



1964 groundbreaking, l to r: Harbormaster Lester Petersen, Port Commissioner Malio Stagnaro (in hat); Port Commissioner Worth Brown (with shovel); City of Santa Cruz Mayor Norm Lezin, Port Commissioner Don Falconer (with shovel); Scotchie Sinclair, Editor of the Sentinel; Port Commissioner Al Haber (brim hat); Don Brose, building superintendent for Bogard Construction (white shirt/khakis); yacht broker Vern Allen (in windbreaker); and Jack O'Neill (in suit coat).

THE HISTORIC O'NEILL BUILDING

Film director Alfred Hitchcock sailed from here. Jack O'Neill's hot air balloons were prepared for flight and brought back to this spot for repairs. Wetsuits, sailing catamarans and dive equipment were sold and legendary parties and promotions for the O'Neill brand were held here.

O'Neill describes the building's genesis: "Harry Hind and I are old time surfers from Kelly's Cove and Ocean Beach, San Francisco. We surfed there in the 1950s, and became good friends. I had the idea to open a surf shop at the Santa Cruz Harbor, and I asked Harry if he could back me on the deal. He said he would. Then Harry brought in a CPA and an attorney, and soon our surf shack became an 8,500 square foot building. We got approval from the Harbor and built in 1965. In 2000, Harry and I donated this building to the Sea Odyssey, to have this wonderful facility and revenue from rental space. Harry and I had a lifelong interest in the ocean, and his generosity has helped to make this program possible."

In 2004 O'Neill Sea Odyssey (OSO) and the Santa Cruz Harbor renovated the building, with OSO taking the upstairs and the Harbor taking the downstairs. OSO got an education center to serve thousands of kids per year with the award-winning program, and comfortable private tenant spaces with sweeping views of the Santa Cruz Harbor Channel and the Monterey Bay.

As the building was renovated, OSO continued its classes in a temporary facility on US Coast Guard land on the Harbor's west side. Donors supporting OSO's building renovation included the California Wildlife Conservation Board, Jack O'Neill and Harry Hind, the California Coastal Conservancy, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Balance Vector Inc., Robert Stephens and Julie Packard, Charles and Ann Walton, Jim and Debbie Thoits, Coast Commercial Bank, Jack, Tim and Bridget O'Neill, West Marine, Merrill and Lee Newman, Russ Rolfe Sr., Westcliff Foundation, Dan and Rebecca Haifley, Michael and Ann McCabe, Rob and Nancy Bremner, Nick Petredis, Jack McLaughlin, Shannon Brady and Donna Blitzer.