



COMMUNIQUE

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August 2026

President's Message

Hello PHA Members,

The Summer is roaring by here at PHA. We hope you are enjoying it and looking forward to the sunny weather of fall in San Francisco!

The PHA was fortunate to have an information table ring-side at the June 27th Los Californianos' commemoration of the arrival of the Anza Expedition's families to the Presidio. There was music, children and adults marching in period costume, and excellent speeches noting the long history of the Presidio and the many layers that followed the arrival of the Spanish settlers in 1776.

The planning for our big celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the Presidio, on September 17th, 2026, is keeping us busy along with our wonderful partners the Presidio Theatre and the San Francisco Historical Society. Along with the showing of *Anza 250: A Documentary Film*, there will be a pre-show raffle starting at 5:30 pm, with winners announced at the conclusion of the presentation. The evening will end with a reception and celebratory toast to the Presidio on its 250th Anniversary!

The Presidio Historical Association Board of Directors

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We are currently soliciting sponsors for this event starting at the \$100 level. If you or anyone you know would like to help make this a truly successful evening and give the PHA a boost to continue doing more of the good work we have been doing every year since 1959, please let us know at admin@pha-sf.org or by donating at our ticketing site at <https://www.presidiotheatre.org/show-details/anza-250>

To support these activities, we have also been working on our infrastructure by improving our website, initiating an internal audit of our financials, and forming standing committees to spread the work (and fun) over more helpers. The committees that we have identified so far are: Events, Programmatic Agreement, the *Communique*, and Education, which includes our *Stories of the Presidio* historic interpreter training program — a collaboration between the PHA, the National Park Service, and SF City Guides. If you would like to hear more about these committees and consider joining one of them, please email me at admin@pha-sf.org. You do not need to be a Board member to join one of our committees.

All for now — hope to see you all on September 17th!

Peg

September 17th

PHA's Date With History

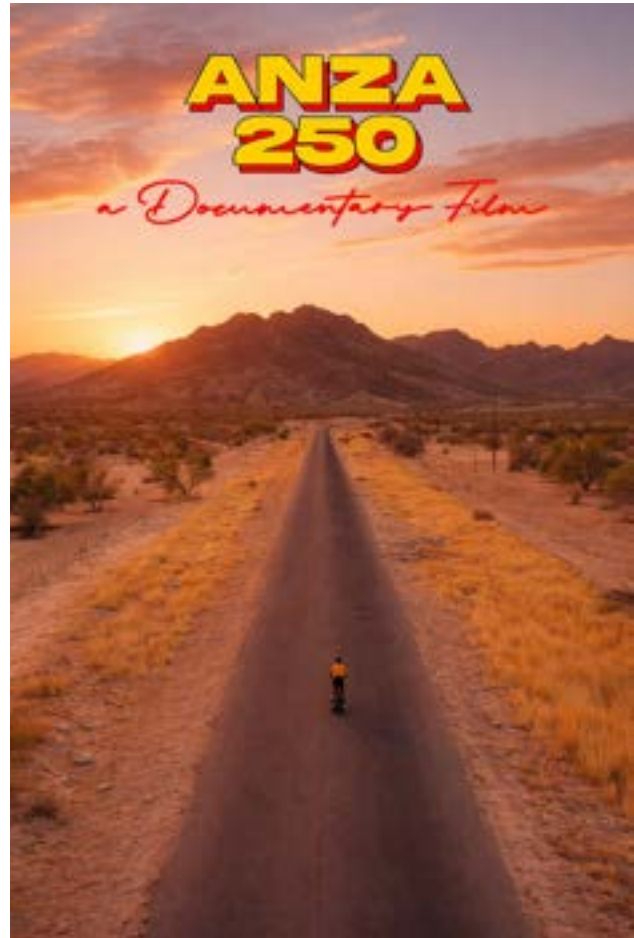
On September 17th the Presidio Historical Association is presenting, with the generous partnership of the San Francisco Historical Society, the world premiere of *Anza 250: A Documentary Film*. This first screening is the culmination of the PHA's recent collaboration earlier this spring with educator and architect Luis Valle and his team, creators of this film. Our organization helped to bring his 1200-mile bicycle retracing of Juan Bautista de Anza's original (and transformative) expedition through the park to Fort Point.

We are making this event a celebration of the 250th establishment of the Presidio by holding it exactly two hundred and fifty years from the day of its creation.

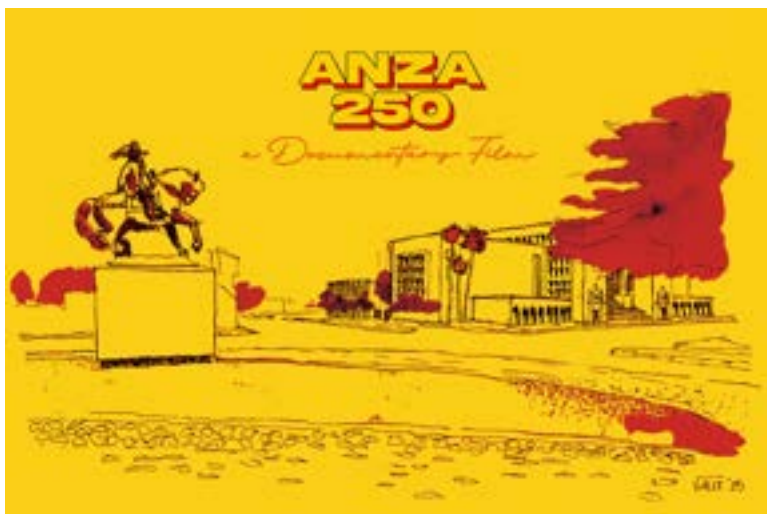
In this time of insecurity and worry, when funding is cut and threats of worse are bandied about, the PHA has taken up the challenge to make sure this important date will be appropriately celebrated. We hope all of you will take advantage of this opportunity to raise a glass to the history of the Presidio and the momentous importance of it to the 250 years of our nation's and city's history.

Those who attend have the opportunity to:

- Meet Luis Valle, a distinguished scholar, de-



*Photo by Rob Preciado, director of
Anza 250: A Documentary Film.*



Artwork by Luis Valle.

lightful individual, and good friend of the PHA.

- Experience the beautifully restored Presidio Theatre — have you seen it yet?

- Connect with other members of the PHA, strengthen our ties, and renew our commitment to support the preservation of the Presidio and educate people about its history.

Be sure to make your reservation early because space is limited.

Here is the link: <https://www.presidiotheatre.org/show-details/anza-250>

Help Protect the Presidio

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), created by the National Historic Preservation Act, is a federal agency whose mission is to promote the preservation of America's historic places — places like the Presidio.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that federal agencies consider the effects on historic properties of projects that the agencies carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve. It gives the ACHP, interested parties, and the public the chance to weigh in on these matters before a decision is made. This process is an important tool for citizens to lend their voice in protecting and maintaining historic properties.

On July 24, the ACHP voted to make major changes to the Section 106 decision-making process regarding the historic resources of the United States, including:

1. State and tribal historic preservation officers would be taken out of the decision-making process.
2. Public participation would be reduced.
3. The definition of a historic property would be narrowed.
4. Requirements to avoid or mitigate harm to historic resources would be weakened.

These changes would impair the very intent of the regulation and threaten historic places like our Presidio. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has spoken out on this subject, and their message can be found [here](#).

PHA members are urged to contact the governor and their U.S. senators and representatives to oppose these changes.

Members of Congress do not provide email addresses; constituents must go to the member's website and leave a message there. If you wish to contact a member of the House of Representatives who is not in your district, you will likely need to send a letter through the Post Office. Here are the websites and addresses of California's senators and the Bay Area members of the House:

Senator Alex Padilla
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
<https://www.padilla.senate.gov/>

Senator Adam Schiff
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
<https://www.schiff.senate.gov/>

2nd Congressional District:
Hon. Jared Huffman
2330 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://huffman.house.gov/>

4th Congressional District:
Hon. Mike Thompson
268 Cannon Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://mikethompson.house.gov/>

8th Congressional District:
Hon. John Garamendi
2428 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://garamendi.house.gov/>

10th Congressional District:
Hon. Mark DeSaulnier
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://desaulnier.house.gov/>

11th Congressional District:
Hon. Nancy Pelosi
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://pelosi.house.gov/>

12th Congressional District:
Hon. Lateefah Simon
1023 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://simon.house.gov/>

California's 14th Congressional District seat is currently vacant.

15th Congressional District:
Hon. Kevin Mullin
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://kevinmullin.house.gov/>

16th Congressional District:
Hon. Sam Liccardo
1117 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://liccardo.house.gov/>

17th Congressional District:
Hon. Ro Khanna
306 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://khanna.house.gov/>

18th Congressional District:
Hon. Zoe Lofgren
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
<https://lofgren.house.gov/>

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814
<https://www.gov.ca.gov/contact/>



Courtesy NPS.

Nike Missile Site SF-88

Greg Brown

Greg Brown was a Nike Hercules Radar Crewman in the Los Angeles area at Site LA-88. He was also a National Park Service volunteer at the SF-88 Historic Nike Missile Museum for 20 years.

Perched high above Rodeo Beach, overlooking one of Marin County's most spectacular stretches of Pacific coastline, stands a lonely outpost of freedom. Hidden among the coastal hills is Battery "A" of the 2nd Missile Battalion, 51st Air Defense Artillery, better known as Nike Missile Site SF-88.

One of seven Nike missile sites protecting the San Francisco Bay Area, SF-88 stood watch during the Cold War as part of America's air defense system. Behind the missiles and radar equipment were approximately 120 young citizen-soldiers. They were entrusted with an enormous responsibility: to protect the communities below from the threat of a surprise aerial attack.

Every hour of every day, radar crews continuously scanned the skies. If hostile aircraft were detected, the alert crews would have only minutes to respond. Nike Hercules missiles, capable of supersonic speeds, stood ready to intercept

enemy bombers before they could reach their targets. The soldiers trained repeatedly under simulated wartime conditions so that every action became instinctive. In an era when enemy aircraft could approach carrying nuclear weapons, hesitation was not an option.

Although SF-88 was only one missile battery, it formed part of the vast North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), a joint United States

and Canadian defense network created to protect the continent from attack. Every Nike site contributed to that larger shield.

Life at SF-88 demanded constant readiness. Alert crews lived only steps from their battle stations. At any hour, a siren could shatter the silence. Sleeping soldiers would rush from their bunks to radar vans, launch control trailers, and missile magazines, never knowing whether the alarm signaled another training exercise or the beginning of a real attack. Whatever the reason, they responded

with the same speed and professionalism.

Yet the story of SF-88 extends far beyond military readiness.

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Nike Missile Site SF-88

Continued from Page 4.

Like thousands of young Americans serving across the country, the soldiers of SF-88 became part of the communities they protected. Although



Location of Nike Missile Site SF-88 in the Marin Headlands. From Google Maps.

they wore Army uniforms while on duty, they were known by local residents simply as neighbors, church members, volunteers, or parents.

The soldiers actively participated in civic organizations, including the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the YMCA, the Optimists, and the Lions Club. They escorted hundreds of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts through Nike missile sites, helping young people understand the importance of national defense during the Cold War. They donated blood to local blood banks, supported community churches, and participated in parades, Memorial Day ceremonies, Veterans Day



GGNRA Archives, Major Warren Hurst Photographs, 1955-1956.

observances, and wreath-laying ceremonies honoring those who had served before them.

Many soldiers' wives worked for local businesses, further strengthening the ties between the missile site and the surrounding communities.

Education was also encouraged. Soldiers were given opportunities to complete their high school education or continue working toward college degrees while serving their country. Military service became not only a period of national service but also an opportunity for personal growth and preparation for civilian life.

The battalion also made a significant economic contribution to the surrounding area. Annual military payroll exceeded \$1.2 million, providing substantial support to local businesses.

While many soldiers lived on the installation,



GGNRA Archives, Marin Headlands and Angel Island Study Collection.

others lived with their families in government-leased housing or rented and purchased homes throughout the community.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent annually on housing, utilities, groceries, and local services, making the soldiers an important part of the area's economy.

The Nike Hercules missile itself was designed as a deterrent. Between 1954 and 1979, 234 Nike Hercules sites operated in 27 states, defending 44 major metropolitan areas as well as Alaska and Hawaii.

More than 24,000 Nike Hercules missiles were

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Nike Missile Site SF-88

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produced by Douglas Aircraft. Despite decades of continuous readiness, no Nike Hercules missile was



GGNRA Archives, Bell Telephone Laboratories Nike Hercules Photos, 1959.

ever fired in combat against an enemy aircraft.

During the Cold War, the United States was never attacked from the air by hostile bombers.

While many factors contributed to preserving that peace, the constant vigilance of the soldiers who stood watch at sites like SF-88 helped deter any potential aggressor from testing America's defenses.

SF-88 remained in operation from 1954 until 1974, faithfully protecting the skies over the San

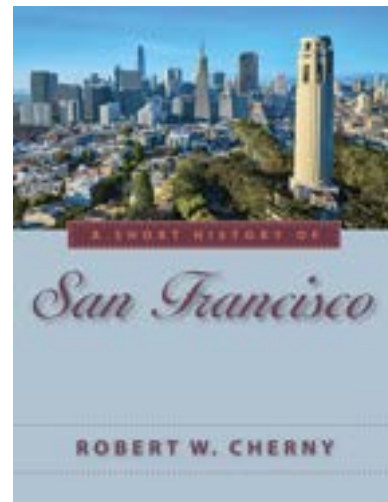


GGNRA Archives, Chuck Dyson Nike Photograph Collection, c. 1970-1971.

Francisco Bay Area for 20 years. Today, it holds a unique place in American history as the only fully restored Nike Hercules missile site open to the public.

Preserved as part of the National Park Service, it stands as a lasting tribute to the thousands of young men and women who quietly served during the Cold War. Their mission was simple but profound: remain ready, preserve the peace, and protect the communities they called home.

Today, visitors who walk through SF-88 can see far more than radar equipment, missiles, and launchers. They experience a place where ordinary young Americans stood watch through decades of uncertainty. Their dedication, professionalism, and commitment to both their country and their community remain the site's most enduring legacy.



The Presidio Historical Association's Bob Cherny, professor emeritus of history at San Francisco State University, released his latest book this spring — a walk through San Francisco history that is both scholarly and a very enjoyable read.

Preservation Officer's Corner

What's New at the Presidio

Rob Thomson

Federal Preservation Officer, Presidio Trust

Happy summer! I'm excited to provide the PHA with a few updates on the Presidio Trust's historic preservation program. The Presidio has two new public-facing food service venues coming to the park soon, each occupying historic buildings in the Main Post and Letterman districts. We also continue to make progress on moving the Letterman Residential Project forward following the conclusion of a successful environmental and historic preservation review earlier this spring.

Later this summer, The Mess Hall will debut in historic Building 201, located on Halleck Street at the eastern edge of Tunnel Tops. The architecturally modest building has an interesting history, including the distinction of being the only existing build-



ing moved *twice* in the Presidio (to the best of my knowledge). 201 began its life in 1897 as a "forage warehouse," storing hay and stock feed for the cluster of stables that occupied the northern Main Post into the early 20th century. It featured a series of barn doors facing a loading dock that

ran parallel with Halleck Street. The building was moved to the south of its original location during the construction of Doyle Drive in 1936-37, maintaining its Halleck frontage, but receiving a new lower story that housed garages and vehicle loading bays. A 1940 Quartermaster Corps plan showed the building containing offices, storerooms, a general store, and a butcher shop. The U.S. Army renovated the building the following year, us

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The red arrow points to Building 201 in its original location, circa 1922. Courtesy Presidio Trust.

What's New at the Presidio

Continued from Page 7.

ing \$3,507.91 in Works Progress Administration funds to enclose the lower-level garage area. Other uses cited in the building's documentation include a post office, bank, cafeteria, and bakery.

During planning for the Doyle Drive/Presidio Parkway replacement project in the early 2000s, the Trust worked with Caltrans to relocate, store, and re-establish Building 201 near its original location on Halleck, rather than demolishing it to make way for the eastern Main Post tunnel portal. For



Building 201 in 1937 (center — the building with awnings) after it was relocated for the construction of Doyle Drive. Courtesy Presidio Trust.

two years, the building was securely stored along French Court (perpendicular to its current orientation), before it was moved onto a new foundation along Halleck. With the Trust's supervision, the Presidio Parkway project performed base building work that included a structural upgrade, new utility stub outs for future food service use, rehabilitation of all original windows, removal of Army-era vinyl siding and restoration of original exterior wood lap siding, removal of non-historic interior partitions, and reconstruction of the loading dock. The Trust commercial leasing team successfully secured The Mess Hall tenant, which then designed their restaurant buildout according to Trust guidance and historic preservation standards. Interior features in the new restaurant space will include original wood flooring, beadboard ceiling finishes, a circa 1950s hoist mechanism, and other details recalling its use

as a butcher shop.

Speaking personally, I have been involved in advocating for this building since 2008, and this project is the best outcome I could have imagined. I hope you all have a chance to enjoy its next chapter once it opens later this summer! See [this press release](#) for information on the tenant team behind this project and the types of food offerings they will bring to this exciting project.

Relatively speaking, Building 563 has a much more straightforward history compared to its similarly-sized and designed cousin, Building 201.

Constructed in 1903 as an enlisted men's barracks to house the surge of troops arriving in the Presidio from the Philippine-American War (1899-1902), Building 563 originally housed 42 men. Neighboring Buildings 567, 569, and 572 date to this same period and were originally part of the 38-building East Cantonment that housed the 7th and 19th

Infantry. While the Army removed many of its neighboring barracks later in the 20th century, 563 endured, serving as offices, a thrift store, and a day care in the Army's twilight years.

In 2006 the Trust partnered with a restaurateur to rehab the building as the Presidio Social Club, completing structural and building system upgrades, along with a new kitchen build out, and later an exterior dining patio and deck. The Presidio Social Club closed in 2024 after a remarkable 18-year run, and this summer the Trust commercial team signed Berkeley-based Fieldwork Brewing as the new tenant. Fieldwork has yet to submit their architectural drawings for review, but preliminary conversations indicate that they plan to focus on a kitchen remodel and other interior upgrades. Trust historic preservation and capital projects staff will

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Presidio Chapel Story

SSG Peter Masuoka: From Incarceration Camp to National Hero

Mary Zamboukos

In his speech commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Selma march, President Barack Obama spoke of “Japanese Americans who fought for this country even as their own liberty had been denied.” Here is one such story.

On the historic Main Post Chapel’s walls are plaques honoring those who served in the U.S. Army. Families and comrades placed these memorial plaques. One of the plaques honors the service and sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Peter S. Masuoka (1921-1944). He served in the 2nd Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division in Italy and France during World War II. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team, composed of Japanese American volunteers, is the most decorated unit in U.S. military history.

Peter Masuoka graduated from Analy High School in Sonoma County, California in 1940 and was the senior class president. He was the first American of Japanese ancestry in Sonoma County to receive the American Legion Citizenship Award. He attended Santa Rosa Junior College, where he played football and rugby. He enlisted in the U.S. Army while incarcerated

with other Japanese Americans at the Amache Relocation Center in Colorado. He reached the rank of Staff Sergeant. The 442nd earned numerous decorations, including the Army Presidential Unit Citation and the Army Good Conduct Medal.

The tale of Staff Sergeant Masuoka’s heroism is detailed in his Silver Star Citation which reads:

“Headquarters, SEVENTH U.S. Army, General Orders No. 17 (January 24, 1945)



SSG Peter S. Masuoka. Courtesy Western Sonoma County Historical Society.

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pride in presenting the Silver Star (Posthumously) to Staff Sergeant Peter S. Masuoka (ASN: 37344728), United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy while serving with Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 442d Regimental Combat Team, attached to the 36th Infantry Division, on 3 November 1944, in the vicinity of Biffontaine, France. When his company was subjected to an intense artillery barrage, Sergeant Masuoka volunteered to lead a squad of litter bear-

ers in the evacuation of several casualties. Exposing himself to terrific artillery fire, he skillfully

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Military Intelligence Service Language School in Building 640 at Crissy Field, 1941-1942. Courtesy National Park Service.



Building 640 today. Courtesy National Japanese American Historical Society.

What's New at the Presidio

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soon start working with them on detailed plans to ensure that they follow our preservation guidance and standards.

See [this press release](#) for more about Fieldwork and their schedule for Building 563.

Finally, I want to thank PHA for its engagement in our compliance process on the Letterman Residential Project. The Trust completed its Envi-

ronmental Assessment and historic preservation review of this long-contemplated project in May; the final documents are available [on our website](#). Demolition of existing non-historic buildings on the site will commence later this summer, while the project team continues to refine designs for the new residential complex. Currently, the Trust plans to begin construction on the new buildings in 2027 with occupancy by 2029.

Thank you, and keep in touch!



East Cantonment buildings in the foreground, including Building 563, with the Panama-Pacific International Exposition under construction in the distance, 1914. Courtesy Presidio Trust.

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SSG Peter Masuoka

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administered first aid and evacuated the wounded. While working on a wounded comrade, Sergeant Masuoka was killed by enemy shellfire. Inspired by his courageous action, which was performed at the sacrifice of his life, his litter bearers continued administering first aid to the remaining casualties, successfully treating them and evacuating all the wounded men of the company. His actions, without regard for his own safety, reflect great credit on himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.”

Masuoka also received the Purple Heart, World War II Victory Medal, and American Campaign Medal. His parents were notified of his death while they were still incarcerated at Camp Amache in Colorado. Masuoka was initially buried at the Epinal American Cemetery in Dinozé, France. After the War, his family had his remains returned to the United States. He is buried at the Golden Gate



Memorial plaque in the Presidio Chapel.

National Cemetery in San Bruno, California. His story is preserved in the Western Sonoma County Historical Society Collection and he is honored by Colorado’s Gold Star Veterans community. In 2023 his nephew, Alan K. Murakami, authored the book *Peter Masuoka: The Uncle I Never Knew*.



Flagpole, 1902. Courtesy National Park Service.

Juan Bautista de Anza: Foundations of California

Enya Roman

Enya Roman is a graduate of the Class of 2026 at St. Ignatius College Preparatory. This fall she continues her studies at Napa Valley College.

The expansion of Spanish influence into Alta California during the late eighteenth century depended heavily on exploration, military planning, and the establishment of permanent settlements (Bacich). One of the most significant figures in this process was Juan Bautista de Anza, a Spanish officer and explorer who played a central role in shaping the early development of California. Born in New Spain in 1736, Anza developed leadership skills through military service on the northern frontier, where he gained experience navigating difficult terrain and managing relationships with Indigenous groups. His early career included defending frontier regions and participating in campaigns that required both strategy and negotiation, which helped prepare him for the challenge of

leading large expeditions (Bacich). His expeditions into California in the 1770s were not casual explorations, but carefully structured missions intended to expand Spanish control and establish lasting settlements. Anza is a major figure in the history of San Francisco by virtue of his leadership in organizing

and guiding expeditions, establishing a successful overland route to Alta California, and helping found settlements such as the Presidio of San Francisco in 1776.

One of Anza's most significant contributions was his ability to lead and coordinate large-scale expeditions that made settlement in Alta California possible. His 1775 expedition included more than 200 settlers along with livestock, tools, and supplies, making it one of the earliest successful overland migra-

tions into the region ("Who Was Juan Bautista de Anza?"). Unlike earlier exploratory missions that focused primarily on mapping territory, Anza's ex

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Juan Bautista de Anza, painted from life by Fray Orci, 1774.

Juan Bautista de Anza*Continued from Page 13.*

pedition was structured with the explicit purpose of relocation and settlement. This required sustained logistical planning, since the group had to move across deserts, mountains, and unfamiliar terrain



Statue of Juan Bautista de Anza at Lake Merced.

while maintaining cohesion and survival (“Who Was Juan Bautista de Anza?”). Anza carefully selected travel routes that prioritized water access, grazing land, and manageable terrain (LaPierre). His decisions reflected not only military strategy but also an understanding of environmental survival requirements for a large traveling population. The success of this expedition demonstrated that overland settlement of California was possible on a large scale, which transformed Spanish expectations about territorial expansion.

The success of Anza’s overland route also reduced Spain’s reliance on coastal shipping, which was slower and more limited in reach. The route connected previously distant regions of New Spain

to Alta California, allowing for more consistent movement of people and resources as well as easier communication between different parts of the Spanish Empire, all of which improved coordination and stability (LaPierre). In this way, Anza did not simply open a path, but also created a system that allowed colonization to expand and stabilize over time.

Anza’s diary entries provide critical insight into the structure and demands of his expeditions. They document environmental conditions, travel distances, resource availability, and daily progress (Anza). These entries emphasize that leadership required daily assessment rather than fixed planning. He frequently recorded adjustments made due to changing conditions, indicating that flexibility was essential for survival (Anza). He also paid attention to the health and endurance of settlers, thereby maintaining the stability of the expedition. In addition, the diary highlights Anza’s responsibility for maintaining order among settlers and soldiers. This level of organization reveals that the expedition functioned as a highly managed system rather than a loosely organized migration (Anza).

Anza’s diary further illustrates the expedition’s dependence on environmental awareness and Indigenous knowledge. Native guides provided critical information about water sources, terrain routes, and safe passage through unfamiliar regions, allowing the group to navigate more efficiently (Anza). At the same time, these interactions existed within a broader colonial system that ultimately reshaped Indigenous life (History & Culture”). While cooperation occurred during travel, Spanish expansion introduced long-term changes to land use, settlement patterns, and control over resources. This creates a more complex understanding of Anza’s role, where collaboration supported immediate success but contributed to long-term disruption.

A major aspect of Anza’s significance is his role in establishing permanent settlements that shaped California’s early infrastructure. His expedition led to the founding of the Presidio of San Francisco, which helped Spain secure the region by allowing

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Juan Bautista de Anza

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it to monitor the coastline and defend against potential adversaries. Settlements like this created a foundation for future population growth and development. Over time, these settlements contributed to the growth of cities like San Francisco, demonstrating the long-term impact of Anza's planning



Detail of the plaque on the pedestal of the Anza statue.

and leadership. This connection between early settlement and modern urban development highlights how decisions made during colonization continued to influence the region long after the Spanish period ended (“Anza’s California”).

The legacy of Juan Bautista de Anza continues to be recognized through historical landmarks such as the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which traces the path of his expedition, as well as streets and institutions that bear his name (“History & Culture”). These recognitions emphasize his role in shaping early California development, and they also reflect how societies choose to remember fig-

ures who contributed to expansion and growth. At the same time, modern perspectives provide a more complete understanding of Anza’s legacy by recognizing the broader consequences of colonization. While Anza’s actions contributed to development and expansion, they also played a role in systems that displaced Indigenous communities and altered existing ways of life. This perspective does not remove his achievements, but instead places them within a larger historical context. Understanding both aspects of his impact allows for a more accurate interpretation of why he is remembered today. Anza’s legacy reflects both the development of early California and the broader consequences of expansion, making his contributions significant in understanding the region’s history.

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Time Flies When You're Having Fun: 1976 to 2026 at the Presidio

Stephen Voris

Wrapping up this issue of the Communiqué is this reminiscence of the Presidio, spanning fifty years, from PHA Director Steve Voris.

In 1976 I was newly married, and my beautiful and talented wife landed a speaking engagement in San Francisco. At the time she was the editor of a life insurance industry trade journal in Indianapolis, Indiana. In conjunction with her editorial job, she had developed a specialty in how a new widow should best be approached in a time of grief (she had been one). Talk about a woman in a man's world in the 1970s! But all that is another story. She would be giving a keynote speech to a life insurance company's annual convention, Northwest Mutual I think, at the St. Francis Hotel. We cannot remember for sure; we think September or October 1976.

I was in the Army, assigned to the Army Recruiting Command in Indianapolis, Indiana. My office was in Bloomington, home of Indiana University (Go Hoosiers!). As a young Captain, I supervised six recruiting stations in central Indiana. The Army had just decided, as the Volunteer Army became a reality, that it was best to assign officer supervisors back to their "home area," since the requirements and challenges were significant. Not exactly a hardship tour! Anyway, another story. Serendipity again. Betty and I met and married. So when she got the S.F. gig, she asked the insurance company if she could bring

her spouse (on their dime). They said yes, and it sure worked for me! My only experience with San Francisco had been passing through when returning from a trip to Asia. Clearly remember seeing Coit Tower as I crossed the Bay Bridge on the way to SFO.

I became aware of the existence of the Presidio, and so we decided to spend a day there before Betty's speaking engagement. So I called the Visiting



Crissy Field. Courtesy Open SF History.

Officer's Quarters at the Presidio, only to be told "no room at the inn." Well, by chance, the Colonel I worked for knew a Colonel assigned to the Presidio. And after an exchange of communications, a room became available! So we flew to S.F., rented a car, found our way to the Presidio (using a paper map — remember them?), and found the Visiting Officer's Quarters. Which turned out to be the building that is currently the Inn at the Presidio! We were there for only about 24 hours, but certainly memorable! The room we had was spacious, 1950's furniture,

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Time Flies When You're Having Fun

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rather uncomfortable bed, we remember. But clean, tidy, and a great location!

I paid a call on the Colonel who has facilitated our room reservation while Betty wrote post cards. (Remember them? She was big on that.) The person at the reservation desk directed us to the Officer's Club, practically next door. So we went there for dinner, not knowing much or what to expect. We had been told it was a historic building. It certainly was an unexpected experience! Moraga Hall was the dining room. A full service restaurant. And well occupied, I recall. We were given a brochure



Letterman Army Medical Center. Courtesy Open SF History.

along with our menu, talking about the history of the building, and the 200th celebrations that had taken place! There is a picture of that celebration on the picture wall in the Moraga Room now. And of course the staff directed us to the window that lit up to show the adobe bricks. Window is still there today! I was fascinated and hooked at that time. Either before or after our meal we had a drink in the bar, which was across the hall, where an office and storage rooms are now. I know I must have looked around a bit, but do not recall details. The next morning I roamed about main post a bit while Betty prepared for her meetings and presentation. I

clearly remember that suddenly at the lower end of main post, I guess about where the Bay School is now, maybe 30 to 40 soldiers in mess whites (cook's attire) appeared! I think I subsequently found out that there was a baker's school at the Presidio then. That afternoon, we left the Presidio for the St Francis (very comfortable bed). With no real thought of ever returning . . .

Jumping ahead (just a bit), my employer decided to send me to Asia again. While there, I was the chief "horse holder" in the Division Headquarters, near the DMZ. Often briefed the two-star division commander. Jumping ahead again, another story, back in the States, and assigned to an Infantry Battalion at Fort Ord (Monterey, CA). Well, it came time to be reassigned once again, and we thought being assigned to the Presidio might be just fine! Well, the assignment people said on the phone — well, I won't repeat. The formal reply was again essentially "no room at the inn." Well, serendipity again for sure. I had read that the general I knew from Korea had been promoted to three stars, and was now at the Presidio, the Commander of 6th Army!

So I sent him a letter (remember doing that?) and said in essence "Remember me, sir? I am looking for a job." And in about two weeks, well I was on my way! For my first two months here I lived in temporary lodging in Building 40 (a single room, restroom/showers at the end of the hall) while waiting for our permanent quarters to become available. And then Betty joined me when our quarters (home) became available. A wonderful place, 1310B Kobbe Avenue. Yard, garage, fog blowing through the eucalyptus across the street, bridge foghorns at night. Great times then, parties, exploring S.F., Bay Area, etc. Next door to

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Los Californianos' Anza 250 Celebration

Members of the Presidio Historical Association took part on June 27 when Los Californianos, an organization whose members trace their ancestry back to the early Spanish and Mexican settlers of California, sponsored an event at the Presidio parade grounds commemorating the Anza Expedition's arrival 250 years ago in what grew into San Francisco.



Among the speakers were, from left, actor Dane Andrews portraying Juan Bautista de Anza; Marco A. Mena, Consul General of Mexico in San Francisco; and Carol Eber, member of Los Californianos and co-chair of the event.



Among those in attendance were David Smith, Superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Elaine Jackson-Retondo, PhD, Cultural Resources and Science Division Manager.



Members of the Young American Patriots Fife and Drum Corps marched with the colors.

Time Flies When You're Having Fun

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us was a very large house, the front steps used in an early silent film made at the Presidio (just cannot recall the name, has been restored and shown here several times).

Jumping ahead again, I retired at the Presidio in 1987, got an MBA, and we purchased a house in S.F. Subsequently had a 15-year business career before retiring again. But I tell everyone that this Place, the Presidio, is now in my DNA. Visited weekly in the early retirement days for exercise for my dogs and me. In 2013, visited an early exhibit in Building 103 ("Before the Bridge"). And was hooked on volunteering here! The Trust was "hiring" volunteers at the time, getting prepared for the

Club reopening in 2014. I was selected, and took the extensive training course offered by the Trust. I thoroughly enjoyed docent and volunteer duties at Building 50 and the Museum. And now, I am really appreciative of the PHA and the opportunity to participate in the ongoing projects to promote the history of our Place in this 250th anniversary year of 2026! And in the process to once again make Building 50 and the Museum a vibrant and active place for our Presidio guests to visit and learn — learn not only of our amazing past and rich and diverse heritage, but of the importance of applying our history and lessons learned to our exciting, evolving future!

So that's my Presidio, 1976 and 2026. A very lucky guy in so many ways!



Courtesy Presidio Trust.



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Please visit our website at pha-sf.org
and our upcoming events calendar at
<http://presidioassociation.org/pha-calendar-events>

The Presidio Historical Association is a
non-profit 501(c)(3) organization chartered
in the State of California. Donations to the
Presidio Historical Association are tax deductible.

Members: We want to hear from you!

Please email the PHA office (admin@pha-sf.org)
as soon as possible so we may confirm or update
our email list and weed out errors. We have
heard from some members who get only USPO
mailed items, even though they do have email.

We also invite members to submit articles
that might be of interest.

Please contact:
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