



The City of San Diego
 Balboa Park Administration Building
 2125 Park Blvd.
 San Diego, CA 92101
 Phone number: (619) 235-1100
www.sandiego.gov



“ We enrich lives through quality parks and programs ”

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SERRA MUSEUM

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

For general information about the Serra Museum and programs, please call **(619) 297-3258**.

To arrange private functions at the Serra Museum or loggia, please call the Site Rental Coordinator at 619-232-6203 extension 109.
 Website: www.sandiegohistory.org



2727 Presidio Drive
Open to the public:
 Mon. - Fri: 11am–3pm
 Sat. & Sun:
 10am-4:30pm

EVENTS

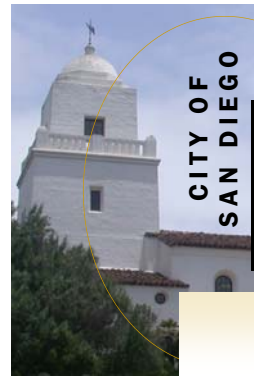
If you are interested in having a special event or an outdoor wedding in Presidio Park, please call the **Permit Center** at **(619) 235-1169**.

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 call the **Park Rangers** at **(619) 235-5935**.

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS BROCHURE IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS UPON REQUEST. YOU MAY CALL (619) 235-5935. PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.



CITY OF
SAN DIEGO

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

PRESIDIO PARK RANGER REPORT

QUARTERLY: JULY – SEPTEMBER SUMMER 2007

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHT: THE SERRA CROSS

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

(look for answers inside)

Where is that?

The Deer Memorial

Arizona Cypress



The year was 1769. Father Serra arrived here and claimed the land for “God and Country”. Then, in 1913, One-hundred-and-forty-four years later, organized by the Order of Panama, a cross was erected in what was described as a solemn ceremony commemorating that event and the man who overcame great trials to realize his dreams. But as with most things, that’s not the end of the story.

In 1913, George Marston, “San Diego’s First Citizen” wholeheartedly supported their endeavor. He had been fervently seeking to preserve what was left of the Presidio and had acquired ownership of most of the surrounding land. But this seemingly isolated hill had been neglected and ignored. The landscape dry and dusty, inhospitable, had forgotten its purpose. Much of the ruins themselves, removed and recycled into the nearby residences of what is now Old Town, as the Presidio had been abandoned since the 1830’s.

But through Marston’s foresight a regeneration of sorts began. This cross symbolizes the chrysalis of Presidio Park into what it is today. This cross was the first man-made structure to again grace this hill since the

settlement—San Diego’s first—had been rejected in favor of the more logistical Old Town flats.

Marston and his colleagues removed a precise and calculated amount of the remaining bricks and tiles and formed this cross out of the ruins of the old Presidio. At that time it could be said that it sailed majestically on the hillside as it stood above the surroundings overlooking San Diego Bay, False Bay, and Mission Valley.

Marston himself was elated to again draw public attention to his beloved park. In fact, the popular ceremony included some of the most distinguished attendees. Representatives from the Office of the Spanish Ambassador, Presidential stand-ins and more.

You will find the Cross within the “Marston Walls” looking West to the Pacific.

“The use of these old worn and broken tiles, so intimately associated with the past...lent the crowning touch of genius and sentiment to the occasion”

Carl H. Hellbron;
San Diego Magazine, July 1929

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.



FEATURED ANIMAL: RED-TAILED HAWK

Around Presidio Park, there lurks danger...if you're a rabbit. The Red-Tailed, also known as *Buteo jamaicensis* is at home in Presidio Park's tree tops and has thrived well in the urban environment.

These impressive raptors are actually very common in the Northern Hemisphere and are readily seen as far south as the country of Panama and as far north as Alaska. There are 14 known sub-species and therefore colors can vary.

These fast-flying hawks can soar high in the clouds, where they often move in circular patterns or can dart between the branches of the trees faster than you can follow them with your eyes.

Sometimes referred to as the "Chicken Hawk" the Red-Tailed is the largest member of the hawk family, reaching weights of more than four pounds with a wing span upwards of five feet.

In Presidio Park, there are at minimum two pairs of Red-Tailed hawks. One local pair, for several years in a row now, seem to have made their home on the east side of the park.

As with all *Buteo jamaicensis*, this pair is very territorial and can simulate a robust attack on passer-bys, turning aside and flying off just prior to contact. But don't worry, this only happens during nesting season, March—May, and then only to frighten. Those terrible talons won't actually hurt you...unless you're a rabbit.

So take a moment to

look up and into the trees, you quite possibly will spot one of our beautiful local Red-Tailed Hawks.



This local resident (above) has recently been observed during the late afternoons near the Ball Field by the Presidio Rec. Center.

FEATURED PLANT: LAGUNARIA PATERSONII

COWITCH TREE (WHY DO THEY CALL IT THAT?)

This evergreen native of the South Pacific produces a beautiful pink to purple flower and here in Presidio Park, it's flowering NOW! The most noticeable specimen grows on the steep hillside just north of Ft. Stockton. This particular tree has reached its maximum height, typically 40'. Although this tree is native to an island

near New Zealand, called Norfolk Island, it seems to have adapted well and you can find this tree all over California. Interestingly, this tree is related to the Hibiscus plant and is sometimes referred to as Norfolk Island Hibiscus. But why "Cowitch"? Because it's said that the tiny hairs on the seed pods can be so

irritating that they could make a cow itch!



VOLUNTEERS

EAGLE PROJECTS:

We encourage and support Eagle Scout Projects. Their hard work benefits everyone!



A Recent Eagle Scout Project. Because of a little ingenuity and a lot of sweat, this staircase may last forever.

Academy of Our Lady of Peace



Young ladies of the Academy of Our Lady of Peace pose for a group photo after their hard work (Palm Canyon).

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

Stein Education Centers:

This volunteer group provides litter abatement 4 times a week throughout the park and their help is greatly appreciated.

Presidio Plant ID. Project:

Members of the Mission Hills Garden Club and members of the Master Gardeners have diligently been gathering horticultural information for the Presidio Plant Identification project. The outcome will be magnificent and we sincerely thank them for their help.

HOW TO VOLUNTEER

Please call the Park Rangers Office at:
(619) 235-5935

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:(answers)

Where is that?

Deer Memorial:

Far to the east and at the height of the hill you'll find the pool that collects the refreshment and the memories.

Arizona Cypress:

East side of the Serra Museum. How old might these be?



Artists capturing Presidio Park's beauty.

HELPFUL HINTS

PLEASE BE ADVISED

- Smoking is not permitted in any of San Diego's parks or beaches.
- Please keep your park clean.
- Do not stake anything into the ground. No metal detectors.
- Please do not feed the wildlife or chase them (i.e. Squirrels).
- Camping in the park is **not allowed**.
- **Please stay on designated trails.** People and pets are prohibited off trail. Staying on the trail preserves the park.
- Jump-for-Joys are not permitted.
- **Dogs must be leashed at all times.**

