

Imperial Beach Historic Sites



Help us identify IB's historic sites that are at least 50 years old and represent something or someone of significance to the history of the community. What is this chunk of cement on the north end of the beach? [Reply](#)

1769 - The original El Camino Real began at the border and followed today's Hollister Street north to San Diego and California's 21 missions, before the California Legislature created Highway 101 in 1909.

1887 - The Grissom house at 554 10th St. was built in the new subdivision of South San Diego, and survives today as the oldest home in Imperial Beach.

1888 - Coronado Belt Line opened in June by Elisha Babcock around the bay to the Hotel del Coronado. The railroad tracks and some bridge segments still exist. In 2003 the tracks and the bikeway following the path of the tracks was designated Historic Site #640 by the City of San Diego.

1896 - Nestor Post Office originated in a building moved from Oneonta with the Charles E. Smith store that became the Smokehouse at Coronado and Hollister.

1896 - Nestor United Methodist Church at Coronado and Hollister was built on land donated by Captain John Folks.

1899 - Mount Olivet Cemetery at 7141 Iris Avenue.

1908 - The Lori Bragg house at 968 Florida Street was built in 1908 and at one time was a chicken ranch.

1909 - The original pier was built by the South San Diego Investment Company, damaged and rebuilt several times.

1909 - Snow family house at 855 Seacoast Dr. was built.

1910 - Aviation Field used by Charles Walsh to fly the first airplane built in San Diego; became Ream Field in 1918.

1912 - Jay Jackson house built at 2055 Leon.

1915 - Packing house on railroad siding at Palm and Hollister used by the Iguchi brothers, the first Japanese farmers in Imperial Beach.

1919- Navy Radio Compass Station established, renamed 1932 US Navy Direction Finder Station, Camp Emory in 1942, site of big Wullenweber antenna in 1942.

1919 - House at 203 Elm Avenue was built, occupied by Louise P. Genone, former Hollywood dancer, director of the Rainbow School of Dancing in Imperial Beach and Chula Vista in the 1950s and 1960s.

1920 - Benny Holt house at 176 Imperial Beach Blvd. was moved from Coronado by barge.

1923 - Colonial two-story home built at 898 5th Street.

1925 - House built at 1323 Saturn Blvd.

1926 - Subdivisions built in Silver Strand Beach Gardens, Imperial Beach Manor, Sea Breeze.

1926 - Harris house built at 862 Seacoast Dr., now Schaumburg Real Estate.

1927 - "The Castle" at Elkwood and Seacoast Blvd. has been a landmark on the beach since the 1920s.

1929 - Navy acquired land that became a gunnery range and later Border Field State Park.

1929 - Southwest Junior High School built at 2710 Iris Avenue.

1930 - Dick & Jackie Palmer adobe on Beverley Ave. was built on what had been the Abner Whitely ranch in 1892.

1930 - South Bay Union School District office at 601 Elm St. was designed by architects John Siebert and Irving Gill.

1930 - Emory Elementary School dedicated, the 1st school in the new South Bay Union District; damaged by earthquake in 1948; rebuilt in 1963.

1931 - Egger dairy barn at Leon and Saturn is located on the site of the Schnell dairy that Robert Egger purchased in 1931; current barn was built in 1956.

1932 - Two-story building at 235 Palm was the community hall; in 1965 was the Imperial Beach Beauty Salon; today is a Skate Shop.

1933 - The Palm City Woman's Club was founded, and became the Imperial Beach Woman's Club in June 1962 with the first 17 members electing Mrs. LeRae as first president, meeting the second Wednesday each month at the Beach House, 716 Ocean Avenue.

1938 - Herman Hippe opened Bamboo Inn at 1719 Palm Avenue; in 1992 owners Carlos and Rosalie Ramirez changed name to Rosalie's Bamboo Inn.

1939 - The house at 260 Dahlia Avenue was one of a group of houses moved from Tent City to Silver Strand Beach Gardens. It was purchased in 1943 for \$10,000 by Bridie Kilburn, grandmother of the current owner James F. Smith. The homes at 184 and 243 and 251 and 252 Dahlia are similar in appearance.

1939 - The McKinney Oceanfront Center in the YMCA Camp Surf is built around the last Summerville Cottage that came from Tent City in 1939.

1940 - House at 120 Imperial Beach Blvd built.

1942 - Fort Emory was built on site of old Coronado Heights. A part of the sewer line from the fort to the estuary is still visible near the Estuary Visitor Center.

1943 - Imperial Beach Elementary School, the District's 2nd school, was built by the federal government at 650 Imperial Beach Blvd.

1945 - South Bay Community Park at Coronado Avenue and 17th street dedicated on land donated by Robert Egger; was re-dedicated as Robert Egger Athletic Center in 1957.

1946 - St. Charles Church built on land donated by Robert Egger.

1947 - The home at 287 Evergreen was built by Edward Braga who came to IB in 1947 on his honeymoon with his bride Olga after getting married in Massachusetts; they fell in love with the place and decided to stay.

1947 - Teofilo Mendoza started his farm where Mendoza Elementary School is located today at 2050 Coronado Ave.

1947 - South Bay Supply Store was a two-story feed store at 1760 Palm Ave; owners were George N. Cooper and Louise Cooper; it became Marvelle Floris then was an upholstery shop.

1948 - John and Jane McLaughlin bought the house at 777 Elm St. and raised a family of 9 kids; Jane was a councilwoman (1962-1970) and mayor (1964-1967-68) of Imperial Beach.

1948 - Palm Avenue Cafe at 24 Palm Avenue opened by owners Paul and Mary Whelchel, then in 1956 became the Patio Cafe, and in 1948 became the Ye Olde Inn in 1964 under owners John and Peggy Cash.

1948 - Lucille's Restaurant opened at 951 Palm Ave., today is the Scoreboard II Sports Bar and Grill.

1948 - Bunny Inn Cafe built at 940 Palm, became Little Bonanza in 1989, and is now The Fine Auto Shop.

1948 - Rexall Drug Store was built by Jimmie Zurcher at 123 Palm Ave., became the Bonanza Night Club in the 1970s, and since 1979 has been Post 5477 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

1949 - West View Elementary School built at 525 3rd Street, the District's 3rd school, on the site of Camp Hearn that was an Army cavalry post 1916-1931.

1950 - Sullivan's Market at 801 Seacoast was owned by Francis Sullivan who came to Imperial Beach from Texas in 1935. After he retired in 1977, the building was remodeled and is now the IB Liquor Market.

1950 - Imperial Beach United Methodist Church moved to its building at 455 Palm Ave in Dec. 1950. The congregation started as the Imperial Beach Methodist Episcopal Church in 1917, and during the 1940's met in a little green building at 213 Evergreen Avenue which has since been remodeled for a dwelling. Evergreen Street was then called 5th Street.

1952 - Mundt Hardware was built at 226 Palm

1952 - Contractor O. L. Parker built 1144 Palm for Simpson Realty; now is Billie Jean's Hairstyling

1953 - Central Elementary School built at 1290 Ebony Street, the district's 4th school.

1953 - Mar Vista High School built at 505 Elm Ave.

1956 - Imperial Beach Post Office was built at 946 Donax, absorbing the former Palm City Post Office.

1956 - 1008 Ocean Lane was owned by Louis Eskiborn, a retired Navy chief who fought in three wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam, and saved seven lives by drowning in two heroic episodes, for which he received a Navy Commendation Medal in 1967. He was a former reserve firefighter, reserve police officer and a leader, who was known for sweeping the streets in his neighborhood with an old broom.

1956 - St. James Luthern Church was built at 866 Imperial Beach Blvd.

1957 - Jalisco's Cafe at 1669 Palm Ave. was originally Steve's Cafe started by Ruth and Steve Gonzalez and Alice Salazar.

1958 - The South Bay Drive-In opened at 2170 Coronado Ave. on 17 acres leased from Robert Egger.

1958 - House at 455 Donax built.

1960 - Army Corps Engineers built two stone groins to protect beach.

1960 - Bayside Elementary School was built at 490 Emory Street, the District's 5th school.

1960 - Oneonta Elementary School built at 1311 10th Street, the District's 6th school.

1960 - Seacoast Inn, a 38-room motel, was built in 1960, closed Jan. 1, 1995, replaced by Pier South Resort with 78 rooms that opened Jan. 15, 2014, at 800 Dr.

1961 - Mar Vista Baptist Church built at 888 5th Street; had been meeting near the beach at 121 Elm Avenue since 1951.

1962 - Nestor Elementary School built at 1455 Hollister, the District's 7th school.

1962 - Reama Park built.

1962 - Strand Shopping Center built at Palm and Rainbow.

1963 - The old Bonanza club was located at 1351 Palm until 1973; now is Fiesta Hall.

1963 - Sinatra kidnapper John W. Irwin arrested at his brother's house at 1124 Florida St.

1963 - New city hall dedicated at 825 Imperial Beach Blvd., replaced old quonset hut on Palm Ave.

1964 - Marco's restaurant is at 1205 Palm.

1965 - A new building for the Clock Cafe was constructed by Ann and Joe Baas at 285 Palm Ave, became "the newest, most modern and largest cocktail lounge in South Bay" with the "Largest Most Beautiful Dance Room In South Bay Area." Became Marquis Steak and Sea Food in 1981, Bryan's Landing in 1986, Marco's Mexican Seafood Grill in 2006, and has been Filippi's Pizza Grotto since 2013.

1966 - Boys' Club opened Aug. 1 on Imperial Beach Blvd across the street from the Civic Center.

1966 - Harborview Elementary School was built at 650 Imperial Beach Blvd., the District's 8th school.

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