



# THE GUIDEPOST

Publication of the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild

**Vol. 24 – No. 4**

December 2009



## INSIDE

Message from the Board	Page 2
Angel Island	Page 3
Dim Sum	Page 5
Presidio	Page 6
Cabrillo	Page insert

## San Francisco Reaches for the Sky

*By Jason Cohen*

What is currently the tallest building in San Francisco? There has been some confusion on the question of the tallest building with the recent completion of One Rincon Hill, which towers over the western end of the Bay Bridge. Some buildings appear taller than others because they're built on higher ground, or stand alone rather than among other towers. Also, confusion can occur regarding the number of stories versus the height. How tall a building is should be based on its height above the street, not its number of stories or its height above sea level. For example, the Transamerica Pyramid is several stories shorter than the Bank of America tower but is taller in feet since it's capped by the decorative pyramid.

Here is the current line up of tallest buildings in San Francisco:

1. Transamerica Pyramid: 853 ft, 48 stories
2. Former Bank of America Headquarters: 779 ft, 52 stories
3. 345 California (the "tweezer building" that includes the Mandarin Oriental Hotel): 695 ft, 48 stories
4. Millennium Tower (Mission & First): 645 ft, 60 stories (tallest residential building west of Chicago)
5. One Rincon Hill: 605 ft, 64 stories

The building planned for the current site of the Transbay Terminal could rise as high as 1,000 ft, which (if built) would make it the tallest building west of Chicago, surpassing even the US Bank Tower in Los Angeles.

Sources:

Various websites list this data, e.g. real estate developer sites and <http://www.emporis.com/en/wm/ci/bu/sk/li/?id=101040&bt=5&ht=2&sro=0>. Quite often, the number of stories and heights shown vary a bit from website to website, but the overall ranking of which building is taller than which is consistent.

This article was reviewed for accuracy by Rick Evans, owner of San Francisco Architecture Walking Tour, [www.architecturesf.com](http://www.architecturesf.com)

S A N  
FRANCISCO  
T O U R  
G U I D E  
G U I L D

The GUIDEPOST (ISSN 1097-2285) is published quarterly by the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild, a non-profit association established in 1984 to promote the integrity of the profession through certification testing and continuing education, and foster a standard of quality, ethics, and professionalism among guides and operators in the San Francisco Bay Area. SFTGG is a member of the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.

For more information contact:  
SFTGG  
PO Box 170610  
San Francisco, CA 94117-0610  
415.753.8600 [www.sftgg.org](http://www.sftgg.org)

Editing Team:  
Ulla Kaprielian [muttik@flash.net](mailto:muttik@flash.net)  
Renate Coombs [R2CO2M@earthlink.net](mailto:R2CO2M@earthlink.net)  
Jason Cohen [jcohen1@pacbell.net](mailto:jcohen1@pacbell.net)

Layout & Design: Ulla Kaprielian

Contributors to this issue:  
Jason Cohen, Renate Coombs,  
Michele McCurry, Ulla Kaprielian

2009 SFTGG Board of Trustees

President	Michele McCurry
V P	Bob Hunt
Secretary	Beth Graubart
Treasurer	Jeanette Arevalo
Membership Programs	Beth Graubart
	Anita Rao & Don DeLaura
Certification	Michael Stortz
Public Relations	Michael Purcell
Mentoring	Marilee Traynor

---

## Message from the Board

In January, when your current Board took office, we knew that 2009 was going to be a tough year for everyone in the tourism industry. We were facing an economic crisis that the President suggested could be solved, in part, but cutting destination meetings and conventions. We were facing a state budget so in the red that it was suggested that closing State Parks was a necessity. Transit authorities raised fares and cut frequency. And yet, the mission of the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild, as established twenty-five years ago and refined as we grew, is to foster standards of quality, ethics and professionalism among tour guides and advocate for the advancement of tourism. With this in mind, we set our goals for the year: to encourage professional growth and collegiality among members.

We started the year by bringing together a committee of long standing, well respected guides to finalize the Guidelines document and participate in an open forum with the local DMCs. The goal of this process was to create or update industry standards relating to the work we do as employees of the local companies. Some of those things were already moving in to place, while others, we were told, were changes that could be made when the economy improved. The meeting was productive, open and respectful and all parties involved felt they had a chance to be heard.

We next turned our attention to certification. Michael Stortz, our Certification Chair, reached out to a number of certified guides to participate in study session and conduct the examinations for both the spring and fall certification processes. In this way, he took some of the stress off of associates seeking certification. He also helped members from different circles get to know each other.

Our Programs Co-Chairs, Don DeLaura and Anita Rao, were very conscious of the feedback from long time members that we seem to cycle through the same programs repeatedly. They came up with a variety of new ideas and worked closely with our Business Friends to add more value to our tours with our adding expense. The Angel Island tour was so successful that we ran it twice!

Mentoring is something the Guild has tried to do for a long time, but the program suffers because we are all so busy doing what we do. This year, we tried to foster relationships and an exchange of information between members by holding trivia nights. It was a fun, relaxed way to show off what we know to those who can truly appreciate it—fellow tour guides.

One of our proudest moments this year, however, came just a few weeks ago, when we received a Proclamation from the Mayor's Office declaring November 16, 2009, San Francisco Tour Guide Guild Day in San Francisco in honor of our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The sentiments of pride and joy were palpable during our General Meeting after the announcement of the honor. We were also acknowledged by the SFCVB for the same achievement. It took a lot of time and persistence from PR Chair Michael Purcell to make these recognitions possible.

Your 2009 Board is proud to have served you this year. It has been work, as it has been for all the Boards who have preceded us, but it is clear that we have achieved our goals this year. The evidence is that we were able to fill a slate of candidates for next year's Board without having to twist any arms or pull out any of our hair. With so many people willing to serve the membership, we have certainly fostered a sense of belonging to the organization. We thank you for your support and confidence in us.

Sincerely, on Behalf of the Board of Trustees,  
Michele McCurry, President



## No Ellis Island This

By Renate Coombs

Whoever dubbed Angel Island the “Ellis Island of the West” either didn’t bother to look behind the scene or liked to use euphemisms. Apart from the similarity of their geographical location in the harbors of prominent cities on the two coasts, Angel Island and Ellis Island had very little in common.

From 1892 to 1954, Ellis Island was the point of entry into the United States for over twelve million immigrants from all over the world, “the huddled masses yearning to breathe free” to whom the Statue of Liberty lifted her “lamp beside the golden door.” No such welcome was extended to the multitude of mostly Asian immigrants who desired to enter through the Golden Gate. Both islands had large buildings known as Immigration Stations, but this designation was largely undeserved on Angel Island. Chinese Detention Center would have been more accurate.

Over the 30-year life of the Immigration Station an estimated 175,000 Chinese were detained in the barracks on Angel Island under appalling conditions. Most of them spent at least some days, more likely weeks or months. Even though in the end more than 90% were eventually admitted to the United States, the stay on Angel Island remains a painful chapter in the family history of many Chinese Americans. Only today’s generation speaks openly about the topic that their parents and grandparents fearfully avoided. When asked, the older generation’s answer often sounded like one word, “Angel-Island-Shhh.”

With the reopening of the renovated and upgraded Angel Island Immigration Station museum on a rainy Sunday in February 2009, Chinese immigration history has become a *cause celebre* in the Bay Area. No wonder then that the Guild’s Angel Island Tour on June 25 was an instant sell-out and, in retrospect, deserved to be. Master docent Lynn Eichinger brought history to life in such a compelling fashion that even those of us who failed to dress appropriately for a typical San Francisco “summer” day stopped shivering. (A second tour took place on August 13.)



No matter how many times retold, the story of the Chinese Exclusion Act, first passed in 1882 and updated periodically until its repeal in 1943, remains a horrific example of xenophobia fanned by hard times. In the 1860s, California’s economy faltered with the end of the Gold Rush and the national economy went into a depression after the Civil War. Lacking other solutions, searching for a scapegoat provided a diversion. In California, the search was instantly successful – Chinese laborers, fleeing from disastrous conditions in their homeland, brought here in large numbers through the lure of “gold mountain” and actively recruited to build the transcontinental railroad, were blamed for white unemployment.

Starting in the 1870s with discriminatory state laws such as the foreign miners tax aimed at depriving Chinese residents of their ability to earn a livelihood, the anti-Chinese sentiments gained national support – culminating in Congress enacting the first exclusionary law in 1882. In its initial form, this law prohibited both the naturalization of any Chinese and the immigration of Chinese laborers for ten years. Chinese of higher socio-economic status like teachers, consular officials, merchants and tourists continued to be admitted. Also exempt were American-born Chinese and those Chinese who had become citizens prior to the passage of the Act. Most importantly, the wives and children of exempt individuals were allowed to enter. This loophole was later closed, at least with respect to Chinese-born wives.

Enforcement of these immigration restrictions had been a problem from the start, but became more of a challenge in the aftermath of the 1906 disaster. A fairly new city hall had been severely damaged by the earthquake and its contents consumed by the fire. From now on it would be difficult to prove whether a particular document such as a birth certificate was destroyed in the conflagration or had never existed. It didn’t take long before a lively trade in false documents gave rise to the “paper son” phenomenon. The construction of an Immigration Station on Angel Island began in 1905; it was a controversial project from the start. Consisting of barracks, a hospital, a heating plant, an administration building and a mess hall, the Station didn’t open until 1910.



cont’d on page 4

cont'd from page 3

Most “regular” immigrants arriving in San Francisco were processed on board ship and then allowed to disembark. The rest were ferried to Angel Island for detention and interrogation. Of the half million persons brought to the Angel Island Immigration Station, one third each was either Chinese or Japanese. The remaining third was a mix of 75 nationalities with Koreans, Filipinos, Indians, Portuguese, Mexicans and Russians leading the list. But the Chinese were specially targeted for questioning. The purpose of these lengthy, sometimes harsh and often impossibly detailed interrogations was to ferret out “paper sons,” a practice that gave rise to an underground trade in coaching books.

Those who were detained on Angel Island, sometimes for up to two years, endured appalling conditions. Bunks between poles were arranged in sets of six Ellis-Island style, but the total number of persons per room was twice that which was officially considered healthy at the time. Only Europeans had access to the exercise yard. To make sure that Chinese and Japanese remained entirely separate from Europeans, the first version of the Station’s hospital had segregated entrances. Apart from living in crowded dormitories without a shred of privacy, most of the detainees could barely stomach the foreign food they were given – standard American prison fare. Sanitary facilities were atrocious. Probably worst of all was the interminable waiting time.



A few found relief from this agony by expressing themselves in poetic form. The poems, some written with pencil or brush, some carved into the wooden walls of the barracks, were almost lost twice – first, when the Army took over after the 1940 closure of the Immigration Station and the engraved characters were filled in with wood putty or painted over many times to clean up the walls to military standards; then in the 1970s when the barracks were slated for demolition. This second time, the loss would have been irreversible, had it not been for



California State Park Ranger Alexander Weiss rediscovering the writings. Local Asian American historians and poets were the first to study and translate them. Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim and Connie Yung published the results of their labor under the title “Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910 – 1940.”

Initially, 135 poems were documented, but at least 85 more have since been discovered. This poetry of anguish caused the Immigration Station to become a National Landmark in 1997. A wooden replica of the carvings is featured in the main exhibition hall of the Museum of Chinese in America in its new facility that opened in lower Manhattan in September 2009.

Despite the overwhelming impact of the Chinese immigration story, we mustn’t forget that Angel Island State Park has many other attractions to offer between its long military history, the lighthouse service and its natural environment. Hiking, bicycling, camping and boating are popular activities. None of this would be possible without the extraordinary efforts of Marin County conservationist Caroline Livermore and other concerned citizens who in 1963 succeeded in getting all of Angel Island declared a State Park.

Many strange and wonderful things have happened to Angel Island before and after 1775 when the Spanish ship San Carlos found shelter in what is now known as Ayala Cove, but none quite as wonderful as the great good fortune of October 2008. A massive wildfire raging through the island never touched the newly renovated Immigration Station area.



Photos by David Orr

---

## DIM SUM - and THEN SOME!!

Chinatown Tour September 25, 2009

By Fran Perry

An impromptu Tai Chi warm up got the September 25 Chinatown tour off to an energetic start.

Anita Rao, our esteemed leader, gave a quick overview of historic Portsmouth Square (a.k.a. Chinatown's Living Room); then we were off to visit the Chinese Culture Center on the 3rd floor of the adjoining Hilton. This is a valuable resource and communication center for Chinese culture in the West with a focus on art exhibitions.



Next, we hustled for our appointment at the Chinese Historical Society at 965 Clay Street. Originally designed by Julia Morgan for the Chinese YWCA in 1930, the building is now home to several permanent installations in addition to rotating exhibits of artifacts, photos and documents depicting the history of the Chinese in America. We were treated to a fascinating narration by a volunteer docent, who interspersed his pertinent personal history with the history of the Chinese community both here and elsewhere ... that he was knowledgeable would be an understatement!

Around the corner at 920 Sacramento Street, the Donaldina Cameron House has provided faith-based support to Asian women for over a century. Fellow tour guide Ming who works there in social services explained their work past and present. Started in 1874 by the Presbyterian Church as the Occidental Mission Home for Girls, it became a refuge for Chinese girls hiding from prostitution and slavery. Also known as the Chinese Presbyterian Mission School, it was rebuilt soon after the original building had been destroyed in the 1906 earthquake. The institution acquired its current name in 1942 to honor Scottish missionary Donaldina Cameron who devoted forty years of her life to assist female Asian crime victims; she was famous for her daring rescue missions to save many Chinese girls from the child-slave trade.\*

A kaleidoscope of unique Chinatown sights followed as our fast moving leader led us through the bustling maze of sights, sounds and aromas. Surrounded by an intriguing collection of ginger roots, lychee nuts, bamboo shoots and shark fins, we heard the story of the Chinese Telephone Exchange which had been housed in the colorful three-tiered pagoda at 743 Washington Street. Today's pagoda was built in 1909 after the first building had been destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire. It served as an exchange until 1949 when automated dialing replaced operators. The pagoda was sold to the Bank of Canton. Renovated in 1960, the building serves as a bank, in recent years under the name United Commercial Bank.\*\*

Long before any pagoda was built there, the office of the California Star, San Francisco's first newspaper, stood on this site. With Sam Brannan as its publisher, the Star spread the word of "Gold!" in 1848.



On the "Street of Painted Balconies" (a.k.a. Waverly Place), we followed Anita and the smell of incense up four flights of stairs to the Tin Hou Temple, the oldest Taoist temple in the US. Flowers, candles and intricately carved statues fill the small sanctuary.

A welcome tea tasting awaited us at Vital Tea Leaf at 1044 Grant Avenue where the art of fast brewing top quality loose-leaf teas was demonstrated.

The excellent morning of Chinatown immersion ended at the Imperial Palace at 816 Washington Street with a delicious "all-you-want" Dim Sum feast. Fortune Cookies indicated "Prosperous Future Ahead for San Francisco Tour Guides!"



cont'd on page 7

---

## San Francisco Presidio – National Park and much more

By Ulla Kaprielian

On October 29<sup>th</sup> of this year, it was time for Guild members to revisit the Presidio.

The Presidio, part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the largest urban park in the country, encompasses 1,491 acres and 768 historic buildings. During its 200 plus year history the Presidio was a Spanish outpost (1776-1821), then under Mexican rule until the US Army took over in 1847. Presidio soldiers participated in every conflict from the Indian Wars until the end of the Vietnam War.

Members of the 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers were stationed at the Presidio between 1902 and 1904. They served as presidential Escort of Honor for Theodore Roosevelt during his visit to San Francisco in 1903, the first time African American troops were given this role. Under the leadership of Captain Charles Young they patrolled Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant (Kings Canyon) National Parks before there was a National Park Service.

Due to its strategic location, the Presidio became the most important Army post on the West Coast. During WWII the Presidio was a nerve center for Army operations. You can find a wealth of information at the Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, including the details of the orders of the infamous Lt. General John L. DeWitt. The caption under his photo reads: “American WWII military leader responsible for the worst abuses of civil liberties in the history of the US.” His “Instructions to Person of Japanese Ancestry” forced more than 115,000 people into “relocation camps.”

The current exhibit “Prejudice & Patriotism” at the Officer’s Club (until Jan. 31, 2010) deals with this subject in great detail.

The historic buildings include Old Letterman General Hospital (1924), Baker’s School & Barracks (1939), Old Post Hospital (1862), two



Earthquake Cottages (5,000 were built by the Army to house earthquake victims) and the Victorian homes along Funston Avenue. Pershing Hall (1903) is currently under renovation. Remains of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Commandancia are on display inside the historic Officer’s Club (1934.) The ornate cannons in front date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and are thought to be the oldest in the US. The visitor center is also located in the Officer’s Club.

The San Francisco National Military Cemetery is worth a visit as well. (*see* Guidepost Vol.23, No.1, page 7 -”Did you know?” for more details.)

In 2005, the Letterman Digital Arts Center, home of Lucasfilm Ltd., Industrial Light & Magic and LucasArts opened. It is also home of the educational foundation & visual effects archive. Employee facilities include dining commons, fitness center and childcare center. If you would like to have your picture taken in front of the Yoda fountain or with Darth Vader, you’re in the right place.

The public can enjoy 17 acres of landscaping, designed by Lawrence Halprin (1916-2009). Reclaimed water is primarily used for the irrigation of the 500 trees, shrubs, vines and perennials. Walkways and sitting areas are very inviting.

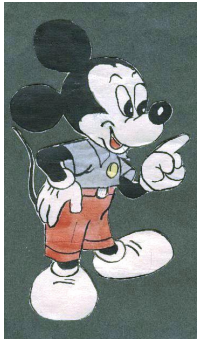


There are two statues to honor the beginning of all this technology. One is of Philo Taylor Farnsworth (1906-1971), the American inventor who developed the idea of the image dissector, one of the inventions that led to television (California landmark 941, on

the north west corner of Green & Battery Streets, commemorates the location of his lab.) The other is of Edward Muybridge (1830-1904), the photographer who was hired by Leland Stanford in 1872 to show that when a horse is in a gallop there is a moment when all four hooves leave the ground at once. To prove it, Muybridge invented stop motion photography, a building block of motion pictures technology.



cont’d on page 7



Of course, the main reason for this visit was to see the new Walt Disney Family Museum. This museum is a very detailed documentation of Walt's family, his life and career. There are ten galleries explaining the development of such characters as Mickey Mouse, Pinocchio, and movies from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" to "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," as well as the magical effects of "Mary Poppins." Then there is, of course, the idea and completion of Disneyland and beyond.

Maybe best of all, there is a theater which features some of the wonderful animated movies only Disney could create.

If you would like to relive your youth, or maybe share movies like "Fantasia" or "Sleeping Beauty" with a friend or a member of the younger generation, here is your chance to do so.

Location: 104 Montgomery Street, the Presidio. Open Wednesday – Monday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Tuesdays and on January 1, July 4, Thanksgiving and December 25. Museum entrance: Adults \$20; seniors over 65 and students with valid ID \$15; children 6 to 17 \$12.50. Theater only: \$10, no need to pay for the entire museum tour. For schedules and tickets go to [www.waltdisney.org](http://www.waltdisney.org).



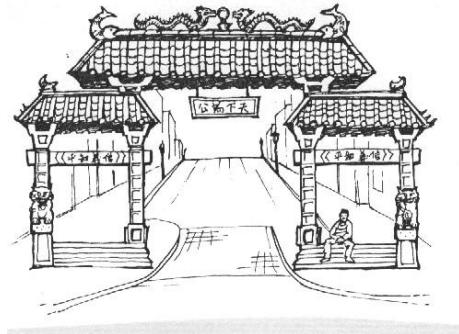
Thank you to Don DeLaura for arranging this outing and to our guide Mary Johnson.



Photos by Ulla Kaprielian

\*There is another Chinatown-Julia Morgan connection. When Cameron moved her school to a safer environment on a farm in Oakland, Morgan designed the Ming Quong Chinese Girls School for the site. Since 1936 it belongs to Mills College thereby joining the other famous Morgan buildings on the campus.

\*\*The future use of the pagoda is somewhat uncertain since United Commercial Bank went into receivership on November 6, 2009 and has since been sold to East West Bancorp.



Drawings by AudreyHulburd  
Photos by Ulla Kaprielian



---

---

## ***SFTGG PROGRAMS***

There are some exciting programs in our future! Watch for announcements.

Monday, December 7, 2009 – Lake Chalet, 1520 Lakeside Drive, Oakland

SFTGG 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

RSVP: Don DeLaura at [ddelaura1@earthlink.net](mailto:ddelaura1@earthlink.net)

January 6, 2010 9 a.m. – CPR

\$50 for a two year certificate. Contact Don DeLaura for details.

[ddelaura1@earthlink.net](mailto:ddelaura1@earthlink.net) for 510-922-8150

\*\*\*\*\*

S A N  
FRANCISCO  
T O U R  
G U I D E  
G U I L D  
PO Box 170610  
San Francisco, CA  
94117-0610

---

## Spanish Conquistadors in California!

By Jason Cohen

Quite often on tours we'll say one or two sentences on a topic, knowing that we're summarizing the contents of hundreds of books. But it's not always true. Have you ever said "The first European to visit California was Juan Cabrillo, who sailed up the California coast in 1542?" If so, you've said very nearly all that's known on the subject!

Not that numerous books haven't been written, but almost nothing is known about Cabrillo's California voyage. This article is based on the book *Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo*, by Harry Kelsey (Huntington Library, 1998). It appears to be the comprehensive source on Cabrillo in recent times. The book is 181 pages long (plus 78 pages of notes), yet there is only enough information to fill *twenty* pages about the California trip! Most of what is known is from two sources, one merely an 8-page summary of a longer report that no longer exists. Materials for both sources were prepared from interviews with the expedition's survivors when they returned in 1543, along with Cabrillo's own journal.

Cabrillo was born c.1500 and came to the New World as a boy. Though he sailed for Spain, debate continues as to whether he was Spanish or Portuguese. Kelsey analyzes the evidence, and sees no compelling case for the Portuguese position. He thinks it's just wishful thinking on the part of those of Portuguese ancestry.

Cabrillo was a conquistador, beginning service as a crossbowman. He assisted Cortés in the conquest of Mexico City from the Aztecs in 1521, and then participated in the conquest of Guatemala (where he became rich from gold mines and from tribute extracted from the Indians).



In the following decade Cabrillo oversaw the construction of various ships for trade and exploration journeys. The viceroy of New Spain, Don Antonio de Mendoza, commissioned him to lead an exploration mission up the coast in 1542. A second fleet left at about the same time, traveling west. The intent was

for the two expeditions to meet up in China (the Spanish did not have a good sense of the size or shape of the Pacific Ocean). Cabrillo's fleet probably consisted of three ships, with 200-300 men.



JUAN RODRIGUEZ CABRILLO.

They left from Navidad Harbor (near Puerto Vallarta) on June 27, 1542, and spent the summer sailing up the coast of Baha, a route that had been traveled by two previous expeditions. On September 28, 1542, Cabrillo entered San Diego Bay, becoming the first European to reach what today is the state of California. As at every bay, point, and cape the expedition reached, he formally claimed it in the name of the king.

Cabrillo stated, "We saw an Indian town on the land next to the sea with large houses built much like those of New Spain." He reported a round structure so large that it was home to 50 people. Canoes that could hold 12-13 people crowded the beach, and the explorers named the place Village of the Canoes. Another location was named Village of the Sardines because the Indians brought them so many fish. They visited a village whose chief was an elderly woman. Each town had a central plaza including "mastlike posts covered with paintings," apparently religious in purpose, as the Indians danced around them.

Continuing north, they reached Catalina Island on October 7 and San Pedro Bay (Los Angeles) on October 8. A month later they passed the Golden Gate (without seeing it), then reached Pt. Reyes on November 14, and, finally, the mouth of the Russian River.

Turning back southward, they reached Monterey Bay on November 16 (they had missed it while traveling north due to a storm). The climate was much colder in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and the mountains of Big Sur were covered with snow as they passed. They called them the Snowy Mountains (Sierra Nevada).

On November 23 they arrived back at the Channel Islands, and spent the winter anchored off Catalina. Approximately on Christmas Eve, some of the men went ashore for fresh water and were attacked by Indians. Cabrillo led a rescue party, but as he was stepping off the boat, he slipped and broke his leg. Soon thereafter, realizing he was dying (of gangrene), he tried to complete his journal, but didn't have the strength to put much into the description of the part of the voyage north of Santa Barbara, so the information we have of the visit to our area is sketchy.

cont'd next page

---

cont'd from previous page

Cabrillo died January 3, 1543, and, according to Kelsey, is buried somewhere on Catalina Island, though others believe he's buried on one of the northern Channel Islands near Santa Barbara, such as San Miguel or Santa Rosa.\* Following his death, the crew decided to make another push north, reaching Point Arena (between the Russian River and Mendocino) on February 26.

Exhausted from fighting storms, with ships leaking, supplies running out, and their commander dead, the crew made their way back to Mexico. They arrived home on April 14, 1543, nine months after departing.

Cabrillo's journey to California was intended to find riches. Since it didn't, and since he died during the trip, the journey was a failure. As soon as the crew returned to Mexico they were sent on a new trip to Peru, from which few if any returned. Luckily, interviews were conducted with the crew before they departed, which is why we have the small amount of information that we do.

The reports that survive are the oldest written record of the history of the west coast of the United States. Maps made from the expedition's discoveries include some of the earliest uses of the word "California" in American geography. Also, during a storm when the crew feared for their lives, it is recorded that they prayed to the Virgin of Guadalupe, one of earliest accounts of her veneration.

Cabrillo was no saint. There is a story, possibly true, that during the conquest of Mexico City he used fat from the bodies of slain Indians to make caulk for ships. But Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo does hold the position as the first European to visit California, 467 years ago.

\*(see <http://www.mms.gov/omm/pacific/kids/cabrillo.htm>).



Cabrillo memorial on San Miguel Island



*The Members of the Board  
and the  
Guidepost Editors*

*are wishing all of you*

*Happy Holidays  
and a  
Successful New Year.*

*May there be Peace.*