

State of California — The Resources Agency	Primary #
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	HRI #
<b>PRIMARY RECORD</b>	Trinomial
Other Listings	NRHP Status Code
Review Code	Reviewer
	Date

Page 2 of 2 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) West side 6800 block Neptune Pl.

P1. Other Identifier: THE SHACK at Wind an Sea Beach (Neptune Park)

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted \*a. County San Diego

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ T. \_\_\_\_\_ R. \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4 of \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4 of Sec. \_\_\_\_\_ B.M.

c. Address 6800 Neptune Pl. (west side) City La Jolla Zip 92037

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Neptune Park on sandstone Point Loma formation below foot of Bonair St. 1 block south of Nautilus Street.

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Quintessential "surf shack." Eucalyptus structure covered by palm frond thatch. Logical use of local, renewable resource. Interpretive Polynesian design. Hipped roof, "W" gusset centerline to support roof peak. Corner poles set in concrete. Approx. 22' x 18' at base, 8' to 10' to roof line, 12' to 15' to peak. Oriented to surf break at WindanSea Beach.

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) Focal point for surf community and shade

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #) Taken from parking lot looking south about 10 years ago.

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:  Historic  Prehistoric  Both Approx. 1947 post-WWII redesign 1953-present

\*P7. Owner and Address: Community of San Diego Neptune Park

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address) Wm. "Hans" Newman, Windan Sea Surf Club, Friends of WindanSea Chair W.H.S.A

\*P9. Date Recorded: May 1998

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Single submission

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") None

\*Attachments: NONE  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List) News articles

State of California — The Resources Agency Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

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\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) THE SHACK

B1. Historic Name: The Surf Shack at WindanSea Beach

B2. Common Name: The Shack

B3. Original Use: gathering place for surf B4. Present Use: Same

\*B5. Architectural Style: interpretive Polynesian

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Local surfers returning from WWII built shack. New design rebuilt 1953. Maintained annually. Repaired last Dec. 1997.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: Yes

\*B8. Related Features:

Orientation or "line up" for the WindanSea surf break. Shack built on cement footings into sandstone below the parking lot on Neptune Place.

B9a. Architect: Don Okey, Engineer

b. Builder: Same/friends/community

\*B10. Significance: Theme So. Cal. Aloha period Area WindanSea Beach, La Jolla

Period of Significance post WWII to present Property Type Public Park Applicable Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

(see attached)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) Beach community architecture

\*B12. References:

Personal history  
La Jolla Historical Society

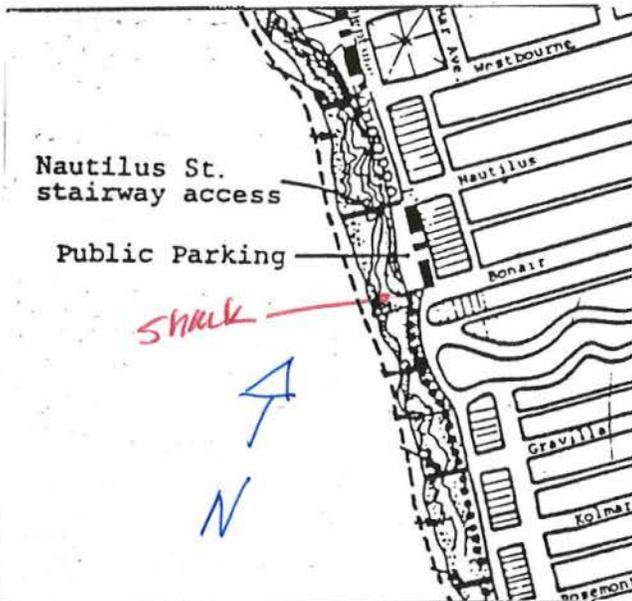
B13. Remarks:

Threat of sandstone erosion, wave action.

\*B14. Evaluator: Wm. "Hans" Newman  
3rd generation La Jolla resident

\*Date of Evaluation: 1962 to present (May 1998)

(This space reserved for official comments.)



The "Shack" at WindanSea beach was built by surfers returning from WWII in late summer of 1946. Local materials were used then and continue to be used now. Sugar Gum Eucalyptus from groves around Camp Callen (now UCSD) was used for the structure, and the thatch consists of Canary Island "date" palm fronds. Exposure to Hawaiian and other Pacific Island styles lent a semi-Polynesian style to the design. (Original design was simpler than that of the 1953 rebuild.)

In the late 40s and 50s, the Shack served two main functions: primarily, as a focal point for most local beach social activities, and, secondarily, was used by surfers for the care and maintenance of their surfboards, especially during the summer. While it's obviously not necessary to enumerate all the "social activities" held at the Shack during the early "Aloha" period, those of significance were the Hawaiian-style luaus. While a few have since achieved myth and legend status, they were originally mellow affairs involving food, ukelele playing and a bonfire. That atmosphere changed in the early 60s, as WindanSea got more rowdy and radical.

The Shack was used to shade the wooden surfboards in use during the "Aloha" period. Board were either hollow or planks, neither of which were left in the sun for long periods of time or they got damaged. Hollow boards were leaned conveniently on the Stack to drain after a surf session. Boards were commonly left overnight in the Shack during a swell, a practice that died out by the late 50s. Boards were also repaired and even shaped in the shade provided by the Shack, a practice that does occasionally continue today.

People of note involved at WindanSea during the "Aloha" period and before include the Blankenship brothers, John and Fran, friends of Cliff Robertson, who also grew up around La Jolla.

A noted glider innovator, sailboat designer and very early "hot dog" surfer is actually part of a group who pioneered surfing at WindanSea before there was a Shack is Woody Brown (he moved to Hawaii after the war). He appeared just recently in the movie "Liquid Stage" on PBS when he returned to surf at WindanSea after nearly 40 years.

The Ekstrom brothers—Woody, Bobby, and Carl— are also prominent from this period on. Woody made his own boards out of wood, and surfed mainly during the "plank" period. Bobby and Carl made the transition to foam boards, and Carl went on to manufacture surfboards for about 10 years. His first partner was Al Nelson ("Pal Al") a colorful character around WindanSea. Carl went on to laminate all the original tables and many of the bars as the Chart House chain expanded. He built race car bodies and is now known for his international involvement in "wave machines" and flowriders. Carl, 13 at the time, put a red marble in one of the cement footings when the 1953 repair was in progress. It is still visible today!

Buzzy Bent, a co-founder of the Chart House, is another extremely talented surfer who made the transition from wood to foam boards. His name, along with his brother's, appears several times inscribed in the cement footings poured around each eucalyptus pole when poured in 1953. The names and the date are still decipherable after all this time. Look for "Storm Surf" Taylor and Bill "Ike" Isenhauer's names, too.

Bob Simmons, an engineering student at Cal Tech, traveled many times down to surf at WindanSea in the late 40s and very early 50s. Bob is generally credited with both developing the balsa wood "spoon" shape and pioneering the use of polyester resins and fiberglass in the finishing of the shaped blank. Many design sessions with his contemporaries went on at the Shack and in the lot above it, though he was mainly a loner. He dies tragically at WindanSea on a late fall afternoon in 1953 during a large north well. It was at the Shack where everyone met to start the search for his body.

Mike Diffenderfer, who was there that day, went on to become a master big gun shaper for both California and Hawaii. He later did well on the Master's Golf circuit. His father was a local bank president, and he himself a La Jolla High graduate.

Don Okey, also an engineer, is credited with the 1953 structural design for the "new" (repaired) Shack. The hipped roof and centerline "W" gusset gave the Shack the strength and rigidity needed to weather nearly 44 winters exposed to extreme Pacific Ocean environmental conditions. Don Okey is a contemporary of the Blankenships, built his own surfboards (still does) and currently has a surfboard design handbook in print.

The best known surfer to ride the evolution of the foam surfboard to worldwide fame after "training" at the WindanSea reefs was Butch Van Artsdalen. Butch was radical, and some of his stories can be found elsewhere. He is best remembered for his natural athleticism, the ability to switch stance (surf with either foot forward, right or left on the wave) and his performance both in big surf and tube riding. He went to the Islands as part of the WindanSea crew who had all basically met at the Shack to surf at WindanSea. Their names include Buzzy Bent, Mike Diffenderfer, Al Nelson, Pat Curren (Tom Curren's father, Tom being several times current World Champ), David Renn, Chuck Hasley, Al "Tiny Brain" Thomas, to name a few of the more colorful standouts. Butch went on to become the master of Pipeline, a famous tube-style wave on Hawaii's North Shore, where he was a lifeguard for many years. His legend lives on.

Mike Hynson developed a surfboard specifically for use at WindanSea (and other local reef breaks) by listening to the needs of his surf-buddies, often in discussions at the Shack. Mike went on to develop some of the most innovative surfboard designs, through the 60s and 70s. His influence is still felt today throughout the surfboard shaping community. While Mike is still involved today and his other contributions are too numerous to mention here, he will always be best remembered as one of the duo in the quintessential movie *The Endless Summer* by Bruce Brown.

Another surf cinematographer who used the Shack for shade (and who attended luaus there) is Greg Noll, "da Bull," who is better known for his big wave riding on Hawaii's North Shore and Makaha. Greg mentions the Shack at WindanSea in his 1956 film, currently in video release, *Search for Surf*.

The names of note associated with the Shack for the last 30 years are too numerous to mention here, however, a few just for the record: Tom Ortner, a style master; Jon Close and Andy Tyler, musicians; Chris O'Rourke, who died young of Hodgkin's disease; a radical kid, Kyle Bakken, a local arborist, who maintained the Shack for over 10 years with little or no credit; Peter King of MTV fame; Jim Newman (my brother), currently an astronaut; all the way up to today's Joel Tudor, reigning "longboard" champ.

Respectfully submitted,

Wm. "Hans" Newman  
La Jolla, May 1998



