Before April 4. Design alterations caused the project to go over deadline and over budget by approximately $4,000. However, the cosmetic changes clearly added to the visual appeal and safety of the breakwater.

Outside of these slight modifications, Savage encountered only one obstacle during the final phase of construction. He noticed that the sand level of the pool constantly fluctuated with the ebb and flow of the tide. “A strong suction pull caused by the water running into the sluiceways and then receding” made it difficult for the pool to have an even sandbar. To remedy this problem, he decided to close the four wooden grillages. This prevented the sand in the pool from moving west through the sluiceways. On March 27, workers sealed the grillages. The pool’s floor immediately lowered one and a half feet. Three days later, a sand beach formed at “the corner between the bluff and the inside of the breakwater.”

La Jolla residents sat on the grass in front of the Casa de Mañana for the May 31, 1931, dedication and ceremonial opening of the Children’s Pool. Courtesy of the La Jolla Historical Society.
which Savage saw as beneficial “for children bathing in the pool.” If it ever seemed desirable to reopen the gates, Savage proposed hand excavating the sluiceways at low tide and raising the frames and gates at low tide. After dealing with these obstacles, work was finally finished on the Children’s Pool and it was ready for the public’s use.41

“A Wonderful Improvement”

After extensive planning, a tedious permit/approval process, and construction filled with numerous delays and obstacles, Savage, Johnson, and Ledbetter eventually completed the Children’s Pool on April 4, 1931. From the initial survey and design to the final work done by the contractor, the entire project took ten years.

On May 31, a celebration occurred at the breakwater to celebrate the accomplishment. Scripps was too ill to attend the celebration but Savage spoke in her place, reminding the audience of the difficulties involved in constructing the structure and the importance of the breakwater to the people of La Jolla. The ceremony featured speeches, a pantomime performance by La Jolla school children, and a concert by the San Diego Y.M.C.A. band.

The breakwater received tremendous support from members of the community. Judge John Kean described the project as “the most valuable of all Miss Scripps’ benefits to La Jolla.” Samuel Fox, representative to Mayor Walter Austin, believed that the breakwater would allow children “to enjoy without danger, the Ocean.” The community’s weekly paper, La Jolla Journal, called the idea a “wonderful and valuable improvement,” and “a great asset to the community.”42

The breakwater reflects the philanthropic legacy of Scripps and the dedication and work ethic of Savage. Its construction was an intensive undertaking that created a safer bathing area for children. It remains a durable and lasting structure on La Jolla’s coast.

NOTES

1. The author thanks Dr. Molly McClain and the La Jolla Historical Society for their research assistance. “Work on Children’s Swimming Bathing Pool in La Jolla Started,” La Jolla Journal, September 18, 1930, 1.


La Jolla, California  
March 23, 1931.

H. H. Savage,  
524 F Street  
San Diego, California,

Dear Mr. Savage:

I have been down at the Pool and note that the sand is apparently being taken from the Childrens Pool and deposited in the pool to the south. It, therefore, seems to me that we should at this time experiment by closing the gates in the sea wall and see if the sand cannot be kept on the Childrens Pool side and give us a beach during normal tides at least.

For purposes of trying this experiment, I have authorized the fixing of the gates in the sluiceways so as to prevent washing for the present.

If this is satisfactory, it will relieve one danger that has developed, namely, the strong suction pull caused by the water running into the sluiceways and then receding.

Apparently we have accomplished two things by the Childrens Pool, namely a satisfactory childrens pool to the north for medium and high tides and also a satisfactory pool to the south which can be used under normal weather conditions. Both seem about equally used at the present time.

Very sincerely yours,

W. C. Grandall.