign of peace, began their voyage as “The Great White Fleet.”

While Roosevelt aimed to place American sea power on the world map, San Diego's political leaders saw the tour of Navy ships as an opportunity to launch San Diego into the 20th century. At the time, San Diego Bay was shallow and ill-equipped to accommodate large military vessels, but civic leaders wanted to make their city a world-class seaport. For that to happen, San Diego Bay needed to be dredged and that required federal funding. As the Great White Fleet headed up the coast of Baja California on their way to the West Coast of the United States, San Diego's leaders persuaded the fleet's admiral to stop in San Diego, and for four days the Great White Fleet anchored off the coast of Coronado. The Navy saw great potential in San Diego, particularly as a new base of operations on the Pacific Rim. Over the next several years the city council voted to donate land at Point Loma and elsewhere for Navy facilities, while a door-to-door campaign raised funds to buy additional parcels the Navy could use to establish a presence in the region.

A century later, 143,000 Navy, Marine, Coast Guard, and Veterans Administration personnel work in the region. San Diego is home to 60 Navy ships and four submarines, including two aircraft carriers. Twenty-eight billion dollars in direct spending in the region is related to defense, and one in five jobs in San Diego County is created by the military sector. Twenty-two percent of San Diego County's gross regional product is generated by the military and its work in the region. And it all began with a small group of civic leaders who saw the potential of their coastal region and seized the opportunity to lure the U.S. Navy.

CREATING A VACATION WONDERLAND

An international expo, a city park, and the birth of a tourism economy

When many people think of San Diego, they think of sunny beaches, a sprawling zoo, marine parks, and bustling waterfronts. They think of a great place to go on vacation. That too, didn't happen by accident.

Early 20th century Americans who planted roots here knew they had something special, and they were eager to put their town on the map. No single event is matched during this period than the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. The focal point of the exposition was

Balboa Park, where 23 years earlier botanist Kate Sessions had begun planting hundreds of cypress, pine, oak, pepper trees, and eucalyptus for future generations. To prepare for 1915, the city of San Diego embarked on an ambitious building program at Balboa Park, hiring American architect Bertram Goodhue to design museums, exposition halls, fountains, and other structures. The Spanish-colonial buildings he designed were inspired by the architectural styles he saw during a trip to Mexico. The fair ran in San Diego for two years, and by the end of that period 3.7 million people had visited San Diego. At the time the city's total population was a mere 50,000, but with new worldwide exposure the city began to grow rapidly.

Today Balboa Park remains a major cultural center, but tourist attractions extend to Downtown's waterfront and Seaport Village's shops and restaurants, Coronado Island's beaches, Mission Bay's resort hotels and boating attractions, and miles of beaches that stretch north to Oceanside. Up the coast, visiting families enjoy Legoland, San Diego Wild Animal Park, and other popular destinations.

Public and private investments in these and other attractions over the past century and a half have built the San Diego region into a world-class destination for people from around the world.

PHILANTHROPY AND CIVIC INVESTMENT

The gifts of Ellen Browning Scripps, and generations of generosity in San Diego

Ellen Browning Scripps, founder of Scripps Memorial Hospital and Scripps Metabolic Clinic (now The Scripps Research Institute) in La Jolla, was a giant in early 20th century philanthropy in the San Diego region. Featured on the cover of Time Magazine in 1926 as "the most beloved woman in Southern California," she was a leading benefactor of hospitals and educational and cultural institutions. A partner and heir of a famous newspaper empire, Scripps was already a well-known philanthropist when she backed the construction of Scripps Memorial Hospital in 1924 in La Jolla. Her generosity led to numerous other institutions, among them the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, The Athenaeum Music and Arts Library, and Scripps College. To preserve the rare Torrey pine tree for future generations, Scripps purchased land and gave it to the state with the provision that the land and its unique trees, now Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve, would be protected forever. Scripps' legacy can also be found at San Diego Zoo, where the aviary was a gift from her, and in Balboa Park, where the tower and carillon at the park's entrance, were also gifts. The enduring legacy of the Scripps family can be found across our region, a century after Ellen Browning Scripps committed her time, wealth, and passions.

The San Diego region has prospered from the generosity of many people who envisioned a greater future for their home. Ephraim Morse, Alonzo Horton, and Kate Sessions are but a few names that marked the region's early history.

In more recent times people such as Joan B. Kroc, Joan and Irwin Jacobs, Ernest Rady, Robert Price, Debbie Turner and Conrad Prebys, Darlene and Donald Shiley, T. Denny Sanford, Malin

Burnham, Andrew Viterbi, and Ted Waitt have contributed to colleges and universities, the arts, public broadcasting, healthcare institutions, charity groups, animal welfare organizations, medical research, urban redevelopment, environmental sustainability efforts, and more.

Again and again, individual acts of philanthropy in our region have propelled it forward and made our home a better place for us and for future generations.

BUILDING A POST-WAR ECONOMY – EDUCATION AND TECH

World War II and a post-war vision

World War II changed San Diego more than any other event of the 20th century. The region's war economy fueled tremendous growth, drawing tens of thousands of new residents from all over the country. Consolidated Aircraft Corporation, which established a presence in San Diego in 1935 and helped turn San Diego into a major center of innovation in 20th century aviation, built the B24 bomber in a massive factory north of downtown, completing a new aircraft every 15 minutes at the height of production. By the end of the war, 42,000 people – a quarter of the region's population at the time – were employed building aircraft, and more than 4 in 10 of them were women.

But after 1945, the war economy evaporated and the region entered a deep recession that lasted until the onset of the Korean War in 1950. San Diego's political leaders knew then that the region's economy could not be sustained on defense spending alone, and that new opportunities existed to establish and support institutions engaged in research and development in physics, engineering, medicine, and other high-impact fields. In 1955, the city council voted to donate 1,000 acres of pueblo lands in La Jolla to the University of California, which five years later opened the University of California San Diego to its first graduate students, and in 1964 to its first undergraduates.

Today, UC San Diego is the county's largest employer outside of government, with more than 74,000 employees. The institution brings in \$5.5 billion in annual revenues, manages a \$1.4 billion annual sponsored research portfolio, and contributes about \$11.5 billion annually to San Diego County's regional economy. The university is a global research leader in engineering and physics, supercomputing and data science, marine science, and biochemistry. UC San Diego's three medical centers anchor UC San Diego Health, a force in health care throughout the region.

The region's biotechnology industry, concentrated on the Torrey Pines Mesa adjacent UC San Diego, has grown into one of the region's most innovative economic sectors engaged in both basic research and drug development. The university has formed close collaborative relationships with biotech institutions populating the Torrey Pines Mesa area around the campus, including the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, The Scripps Research Institute, the Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute, and the La Jolla Institute for Immunology. Through its numerous innovation programs, UC San Diego has helped launch new businesses, helping young people translate basic research into commercial ventures.

One relatively new effort, the Halicioglu Data Science Institute (HDSI) at UC San Diego, was launched in 2018 to advance data science and position our region to be at the forefront of this rapidly advancing field. HDSI was made possible with a \$75 million donation from Taner Halicioglu, a computer science alumnus of the university and Facebook's first employee. The institute is just one example of how our region is positioned to lead in the globe's next era of innovation.

Born from the foresight, vision, and generosity of a past generation of leaders, UC San Diego has become a center of intellectual achievement and an engine of economic growth and prosperity throughout our region. Its founding more than half a century ago set the stage for an innovation culture that has attracted talented people from around the world and brought billions of research dollars to the region.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Rapid development, and a turn toward conservation

Long a sleepy and quiet corner of the United States, San Diego grew rapidly during World War II, and with this economic growth the demand for housing, commercial centers, roads, and highways grew. During WWII, new housing sprouted north of Mission Valley in Linda Vista, and a new Cabrillo Highway – which would become State Route 163, connected the new suburb to aircraft factories and other places of employment to the south. In the decades after the war, the region grew by leaps and bounds – despite the post-war recession – and the demand for housing and highways continued as the regional population increased from 209,000 in 1930 to 1.3 million in 1970. Bedroom communities spread north, south, and east of the city's core. Through the 1960s and into the '70s and '80s, the built environment in our region situated people far from work and far from limited public transportation options. As a result, the automobile became the only choice for mobility for nearly everyone. Traffic congestion quickly increased, impacting the quality of life for commuters and others.

By the 1990s, it became clear that many of the attributes we love most about our region – its pristine beaches, its lagoons and marshlands, its network of coastal hills and canyons – were under threat from sprawling development, traffic congestion, and environmental stresses. Government agencies and other stakeholders began mapping out natural habitats worth saving, so future development could be guided more intelligently. The products of this multi-year effort were the region's Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan (MHCP) and Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). The MHCP is a comprehensive conservation planning process that addresses the needs of multiple plant and animal species in northwestern San Diego County, while the MSCP is a similar program covering southwestern San Diego County. These plans have guided development since their inception, and they promise to preserve the region's most valuable natural lands and wildlife into the future.

Numerous other planning efforts in our region, along with the MHCP and MSCP initiatives, have been designed to protect our region's invaluable natural landscapes and rich biodiversity. Particular attention has been directed at protecting our magnificent shoreline through replenishing sand, strengthening seawalls, and shoring up bluffs. But the region's comprehensive approach to environmental protection has also included preserving and protecting coastal lagoons and marshes, and the inland watersheds that flow toward them for the myriad birds, mammals, fish, and other wildlife that live there.

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