

FEATURED INSTITUTION—

THE ALLAN HANCOCK FOUNDATION OF
THE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

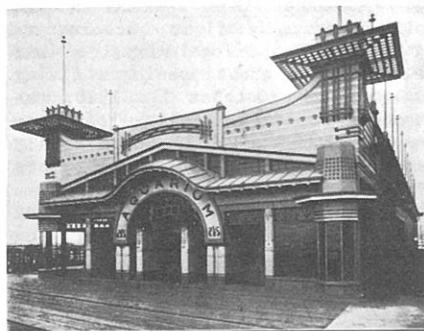
I. HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUNDATION

No view of the Allan Hancock Foundation can be considered legitimate or consummate without a brief sketch of its benefactor and the circumstances that led to its inchoation. Hence, I begin with a succinct historical conspectus before proceeding to the more mundane aspects of the Foundation.

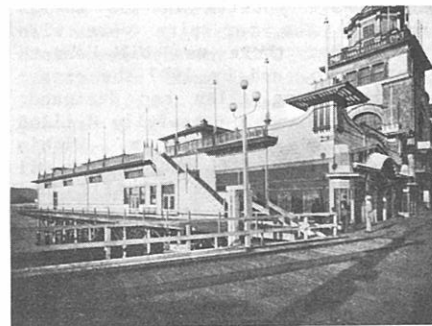
Sixty-eight years ago, construction began on an ornate, quasi-oriental beachfront edifice that was to serve as a public aquarium, as well as provide facilities for teaching and the scientific study of marine life in the southern California region. This eclectic facility was formally christened the "Venice Marine Biological School," but soon became simply the "Venice Aquarium" (Fig. 1). This unusual institution was the forerunner of what was to become the marine sciences program of the University of Southern California. The facility was originally under the directorship of Professor A. S. Ulrey, and had space for 8 investigators and 40 students. The property was a gift from Abbot Kinney, prominent California developer and conservationist (terms that today, unfortunately, seem contradictory, if not oppositional). Kinney also helped to establish

the ephemeral School of Forestry at USC in the late 1880's. Shortly after this, he developed what he called his "Venice by the Sea"; that portion of the City of Los Angeles now simply referred to as Venice, whose improbable yet venerable canals appear destined to become the focal point of a controversial residential development project in the near future. The Venice Aquarium burned in 1920 and was not rebuilt. Shortly before the fire, however, USC acquired its first research vessel, the Anton Dohrn, constructed under the supervision of Dr. Ulrey (Fig. 2).

During these same years, an adventurous gentleman by the name of Henry Hancock was roaming the California coast. While educated in the tradition of the "eastern establishments", Henry found need to give expression to the family's pioneer spirit and left home to sail around Cape Horn to west America in 1849. Although he held a degree in law from Harvard, he found this vocation less profitable in early California than the surveying profession, and in 1852 he was hired by the City of Los Angeles (then little more than a growing pueblo) to help straighten out hopelessly



Front Entrance to Station



Station Building and Venice Auditorium

Fig. 1. Venice Marine Biological School. circa 1911.