

## Long Beach Centennial a 'Celebration of a Lifetime'

by Scott Mitchell  
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The Long Beach Fire Department Marine Safety Division held its Centennial Celebration aboard the three stern decks of the Queen Mary on July 22, 2006. It was the culmination of over one-and-a-half years and thousands of volunteer hours of planning and preparation, packed into one evening of tradition and history.

The Port of Long Beach was the headline sponsor with too many other sponsors and supporter's to name. The event was also a fundraiser and silent auction for

the Vanguard Cancer Foundation. The \$35,000 in proceeds was donated to further cancer treatment through the foundation at Memorial Hospital in Long Beach.

The event was opened to a crowd of over 750 people with a quick word from LBLG Association President and CBSOA member Dirk Crawford. He introduced the Fire Chief Dave Ellis who spoke of the great history between the lifeguards and firefighters in Long Beach finishing with the announcement of hourly lifeguard Zack Walter being accepted into the September 2006 academy class. It was a total surprise for Zack and a great moment for the lifeguard family. Chief



The Fellowship of the Dory: The hardwood, brass and bronze dory built by Lowell's, MA, on display at the Long Beach event.

Ellis then introduced new Mayor Bob Foster who spoke on behalf of the city council and presented a proclamation recognizing the lifeguards for 100 years of service.


With the opening finished attention was focused out to sea as a "Parade of Rescue Boats and Fireboat Water Display" wowed the crowd. It culminated with a fantastic photo op of all the vessels right at dusk. It was breathtaking and one of many emotional moments of the evening. A buffet dinner was served and was quite delicious. The crowds then enjoyed dancing with music provided by The Eliminators, a surf band from the south Orange County area and a great DJ with some of the more current tunes for the younger crowd. The weather was unpredictable as usual and provided some excitement later in the evening with an awesome thunder and lightning show. A 20-minute documentary produced by LBLGA board member and CBSOA member Shawn Parker was another highlight with many pictures, interviews and movies of our 100 years of service and tradition.

Two of our non-career lifeguards, Derek Pakiz and Scott Crail, created a group called "The

Fellowship of the Dory". They commissioned a banks dory to be built by Lowell's Boat Shop in Amesbury, Massachusetts. This is the same shop that built our dories in the past. Interested past or present lifeguards bought into the partnership. It was made from hardwood and all brass and bronze fittings, a real sight to see. The dory will be used for special events and a link to the past for future generations at our lifeguard museum.


Generations of lifeguarding were represented from the 1920s to present. We had two ninety plus year olds that guarded during the late 1920s. The stories told were just amazing. Old and new came together as one and most often heard were comments saying this was the event of a lifetime. Many CBSOA agencies came to support our event and we wish to thank them all again for sharing in our tradition and history.

For the past 100 years the Long Beach Fire Department Lifeguards have been saving lives and property on the beaches and waterways. We are committed to continue with this history and tradition. Everyone stay safe on the water and never forget your roots because they will be the foundation for growth in the future.




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