

By Vicki Vedder Sweet

A true Orange County native, Glenn Vedder was born in Santa Ana in 1901 and came to Laguna Beach in 1916, becoming a part-time resident in 1925. Glenn moved to Laguna fulltime in 1954 to retire and became a resident of Shaw's Cove. He was fond of saying that he retired to the beach "and I've been busy ever since!" A former chemistry professor and licensed pharmacist, Glenn and his wife Helen raised three sons, all of whom were beach lovers and scientists. They taught their children, their grandchildren and their great-grandchildren to respect the ocean and its environment.

Glenn joined the City Council in 1965 and eventually became mayor. Because of his love for the ocean and the marine environment, in early 1967 he began a project to create a marine preserve in Laguna. He wanted to "prevent the destruction of shoreline biota." Assembly Bill 169 was passed shortly thereafter which included marine preserves in Laguna, Newport Beach and South Laguna. Established in 1968, the area was eventually named the Glenn E. Vedder Ecological Reserve in 1975. It was truly one of his proudest moments.



Glenn Vedder in 1988 walking near  
the tide pools in Laguna Beach

I spent much of my youth on the beach in that special cove in North Laguna. I scampered over the rocks and explored tide pools, learning how the marine environment worked. I was taught not to disturb the natural order of things, but to observe and be amazed! Because of what my grandparents, Helen and Glenn, taught me and my children about the ocean, the waves, the beach and the fragile marine environment, it seems only fitting that I pay that forward and give my support to the Ocean Awareness Challenge. I'm proud to support this endeavor and am pleased that my grandfather's name will be associated with this event! Congratulations on an incredible project!