



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

The City of San Diego
Balboa Park Administration Building
2125 Park Blvd.
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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 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

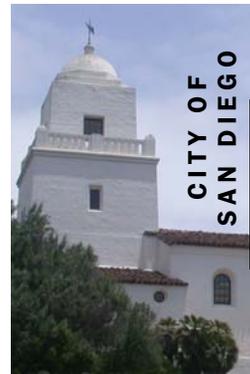
EVENTS

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 contact **Park Rangers** at (619) 235-5935.



CITY OF SAN DIEGO

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

PRESIDIO PARK RANGER REPORT

QUARTERLY: MARCH 2008

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHT:
HOW IT CAME TO BE...

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

(look for answers inside)

Where is that?

W.P.A. fireplace

Mormon Memorial



From the deep, warm, and blue oceans off the southern tip of Baja California, began the journeys into the unknown. First by **Cabrillo** in 1542, then by **Vizcaíno** in 1602, and yet again in 1769 by **Father Junipero Serra**. All these epic voyages were fraught with hardship, disease and death. Yet each push northward paved the way for the future of Presidio Hill and the genesis of modern San Diego.

Cabrillo's Spanish galleons sailed the rough waters searching for an hospitable bay that could harbor them as they explored, as they pushed north to, among other reasons, thwart any future Russian claims.

Then in November of 1602, **Sebastian Vizcaíno** and crew limped into San Diego Bay, being crippled by sickness and disease. This leg of the voyage, from Cabo San Lucas to San Diego Bay, took an astonishing 6 months due to opposing currents, winds and a lack of water. **Vizcaíno** succeeded in finding no new territory. However, the **Fray Antonio de la Ascension**, who sailed with him is credited with creating the first truly correct representation of what would become California's coast line. His maps were used until the late 1700's.

And it was in 1769 that **Father Junipero Serra** arrived in San Diego via the land route, to help establish the outpost of San Diego. On a lonely bluff overlooking the surrounding flood plane, Serra claimed this corner of North America for God and Country. His fellow countryman, **Gaspar de Portola** represented the military interests of Spain.

They had left mainland Mexico strong and determined. Three ships were to sail from La Paz north to San Diego harbor, and the accompanying land expedition traveled by foot with **Gaspar de Portola**, the first governor of California serving as escort to **Father Serra**.

Only two ships arrived, one, lost forever at sea. Of the remaining two only one actually sailed into the harbor as expected. The other continued northward, missing the harbor, eventually finding its way back to San Diego.

It was from this location that the Spanish missionaries began the next epic journey northward to San Francisco, building the missions, proselytizing, and claiming the land for Spain...until the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821), when the political and cultural tide began to change...again.

FEATURED ANIMAL:

CALIF. TOWHEE

The *Pipilo crissalis*, or California Towhee as it's often called, is a native of these here parts. They can be found from South-Central Oregon all the way to Cabo San Lucas, but usually always within 100 miles of the coast. However, these birds are not migratory. They will spend their lives within a short distance from where they were hatched.

They tend to make nests that resemble a rough-draft compared to other bird species' nest building skills, but they are skilled in other ways.

That scratching you hear under the bushes just might be a Towhee. Their

preferred method of foraging can be described as a "two-footed backwards hop", as it dislodges the ground cover seeking seeds and insects.

In Presidio Park you will see them.... if you sit still long enough...and listen carefully for the scratching.



FEATURED PLANT: YUCCA FILIFERA CHABAUD

It is quite possible that Presidio Park harbors one of the most unique hybrids of Yucca. It is likely **not** *Yucca brevifolia* or Joshua Tree. It is likely **not** *Yucca ele-*



phantipies or Giant Yucca. Both of those species have a magnificent inflorescence which protrudes upward when in bloom. But this mature yucca actually has inflorescence pendulatum, or clusters of flowers that hang downward, which is fairly unusual.

These plants could be as old as 78 years old. Some photographs taken in the early days of Presidio Park seem to show these plants as juveniles.

They will produce wonderful flowers, usually in early to mid spring but they will not produce fruit. In order to produce the fruit it is necessary for the flowers to be pollinated by a very particular type of moth—not present in San Diego.

These *Yucca filifera chabaud* are located along the west side of the Serra Museum and have flourished all these years due to sufficient sunlight, well drained soil, plenty of water and the care of the San Diego Park and Recreation Department.

Enjoy these unique plants and their strange shapes.

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.

OTHER INTERESTING ITEMS...

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:

The project continues to move forward...having passed one year's worth of work. Much has been accomplished yet there is much to do. A special thanks to our "core" group!....stay tuned.....



Photography: The Scenery

Presidio Park must be one of the loveliest places in the City. Filled with beautiful vistas and colorful scenes.

HOW TO VOLUNTEER

Please call the Park Rangers Office at:

(619) 235-5935

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:(answers)

Where is that?

W.P.A. fireplace

Work of the 1930's—Palm Canyon - 1/4 of the way up—East Side

Mormon Memorial

At Presidio's Zenith—at the foot of Old Glory



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.**

