

Valley —LIVING

Napan's sculpture

Internationally known sculptor Franco Vianello of Napa has completed a heroic-size bronze sculpture of Tuna Fishermen landing a giant tuna. This monument to pioneers of the tuna fishing industry will be placed in the park-like seaport Village waterfront of San Diego where it can be viewed by passengers on cruise ships entering and leaving the port.

The statue is over 18-feet high and weighs approximately 10,000 pounds.

The monument shows the three-pole tunaman team bringing in a giant tuna. This live bait fishing reached its peak during the 1950s and gave way to net tuna fishing in the 1960s. The strong, agile quick-reflexed tuna team worked together with coordination and timing to flip the tuna on deck in less than 10 seconds.

The Portuguese Historical Society has funded this tribute to the men of the proud Tuna Clippers, American pioneers with traditions, lore and heroism on the high seas — romantic figures not unlike the old west cowboy.

This monument was the vision of Captain Anthony Mascarenhas, a fishing captain from the late 1930s to 1950. His dream was to immortalize this part of America's history in an enduring monument of bronze.

Born in Europe, Franco Vianello was only 11-years-old when he was apprenticed in Venice, Italy, to a noted sculptor. His exceptional talent at the age of 13 qualified him to study at the Institute of Arts in Venice. He remained at the university until he received his master's degree. He came to America in 1959, and served in the United States Army in 1962.

After the service, he moved to California to work full-time as a sculptor. Commissions have kept his time filled and his wife Jane has become a valuable assistant in overseeing the completion of each project. He has completed a commissioned 18-foot high, 20,000 pound four-horsemen bronze statue for the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and western heritage Center in Oklahoma City and a bucking bronco monument for the Calgary Stampede in Canada. Franco also executed the one-and-a-half life-size Pony Express bronze statue in Old Town Sacramento, an 18-foot Leif Ericson bronze for the city of Seattle and the 11th Airborne "Flying Angels" heroic-size monument for Washington D.C.



VIANELLO'S 'FISHERMEN'