



Once an isolated boathouse, Caltech's marine lab is now an academic stronghold among residential high rise.

Renovation of An Old Shell

Caltech's William G. Kerckhoff Marine Laboratory—where Thomas Hunt Morgan once studied self-sterility in the hermaphroditic ascidian, and many other distinguished Institute scientists of the past did research—has now been treated to an eight-month, quarter-million-dollar rejuvenation. Work was begun in November 1965 on the 40-year-old Spanish-style building which stands at the entrance to Newport Harbor in Corona del Mar. In July 1966, when all but a few details were completed, biologists moved their research projects back into a completely renovated laboratory.

The lab was built in 1926 as a boathouse and bathhouse for the exclusive Palisades Club. Four years later it was bought by Caltech with funds given by William Kerckhoff. Today, after its first major overhaul in 36 years, its outer shell remains the same, but the interior has been totally revamped. Now eight individual laboratories, a common laboratory with centrifuges and other equipment for cell physiology and biochemistry, one large laboratory used for instruction and seminars, and miscellaneous supporting rooms offer working facilities for a dozen researchers. Aquarium tanks of continuously circulating seawater have been enlarged to triple the lab's storage capacity. A four-unit apartment built next to the lab offers accommodations for the staff and visiting researchers.

Among the major projects resumed when the reconditioning was complete is the work of Charles Brokaw, Caltech associate professor of biology, whose team is studying the swimming mechanisms of spermatozoa. Sea animals used in the research are abundant in the area and are gathered with the aid of the lab's sea-going fleet—a 24-foot inboard launch and a 12-foot skiff.

Other divisions of the Institute also maintain research teams at the lab. For example, Wheeler

North, associate professor of environmental health engineering, is conducting studies of the ecology of kelp in polluted water. George Clark, graduate student in geology, is studying the changes in the chemistry and form of the scallop shell in response to changes in its environment; and Heinz Lowenstam, professor of paleoecology, is setting up a project to catalog the types of scratches that chitons and tippets make on the rocks with their teeth.

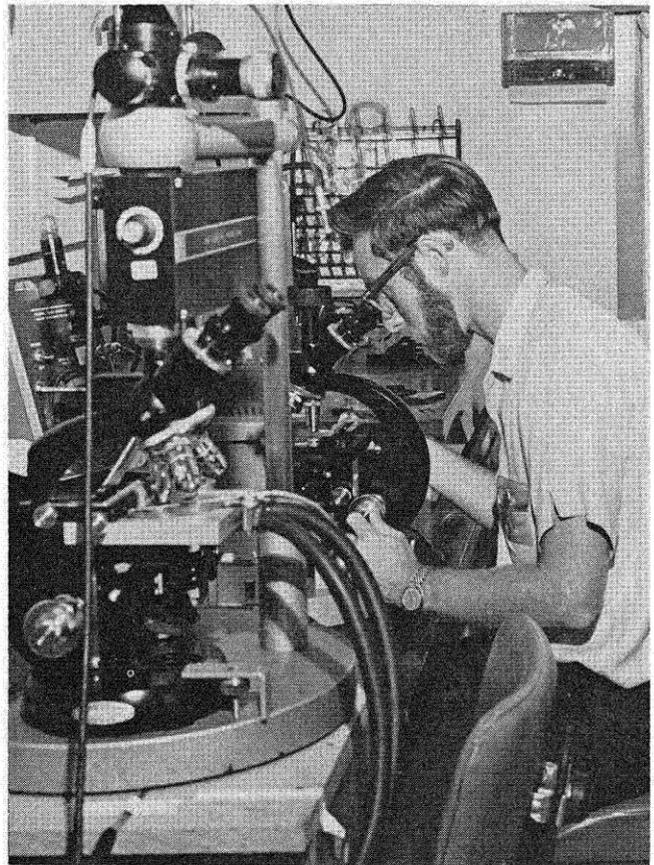
Other Caltech personnel will be moving their projects and teams into the lab within the next few months, and investigators from other institutions will be coming to Corona to do research.

Caltech's Wheeler North and Charles Brokaw have major projects under way at the marine lab.



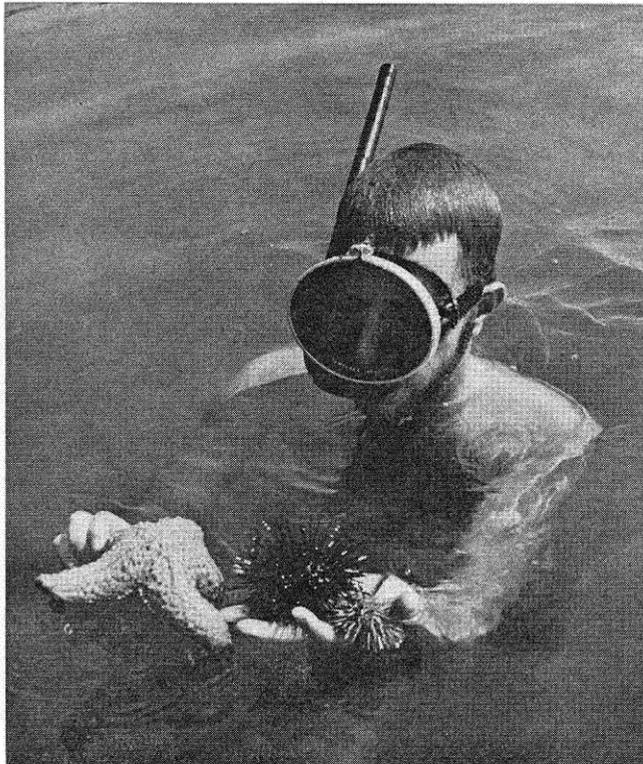


Dr. Brokaw's research requires abundant supplies of sea urchins available in Corona waters.



Graduate student Stuart Goldstein works with new laser microbeam equipment in the laboratory.

Bob Schor, Caltech senior in biology, scuba dives for marine flora and fauna in Newport Harbor.



The lab's skiff is taken by research assistant Einar Anderson to collect specimens in the harbor.

