Guide to the Christine F. Shirley Files on Crystal Cove Historic District

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Guide to the Christine F. Shirley
Files on Crystal Cove Historic
District

Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Christine F. Shirley files on Crystal Cove Historic District

**Date:** 1923-2002,

**Date (bulk):** bulk 1977-2001

**Collection Number:** MS-R113

**Creator:** Shirley, Christine F.

**Extent:** 7.3 linear feet (8 boxes and 1 oversized folder)

**Languages:** The collection is in English.

**Repository:** University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.

**Irvine, California 92623-9557**

**Abstract:** This collection comprises the personal papers of Christine Shirley, a former resident of Crystal Cove, California and member of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association Executive Committee. The collection includes records from the Crystal Cove Residents' Association. Materials reflect Shirley's involvement in the association's efforts to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places and its legal struggles with the State of California over tenancy of the Crystal Cove cottages.

**Access**

The collection is open for research.

**Publication Rights**

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**Preferred Citation**


For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

**Acquisition Information**


**Processing History**

Processed by Audrey Pearson, 2008.

**Biography**

Christine F. Shirley was a resident of Crystal Cove, California from 1967 until 2001 and a long-time activist for preserving its 46 rustic cottages and the surrounding natural environment. Shirley first began to visit Crystal Cove in the 1930s with her cousin and fellow Cove resident Ruthie Van Wyck. She purchased the lease to cottage 23 in 1967 and spent most weekends thereafter at Crystal Cove with her children. At the time, she lived with her family in the Hollywood Hills and taught at Los Angeles High School. She married Jack Shirley in 1970 after they met at Crystal Cove.

Shirley was a member of the Executive Council of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association. Worried that the Irvine Company would sell Crystal Cove to a developer who would destroy the cottages and natural ecology of the surrounding area, Shirley worked with fellow resident Martha Padve to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places. Shirley was deeply interested in Crystal Cove's history and gathered much information about it for an unrealized book.

Crystal Cove lies on the Pacific Coast between the Southern California cities of Newport Beach and Laguna Beach. The area was purchased by James Irvine in 1864 and retained by the Irvine Company until 1979. Early in the twentieth century, squatters began to live in the area, first erecting tents, then one-room cottages. More rooms were added to these structures as needed over time, often assembled from driftwood gathered along the beach. The cottages are one of the only remaining examples of California vernacular beach architecture, otherwise known as architecture without architects. Beginning in the 1920s, silent film productions used Crystal Cove as a set for movies set in the South Seas because all of the cottages had palm-thatched roofs during this era. Such movies included Treasure Island (1920), Storm Tossed (1921), Sadie Thompson (1928), Half a Bride (1928), White Shadows in the South Seas (1928), and, much later, Beaches (1988).

Road traffic increased with the construction of Pacific Coast Highway in 1926, and Crystal Cove became easily accessible to the public. In the late 1930s the Irvine Company informed cottage owners that they must either move their cottages or agree to lease the property from the company. Many owners chose to remain.
After the Irvine Company sold Crystal Cove to the State of California in 1979, Shirley remained involved in the Crystal Cove Residents’ Association as it filed lawsuits against the State to allow residents to remain in the cottages. The association won several lease extensions for its residents until 2001, when all residents were evicted.

The last of the cottages was built in the late 1940s. The exteriors of the structures have remained nearly unchanged since the 1950s, although many interiors have been remodeled. Between 2001 and 2006, the State of California restored 22 of the 46 cottages to their vintage 1935-1955 interior and exterior condition.

Biography/Organization History
1967 Christine Vail purchases the lease to cottage 23.
1979 June 16 Crystal Cove Historic District placed on National Register of Historic Places.
1979 December State of California purchases 1,898 acres of Crystal Cove State Park from the Irvine Company for $32,600,000.
1981-1983 First Development and Public Use Plan was created. Crystal Cove Residents’ Association took action against the State of California to win the right to remain in their cottages.
1982 April 14 Crystal Cove residents given notice to vacate by 1982 July 31.
1983 Crystal Cove lease period extended by ten years.
1991-1994 Second Development and Public Use Plan created to establish some of the cottages as a hostel. The plan was blocked by legislation that required the California Department of Parks and Recreation to prepare a legislative report on alternative uses for the Historic District.
1993-1995 Tenant leases extended for two years.
1994-2001 Third Development and Public Use Plan was created which planned to build a seaside resort on the Historic District. Implementation of the plan cancelled by the California Department of Parks and Recreation following public concern about the project.
1995 December 29 Crystal Cove Residents’ Association file lawsuit against the State of California, Parks and Recreation to prevent eviction.
1996 Crystal Cove Preservation Partners selected as concessionaire of the Historic District.
1999 Crystal Cove Alliance formed to resist the State of California's plans to build a luxury hotel and modify the Crystal Cove cottages.
2001 Crystal Cove Preservation Partners’ contract cancelled.
2001 February 9 The California Department of Parks and Recreation issues 30-day eviction notice to residents. Residents file lawsuit claiming non-compliance of agreement.
2001 July 8 Crystal Cove residents vacate their properties.
2001-2006 State of California Department of Parks and Recreation begins to renovate cottages and implement fourth Plan for Public Use and Preservation.
2006 June Crystal Cove cottages made available for public use.

Collection Scope and Content Summary
This collection comprises the personal papers of Christine Shirley, a former resident of Crystal Cove, California and member of the Crystal Cove Residents’ Association Executive Committee. The collection also includes records from the Crystal Cove Residents’ Association and reflects Shirley’s involvement in the association's efforts to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places and its legal struggles with the State of California over tenancy of the Crystal Cove cottages.

Collection Arrangement
This collection is arranged in three series.
Series 2. Subject files, 1923-2002. 3.2 linear feet
Series 3. Clippings, 1959-2002. 2.0 linear feet

Related Collections
Related Crystal Cove materials can be found in the following collection:
Martha Padve papers on the Crystal Cove Historic District. MS-R091. Special Collections and Archives, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

**Subjects**
Shirley, Christine F. -- Archives.
Crystal Cove Residents' Association -- Archives.
Historic buildings -- California -- Crystal Cove State Park.
Cottages -- California -- Crystal Cove State Park.
Crystal Cove Historic District (Calif.).

**Genres and Formats of Materials**
Photographic prints -- California -- Orange County -- 20th century.

**Contributors**
Crystal Cove Residents' Association.
California. Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

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- **Physical Description:** 2.0 linear feet
- **Series Scope and Content Summary**
  This series contains materials generated by the Crystal Cove Residents' Association, including meeting minutes, newsletters, legal papers, and files on individual residents.
- **Arrangement**
  This series is arranged alphabetically by topic or material type.
- **Processing note**
  Loose photographs in box 2 are not sleeved. Researchers must wear gloves.

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<td>Assessment notices 1989-1995</td>
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Crystal Cove State Park
Analysis 1980
Meeting agendas, invitations, and other materials 1981-1984
Planning team: correspondence, questionnaires, and other materials 1978-1980
Department of General Services Real Estate Services Division correspondence and clipping 1978-1988
Department of Parks and Recreation
Crystal Cove State Park Relocation Plan, booklet, and correspondence 1980

Box : Folder 3 : 31  
Crystal Cove State Park Relocation Plan, booklet, and correspondence 1980

Box : Folder 3 : 32-33  
Hearing notice 1984
Lease agreement amendments and related correspondence 1986-1987
Lease agreement draft 1983

Box : Folder 3 : 34  
A Report to the Legislature on Museum Collections Management undated

Box : Folder 3 : 35  
Requests for quitclaim deed 1995
Sources of Historic Preservation Funds circa 1978
El Morro Community Group reports and lease 1978-1981
Eviction notices 1982

Box : Folder 3 : 36  
Legal papers, correspondence, and clipping 1981
Newsletters, correspondence, and other materials 1978-1991
Garages: correspondence, lease, and map 1985-1986
Gate to upper road announcements and bulletin 1980, 1990
Greenpeace fact sheets, correspondence, and ephemera 1978-1979

Box : Folder 3 : 37-42  
A Report to the Legislature on Museum Collections Management undated

Box : Folder 4 : 1  
Requests for quitclaim deed 1995

Box : Folder 4 : 2  
Sources of Historic Preservation Funds circa 1978

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El Morro Community Group reports and lease 1978-1981
Eviction notices 1982

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Friends of the Irvine Coast

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Legal papers, correspondence, and clipping 1981

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Newsletters, correspondence, and other materials 1978-1991

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Gate to upper road announcements and bulletin 1980, 1990

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Greenpeace fact sheets, correspondence, and ephemera 1978-1979

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Histories and summaries 2002

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Bibliography undated

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Early resident questionnaires 1978, 2002

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International popularity: correspondence and summary 1976

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Lifestyle and celebrations: summary, correspondence, and notes 1978

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Natural disasters: notes and clippings 1978

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Insurance policies and correspondence 1984-1987

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Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. correspondence, brochures, and other materials 1978-1991

Box : Folder 4 : 25-26  
Leases, correspondence, and other materials 1940-1973

Box : Folder FB-001 : 1  
Magazines featuring articles on Crystal Cove

Box : Folder 4 : 27  
Coaster Magazine 1995

Box : Folder 4 : 28-29  
Los Angeles Times Magazine 1990

Box : Folder 4 : 30, FB-001 : 1  
New Worlds 1973-1978


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McClure, Vicki: clippings, announcements, and other materials 1984

Naming of lessees: announcements and correspondence 1983

National Audubon Society Laguna Hills Chapter newsletters 1976-1989


Historic summaries drafts 1977

Nomination forms, correspondence, and other materials 1978-1979, undated

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Plaque order form, nomination forms, and other materials

National Trust for Historic Preservation fact sheets and related materials 1978, 1997

Nature Conservancy membership packet 1980

Californians for Preservation Action Newsletter 1976

Coastal News 1982

Crystal Cove Historic District 2001-2002


Laguna Beach Community Historical Society 1978-1981

Orange County Historical Society County Courier 1985

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service Irvine Coast/Laguna New Area Study Newsletter undated


Orange Coast National Park correspondence and minutes 1979

Orange County historical organizations roster 1975

Orange County Planning Commission


Public hearing notice and agenda 1976

Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly 1987

Pacific Coast Highway relocation study 1973


Parking

Pass announcements 1981-1986

Rules and notice 1996-1997

Petition to Governor Jerry Brown and related materials 1982

Photographs circa 1930, undated

Scope and Content Note

4 black-and-white and 2 color photographic prints. Includes aerial shots of Crystal Cove, photographs of the cottages and beach, and one photograph of early residents posed in front of cottages.

Political contacts: correspondence, brochures, and other materials 1977-1983

Real estate appraisal 1983

Relocation Assistance in California packet and relocation notice 1981

Relocation needs booklet and survey 1978

Rental records

Cottage 23: budget and notes 1990, undated

Cottage 26

Bulletins, correspondence, and other materials 1973-1978

Correspondence, legal papers, and other materials 1982-1986

Correspondence, receipts, and other materials 1978-1999

Reports

County of Orange Local Coastal Program Irvine Coast: Commission Staff Summary and Recommendation 1978

Crystal Cove cottage rehabilitation geotechnical investigation 1994

Crystal Cove State Park Interpretive Plan appendix D undated

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Box : Folder 6 : 7  Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Proposed Wilderness Park and Resource Conservation Area 1978
Box : Folder 6 : 8  The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects undated
Box : Folder 6 : 9  Shipwreck Reef Project proposal 1995
Box : Folder 6 : 10  Slides 1974-1977
    Scope and Content Note
    2 color photographic slides of Crystal Cove's beach and cottages.
Box : Folder 6 : 11  Television channels available at Crystal Cove: correspondence 1984
Box : Folder 6 : 12  Trails: clippings, correspondence, and other materials 1979-1989

    Physical Description: 2.0 linear feet
    Series Scope and Content Summary
    This series comprises extensive clippings files on Crystal Cove collected by Shirley.
    Arrangement
    This series is organized chronologically.

Box 7  Clippings 1959-1981, undated
Box 8  Clippings 1980-2002