

History of the Marine Monument Garden at Park Semper Fi from Launa Gould

In June of 2005, soon after being installed as President of the San Clemente Garden Club, I reviewed the New President's binder and came across a grant that was being offered featuring a civic development project honoring those who serve our country.

The community of San Clemente was in the process of designing and creating a tribute to the Marine Corp. I contacted **Wayne Eggleston**, founder of the **Heritage of San Clemente Foundation** and driving force behind the Marine Memorial Monument. Wayne was thrilled that the garden club was willing to participate in the design, planting and maintenance of the gardens around the monument.

With the exciting potential of our club contributing to this major community project, I approached our board and was given the support to pursue this project.

Club members were asked to participate in the design and implementation of the gardens which needed to be completed before the November 12, 2005, dedication date. A daunting task!

The **ground breaking ceremony** was held on **September 7, 2005**, which included the City Council, Marines and the San Clemente Garden Club among other contributors to the project.

On October 20, 2005, the Club organized a planting day and invited the Marines and community to participate. Club members, Marines, and community volunteers took this bare plot of land and through the process of design and planting, created a beautiful native garden that attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

The Marine Monument was **dedicated on November 12, 2005**, at a ceremony organized by the Heritage of San Clemente Foundation to commemorate the 230th birthday of the US Marine Corp.

In March of 2006, our club was awarded a \$2000 grant sponsored by National Garden Clubs, our parent organization. The club match the funds and major plantings began. In May, our club was presented an appreciation plaque by Mayor Wayne Eggleston. On July 4th, club members served as docents in the gardens during the fireworks celebration at the pier.

Veteran's Day in November 2006, we celebrated the One-Year Anniversary of the Marine Monument at Park Semper Fi.

The Marine Monument Garden Project of the San Clemente Garden Club started out as an idea that the Club could become a significant part in creating this tribute to the Marine Corp. The significance and emotional impact on the community and neighboring Camp Pendleton has far exceeded the expectations of the original idea for the Marine Monument at Park Semper Fi.

