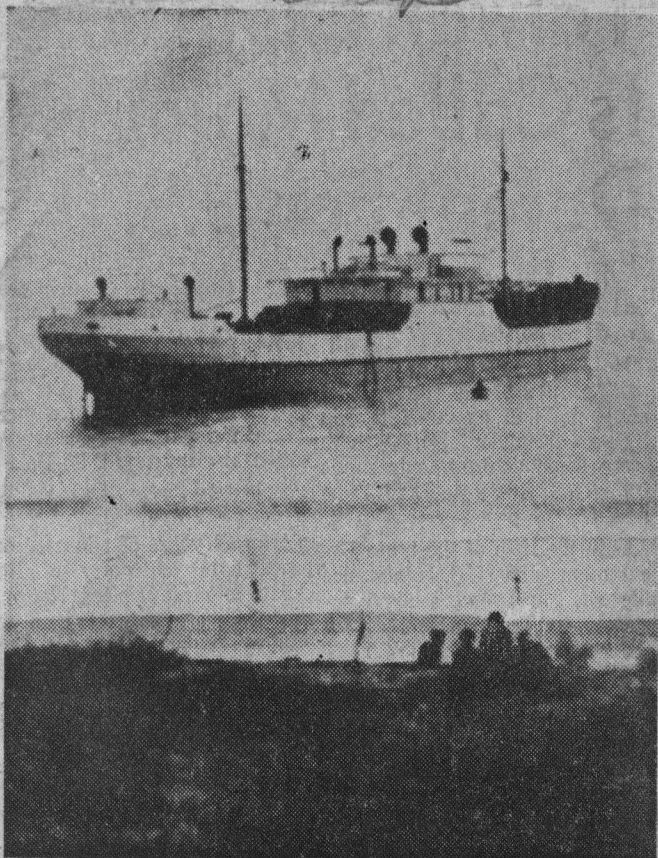


# Cement Ship

Parkes & Beaches - State



The Palo Alto, a ship that never went to sea, is pictured as she is being settled onto the shore shelf at Seacliff. Later,

a pier was built from the beach to the ship, and she was outfitted as a kind of off-shore pleasure dome.

## The Palo Alto—She Knew Greater Glory

By DON RIGHETTI  
Sentinel Staff Writer

Seacliff's cement ship is a natural as a curiosity piece. A ship made out of cement is quite a curiosity in itself. Then, when you beach her just a few feet off shore, let 40 years pass so her history becomes misty and develop a widely popular state park around her so she is seen each year by thousands — well, you find yourself with questions on your hands.

Histories and explanations have been written from time to time in an effort to answer them. But most of those contain inaccuracies and blank spaces.

Now, Charles Pasha, a ranger at Seacliff Beach State Park, has compiled as complete and accurate a history of the cement ship as two solid months of research will allow.

Pasha is uniquely qualified among the park's rangers to do the work — members of his family are long-time residents of the Aptos-Seacliff area, and both his father and grandfather worked at building the original pier out to the ship and in turning the ship into an amusement place.

This is what Pasha found out: The Palo Alto was one of three cement ships built in the Oakland Naval Shipyard during World War I.

Despite the fact she never was used for her intended purpose, had only a brief and disappointing career as a kind

of off-shore pleasure dome and ended up as a broken-backed fishing platform, the Palo Alto nonetheless seems to have fared better than the other two vessels.

The Faith was the first of the

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## Cubans Cheer Kosygin Upon His Arrival

MIAMI, Fla. (AP) — Soviet premier Alexei N. Kosygin arrived in Cuba from Toronto, Canada, shortly after noon Tuesday and was greeted by huge throngs of cheering Cubans and a 21-gun salute.

Kosygin, making his second visit to the Communist island in four years, was met at Jose Marti International Airport in Havana by what Cuban radio described as a "delegation representing the party and the government."

Prime Minister Fidel Castro was a member of the official welcoming delegation, the radio broadcast monitored in Miami said.

After a 20-minute airport ceremony, Kosygin and his party boarded cars for the 10-mile drive downtown.

The route was lined by cheer



# The Cement Ship—Her Brief Past Glory Recalled

(Continued from Page 1)

three ships to be completed, but she already had been reported as a hulk in Santiago, Cuba, in the early 1920s.

The Peralta and the Palo Alto were sister ships constructed to carry petroleum. They were not finished in time to be used during the war.

The Peralta was used as a fish reduction plant out of Monterey in the early 1930s, then was converted to a fish canning plant and used in Alaska. After that she was purchased in the mid-1930s by the Pacific Molasses Co. and used in San Francisco Bay as a molasses storage and pumping station.

She finally was scrapped and now is used as a breakwater in the San Francisco estuary.

The Palo Alto was launched May 29, 1919. She was 435 feet long, 54 feet wide, 42 feet from the main deck to keel, and

weighed 7,500 tons. She cost about \$1.5 million.

The aggregate used in the construction of the three cement ships was made especially for that purpose at the cement plant at Davenport and was comprised of about 50 per cent puffed brick — which still can be seen in the concrete.

The ship was purchased by the Cal-Nevada Co. in 1929 from an R. C. Porter for use as an amusement center.

The Palo Alto made her maiden voyage under tow from Oakland to the point where she now rests at Seacliff. She arrived here Jan. 22, 1930. Her bow anchors were placed, then she was swung into position and the stern winched shoreward until the aft section was resting on sandstone as far as it could be brought in.

Six of the oil storage compartments amidships, each 16 feet wide, 34 feet long and 36 feet deep were flooded with

water, which eventually would Sant Cruz Boardwalk today. The pier then was 156 feet long, 54 feet wide completed from the shore out to and took the main foredeck, now broken off.

According to a report from Amidship was a big heated the job foreman on converting swimming pool 54 feet square, the ship into an amusement which is believed to have been center, the Palo Alto's engine below the level of the main was 2,800 horsepower with deck.

three reduction cylinders driving a propeller shaft of solid steel 200 feet long and 18 inches thick through a shaft alley about eight feet high.

The propeller, solid bronze and weighing 11 tons with a diameter of 15 feet, nine inches, of weather promenade decks was shipped to Hamburg, Germany. The rudder was made of two blades of steel 1½ inches thick, eight feet wide and 26 feet high. It weighed 15 tons.

The formal opening of the Palo Alto as an amusement center took place on the evening of June 28, 1930. She sported several concessions on the after deck similar to those on the

But the Palo Alto's life as a pleasure spot was a short one. According to reports, the Cal-Neva Amusement Center went broke in 1932.

The first winter after her demise as a night spot, the Palo Alto cracked amidships — where the large break is now. The superstructure and all the improvements were scrapped in 1934, leaving a stripped hull.

In Feb., 1934, the Parks Commission of California acquired the ship from an Aptos businessman. A slashing winter storm really broke her back — where the crack had been — five years later.

In 1959, the rotting 76-foot masts were cut down in the interest of public safety.

In 1963, the bow section was broken by another huge storm.

Although battered and beaten by the elements for 40 years, the stern section still has compartments in use for storage today, a tribute to the strength built into the old ship more than 50 years ago.

The Palo Alto — a ship that never went to sea. But although she never sailed, she once was proud and alive with people and activity. Now she is only a battered hulk and a curiosity piece.

And next summer when the visitors descend on Seacliff Beach State Park, hundreds of them again will exclaim: "Look. A ship made out of cement. I wonder how it got there?"



Broad decks of the Palo Alto provided room for a ship was turned into an amusement place. The Rain-drew some of the top dance bands of the early 30s.



The amusement midway on the Palo Alto helped provide diversion for visitors to the ship also was equipped with a ballroom, dining room and heated swimming pool.



Carnival At Live Oak Friday

It'll be carnival time at Live Oak School Friday from 6 to 9 p.m. all in the spirit of

Peterson, Principal Margaret Ashton, Janet Bohn and Rachel Bohn will be a

sters, entertainment, games, food, contests and craft demonstrations at the affair sponsored by the Live Oak School PTA.