



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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www.sandiego.gov



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“ We enrich lives through quality parks and programs ”

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SERRA

MUSEUM

The Serra Museum has been managed by the San Diego History Center since opening its doors in 1929.

For general information about the Serra Museum and programs, please call

(619) 297-3258.

To plan a function at the Serra Museum or loggia, please call the Site Rental Coordinator at **619-232-6203** extension **109**. Website: www.sandiegohistory.org



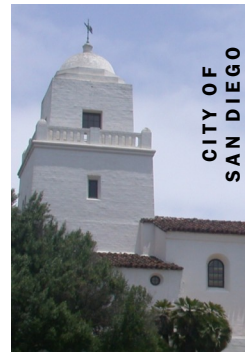
EVENTS

Interested in having a special event or an outdoor wedding in Presidio Park? Please call the [Permit Center](#) at (619) 235-1169.

You can also visit the following website to view availability and options:

www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/bestsites.shtml.

Questions or inquiries about special group tours? Please contact **Park Rangers** at (619) 235-5935.



CITY OF SAN DIEGO

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

PRESIDIO PARK RANGER REPORT

QUARTERLY

MARCH 2011

Cosoy: A Kumeyaay Village by Kevin T. McManus

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

(look for answers inside)

Where is that?

Firestick Tree
AKA—Euphorbia tirucalli

By 8000 BCE, the Kumeyaay people were well established in central and southern San Diego County. The florescence of their culture is characteristically marked by the profusion of five shifts—the use of the bow and arrow, settlement in sedentary villages, the appearance of ceramics, an exponentially increased population, and the extensive use of acorns as a food source. Divided in two by dialect, speakers of the ‘lipay tongue predominated in the San Dieguito River Valley and south into Mission Valley. Their Tiipay counterparts were at home from Mission Valley down into Ensenada.

The Tiipay-Kumeyaay groups local to the Presidio Hill area generally resided in bipolar *Sh'mulqs* (villages); bipolar denoting that residents often shared time between a summer village in the foothills or mountain ranges and an alternate site at lower elevations for the winter months. As ethno-historian Richard Carrico has highlighted, contrary to longstanding misbeliefs, the Kumeyaay “were not simple or typical hunters and gatherers. These people were not passive collectors; they controlled the vegetation, burned off parasites, and replenished the soils through fire management of the valleys and canyons. By moving from one environmental zone to another on regular seasonal rounds, they maximized their ability to collect large and varied quantities of food-stuffs.”

Art was a fundamental part of Kumeyaay life. Known artistic media include sand painting, rock art of pictograph and petroglyph form, wood carving, basket and ceramic design, and tattooing. The plentiful rock art of the Kumeyaay, mostly produced with red, yellow, and black pigments, can still be seen in many areas of San Diego County today. Talented craftspeople, the Kumeyaay made pottery from clay, firing it in open pits, wove grasses and willows into waterproof baskets, composed women’s skirts from willow bark or reeds, and manufactured boats from bundled tule reeds, waterproofing them with tar balls collected along the shore. The Kumeyaay were also acquainted with astronomy, a tool they used to time the harvesting of plants, determine when burns should take place, and dictate when *Sh'mulqs* would break their summer and winter camps.

Much or all of this culture was shared by the community of Tiipay-Kumeyaay villagers occupying the area on and around Presidio Hill when the missionaries and soldiers of *La Sagrada Expedición* (The Sacred Expedition) arrived in 1769. Named *Kossai* by its occupants (commonly known as Cosoy), this village encompassed between 30 and 40 extended families gathered in tule huts—grass and brush roofed homes sometimes incorporating stones but typically constructed entirely of woven native sedge stems. The roughly 300 tribal members of *Kossai* village were amphibious hunters. They fished the San Diego River and its channels, Mission Bay, and the deep sea on their reed rafts, while stalking deer and antelope, snaring hares and rabbits, and

(con't) making use of quails, royal ducks, and other provincial birds from the lands that surrounded their village. The Spanish missionary and litterateur Fr. Francisco Palou, gazing through Old World eyes, found them to be "very intelligent Indians, noisy, bold, great traders, covetous, and thievish. They all go armed with their bows and quivers of arrows, and some with *macanas* [wooden, club-like weapons]...All the men are naked and most painted...but the women are modestly covered in front with woven fibers and behind with skins of animals."

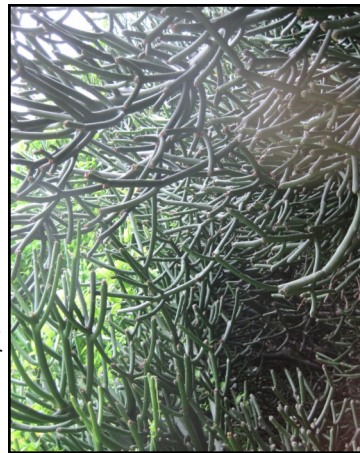
Prior to the cultural and environmental shock engendered by European settlement in the last third of the eighteenth century, *Kossai* denizens, like their kinfolk throughout the San Diego and California region, had sought rhythm with the natural world, achieved a successful balance with their environment, lived chiefly in peace for centuries, and were rapidly growing in numbers.

Abridged excerpt provided by Kevin T. McManus, local historian and author of the forthcoming publication, *A Home to Many: An Abbreviated History of San Diego's Presidio Hill*, scheduled for release by the San Diego History Center this spring.

EUPHORBIA TIRUCALLI

A very unique tree. It is called a Pencil Tree, Rubber-hedge Euphorbia, Kraalmelkbos, Finger Tree, Milkbush and Firestick Plant. These strange looking trees can grow to heights of 30 feet, but usually remain about 10-15 feet.

They flourish in drier climates, but will tolerate moister conditions, and are sensitive to colder temperatures. These twisting plants are filled with a toxic milky substance. The white sap contains 5.1 % latex and 0.4 % rubber along with the toxins. This internal substance can cause great discomfort to eyes and skin. Contact with the skin can cause a burning sensation that can last days, meanwhile contact with the eyes can lead to blindness that can last for a week.



Although its precise native location is uncertain, it grows readily in portions of Eastern Africa—central and southern— in addition to southern parts of India. It is abundant in both drier desert-like regions as well as in semi-tropical locations.

It has been used to produce rubber, latex, and even a type of oil. It is commonly used as a hedge for livestock and perhaps most interestingly, it is thrown into slow moving streams or small lakes where it stuns the fish, which are then collected for food.

The species' name *tirucalli* is traced to a 1753 reference made by Linnaeus to the name given this plant by the inhabitants of Malabar, a region of southern India. Linnaeus was a botanist, zoologist and father of binomial nomenclature.

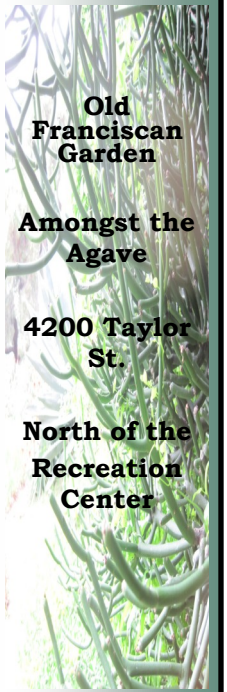
PRESIDIO PARK RANGER-LED TOURS

Join a Park Ranger every **second Sunday of the month** for a free tour of Presidio Park. The Ranger will discuss the history of Presidio Park and its relevance to the area, horticulture, archeology and more. All designed to give you a greater understanding and appreciation of this beautiful park. **Please meet outside the entrance of the Serra Museum at 1pm.**



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:(answers)

Where is that?



Old Franciscan Garden

Amongst the Agave

4200 Taylor St.

North of the Recreation Center

OTHER INTERESTING ITEMS...

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

Stein Education Centers:

Providing litter abatement several times a week throughout the park, and their help is greatly appreciated.

Action Ski and Snowboard Club

Palm Canyon clean-up. What a job well done! 3+ hours of hard work. Thank you.

Presidio Plant ID. Project:

We are now moving forward with the GPS and GIS process! Three areas have been GPS'ed and a 4th nears completion.

....stay tuned....

HELPFUL HINTS

PLEASE BE ADVISED

- **Smoking is ILLEGAL** in all of San Diego's parks and beaches.
- **Please stay on designated trails.**
- Please keep your park clean.
- Do not stake anything into the ground. No metal detectors.
- Please do not feed the wildlife. **It is NOT beneficial to them.**
- **Dogs must be leashed at all times.**
- Camping in the park is not allowed.
- Jump-for-Joys are not allowed.

It is prohibited for People or pets to be off trail. Staying on the trail preserves the park.