

Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens

Rancho Los Alamitos
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For Immediate Release

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Rancho Los Alamitos Introduces Its New Book

**Sunday, September 25, 2011
9:30 a.m. - 12:00 Noon**

Celebrating the Publication of a Stirring Regional History

Rancho Los Alamitos - Ever Changing, Always the Same
by Claudia Jurmain, David Lavender and Larry Meyer

**\$25.00 per person (\$20.00 per RLA Member)
Children under 12 Free**

Long Beach, California -- The festivities surrounding introduction of the new book, *Rancho Los Alamitos - Ever Changing, Always the Same* by Claudia Jurmain, David Lavender and Larry Meyer, will include something for everyone. Participants will have the opportunity to observe a "casual conversation" among the authors, the book's publisher, Heyday's Malcolm Margolin, and the Rancho's Executive Director, Pamela Seager about the meaning of the place over time, past to present. Visitors are encouraged to bring children to enjoy "Story Time in the Garden" which will feature

notable children's literature published by Heyday. In keeping with the event's southern California theme, refreshments will be served in the form of fresh California fare, courtesy of Melissa's Produce. Docents will be on hand to give guided tours of the historic gardens and the ranch house. A book sale and signing will follow the program.

About the Book

Rancho Los Alamitos - Ever Changing, Always the Same by Claudia Jurmain, David Lavender, and Larry L. Meyer, with Foreword by Kevin Starr
Publisher: Heyday & Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation
11" x 8.5" • 256 pages • 300 images, ISBN: 978-1-59714-148-2 • \$35.00

Praise from the Experts

"This extraordinary work is ground breaking innovation in the writing of local history. Its subject is bound in geographical and temporal space, but its rendering soars to levels of interpretation that are transcendent. From one locale, the authors have managed to tell a story fascinating in both its particularity and universality. In form and content, this book is a seminal contribution to the history of California."

- *Dr. James J. Rawls, Reviews Editor*
California History: The Journal of the California Historical Society

"Indeed, were we only to have the story of Rancho Alamitos at hand, we might still be able to reconstruct the outlines and successive phases of this [Southern California] history. "

-*Kevin Starr, University Professor and Professor History,*
University of Southern California, and
State Librarian of California Emeritus

Unearth the Storied Legacy of Southern California

To the native Tongva, it is called Povuu'ngna – for centuries a land of creation, a sacred ground on which to gather for trade and ceremony. For Spanish soldier Manuel Nieto in 1790, it was a rich asset from the Crown. For Governor Jose Figueroa and Yankee Don Abel Stearns it was an investment and a haven from Los Angeles. And to the Bixby family and their workers from around the globe it was an enterprising ranch that would endure for almost a century through the rise of modern-day Long Beach. In this great spectrum, Rancho Los Alamitos encompasses the pre-history and historic continuity of the region, making it the most singular oasis of historic open space and beauty in the midst of greater Los Angeles today.

In elegant detail, Rancho Los Alamitos explores this evolving land and its inhabitants. Through letters, diaries, ledgers, and historic photos, the story of Southern California is powerfully illustrated.

Rancho Los Alamitos has always been a place of gathering, a home of new beginnings for those with dreams tied to a generous land. Rooted in its resilient diversity, the place has retained the distinctive flavor and grace of an older California while living in the times. This is Rancho Los Alamitos – Ever Changing, Always the Same.

About the Authors

Claudia Jurmain is Director of Special Projects and Publications at Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens in Long Beach, California. She began her work at the Smithsonian Institution as a research historian in the National Portrait Gallery and since then has developed and produced awarding-winning projects for museums, sites, and educational institutions across the country, including the Rancho.

Larry L. Meyer is a Professor Emeritus of Journalism from California State University, Long Beach, where he headed the department's magazine *Option* for fifteen years. Prior to that he held the position of Editor in Chief at *Westways* and *Colorado* magazines.

David Lavender, the renowned author of over forty books on the American West, was nominated for Pulitzer Prizes for his works *Bent's Fort* and *Land of Giants*. Admired for their scholarship and verve, David Lavender's books echo his ready familiarity with the places and people he wrote about and his works are an enduring contribution to western history.

Free event parking is at CSULB Lot #9 on Palo Verde Avenue at Anaheim Road with continuous shuttle service to the Rancho. Shuttle buses are handicapped accessible.

Admission for this event is \$25 for adults (\$20 for members of the Rancho) and free for children under 12. Reservations, which are due by September 20, 2011, may be made by calling the Rancho at 562-431-3541 or by visiting www.rancholosalamitos.org

Rancho Los Alamitos is a National Register site which includes an adobe core ranch house c.1800, five acres of lush historic gardens, and an historic barnyard area which will reopen in 2012 following extensive restoration. The site has been continuously occupied by generations of people, beginning with the Tongva people for whom Povuu'ngna was an important ceremonial and trading center, and remains a place of emergence and of gathering.

A visit to the Rancho is a retreat from the surrounding bustle of the city. The site reflects the ongoing blend of regional culture and environment including the Native American, Spanish, and Mexican periods, the ranching and farming era, and the imprint of early 20th century development upon the landscape.

The site is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, 1:00-5:00 p.m. School tours and Children's Native American Cultural Workshops are scheduled weekday mornings. Admission is free and free parking is available on site. Enter through Bixby Hill residential security gate at Anaheim and Palo Verde.

Rancho Los Alamitos is owned by the City of Long Beach and operated by Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation as a public/private cooperative venture under the auspices of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine. For information about the site, tours, or special events and programs, please go to www.rancholosalamitos.org.

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