

Eighty years ago . . .

By Matthew Madruga

Matthew Madruga wrote the following story about his grandparents, Joe and Adelina Rogers, who were Festa presidents in 1926.

Joe S. Rogers was born in the Azores islands in the town of Santa Cruz in November, 1890. His wife to be, Adelina Cardoza, was also born in Santa Cruz. Both families had lifestyles shaped by working at sea.

In 1899, Joe and his family came to the United States and settled in Colton, California. Joe and Adelina were married in Colton in 1914. Working hard as a young couple, they started out in farming and worked on Joe's uncle's dairy ranch. In 1915, they had their first daughter, Lucy. In 1918, they moved to Point Loma in San Diego, California to start their new life. In 1920, they had another daughter, Alice, and then in 1922, Adelina was born. Having three daughters made the Rogers family complete. Joe and Adelina were far from their birthplace in Pico, but they knew they were blessed to have settled in such a wonderful place. They soon became familiar with many new friends and families in the Portuguese community.

For Joe, tuna fishing became a necessity as a career, but it also became a deep passion for him as he developed a tremendous love for the sea. Joe started out as a crewman on one of the small boats, and soon advanced to become an engineer on one of the larger vessels in the fleet. In the years to come, Joe reached his true potential as he became captain of his first vessel, the *Navigator*. Later on in his career, Joe built his own boat, which he also called the *Navigator*, and later built the *Constitution*.

Joe had a long and prosperous career and fished well into the 1950s, at which time he had his nephew and sons in law running the boats. As one of the pioneers in the San Diego fishing fleet, he came to be known for spreading his good fortune throughout the community. He was a man of integrity and character, and helped those that he could. Adelina shared his devotion to the community, and they were both proud of their Portuguese heritage.

When the Portuguese Hall was first started, Joe helped raise funds for the Festa by getting donations from canneries, supply stores, fishing boats and other businesses. He also formed groups to help the Hall become a unified gathering place, and to keep the traditions of our Portuguese heritage alive. He and Adelina believed strongly in the Holy Spirit, and knew that this community would be guided by the Spirit for the future. For many years, Adelina worked in the kitchen preparing food for the Festa and other Hall events.

In 1926, Joe and Adelina were presidents of the Festa do Espirito Santo, and their daughter Lucy was the queen. This was a tremendous honor for them and their family, as it was an expression of their devotion to the community and to the Holy Spirit. Many men and women spent months preparing the Hall, gathering goods, sewing dresses and organizing for this blessed weekend.

The Saturday night before the Festa, boats were anchored in the bay with their lights shining brightly, and fireworks lit up the night sky. Families and close friends gathered together for singing, dancing and story-telling. Festa Sunday was a bright and sunny day with the boys and the men in their best suits, and the girls and women in their white dresses. Lucy recalled that "everyone seemed to be having a great time and enjoying each other's company, because we were all like family." They ate and drank much as we do now, but in

a more intimate atmosphere. In its 16th year, the Festa was fairly new, but the feeling was that this celebration in honor of Queen Saint Isabel and the Holy Spirit, would last for generations to come.

Joe and Adelina Rogers were devoted to each other in their marriage, loving parents, and trustworthy friends of many people in the Point Loma community they helped shape. Joe passed away in 1970 at the age of 79. Adelina lived for many more years after Joe's death and passed away at the incredible old age of 102. They left a mark on their community and showed that dedication and strong moral beliefs can build a foundation for generations to follow.



Matt Madruga is pretty sure this picture was taken in 1926 - during his grandparent's Festa.