

as she takes her turn.
LYDON, Sandy
Hindsight

How Monterey got so stylish

Fourth in a series

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IT USUALLY takes the arrival of out-of-town guests to get us to visit places like the Mystery Spot, the Boardwalk, Cannery Row or Point Lobos. Locals label such places "tourist traps," and even when Aunt Millie's arrival forces us to visit Roaring Camp, we're not supposed to have fun. We're confused when we do. But we suppress the good time and continue being snobs.

I think this snobbery is unfortunate. First the attitude of "I would not be caught dead there" reflects an underlying disdain for tourists and poisons the air of our important local tourist industry. Second, the snobbery creates a historical blind spot which makes it impossible for locals to ever really know their history. The Boardwalk, for example, is a living historical organism dating back to 1907; a slow walk around the place is better than a visit to a museum. If you don't know the Boardwalk, you are ignorant of a major element of the history of Santa Cruz.

I was such a snob about Point Lobos. I assumed that it was nothing but an over-photographed rock garden for folks living in Carmel. However, while doing research on the Chinese in the Monterey Bay Region, I found a neglected Chinese fishing village site at Point Lobos, which state archaeologists later confirmed. One thing led to another and now, with the help of co-author Kurt Loesch of Carmel, I am writing a book on the history of Point Lobos. Not a natural history, but a human history of the point. Kurt and I have concluded that Point Lobos was not only the birthplace of Carmel, but it was one of the most heavily devel-

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Point Lobos history runs deep

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opened pieces of real estate in the region.

One result of this recent research (and Kurt's limitless energy) is a superb little museum devoted to the human history of the point. So, if you have not seen the museum, you have reason enough for a visit. A Point Lobos excursion also serves as an excuse to discuss the relationship of the Monterey Peninsula with the north side of Monterey Bay.

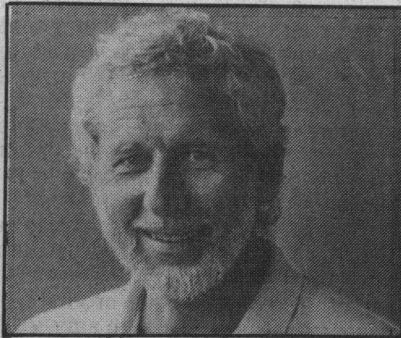
Monterey is very different from Santa Cruz. Sure, you say, they call tourists "visitors" and they have a Macy's. No, I am talking about fundamental differences — historic differences reaching back two centuries. Before Macy's was even invented. Set aside an afternoon and take a drive so I can show you what I mean. I recommend that you put a snack, drink, binoculars and sweater in a backpack and point yourself toward Monterey.

The Drive to Point Lobos. Schedule an hour and a half for the drive on Highway 1. You'll spend the extra 15 minutes behind the broccoli, lettuce and strawberry trucks on the two-lane stretch. Suffer the trucks with a smile because if there were houses in those fields instead of crops, no highway (no matter how wide) could accommodate the resulting traffic.

Restroom Note #1. There isn't one at the Vista Point just beyond the Mar Monte turn off, and I wonder how many tourists forego the view because of it. Maybe that's one reason that folks act like tourists in Santa Cruz County and behave like visitors in Monterey County.

Stay on Highway 1 past Carmel,

Hindsight



Sandy Lydon

Department of Parks and Recreation, Point Lobos is managed as a state reserve, a title which requires a more stringent kind of management than the everyday state park. Cables along the trails were placed to keep the 350,000 annual visitors off the vegetation, so please stay out of the bushes. Besides, most of the bushes are poison oak.

The designation of state reserve and the heavy emphasis on flora and fauna in the brochure might lead you to conclude that Point Lobos is an untouched piece of coastal real estate being preserved in the state it has always been. Not so. This gorgeous spot attracted every type of entrepreneur and developer imaginable, each one gazing at the point with an eye to making it pay. Beginning with the Rumsen Indians and their mussel and abalone camps, Point Lobos has been cattle ranch, fish processing site, granite quarry, fishing village, whaling station, subdivision, sand mine, coal mine, dairy, abalone cannery, movie set, military training ground, private campground, state park, and now, state reserve.



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Stay on Highway 1 past Carmel, cross the very dry and dusty Carmel River, and drive to the top of the next hill. The highway then drops into one of the most beautiful, scenic corridors on earth — Monastery Beach on the right, the Carmelite Monastery on the left and Point Lobos rising in the distance.

No. 1 - Park Outside - Begin looking for a parking spot along the road before you reach the Point Lobos entrance. I suggest parking outside because not only will you save the \$3 entry fee, but also, the most rewarding and dramatic entry is on foot. Also, the number of cars allowed into Point Lobos is limited, and on most afternoons you have to wait at the entrance to drive in. So why not walk in and be done with it? Buy the park brochure (50 cents) as you pass the kiosk — it contains more natural history information than you will find here.

Restroom Note #2. Just beyond the kiosk there is a restroom on the left. There is also another restroom at the walk's mid-point.

No. 2 - Point Lobos State Reserve - Administered by the state

While Santa Cruz is perched atop soft sandstone and other sedimentary materials and is in constant retreat before a sandstone-eating sea, the Monterey Peninsula and Point Lobos are mostly granite.

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We can only imagine what the point looked like before the Rum-sen began using it over 2,000 years ago. We do know that the Indians regularly burned the grassland to keep the terraces clear, and the effects of their fires show up in the treeless vistas in early paintings and photographs.

No. 3 - Carmelo Meadow Trail - About 10 yards beyond the kiosk (and just before the large sign listing what you cannot do in the reserve) turn right onto the Carmelo Meadow Trail. The trail drops down through a relatively young forest of Monterey pines and past a large clump of poison oak before popping out into a flat meadow. The red hot pokers (not native to the area) on the left are one of many clues left by previous inhabitants of this meadow.

The name Carmel is derived from the Carmelite priests who accompanied the expedition of Sebastian Vizcaino who landed near here in 1602. The Spanish called the place Punta de Lobos because of the "sea wolves" (sea lions and seals) that adorned the rocks.

Continue on the trail and it eventually emerges to a vista point that always makes me catch my breath. The cove immediately before you was once called Carmel Cove but over time came to be known as Whaler's Cove, the name it bears today. More about the whalers in a bit. Turn right at the "T" intersection and follow the trail to Coal Chute Point.

No. 4 - Coal Chute Point - There are several seams of low grade coal on the hillside across Highway 1, and over the years several developers attempted to mine the coal and bring it by rail to a chute where they dumped it into small boats. The coal mining never paid, but photographs in the museum across the cove as well as equipment behind the cabin remain as reminders of the coal mining.

The geology here is different from Santa Cruz. While Santa Cruz is perched atop soft sandstone and other sedimentary materials and is in constant retreat before a sand-



Sandy Lydon collection

Photograph taken at Point Lobos around 1910 shows Whaler's Cove on left, coal chute on far right and abalone shells in foreground.

stone-eating sea, the Monterey Peninsula and Point Lobos are mostly granite. Solid and permanent granite. Granite which lasts long enough for trees to grow old, twisted and gnarled. While the backdrop at Santa Cruz is ever-changing and transitory, century-old photographs of Point Lobos rocks can be matched precisely to current rockscapes. Santa Cruz's many natural bridges are long gone.

It's the granite which makes Point Lobos a mecca for divers. The water is crystalline, while the waters off Santa Cruz are roiled with sand. The scalloped inlets here at Point Lobos have beaches of rock and pebble. Great for abalone hunting, but not so great for sun-bathing. Fishermen and marine biologists came to the Monterey Peninsula because the marine life was abundant and because they could see into the water.

A Capsule History of Monterey, or why there is no Macy's in Santa Cruz County. The solid rock of the Monterey Peninsula (versus the sandstone and alluvium of Santa Cruz) helps give longevity not only to Monterey's coastline, but also to its buildings. This permanence, combined with Monterey's serving as the capital of both Spanish and Mexican California, provides the first step in your understanding why you feel the unconscious urge to dress up when traveling to Monterey.

When California's capital wandered off to Sacramento, Monterey was left with a deep humus of Hispanic heritage. Santa Cruz's relatively thin Hispanic layer was quickly erased by the energetic Yankees that came to use the abundant natural resources. Visitors to the region in the 1880s declared Monterey to be the most "old world" town in Northern California; Santa Cruz was the most "American."

When the railroads brought tourism to the region in the late 1800s, Monterey had so many old adobes still standing that it had no difficulty defining itself as the Old Capital. The challenge of self-definition was more complex for Santa Cruz. (And still is.) Santa Cruz eventually settled on a theme-park identity, with the fantasyland casino and redwood groves filled with trees named for United States Presidents. Monterey simply embraced a version (admittedly genteel) of Hispanic California. Monterey was part of *Spanish* California. The word "Mexican" was never used.

With the Del Monte Hotel and Seventeen-Mile Drive (1880), the Southern Pacific Railroad cast Monterey's tourist lot with the four-star crowd, a trend accelerated with the opening of the Del Monte Forest after the turn of the century. Santa Cruz got a roller coaster, carousel and miniature golf. Monterey got Pebble Beach, Hopkins Marine Station and the Casa Munras hotel. (Monterey now has five hotels having AAA's highest rating of four diamonds; Santa Cruz has one (and it is up on a hill outside town). Santa Cruz County got J.C. Penney's (several). Monterey got Macy's. According to Macy's market research, the issue was not one of population. The issue was one of style.

Of course, one of the drawbacks of Monterey's high road was the absence of jobs for regular people. That's what Fort Ord is all about.

If you don't think there's anything to this Monterey-Santa Cruz style thing, imagine this: Put the Giant Dipper on Pebble Beach. Just doesn't fit, right? Now take the Pebble Beach Golf Course and drape it out on Santa Cruz's west side. See? I would conclude this little essay by suggesting that there is no good or bad in the distinctions drawn here. I think that Monterey and Santa Cruz are comple-

mentary. But hey, I grew up in Hollister. What do I know?

CONTINUE on the trail, and where it forks, take the left fork and circumnavigate Coal Chute Point in the propitious clockwise direction.

When you get out on the westernmost point, stop, sit down and look at the granite headland across Whaler's Cove. The cars you see are parked in the remains of an old granite quarry, which provided the granite for the United States Mint and other San Francisco Buildings in the 1850s. Point Lobos granite sold well until Sierra Nevada granite became more accessible to San

Francisco via the railroad. The small, gray building on the left of the quarry is the Whaler's Cabin.

The Chinese were the second commercial fishermen (the Rum-sen were the first) at Point Lobos, arriving as early as 1851 directly from China by sea-going junk. The Whaler's Cabin sits in the middle of the Chinese village site and we now believe that it was built by the Chinese fishermen. The Chinese found the cove attractive because in the harborless Monterey Bay, the cove provided relatively good protection for the junks and sampans.

The Chinese abandoned their vil-

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