

*'My friends have been good to me and
life has been good to me.'*

La Selva marks special birthday

Parade to honor 95-year-old

By ERIN K. QUIRK
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LA SELVA BEACH — When you turn 95 in La Selva Beach, you earn the right to fly your colors down Playa Boulevard.

And that's exactly what Edward C. Sutton, who turns 95 today and has lived in the sleepy beach town for 20 years, plans to do. On Saturday, he will be joined by a few of his friends and trusty Union Jack to celebrate nearly a century.

"I can't believe my age. I had no idea at all I'd live until 95," said Sutton, who looks much younger than his years and can remember the names and ages of each of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sutton, a London native, will lead the march to the bluffs from the corner of Mar Monte and Playa Boulevard. He will carry the British flag and will be followed by as many as 30 other La Selva residents, some of whom will also

carry their heritage flags.

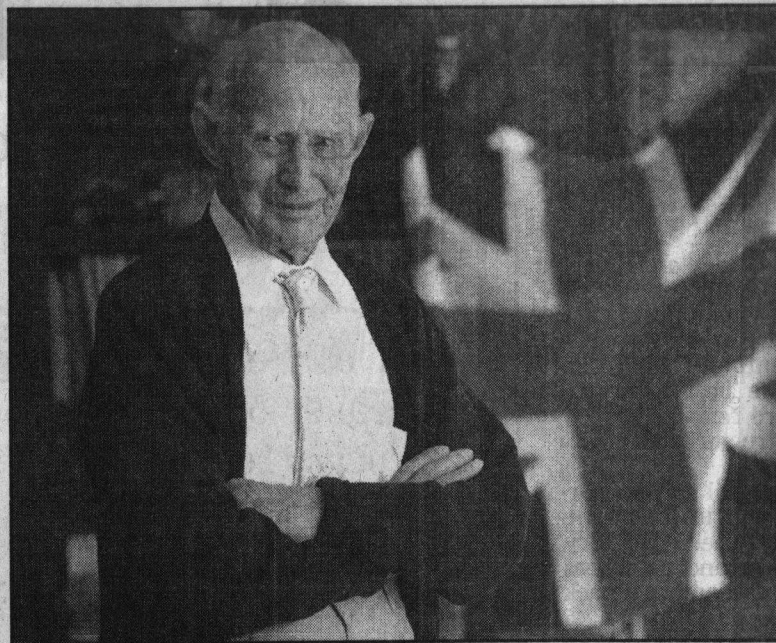
Parade organizer Colleen Hendrick, 69, said she started the birthday event last year in honor of herself. The La Selva resident said she had always wanted a parade and a jazz band at her funeral.

"Then I thought, why should I wait until I'm dead," she said.

So Hendrick grabbed a few of her friends, a Swiss flag and marched to the bluffs over La Selva Beach for brunch. It has become a tradition among her friends in La Selva and three birthdays have been recognized this year.

Sutton's will be the fourth and it is doubtful the march down Playa Boulevard will be difficult for him.

The spry 95-year-old, who had two brothers die in World War I, walks to the beach twice a week — a three-mile round trip. He also maintains a small tomato and strawberry garden, recently built



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Edward Sutton celebrates nearly a century of life Saturday in a parade through La Selva Beach.

a fence next to his house and will be traveling to Europe in September.

But his true love is automobile building and he said, he would still be doing it today if his eyes were any good.

"I stopped work when I was 89. I could do the work, but my eyes can't," he said.

Sutton used to construct cars for Ford Motor Co. when the frames were still built of wood. Photographs of prize-winning Lincolns and Jaguars that he helped build decorate the walls of his home. He has also built several woodies from the ground up, including one owned by one of

the country's most enduring singer-songwriters, Neil Young.

"Oh, you've heard of Neil Young, have you?" he said.

And Sutton has a secret to the long, healthy life that will be the focus of Saturday's celebration.

"I like the ladies," he said.

He said he has a crew of female friends who read to him, take him grocery shopping and one who will even accompany him to Europe. Those friends and many of his family members will help him celebrate his birthday and march in the parade.

"I feel wonderful," Sutton said. "My friends have been good to me and life has been good to me."