ABOUT SCRIPPS

Scripps founding director William E. Ritter initially taught students at the Hotel del Coronado Boathouse (1903-1905), and then in a small laboratory building near La Jolla Cove (1905-1909).

In 1907 William E. Ritter, along with partners E. W. Scripps and Fred Baker, selected an undeveloped parcel of San Diego city land to be the permanent home of the institution. E. W.’s sister, philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps, donated the $1,000 paid for the 170 acres, and the first building was completed in 1910.

The marine lab was renamed the Scripps Institution for Biological Research and became part of the University of California in 1912. The UC Regents changed the name to Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 1925 in recognition of the breadth of research at the institution. In 1960, the university established a San Diego campus and Scripps became part of the University of California San Diego.

Today, Scripps is one of the most important centers for global earth science research and education in the world with more than 2,300 scientists, students, staff, and volunteers. Scripps scientists work to understand and protect the planet, and investigate our oceans, Earth, and atmosphere to find solutions to our greatest environmental challenges with cutting-edge research programs under way on every continent and in every ocean. The multidisciplinary research accessible at UC San Diego makes Scripps a magnet for top students and researchers.

Please come along on a tour of the Scripps campus—rich in history and architectural interest—along the beautiful ocean bluffs of La Jolla.

POINTS OF INTEREST

2 Pawka Green: Named for Steven Sitter Pawka whose fundamental study of waves in Southern California improved prediction of coastal waves throughout the world.

4 Ritter Hall: Home to the Charles David Keeling lab, whose measurements would become the iconic “Keeling Curve,” provided the first evidence of carbon dioxide buildup in the atmosphere, a major factor in global warming.

5 Ellen Browning Scripps Memorial Pier: Named for the most significant donor to the institution in its formative years. Data about ocean conditions have been taken from the pier continuously since 1916 and provide an unparalleled source of information on the coastal Pacific Ocean. Seawater is also pumped up from the pier providing a supply of fresh seawater to laboratories and the tanks at Birch Aquarium at Scripps.

7 “The Ploughman”: Created in 1910 by sculptor Arthur Putnam as part of a series commissioned by E. W. Scripps to represent the history of California.

9 McReynolds Family Coral Reef Garden: A succulent, cacti, and rock garden designed to simulate distinct coral reef zones.

12 La Jollan Indian Archaeological Site: This is the oldest known archaeology site in Southern California dating back roughly 7,500 years BCE.

13 Martin Johnson House: Named for Martin Wiggo Johnson (1893-1984), a professor of biological oceanography at Scripps for half a century. This cottage, which sits underneath cypress trees planted during William Nierenberg’s directorship, has been remodeled for use as a small conference center and wedding venue.

18 Scripps Coastal Meander Trail: The trailhead is located at the top of Biological Grade and offers sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean and San Diego coastline from La Jolla Cove to Torrey Pines State Beach. The trail is part of a larger statewide network of publicly accessible trails.

22 “Atmospheric Rivers”: Created by Oscar Romo, this sculpture is part of a collection of installations on the Scripps campus promoting scientific knowledge through art.