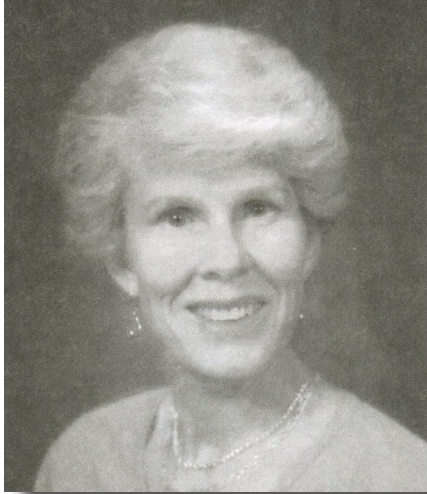


Iris H. Wilson Engstrand (1935-)



Historian Iris H. Wilson Engstrand served as the 42nd President of the Western History Association from 2004 to 2005. Born in Los Angeles and raised in Southern California, Dr. Engstrand graduated from Orange Coast College (1953), and earned her B.A. (1956), M.A. (1957), and Ph.D. (1962) from the University of Southern California. At USC, she was inspired by Dr. Donald Cutter's lectures about the Spanish colonization of California to change her major from biology to history. She was part of the group of USC faculty and graduate students to whom visiting professor Jack Carroll in 1960 first suggested the WHA.

A specialist in Spanish exploration during the 18th century and California history, Dr. Engstrand joined the department of history at the University of San Diego in 1968. The University has recognized Dr. Engstrand with a Davies Award for Faculty Achievement (1984) and a distinguished University Professorship (2004-2005). Dr. Engstrand has received Fulbright and Huntington Library fellowships among numerous other research awards. In 1999 she was elected president of the American Historical Association, Pacific Coast Branch. In 2007, Juan Carlos, the King of Spain, awarded her the Medal of the Order of Isabel la Católica for outstanding contributions to the history of Spain in the Americas.

Dr. Engstrand has published more than twenty books as well as numerous articles and chapters that document Spanish exploration, contributions of 18th-century Spanish and Mexican naturalists, and California history. These include: *William Wolfskill: Frontier Trapper to California Ranchero* (1965), *Spanish Scientists in the New World: The Eighteenth Century Expeditions* (2001), and *San Diego: California's Cornerstone* (2005), a popular history. She has mentored several graduate students and co-authored histories of San Diego's leaders and institutions with some of them. Dr. Engstrand also translated into English José Mariano Moziño's 18th-century manuscript, *Noticias de Nutka: An Account of Nootka Sound in 1792* (1970, 1991). Her article, "Of Fish and Men: Spanish Marine Science during the Late Eighteenth Century" (2000), received the WHA's 2001 Bolton Award for best article about the American borderlands.

A longtime member of *The Journal of San Diego History's* editorial board, Dr. Engstrand has co-edited the journal since 2004. She has been recognized with Awards of Merit from the California, Southern California, and San Diego Historical Societies. She also received the Women's International Center's 2004 Living Legacy Award. Dr. Engstrand lives with her husband Paul in San Diego where she enjoys sailing. She has a daughter Kristin, and two stepsons, David and Craig.

Sources:

"She'll Pore Back Over Conquistadores' Trail," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug 3, 1960, A3; "Iris Engstrand, Professor, History," University of San Diego College of Arts and Sciences, <http://www.sandiego.edu/cas/history/faculty/biography.php?ID=131>; "Iris H.W. Engstrand, Ph.D.," Women's International Center, <http://www.wic.org/bio/iengstrand.htm>.

Authored by:

Karen J. Leong, Arizona State University