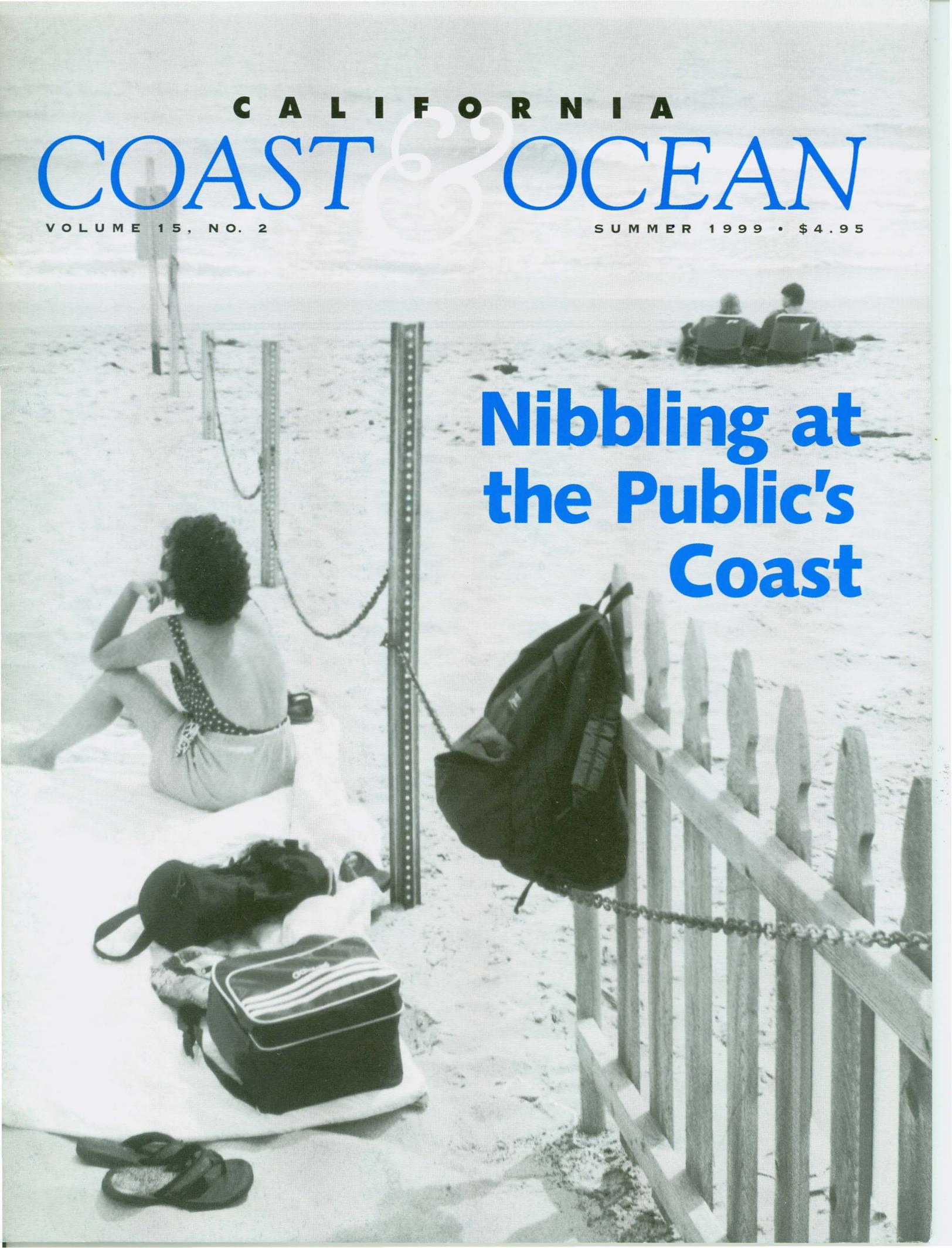


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Nibbling at
the Public's
Coast

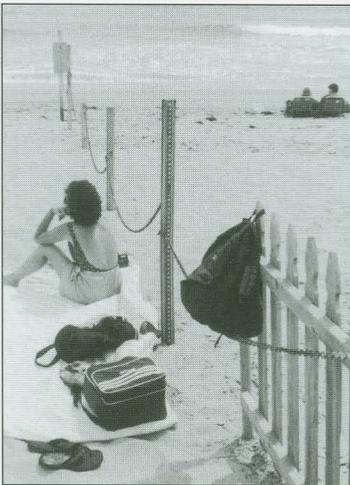


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Cover photo:

Homeowners have installed barriers to keep the public off private areas of Malibu's Broad Beach.

Photographer Ford Lowcock teaches at Santa Monica College. He is preparing an exhibit, "One Hundred Percent Water," for the college's photography gallery for next year.



Coastal Conservancy

The Coastal Conservancy is a state agency that works with the people of California to preserve, improve, and restore public access and natural resources along the coast and around San Francisco Bay. It is funded primarily by bonds authorized by California voters.

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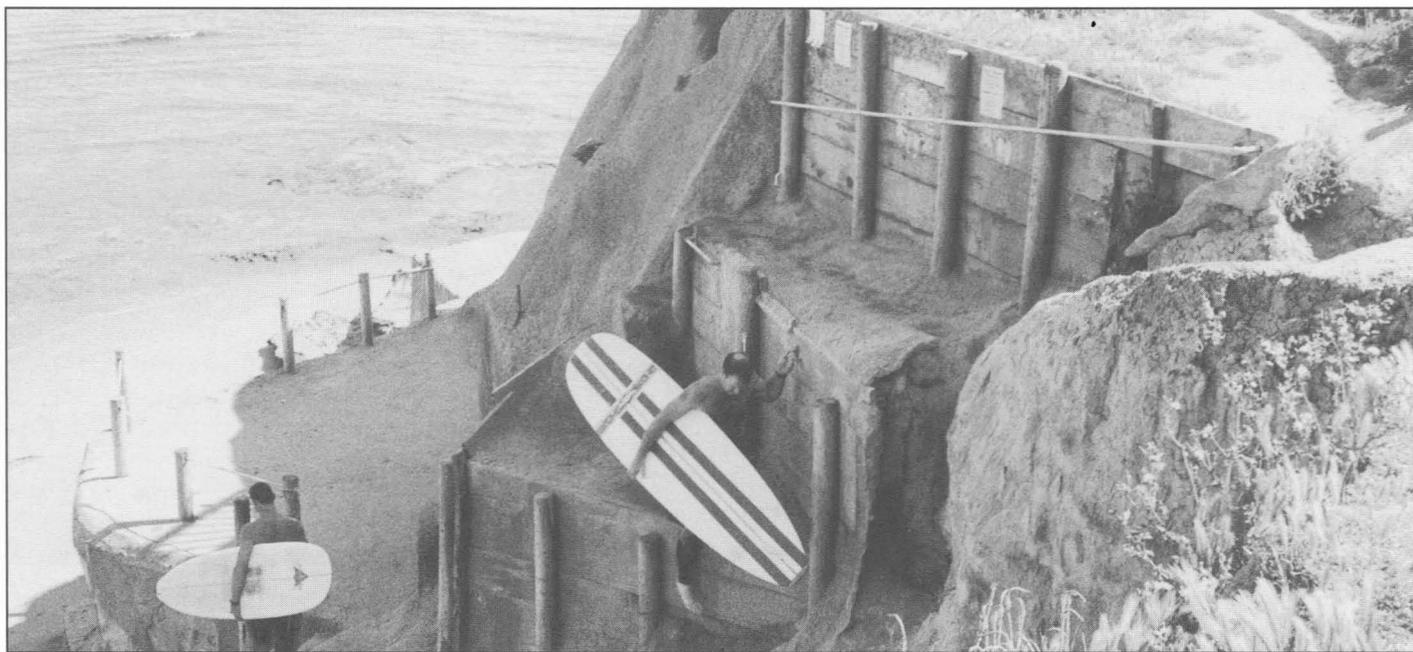
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VOLUME 15, NUMBER 2
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RASA GUSTAITIS

- 2 Good News—New Money for the Coast**
More funds for coastal agencies and state parks
- 3 Nibbling Away at the Public's Coast**
Rasa Gustaitis
Uncounted small developments add up to big impacts
- 12 Carmel Going Going**
Rasa Gustaitis
Historic cottages are being demolished
- 17 A Jewel Lights the Night at Point Cabrillo**
Lisa Weg
Restored Fresnel lens glitters again on North Coast headland
- 20 A Home Away From Homelessness**
Bill O'Brien
To the seashore for the sake of pure joy
- 26 Bringing the City and Country Together**
Ellen Rilla
Agritourism takes root in California
- 33 Secret Science on the California Coast**
John Cloud
Satellite program yielded new knowledge

DEPARTMENTS

36 EBB AND FLOW

- *For Birds and the Beach in Encinitas*
- *San Diego Bay Wetlands Purchase*
- *Beach Wheelchairs for Los Angeles County*
- *New Stairway to Carmel Beach*
- *Agritourism Contacts*
- *Bridge for Coastside Trail in Half Moon Bay*
- *Mendocino County Beach and Bluff*
- *Real-time Bay Information*
- *Coastal Cleanup Day Coming*

40 BOOKS



CORONA PHOTO

New Money for the Coast

GOVERNOR GRAY DAVIS and the legislature have provided a healthy infusion of funds for the coast this fiscal year. The State Parks Department can at last repair many of its dilapidated facilities, including recreational piers and beach access facilities, with \$157 million provided in the 1999–2000 budget. The Coastal Commission has a total of \$13.52 million, 13 percent more than last year, and has begun to recover from more than 15 years of fiscal starvation. The Coastal Conservancy's \$81 million budget is more than double last year's, allowing the agency to undertake many land acquisition and restoration projects, including:

- \$10.25 million to purchase wildlife habitat in San Diego County, divided among the Tijuana River Valley (\$2 million), the Otay River Valley (\$3.25 million), and the San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (\$5 million).
- \$10 million for restoring wetlands and providing coastal access through the Governor's "challenge grants" program, which requires at least equal contributions by grantees.
- \$10 million for the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, inaugurated two years ago but unfunded until now, to protect and improve wildlife habitat and recreational lands around the Bay.
- \$5.6 million for the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, a partnership of 15 state and federal agencies working to acquire, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands and watersheds between the Mexican border and Point Conception. The partnership, formed in 1998, has begun two restoration projects so far, and has identified over 20 potential projects in both urban and undeveloped South Coast areas.
- \$5 million to protect open space and wildlife habitat on Santa Barbara County's Gaviota coast by helping to buy easements along the bluffs of the longest stretch of open coast in southern California.
- \$5 million to purchase the 4,900-acre Palo Corona Ranch at the north end of Big Sur. This property is rich in redwoods, wildlife habitat, and spectacular views, and adjoins lands already open to the public.
- \$3 million for buying habitat and recreational lands along the Mendocino County coast, including additions to the Coastal Trail, which will eventually run from Oregon to Mexico.
- \$2.5 million for the San Francisco Bay Trail, a 400-mile network of hiking and bicycling trails, about half of which has been completed.
- \$1.5 million for Oakland's Union Point Park, to be built on a former industrial site on the Oakland Estuary, near low-income neighborhoods with a scarcity of parks and open space.

THE COASTAL COMMISSION'S ability to carry out its responsibilities under the California Coastal Act was severely undermined in the early 1980s, when Governor George Deukmejian, who wanted to abolish the Commission, inflicted drastic budget cuts.

Until last year, this agency, which bears responsibility for the State's entire 1,100-mile coast, worked with obsolete computers. At an international conference attended by representatives from 41 countries and 35 coastal states, Executive Director Peter Douglas found that only Cameroon, Bulgaria, and the California Coastal Commission lacked e-mail. This was finally remedied last year.

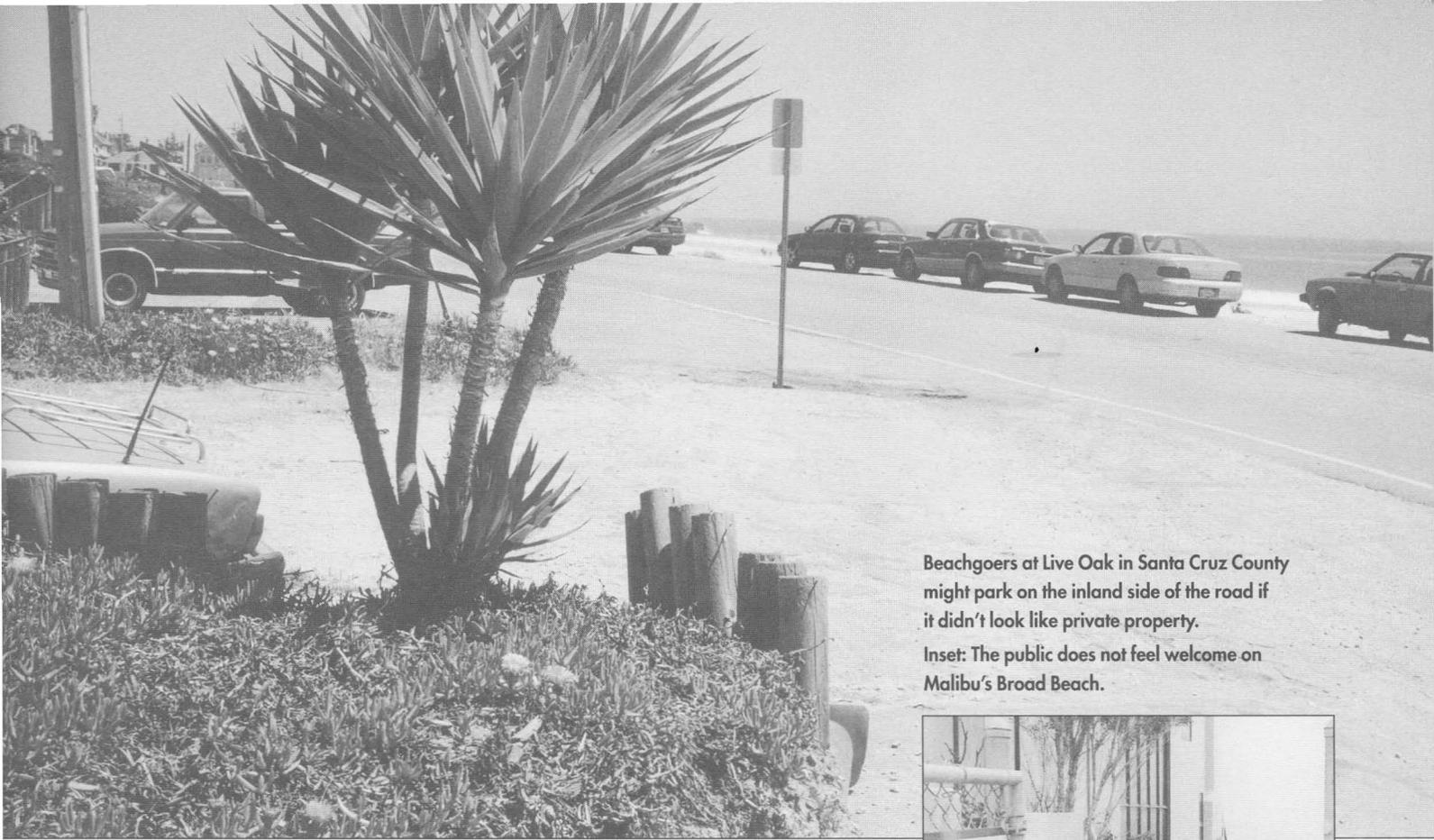
The budget increase of \$1.56 million above last year's allows the Commis-

sion, for the first time, to hire a geologist, a biologist, a water quality specialist, and a geographic information systems specialist; to add a total of 16 staff positions; and to reopen the North Coast office, shut down 15 years ago. "This is definitely a good start," says Chief Deputy Executive Officer James Burns.

The hope is that more funds will be forthcoming over the next several years, to build on this promising beginning. While the Commission's responsibilities have increased in recent years, the budget signed by Governor Gray Davis is still 24 percent below (\$4 million less, in today's dollars) that of 1982–83. With the new hires, Commission staff, now numbering 138, will still be 36 (21 percent) fewer than that of 1982–83.

The State Parks Department, also fiscally starved for years, received a healthy \$137 million to start catching up on its estimated \$1 billion maintenance backlog. That's \$107 million more for deferred maintenance than last year's budget provided. For 1997–98 there was nothing. State Parks also received \$10 million for cultural projects and \$10 million for nature projects.

Corey Brown, government affairs director for the Trust for Public Land, commented that the State Finance Department has estimated that \$579 million is needed for coastal protection. "We believe it's a very conservative estimate," Brown said, "but the budget approved by Governor Davis is a major step forward. Another major step would be a parks, coastal protection, and open space bond act in the year 2000." Two bond acts, each for \$2.2 billion, are pending before the legislature: AB 18, sponsored by Speaker of the Assembly Antonio Villaraigosa and Speaker pro Tem Fred Keeley, and SB 57, sponsored by Senator Tom Hayden, chairman of the Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee. ■



Beachgoers at Live Oak in Santa Cruz County might park on the inland side of the road if it didn't look like private property.
Inset: The public does not feel welcome on Malibu's Broad Beach.

Nibbling Away at the Public's Coast

RASA GUSTAITIS

TEN MILES NORTH OF SANTA CRUZ, just south of the RMC Lone Star cement plant, Highway 1 curves and dips into Davenport, a hamlet snuggled against the hills on the inland side of the road. If you're driving south you could easily miss it, for the view of Monterey Bay is entrancing. Should you pull off the road, as many travelers do, and follow one of the meandering footpaths across the bluff, you would find a classic view of the California coast: a sandy beach, steep sea cliffs, and waves breaking against rocky shores.

The only building on the ocean side of the Coast Highway in Davenport is a low-slung wooden shed. It was built for the railway, then used as an agricultural packing shed, then

leased to Odwalla Juice Company until 1998, when Odwalla moved to Dinuba. Now the building's owner, Fred Bailey, and his partner, Greg Steltenpohl, a founder of Odwalla, are trying to convert it into a complex with a juicery, restaurant, spa, greenhouse, three visitor accommodation units, two residences, offices, and possibly some conference and retail space. They have proposed to put a 66-car parking lot on the bluff—a bluff they refer to as a "dusty lot," and others call a "precious meadow."

The Coastal Act encourages appropriate visitor-serving development. But it requires that environmental and other factors be considered before a permit is issued. If built as proposed, the complex would be massive and more



LEFT: FORD LOWCOCK; ABOVE: RASA GUSTAITIS



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: RASA GUSTAITIS

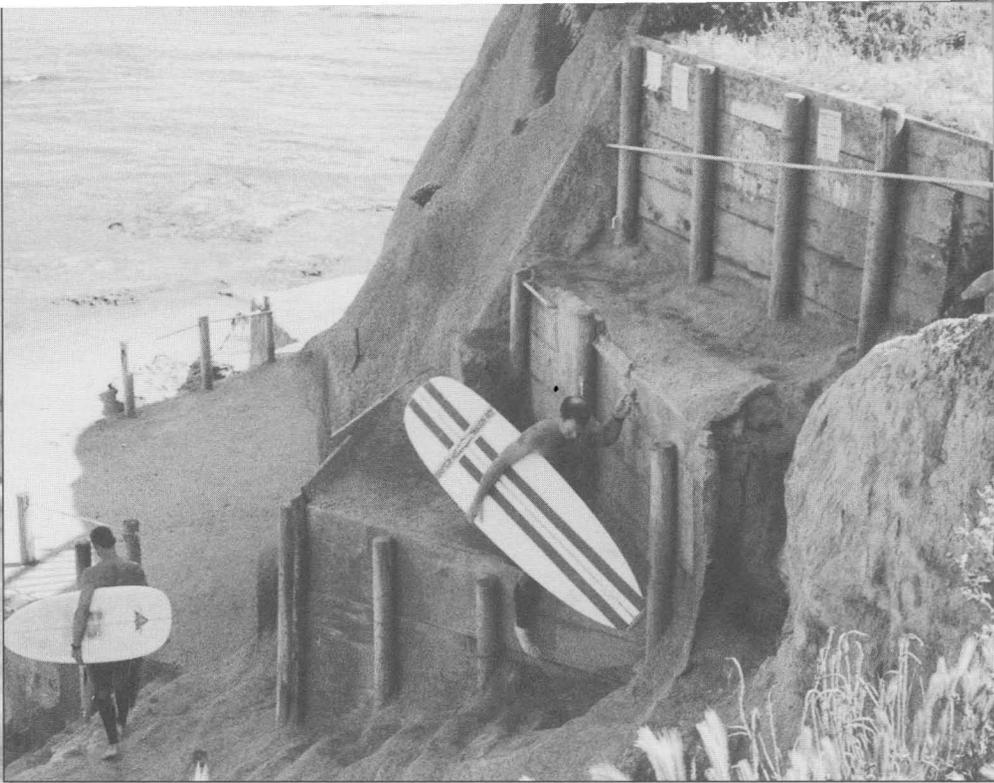


conspicuous than the weathered old shed, and its roofline would rise up to six feet above the shed's current 24-foot height. The parking lot would occupy open space that people have long used to get to the beach, sit down for picnics, or just look out on the ocean. It would bring more tourists, some jobs, and other economic benefits to Davenport but also more traffic and demand for water. It would impinge on ocean views from Highway 1, and could also trigger the process that has led to urbanization in many rural areas. Other old barns and sheds stand on blufftop terraces, amid row crops and pastures, with a truck or tractor the only vehicle in sight. Other landowners will want to convert them, or sell to developers who will. If land speculation begins, the survival of farming in the region would be endangered.

Davenport is the kind of village that is disappearing along the California coast.

Many of its 200 or so residents live in modest cottages. The town has a school, a church, a post office, a bakery, three small restaurants (one also sells handicrafts, another has a bakery, bar, and grill), a 12-unit bed and breakfast, a knife-maker's shop, and a glassblower's studio. The proposed multi-use complex would be the biggest structure and business in town and could become a catalyst for development of a more luxurious kind.

The California Coastal Act, passed in 1976, was a trade-off. Private development would continue, in an orderly fashion, within the designated Coastal Zone, but it was not to impose on the public the costs of any negative impacts on the environment. The public's right to reach the sea was to be protected, as were coastal farms, natural resources, and the special character of coastal communities. One side of the deal has been kept: more than 90 percent of all coastal permit applica-



By the year 2040, California's population is expected to be almost twice that of 1990. One in eight of the nation's children and young people under 20 lived in California in 1990. By 2040 one in five will live in California, and one in 13 in the Los Angeles area alone. All will have the right to enjoy the shore.

tions are approved. But the public is being shortchanged, partly because the cumulative impacts of development often go unnoticed and are not considered over time.

"Cumulative impacts are the combined effects of a series of development activities or natural effects," a Coastal Commission report states. "Although an individual project may not greatly affect the natural environment, the cumulative impacts created by many different projects over time may significantly alter these environments."

The construction of new buildings—be they large or small, in densely urban areas or on the rural coast—is not the only source of troublesome cumulative impacts. Local restrictions on beach access and parking, and small private encroachments on public space also combine to create substantial effects, not just locally but on entire regions.

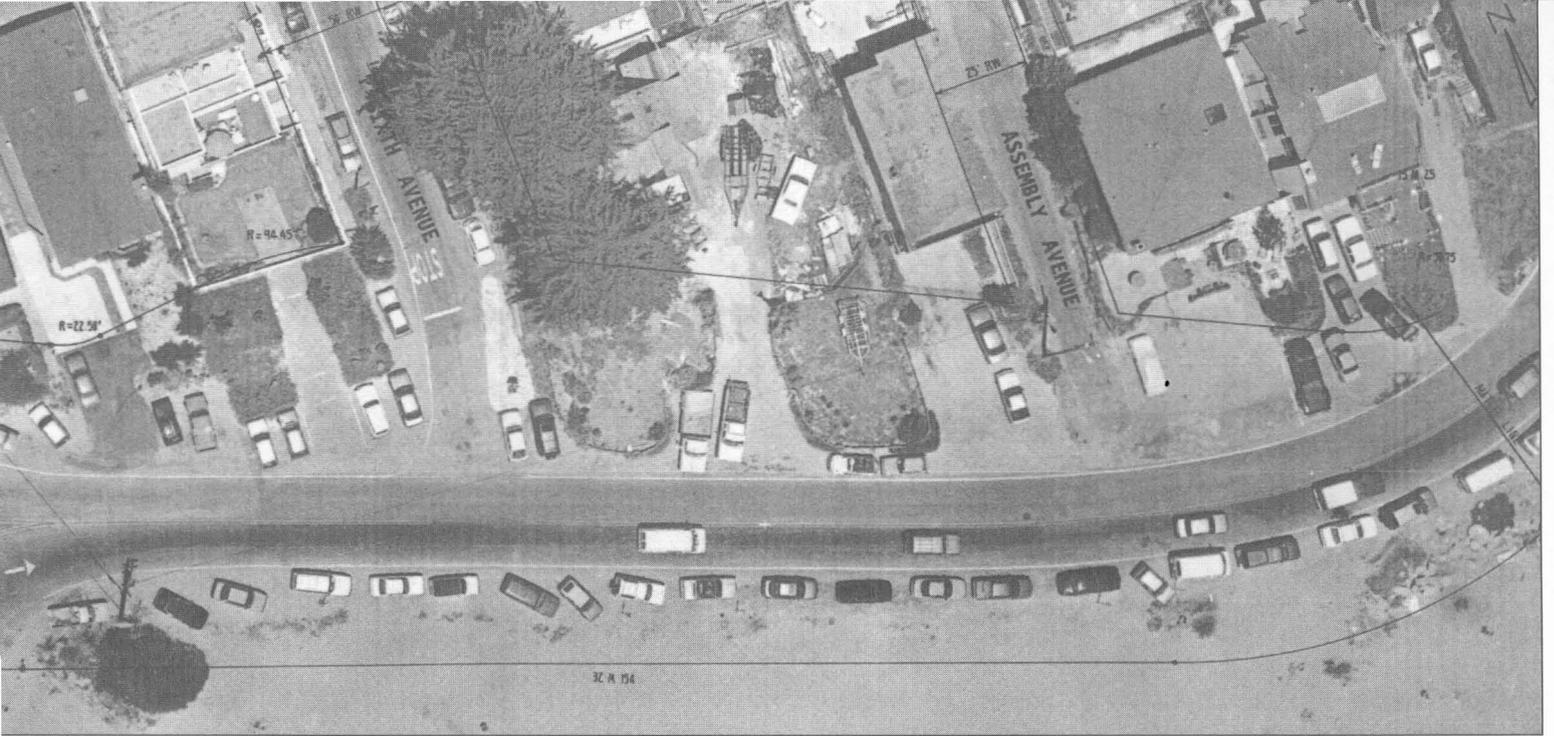
By the year 2040, California's population is expected to be almost twice that of 1990.

Recent data also show that while the country as a whole has been getting older, this state is getting younger. One in eight of the nation's children and young people under 20 lived in California in 1990. By 2040 one in five will live in California, and one in 13 in the Los Angeles area alone. All will have the right to enjoy the shore. How well they will be able to exercise that right depends in large part on the cumulative impacts of uncounted small battles now under way—for a wild open bluff and an open view from the road, for a trail used informally for generations, for 10-foot-wide pathways from road to sand, against encroachments into public right-of-ways, the opportunity

Top left: Shoreline armoring covers about 4.5 acres of sandy beach in Live Oak.

Above: Surfers clamber down seawalls to Pleasure Point surfbreak. Almost the entire Live Oak shoreline is armored in some way.

Opposite: Confusing signs deter beach visitors at Live Oak.



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PLAN LINE STUDY

Top: Line on the inside of Live Oak's East Cliff Drive shows private encroachment on the County's right-of-way. Note the potential parking space. Bottom: The owners want to expand this building, the only one on the ocean side of Highway 1 in Davenport.

to hike or ride the length of the 1,100-mile coast, the right to watch the sunlight move across natural bluffs.

“A Delicate Balance”

THE DAVENPORT COMPLEX was approved by the County and appealed to the Commission by local resident Susan Young and others. The Commission considered the appeal in July. Hardly anyone opposed the project completely; but many residents and their allies contended that it's too big, out of scale, and out of character with the community. Mostly, they wanted to keep the parking lot off the bluff, which is a popular whale-watching spot. Gray whales are easy to see during their migrations, and, if you're lucky, you might even see a blue or hump-

back whale. They asked the Commission to imagine their “small but precious meadow . . . packed with cars glistening in the sun.”

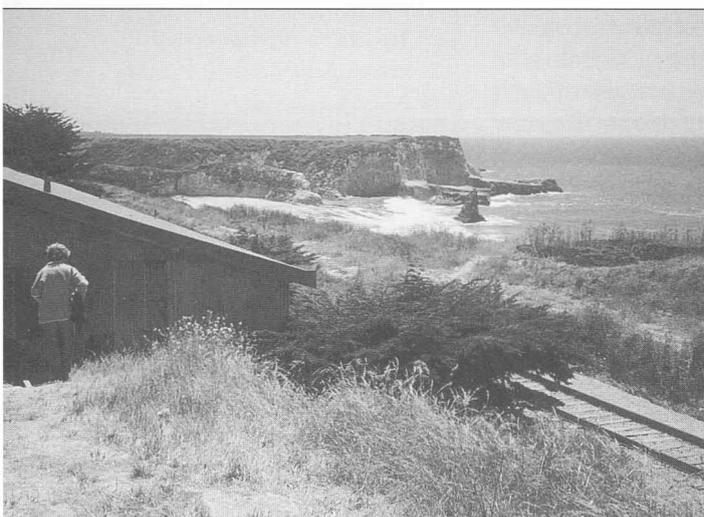
Supporters of the project as proposed praised it as “visionary,” and “elegant,” and said it would benefit whale watchers because benches and one or two trails would be built. They evoked the unknown future: What if the owners

decided to sell to someone with “deep pockets” who could wait until the makeup of the Coastal Commission changed to a more favorable blend?

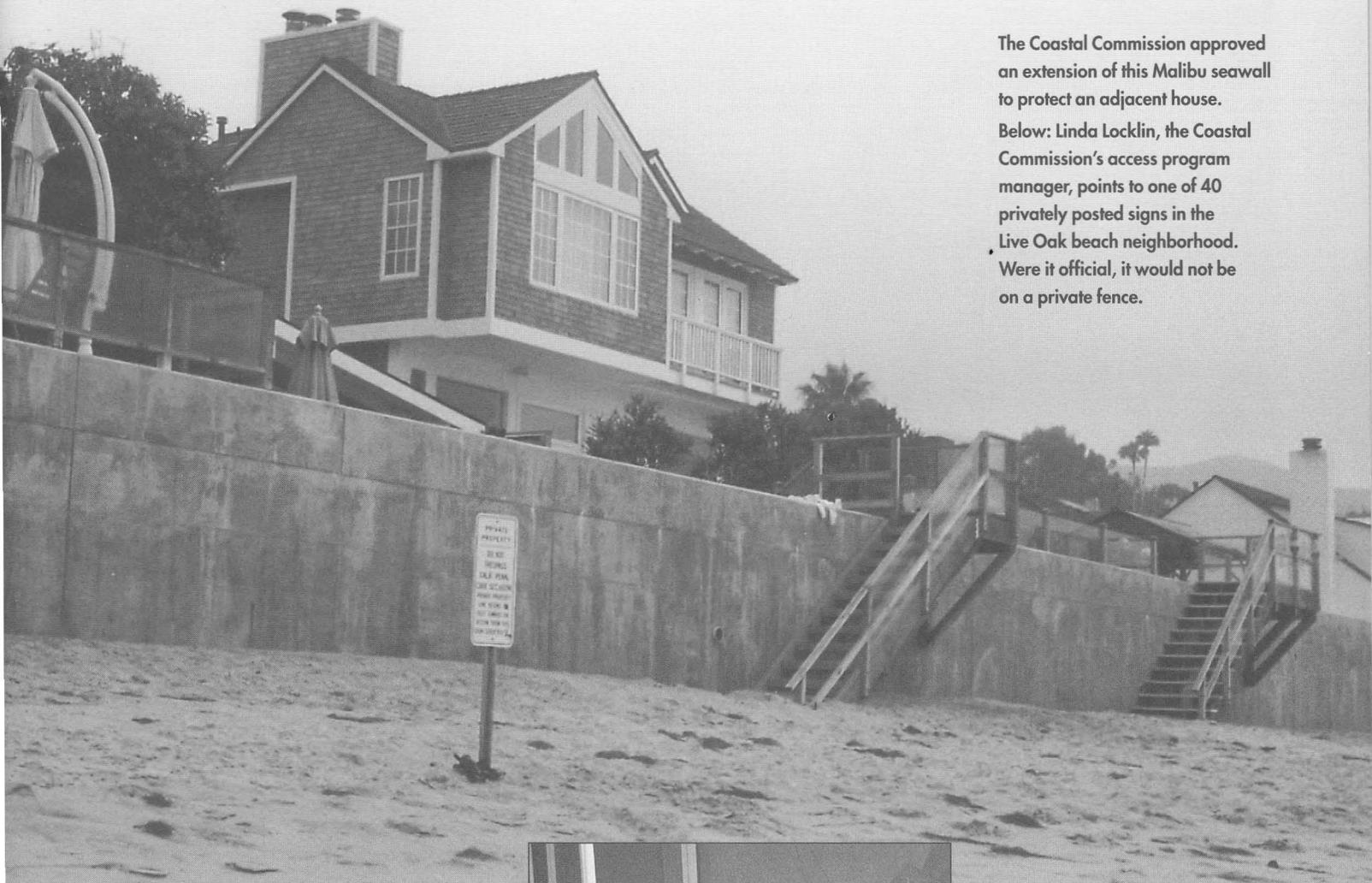
Commission staff recommended that the current “footprint” and “skyprint” of the packing shed be maintained, so that the ground occupied by the new building, and its size, stay the same. It recommended that parking stay at the bottom of the bluff, where people now park, and on the grounds of the building, and that the owners have the option to park some vehicles within the building, on the lower floor.

Executive Director Peter Douglas said that a “delicate balancing act” was required. The Commission instructed the permit applicants to work with Commission staff for a smaller and more appropriate project. In this case, it appeared that the Coastal Act was working.

One way to protect open space is by direct acquisition. Davenport is fortunate because it is surrounded by the 7,500-acre Coast Dairies property, which was recently bought by a group of agencies and non-profit organizations. This purchase does not include the bluffs in front of the town, but it protects more than seven miles of coastline from development pressures. “A rare set of circumstances came together to make this purchase possible,” said Carol Arnold, the Coastal Conservancy's program manager for the Central Coast. “We won't see that very often. We'll continue to see cumulative impacts of development on coastal farmland.”



MELVIN MOSS



The Coastal Commission approved an extension of this Malibu seawall to protect an adjacent house.

Below: Linda Locklin, the Coastal Commission's access program manager, points to one of 40 privately posted signs in the Live Oak beach neighborhood. Were it official, it would not be on a private fence.

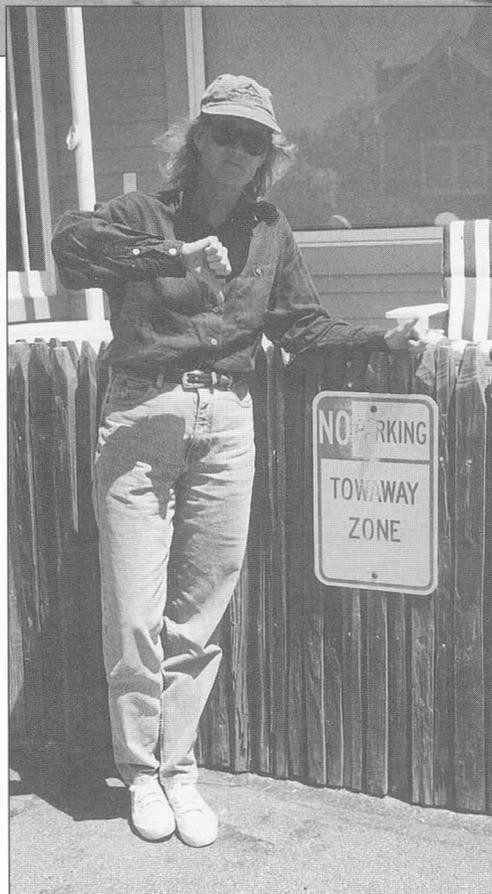
Where's the Beach?

THE COASTAL ACT WAS NOT meant to stop growth. It was adopted to make sure that public and natural resource needs get a share of the benefits, and that they are considered before development forecloses options.

Once public access across private lands is lost, for example, it may be nearly impossible to regain it—especially in urban areas with homes on the beach. The fight it takes does not pay off with a commensurate reward in terms of access. Local government is likely to shy away because the voice of the oceanfront property owner, who feels he's defending his home, is louder and more powerful than that of all the people who merely want to go to the beach.

A vivid case in point is Malibu, where beachfront homeowners have blocked the public from exercising its right to reach the shore. The Malibu situation was a major catalyst for the 1972 voter initiative embodied in the 1976 Coastal Act.

RIGHT: RASA GUSTAITIS; ABOVE: STEPHEN L. JONES



Once public access across private lands is lost, it may be nearly impossible to regain it—especially in urban areas with homes on the beach.



Top: Nine parking spaces are labeled "private" on this "private drive" in Live Oak. Santa Cruz County Public Works Department's senior civil engineer Carl Rom says, "We haven't done a title search, but as far as I can tell, that property is owned by the County."

Right: A private security guard on Broad Beach tells beachgoers to move to the surf side of the sign.

RIGHT: FORD LOWCOCK



On a recent hot Sunday, Ford Lowcock drove with his wife Josie and their little daughter from the San Fernando Valley to Malibu, intending to spend a cool afternoon on Broad Beach, which they had not previously explored. Lowcock, a professional photographer, packed his camera, his wife carried a picnic lunch, and Heather, who is six, took her pail and shovel. They are not likely to go to Broad Beach again, at least not for relaxation.

"I was really upset," Lowcock said.

"There were private property signs at each house. A private security guard was sitting under an umbrella at a table in the private section of the beach, watching up and down the beach with binoculars. The property owners, or their friends, were sitting on knolls overlooking all the people who wanted to be where they were, and they seemed to be helping the guard on cell phones. The guard would get into a three-wheeled motorcycle ATV, ride on the beach, and tell people to leash their dogs. But

property owners' dogs were running wild and free. Two of them hopped on our blanket and ate my daughter's chips, but nobody seemed to care. It was pretty amazing, very split, the haves and the have-nots. Chains run down along the alley we came on, and people sit on blankets between these chains because it's warmer there than by the water, where the other people are. It's pretty amazing."

A week later, Lowcock returned to Broad Beach on a photo assignment. He saw a pair of dolphins leaping in graceful synchrony, while people on the beach clapped, he said. Soon after, something entirely different: A woman who had been playing ball with some children on the private side of the accessway picked up a child's plastic shovel, scooped up some dog poop, and threw it across the chain into the public's narrow space. "It landed not ten feet from our blanket," said Lowcock. "I asked myself, did I really see that? But I did."

Broad Beach is one of the most pleasant beaches in Malibu, being reasonably remote from the highway, and wide enough to accommodate a lot of people. But although it adjoins Zuma County Beach, the most heavily used beach in California, it remains, by-and-large, the private reserve of beachfront residents, who have defeated decades-long efforts by public agencies to enable the public to share more of this beach. The same holds true along much of the Malibu shoreline. A wall of private homes blocks access from the inland side much of the way, while on the beach the public is confined to the water's edge by signs, guards, and other deterrents.

But aren't our beaches public? Don't we all have a common-law right to enjoy them? The answer isn't a simple yes or no, according to Curtis L. Fossum, senior staff counsel for the State Lands Commission, which has jurisdiction over the state's tidelands. In Europe the beaches have been open to everyone since Roman times. In the states of Oregon, Texas, Hawaii, and Washington, and also in Mexico and British Columbia, the public has the right to be on the sand up to the vegetation line. But California's public trust doctrine, as it has been interpreted by the courts thus far, limits public access to below the Mean High Tide Line (MHTL)—a line that does not really exist. It is only a statistical construct, difficult to establish and in constant flux.

No Parking = No Beach Stairway

AS ANYONE WHO HAS DRIVEN TO A POPULAR BEACH on a sunny weekend knows, finding a parking place is essential to actually reaching sand and surf. That's why public agencies that provide funds to local communities for stairways and other coastal access improvements often insist that parking be part of the package. Yet, such requirements often founder when they run up against fierce opposition by beachfront residents. And therein lies a difficult problem. A case in point:

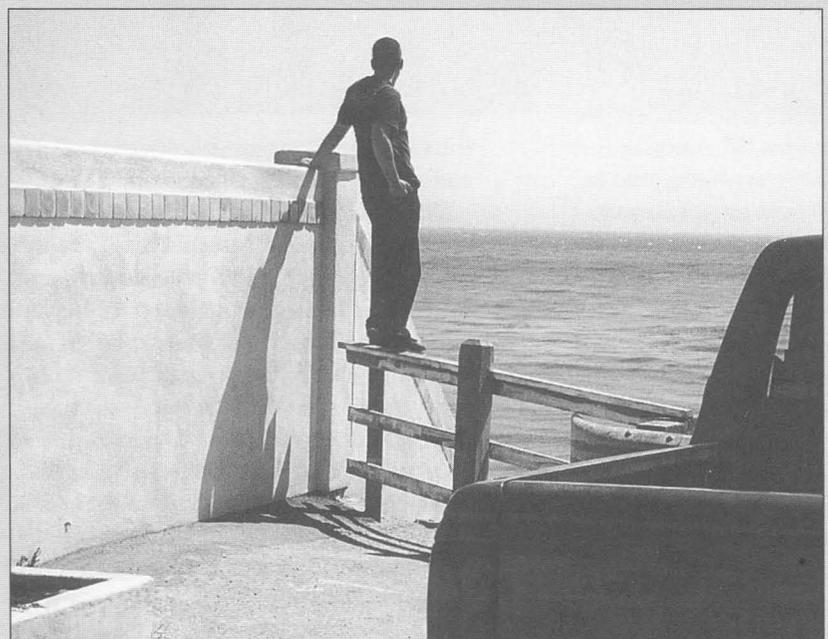
In February 1998, storm-driven waves washed out a stairway that led visitors from the end of 26th Avenue in the Live Oak area of Santa Cruz County to one of the most popular surfing spots in the region. Acting on a County request, the Coastal Conservancy, which had funded the original stairway in 1981, approved a \$40,000 grant last April for its reconstruction. But whether the stairway will be rebuilt remains uncertain. The problem: neighborhood opposition to public parking.

To receive Conservancy funds in 1981, the County was required to refrain from developing or otherwise using the County-owned street right-of-way in any manner that would interfere with or inconvenience the public's use of the new beach accessway. To comply with a separate permit requirement imposed by the Coastal Commission, the County also agreed to establish five on-street parking spaces within 100 feet of the stairway. Unfortunately, the County violated both conditions in 1989 when, in response to residents' complaints about visitor traffic and alleged drug dealing, it eliminated all public parking near the stairway and posted No Parking and No Stopping signs up and down both sides of 26th Avenue.

The Conservancy's mandate requires that it fund only those projects that serve greater than local needs. Yet, with the posting of No Parking and No Stopping signs, the stairway was (until it washed away) serving primarily residents of the immediate neighborhood. Therefore, both the Coastal Commission and the Conservancy notified the County that unless it restores at least five public parking spaces, it stands to lose the \$40,000 in grant funds needed to rebuild the stairway.

In recent weeks, Conservancy and Coastal Commission staff have met with County officials in an attempt to resolve the conflict. As of press time, no agreement had been reached. For now, the public will find neither a parking space nor a stairway to the beach at the end of 26th Avenue. —Tim Duff

Private walls block beach views at 26th Avenue in Live Oak.



RASA GUSTATIS



In the absence of official surveys and definitions, property owners produce their own surveys monthly and post the results on their signs. These may or not be accurate, and they certainly are not official, but they keep people at the damp edge of the beach.

There are some places where the public's towels might stay dry: the Coastal Commission requires property owners who seek permits for seawalls or other protective barriers to offer an access easement on the beach to compensate for beach loss. The state Lands Commission has agreed to accept 124 such easements

Much of Malibu's shoreline was in private ownership long before 1972, but for years people crossed private lands to reach the sand. The use of such trails across private property for five years or more can create a prescriptive right that enables the public to continue to use private property to access the shoreline. That right needs to be established through a legal process, however, or it can be lost to private development.

As the public is kept away from some beaches, other beaches become more crowded, and conflicts between visitors and nearby residents increase. Complaints about noise at night have led to beach curfews. (See *Coast & Ocean*, Summer 1995.) The unintended effect has been more noise on beaches without curfews, and further complaints, leading to more curfews. Each small action, by itself, might not seem like a big deal. Together, they are nibbling away at the public's ability to reach and enjoy the coast.

Along California's urbanized shoreline, there may be no other community so fiercely committed to keeping the beach private as Malibu. But many other urban beachfront communities limit beach access primarily to nearby residents by imposing various kinds of restrictions, barriers, and private encroachments.

Friends, Neighbors, Mostly

LIVE OAK, an unincorporated community between the Cities of Santa Cruz and Capitola, is an example. Because the access issues here are common to many urbanized communities, the Coastal Commission selected it for a case study.

There are fine beaches here—but unless you know your way and are lucky, you might give up trying to get to them on a summer weekend. Plenty of streets lead to these beaches, but few, if any, signs will guide you. Many signs, however, warn against parking without a permit, or prohibit parking altogether—even where state funds have built accessways on condition that public parking be maintained on nearby streets. Private encroachments into public rights-of-way have further reduced parking space. Live Oak has no waterfront pathway or trail. Houses extend over bluffs, and many are reinforced by riprap and other shoreline armament.

In 1981 the Coastal Conservancy funded

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: RASA GUSTAITIS



Top: From 13th Avenue, a Conservancy-funded stairway built on an access easement leads to the beach in Live Oak.

Above: Faye Cupp (with sunglasses), who lives five blocks inland, enjoys the view from the bench at 13th Avenue with friends from Pebble Beach. She comes here daily to watch the sunset, she said. When asked if she'd mind a sign on East Cliff Drive pointing to this public access, she said, with a smile: "I have a chainsaw."

thus far. But these easements are not officially mapped or marked.

The Commission has also required that property owners who build along beaches offer to dedicate public access easements from the nearest road or street to the shore. In Malibu, 15 such easement offers (OTDs) have been made, but to date, 11 of them continue to exist only on paper because nobody has come forward to build the accessways and manage them. "Every attempt to open these OTDs to the public has been opposed by the owners," says Brenda Buxton, the Coastal Conservancy project manager who has most recently struggled with this problem. "Some have mature trees growing in them by now."



ABOVE: RASA GUSTAITIS; RIGHT: MELANIE DENNINGER

seven stairways to the beach at street ends in Live Oak, on condition that the County not reduce parking on those streets. On at least one of these streets, however, the County has put up "No Parking" signs in response to complaints by neighborhood residents. (See p. 9.)

A federally aided effort to alleviate parking problems led to just the opposite results. In 1979, the County launched an experimental program. The Coastal Commission allowed permit parking to be instituted in beach neighborhoods, taking out 600 free on-street spaces on condition that the same number of free spaces be provided inland, and that they be serviced by a free beach shuttle.

The results of the first season, 1981, were inconclusive. Fewer cars were observed on neighborhood streets and fewer people were on the beaches, but the summer was unusually foggy. In 1982 the County found the results of the shuttle service "disappointing," and abolished the service. The shuttle parking lot was abandoned and has since been developed. Only the permit parking program remains. On summer weekends people pay \$5 for a day permit to park on the roadway shoulder, an area that used to be free.

"The main effect of the permit program has been to turn the Live Oak beach neighborhoods into one very large parking lot; the permit is the fee one is charged to use

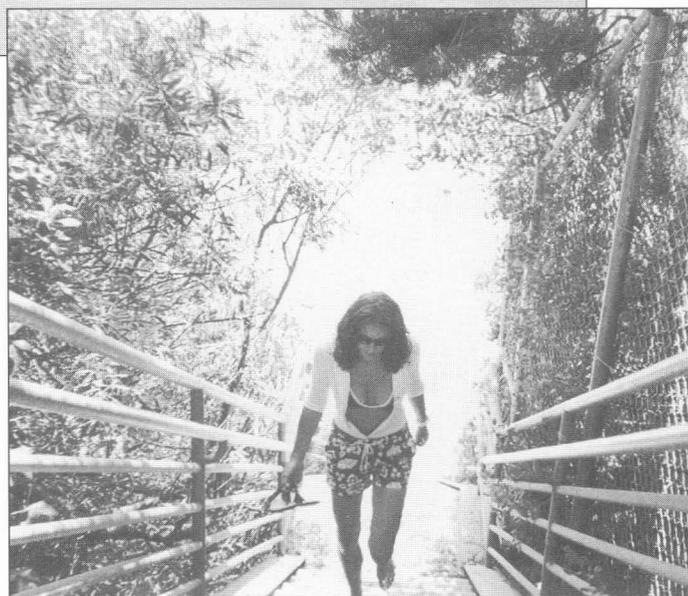
this parking lot," the Coastal Commission study found. "The original intention of using the permit fee as a tool for reducing beach area congestion . . . has been abandoned."

The permit program brings the County \$45,000 a year, plus \$125,000 in citations. Operation costs total \$140,000, according to Live Oak parking coordinator Corky Wallace. The fees cover the costs of implementing the program, said Carl Rom, senior civil engineer at the County Department of Public Works. Excess revenues do not go specifically to Live Oak parking improvements; they go to the County general fund.

The First Regional View

IN 1993, WITH THE HELP of federal funding, the Coastal Commission undertook a multi-year pilot Regional Cumulative Assessment Project (ReCAP) for the Monterey Bay region, encompassing an 83-mile coastline, from the San Mateo-Santa Cruz County line to Point Lobos in

(continued on page 39)

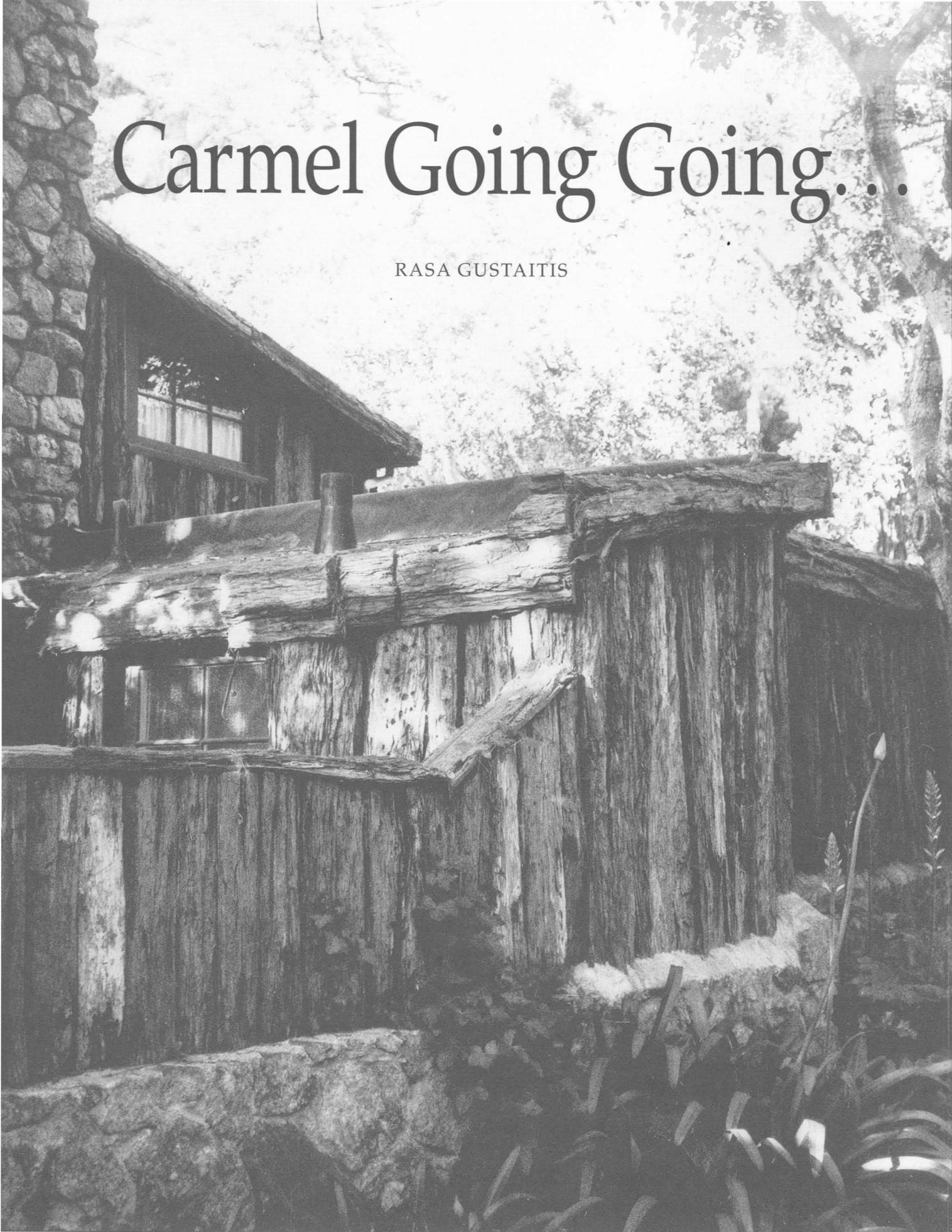


Top: This meadow at Live Oak's Rockview Drive was a street, providing parking along the blufftop until 1986, when the County abandoned it to five property owners who fortified the bluff and installed fences. The Coastal Commission required that a 10-foot-wide access easement be offered along the blufftop. The Surfer Environmental Alliance accepted the easement and opened it.

Bottom: This Malibu stairway was limited to private use for 14 years and is now open to the public.

Carmel Going Going...

RASA GUSTAITIS



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: RASA GUSTAITIS

CARMELO IS LOSING its architectural heritage to the booming economy. Big luxurious houses are replacing more and more of the old cottages in this village in a forest by the sea. Unheard-of prices—up to \$500,000 for the typical 40-by-100-foot lot, even without an ocean view—are prompting homeowners to sell to developers and individual buyers who want the lots, not the cottages.

“What’s being built now are trophy houses—houses that seek to maximize the space available and are designed to be architecturally showy, rather than designed not to be seen, as the typical Carmel houses have been,” said James S. Holliday, an author and former director of the California Historical Society.

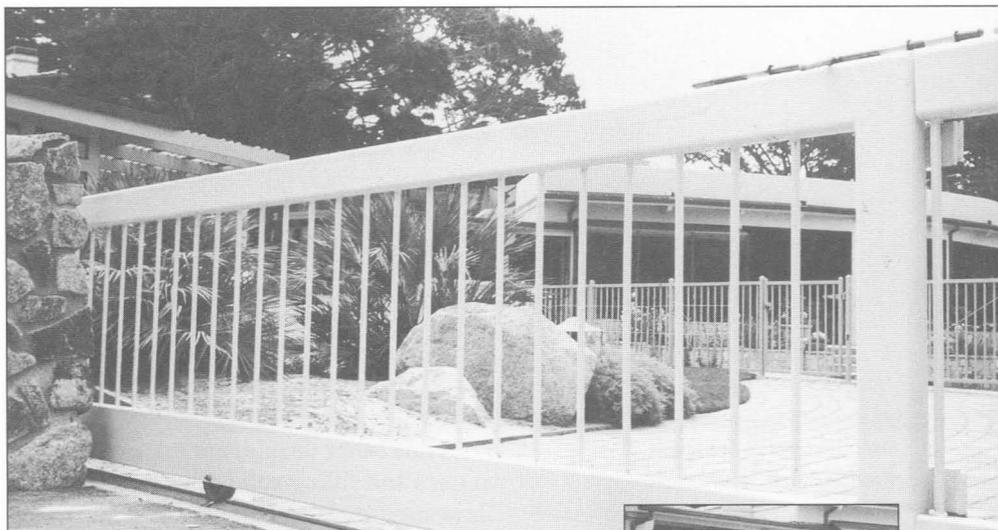
Many of the buyers are newly affluent people from Silicon Valley, said Enid Thompson Sales, founder of the Carmel Preservation Society, who is waging a passionate battle against the demolitions. “They come here because of the charm, then they destroy the charm and build something that’s just like what they came from.”

Although many Carmelites are alarmed, the City Council has been unable thus far to agree on a way to protect its heritage—in contrast to neighboring Pacific Grove, which has put half its single-family homes under a preservation ordinance. (See p. 15.) Property owners in Carmel can ask for a historic listing, but few have done so.

Some residents say the cottages have outlived their time. “I’ve been in some of these single-walled, termite-infested houses,” said Sharon Lawrence, screenwriter and author, who grew up “between L. A. and Carmel.”

“But those cottages were built by exceptional builders as the Arts and Crafts movement was at its height,” counters Sales, who directed the City-sponsored Carmel Architectural and Historical Survey, completed in 1996. “It’s shocking that there is so little recognition” of Carmel’s important place in that movement.

There are about 3,000 houses in this one-square-mile village. The Survey reviewed 2,000 built between 1900 and 1940 and found that 399 were significant or notable. It identified four historic districts as worthy of preservation. The City now uses it to



Old Carmel cottages built of simple local materials stand unobtrusively among native trees. New houses reflect trends seen almost anywhere in wealthy California towns.

guide decisions about demolition permits, said Brian Roseth, the City’s principal planner. No program has been established so far to preserve historic districts or houses identified by the Survey.

In the past 20 years, about 240 houses have been demolished. Roseth has no precise figures, but estimates the annual numbers as 12 to 18. Demolition permit applications have increased in recent years, and again this year. Roseth does not recall any denials.

The California Coastal Act requires that the special character of communities be protected, but it gives no further guidance, so the Coastal Commission relies on local communities to define their “special character.”

Carmel has been unique from its beginning. Frank Devenport, who established the village in 1902 with Frank Powers, appreciated nature and valued poetry above business and profit. He “was perhaps the first in the West to create a community that from its



PHOTOS THIS PAGE FROM THE PAT HATHAWAY COLLECTION

Top: This group of Carmel Bohemians, photographed at Point Lobos, c. 1910, includes George Sterling, Fred Bechdolt, Jane Cohen, and Jimmy Hopper.

Above: The sleeping loft of the Lane and Smiley home, photographed by Lewis S. Slevin, c. 1912.

inception respected and enhanced the natural setting," Harold and Ann Gilliam wrote in their book *Creating Carmel: the Enduring Vision*. While other developers were cutting down trees and filling valleys, he routed streets around trees and along the natural contours of the land. He encouraged tree planting on both public and private property, so that the village grew under a canopy of native oak, cypress, and pine.

Devenport's first sales brochure, in 1903, was addressed "to the School Teachers of California and other Brain Workers at Indoor Employment." He sent an emissary to San Francisco to seek out poets, writers, and painters. Carmel became the home of a Bohemian crowd that included, at various times, poets Robinson Jeffers and George Sterling, writers Mary Austin, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Sinclair Lewis, and the photographer Arnold Genthe, whose images of early Chinatown and the San Francisco earthquake are now classics. Professors came from Stanford University and the University of California, attracted by the place and the creative community.

The early homes are small batten and board or stone cottages, with fences of rough, unpainted wood and wrought iron. The Arts and Crafts movement was a reac-

tion to the Industrial Revolution. It encouraged simple living in nature, crafts, and the use of natural materials.

Carmel has carefully maintained its village-like characteristics, states the *Final Report of the Historical Resources Survey*, published by the Carmel Preservation Foundation in 1996. "For example, there are no house numbers, residential sidewalks, parking meters, street lights, or traffic signals. Houses are small and blend into the surroundings. Gardens are informal, making use of natural vegetation. Trees are greatly revered and given precedence over building expansion and the movement of traffic."

This was primarily a second-home village from its beginning, but residents used to stay for weeks or months at a time, joining in community events. In 1910 the outdoor Forest Theater was built, and nearly half the population took part in plays, many of them locally written.

MOST OF TODAY'S NEWCOMERS "don't socialize, because they are here just weekends, or maybe a weekend a month," said City Councilmember Barbara Livingston. "They don't have a clue about the community." About 60 percent of the houses have absentee owners, and many stand empty most of the time. "For blocks and blocks there may be only one house with lights on at night. It's sad for the older people, being surrounded by darkness," she said.

"The children and grandchildren of the original settlers can't afford to live here anymore, unless they have property," said Sharon Lawrence. Carmel now may have to choose whether it wants to become a "dear little museum or a vibrant little place."

What troubles some Carmelites most is the loss of their treasured trees. Trees don't fare well when cottages are replaced by larger buildings. Some are cut down, others die because their roots are cut or compacted. The City requires that new trees be planted, but these are often neglected. Gradually, Carmel's urban forest is turning into a "ringed forest, with bigger native trees on public property, and smaller ornamental trees on private property," City Forester Gary Kelly said. Development is not the only threat. About 90 percent of some 4,000 Monterey pines on public land are afflicted by pitch canker.

From the perspective of architectural historian Robert Judson Clark, "the special character of Carmel can be summed up in two words—nature and understatement." In the



RASA GUSTAITIS

In Carmel, old houses are typically sheltered by trees.

Pacific Grove's Historic Preservation Program Seems to Be Working

PACIFIC GROVE HAS NOT SEEN the intense pressures for demolition of old houses that Carmel is now experiencing. In 1997, this neighbor city adopted an ordinance that put more than 25 percent of over 4,000 single-family residences on a historic preservation list. More may be included later, and some may be dropped if a case can be made to remove them.

"We have a Historic Resources Committee (HRC) that oversees the process," said Dennis Boehlje, community development director for the City of Pacific Grove. "Sometimes even a shack might be perceived as a historic structure if it's found to be part of the community fabric."

An owner who wants to demolish a listed structure, remodel more than 25 percent, or build an addition, is required to apply for a historic demolition permit. In the last year, Boehlje said, there was one full demolition and "probably two or three partials, including City Hall. We're in the process of modifying over 25 percent of City Hall."

After the HRC reviews an application, the Planning Commission can allow variances. The purpose of these variances is to

allow additions and remodeling while preserving historic structures. Some variances may be allowed on listed structures that would not pass on new buildings, so owners could benefit from being listed. Design of additions and remodeling must be approved by the Architecture Review Board.

"Some people argue that the ordinance is not strict enough because it may allow a 600-square-foot building to have a 1,200-square-foot addition and be engulfed by it," said Boehlje. In light of that, is the ordinance succeeding? "I think it has gone a long way toward preserving the community's historic character," Boehlje said. "The perception of our ordinance being strict may have discouraged applications for demolition."

Ultimately, however, preservation is a matter of politics. "The City Council recently reversed a decision by the Historic Resources Committee to refuse a demolition of a little house," said Boehlje. "People who were buying it wanted to replace it with a modern structure facing the ocean. We haven't seen the design yet."

1950s, when he was an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley, "one could really feel how people here lived in the first generation of founders in a vibrant place so close to the edge of the world."

Returning to California after 30 years of teaching at Princeton University, Clark was "horrified and scared." His response has been to offer lectures, in Carmel, on the Arts and Crafts movement and Carmel's important place in it. But with so many cottages being destroyed, is it not, perhaps, already too late?

"Almost, but not yet," said Clark. "There's a need for education of people who are there and people coming in so they won't so readily relinquish what they have."

"It's important that the city understand the changes and decide what it wants," said Roseth, "rather than just have things happen to it."

TOWARDS THAT END, the City has launched the Design Traditions Project, a community-wide initiative "to look at what has made Carmel Carmel, and once we've done that, how to keep Carmel Carmel," said E. Pope Coleman, who heads the effort. "What has emerged is a remarkable consensus. More important than architecture are the narrow, tree-lined streets; and, within the urban forest, of maintaining a variety of houses designed to fit their specific sites." The Project expects to have a report and action plan for the community to discuss this autumn.

Meanwhile, preservationists are fighting demolitions house-by-house. In May 1999,

Monterey County Superior Court Judge Robert O'Farrell upheld a City decision to allow demolition of a 1924 Craftsman-style house purchased by Ron and Alexis Donati. Enid Sales and Friends of Carmel Cultural Heritage had sued the City, charging that it had engaged in "an unlawful pattern" in allowing demolition of historic homes without requiring Environmental Impact Reports, a trend that would have a "cumulative impact" on Carmel's environment. They lost, but took heart in the judge's comment that the demolition of older homes "is an issue the City would be wise to evaluate."

Because Carmel has not completed a Local Coastal Plan, the Donatis needed a permit from the Coastal Commission. In July the Commission approved the Donatis' plan, but required a 90-day waiting period to provide an opportunity for possibly relocating the old house. The Donatis, who live in Los Gatos, have owned another house in Carmel for 10 years. Ron Donati said he recently sold an electronics company and intends to retire in the home that will be built. Before closing escrow on this property in June 1997, he said, he went to the City Planning and Building Department to make sure that the house wasn't historic. His opponents, he said, are a neighbor with a complaint about his view, and "a pretty small, vocal group that wants nothing to change."

"People who go to Carmel go for the beach, golf courses, and the weather," Donati said. "Change happens all the time in this world. We will win, we will tear the house down, and we will build what we want." ■

This cabin, built in the 1850s, was Frank Powers's studio. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and still stands in Carmel. Photo by Edgar A. Cohen, 1905.



FROM THE PAT HATHAWAY COLLECTION

A Jewel That Lights the Night at Point Cabrillo

LISA WEG

A GOLDEN BEAM OF LIGHT sweeps across the headland, growing brighter, brighter, flash! Ten seconds, another flash. A steady pattern through the night. Rainbows dance on the lantern room glass. The historic Fresnel lens shines again at the Point Cabrillo Lighthouse.

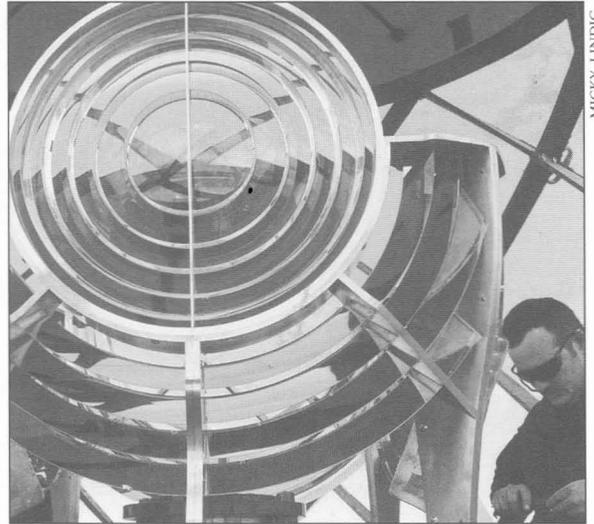
The Lighthouse stands atop a windy bluff at one of the few intact and publicly accessible light stations on the Pacific coast. Little changed by the passing of a century, the Point Cabrillo Light Station looks much as it did when lightkeepers and their families lived in the Craftsman-style houses and raised cattle and potatoes in the surrounding meadows. Hawks and songbirds still nest in the meadows, and wildflowers bloom on the headlands. And today the jewel that lit the night and kept ships safe in a seafaring world glows again.

Ever since the Coastal Conservancy acquired the Point Cabrillo Light Station in 1992, thus completing the 300-acre Point Cabrillo Preserve, people dreamed that the historic lens might one day shine again. Now that dream has been fulfilled, thanks to a unique collaboration between the U.S. Coast Guard's

11th District, the Conservancy, and the staff and volunteers of the North Coast Interpretive Association (NCIA).

The Point Cabrillo Light was built on this rocky promontory after the 1906 earthquake and fire that destroyed San Francisco. The demand for building materials was at a peak, and the light-

house served the doghole schooners and steam ships that plied the lumber trade along the Redwood Coast. The original Third-Order Fresnel lens by Chance Brothers is one of only three remaining British-made lenses in the United States. It was lit for the first time on June 10, 1909, with kerosene,



MICKY LINDIG



DEWEY SCHATZENBURG

Top: Reassembling the Fresnel lens
Bottom: Point Cabrillo Light Station

and electrified in 1935. The Coast Guard replaced the Fresnel with an automated beacon in 1972. The original lens remained in the lantern room, covered and unused.

It took three years of planning and an entire year of construction to restore and relight the historic lens. Success is due to a brilliant mix of individual talents and a dogged persistence to push the project through hoops and over hurdles. More than 1,000 hours of volunteer labor and generous donations of equipment, money, and other support from the community helped to stretch public funds.

The first challenge was to disassemble the lens in such a way that it could later be reassembled in working order. Every mechanical component of the pedestal and every screw was mapped and marked. Layers of paint were chipped away from the joints with dental picks, and the screws were soaked with penetrating oil. After weeks of planning and preparation, the lens came apart in a single day, like a giant three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle.

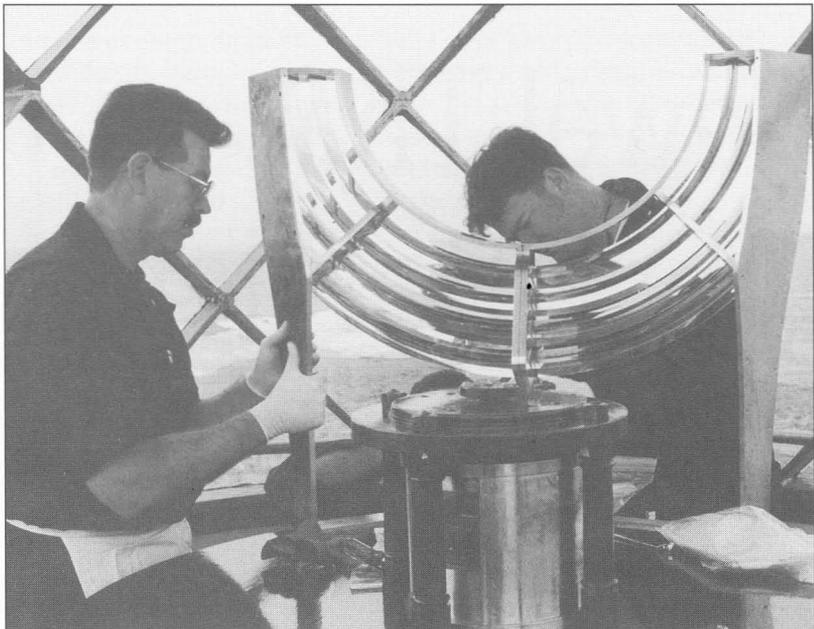
Once the lens was safely removed, the NCI hired an independent contractor who had completed three other lighthouse restorations for the Coast Guard

to lift the lantern room from the tower and rebuild it. Every piece was disassembled, sandblasted, and repaired. New glass was ordered and every pane had to be ground along the edges to fit the curved, diamond-shaped frames. The door to the catwalk, which may never have worked properly, was dissected and rebuilt and a new locking mechanism was fabricated from the original specifications. It now swings open without a whisper.

The Fresnel Lens, Then and Now

DEVELOPED IN THE 1820s by Augustin Fresnel, a French engineer, the Fresnel lens represented a major advance in optical technology and maritime safety. The lens resembles a giant glass beehive within a brass frame. Each face is composed of concentric prisms around a central bull's-eye. The prisms refract and thereby concentrate the light into parallel rays that can be seen many miles out to sea. The individual characteristic of each lighthouse optic is the interval between the flashes of light produced as the bull's-eyes rotate around a central light source (originally an oil lamp). The lenses were tended by the "wickies," the lighthouse keepers, who took pride in keeping the lamp trimmed for soot-free operation and shining the brass to a golden glow. While many lighthouse Fresnels are preserved as museum artifacts, few remain in operation today.

Although the Fresnel lens is no longer standard equipment for lighthouses, Augustin Fresnel's technology has many contemporary applications. Automobile headlamps, the lights on the top of a police car, and lamps in a movie projector use Fresnel lenses.



MICKY LINDIG

Top: Members of the Coast Guard's Humboldt Bay Aid to Navigation team helped to reassemble the lens.

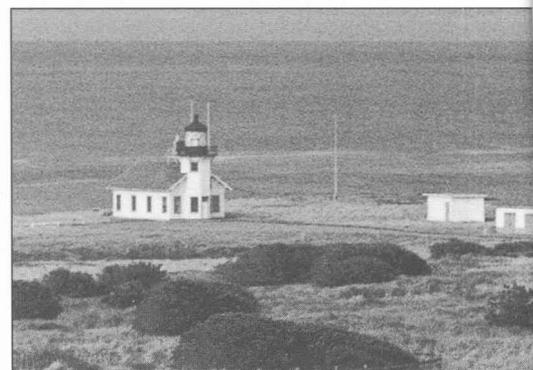
Bottom: Removing the lantern from the lighthouse

Work on the lens progressed simultaneously with the restoration of the lantern room. Volunteers in respirators and neoprene suits labored with chemical stripping agents. Cast bronze and golden brass fixtures emerged from layer on layer of paint and were arranged around the lighthouse like a dragon's hoard.

On the morning of April 1, 1999, with due fanfare and a visit from Senator Wes Chesbro, the fully restored lantern room was returned to the tower. As it hung suspended from the crane, one of the team yelled: "The door's in the wrong place!" A night of apprehension was evident in the panic in his voice. Slowly and without fuss, the crane operator rotated



DAVID RUSSELL



the dangling cupola and then settled it gently, perfectly, in place.

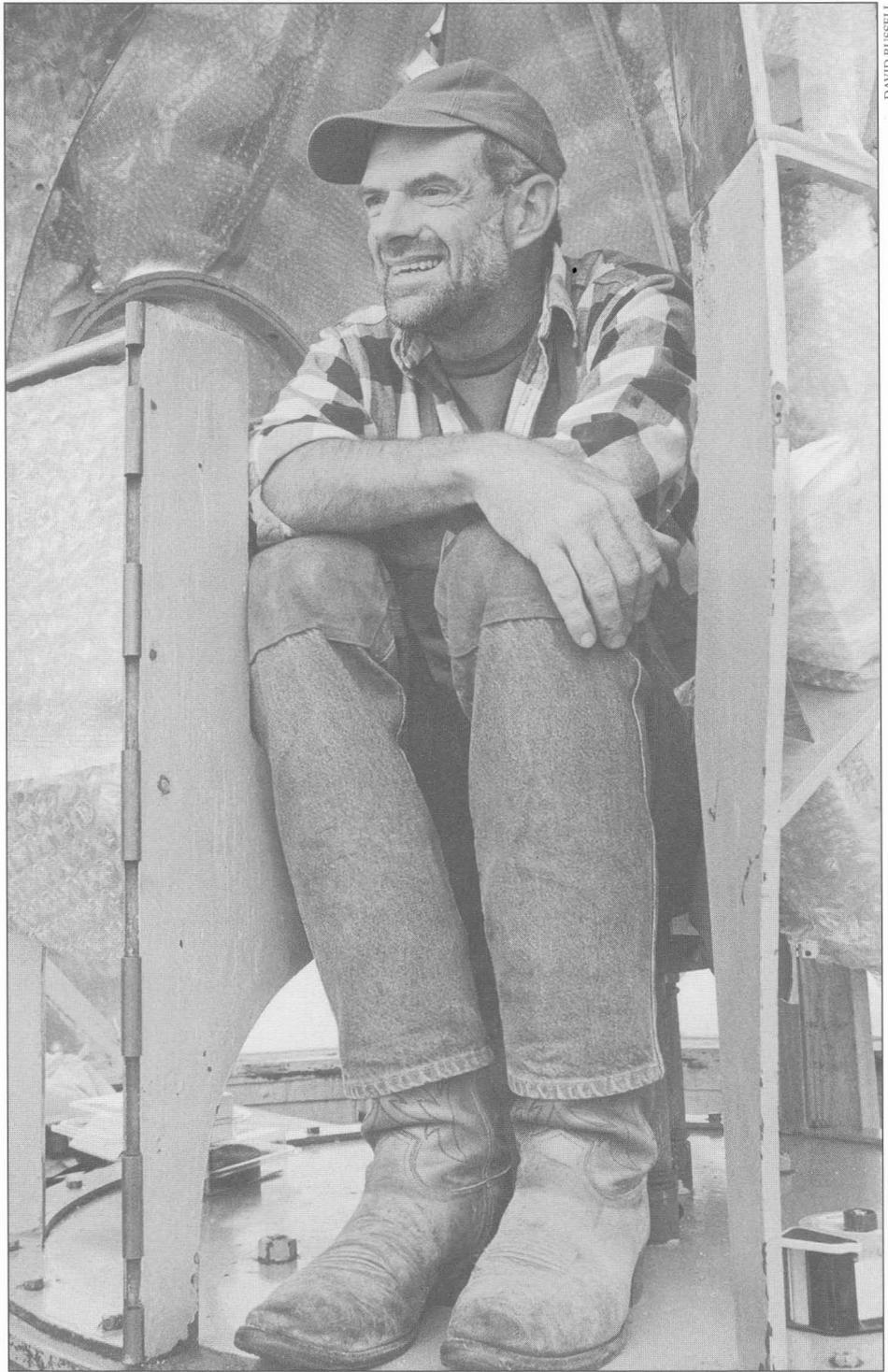
Three weeks later the Coast Guard brought in two Fresnel specialists, who reassembled the restored lens with NCIA staff. There was a false start, a bent drive shaft, and a new electrical system to invent, but by May the lens was operational, and the automated beacon was permanently removed from the building.

The restoration of the lantern room was funded through a federal TEA (Transportation Enhancement Activities) grant, with a matching grant from the Conservancy. The Coast Guard contributed equipment and expertise to the lens restoration. Leadership, labor, and supplies were paid for out of individual donations to the NCIA. The Point Cabrillo lens restoration was truly a labor of loving hands and hearts. All involved worked together to keep the wheels of bureaucracy turning with faith, elbow grease, and meticulous craftsmanship.

The Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Team from Humboldt Bay will continue to visit quarterly to maintain the light, and additional support will be provided by NCIA staff and volunteers through the Coast Guard Auxiliary. ■

Lisa Weg is the site manager of the Point Cabrillo Light Station and Preserve. The Preserve is two miles north of the town of Mendocino off Point Cabrillo Drive. The Light Station is a half-mile walk from the parking area. For further information contact the Preserve office at (707) 937-0816.

Right: Restoration and maintenance supervisor Kevin Fletcher (sitting inside the lens) was the technical mastermind, with an elegant design solution for every riddle.



DAVID RUSSELL



LISA WEG



A Home Away From Homelessness

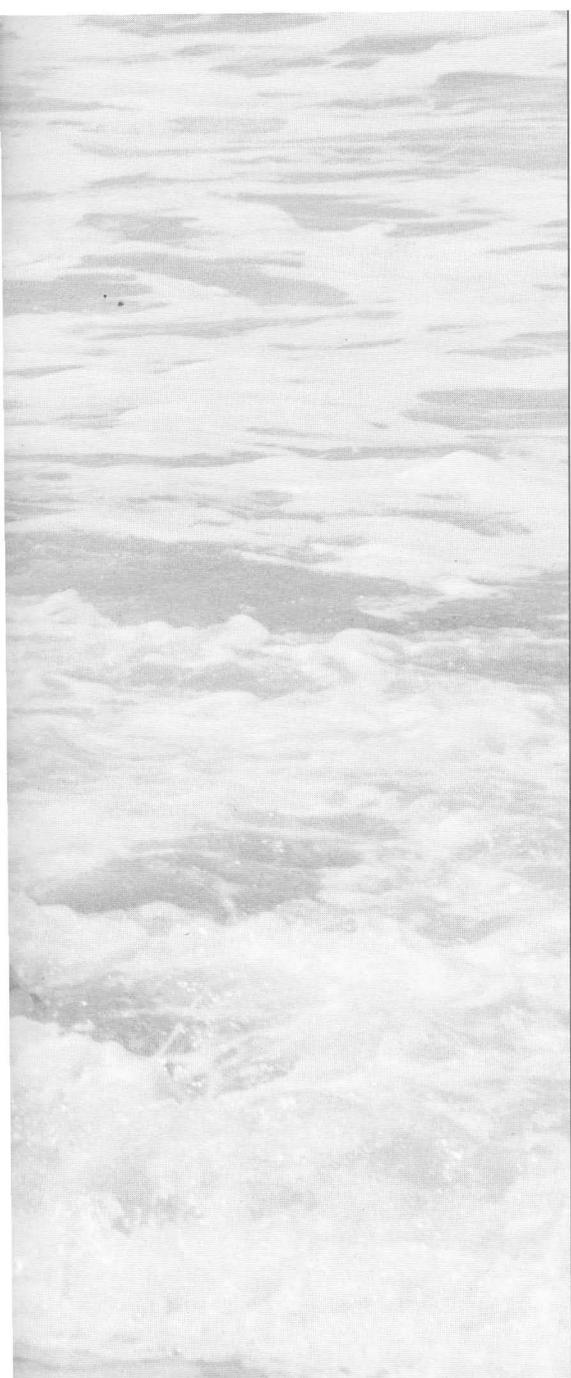
BILL O'BRIEN

Photographs by Jay Jones

THE WHITE VAN SNAKES ALONG the winding roads of the Marin Headlands, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. The moment it stops at the white cottage above Rodeo Lagoon the doors fly open and half a dozen exuberant children explode into the sunshine. "Bikes! We want to ride bikes!" some shout, while a pint-sized Barry Bonds finds a baseball glove on the lawn and begins searching for a bat and ball. They run hither and yon for a few minutes, until an adult asks, "How about some snacks?" then they dash up the steps and inside for chocolate cookies and lemonade.

Since 1994 this cottage, known as the Beach House, has been a place where homeless children come from shelters in San Francisco to be wild, safe, and free, cared for, and indulged, if only for a few hours. It is part of A Home Away From Homelessness, a unique program founded and led by Jeanie Kortum-Stermer, a writer, children's advocate, and former preschool teacher.

On the wall by the front door a ceramic plaque reads: "Welcome to our home away from home." Inside, sunlight streaming in through the windows reflects off pastel yellow walls. Stuffed animals perch on soft



chairs and couches; other playthings and books are within a child's reach on shelves and in baskets. It feels like a cozy home, and that's what it has been for many homeless children since 1994.

Several years ago, Jeanie Kortum-Stermer was working as a volunteer at one of San Francisco's downtown shelters. She started to take some of the children on outings to her family's dairy ranch in Petaluma. Their delight inspired her. Was there a way to give a similar experience to more homeless children? She knew that there were empty buildings at Fort Cronkite and thought that perhaps one might be put to the use she

envisioned. She talked with Rep. John Burton, then with Brian O'Neill, superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), who offered a cottage near the beach. It once had been the base commander's house but at the time was standing empty. Although it needed work, Kortum-Stermer was sure she could get it in shape with the help of volunteers and donated materials.



RASA GUSTAITIS

Jeanie Kortum-Stermer

"I thought it would take a couple of weeks," she recalls with a laugh. "It turned into six months." At one point, the whole enterprise was close to foundering. But then the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a story; a local contractor read it, "pulled in all of his buddies," and got it finished.

In 1994, Kortum-Stermer formalized Home Away as a nonprofit organization and became its executive director. Since then about 100 children aged five to 10 have come here each month from 13 San Francisco shelters. They are picked up on a rotating basis six days a week. Some have come numerous times. The Beach House was there for them as their families moved from street to shelter to shelter. (Shelter rules limit family stays from overnight to at most a year.)

GGNRA, pleased at what was happening, accepted the group as a Parks Partner, joining the Marine Mammal Center, the Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Bay Area Discovery Museum, all of which use former military buildings in the Headlands. Today Home Away has five full-time and three part-time employees, a corps of eighty vo

unteers, and occupies four buildings in the GGNRA.

In the Headlands, a second building has been renovated to house a mentor program, a respite program for parents and preschoolers, larger group activities such as holiday celebrations, and for the occasional overnight stay. At the Club House (also the organization's headquarters) in San Francisco's Fort Mason, homeless families can drop in for emergency help, including food and clothing. On June 15, another Fort Mason building, the School House, was opened as a learning center. Here after-school tutoring and a variety of enrichment activities are available to a group of 15 homeless children age 10-15, in partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District. This four-day-a-week program includes Beautiful Sites field trips, which take children to various natural places.

Kortum-Stermer has a unique understanding of the world these children live in. In 1989 she and her husband, Dugald Stermer, adopted an eight-year-old girl who had lived for several years on the streets with her mother, a heroin addict. Her close

An Irresistible Situation

ON A GRAY DAY GETTING GRAYER, fog and wind coming off the Pacific, photographer Jay Jones and I arrived at the Club House in Fort Mason and were immediately enveloped in warmth and color. Adults and children were bustling around, some preparing for the day's trip to the Beach House, all wearing smiles like those beaming from the murals, photomontages, collages, and cutouts that surrounded us.

Sarah Kennedy, who was in charge of the day's excursion, introduced us to everyone, then, while Jay took pictures, led me off to see the newest Home Away building, a two-story duplex

being readied as a center for middle school-age children. Bright murals—some by children, many by professional artists—were nearing completion in the art studio, computer room, game room, locker room, stairways, and halls. Photographs of children and staff had been taped here and there to be meticulously copied onto the murals.

After this tour, we drove across town to collect the day's children from a shelter. Sarah asked us to stay outside, and cautioned us that two of the children were first-timers and had shown some problem behavior. When all five children were aboard the van, she introduced us. The smallest boy, four or five, clutching a Transformer, had several cuts and scrapes on his sullen face.

Jay and I drove separately to the Marin Headlands, arriving at the Beach House to find sunshine and volunteer Charles Catalano, who had just gotten there. As we chatted and Jay snapped pictures, the van pulled up and instantly there were children everywhere, digging through toys, searching among the multitude of opportunities for fun to find just the right one for the moment. They quickly paired off with volunteers to set up furniture in the big dollhouse, turn out bright wet paintings, or ride the swings. The snacks on the table inside were ignored—there was too much to do. That smallest boy stomped through the cottage whacking stuffed animals and scattering toys from a bucket.

After a bit, Sarah, Charles, and Jay took the bigger kids for a bike ride while I stayed behind with volunteers Cody Russell and Lauryn McCreddie and the smaller children. Lauryn, who was washing dishes, asked me to bake a cake! Soon I'd filled two paper pans with chocolate cake-mix batter loaded with chocolate chips. My reward was immediate—as soon as the cakes were in the oven, the tough little boy appeared and handed me a paint-

ing. "This is for you." He'd been quietly working away with Cody while I baked.

I went outside for a few minutes to enjoy the weather and untangle a kite string. The bike riders returned after a stop at the beach, and within minutes someone was calling, "Let's climb the mountain!" This idea eventually infected everyone, so we set off across the road and headed up the gentle slope—though not without some delays. Two brothers clearly did not want to be engaged in the same activity at once, and it took separate efforts to convince them. Only the smallest boy needed help up one

steeper slope covered with rust-colored gravel (mostly because his hands were full of toys and jellybeans). Cody wound up carrying him till we got back down.

The first climbers to reach the peak danced in the wind. "You have to do a dance when you get to the top," said Cody. He wasn't kidding, we learned as we reached the peak. The wind was strong enough to keep us moving and make us want to soar with the gulls and pelicans. The only little girl in the group wanted to explore the far side of the hill, so we followed her down a ways, with warnings to watch

for poison oak. On the way back up she wanted help, so I became Uncle Hal and toted her over the crest on my back, her hands clasped against my Adam's apple. She didn't even squeak when I slipped on the steep gravel and went down on one knee, and she didn't want down until we reached the swings. She did want a push.

The volunteers were setting out pizza and cake when Jay and I had to leave. I found the smallest boy climbing up on a chair to retrieve toys from a shelf in the back room. I said, "Good-bye, it was nice to meet you." He didn't seem to understand how we could leave early, but a minute later he came out and told me, "Nice to meet you."

Jay and I were grinning as we thanked Sarah. Jay asked how he could become a volunteer. Sarah was delighted, saying they need more men, especially men of color, and that she hoped we'd come again. We had become part of the family.

—Hal Hughes

For information or to volunteer, contact A Home Away From Homelessness, Fort Mason, Building 9, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 561-5533.





Four Generations of Fighting Kortums

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP is a family tradition. Jeanie Kortum-Stermer's great-grandfather Louis Kortum was the first winemaker in Calistoga and in 1886 helped to incorporate the town. In the 1950s, her grandfather Max Kortum persuaded Caltrans to reroute Highway 101—Caltrans had planned to bulldoze a hundred or so chicken ranches. At that time, Petaluma boasted it was "The World's Egg Basket." A family with five to 10 acres could send the children to college on the income from eggs. Max Kortum led his fellow chicken farmers to Sacramento, and the freeway route was shifted east, into the hills. As a result, motorists today enjoy expansive views of the valley as they travel between Petaluma and Cotati.

Jeanie's mother, Jean Kortum, was a major force in the Battle of Bodega Head, which blazed the trail for the 1972 Coastal Initiative. Her father, the late Karl Kortum, founded the National Maritime Museum in San Francisco. Her uncle, Bill Kortum, is a

veterinarian in Petaluma and a longtime leader in conservation battles. When asked to write down his occupation, he has been known to list it as coastal advocate. He has been fighting for more than 30 years to keep the coast "a commons for all the people" and to keep dairy ranching in Sonoma County alive and well. "The dairy farmers are the great keepers of open space," he says. "Unless we have a strong dairy industry, we will lose the open space."

Now Jeanie has combined her love for children with love of nature and crafted her own unique coastal access program. Her uncle says she started to drive up from the city with carloads of children on weekends, and there would be these "wide-eyed kids lying in the grass, flying kites, blowing bubbles" on the family ranch.

"I hardly see my family now, I'm working all the time," Jeanie says. "They must wonder, 'Where does this thing with the children come from?'"

—RG



The historic ships at the National Maritime Museum can be seen from Home Away's Fort Mason Club House.

friendship with the mother gave her insight into the personal struggles of the homeless, and continued until the mother died. Her adopted daughter is now 16 and thriving. "But she had a mean, mean childhood," says Kortum-Stermer.

The philosophy underlying Home Away's programs "is not that these people are broken and we are going to fix them," she emphasizes. "They come in and they're treated like real people."

In a 1997 letter to friends and supporters she wrote, "Though it seems on the surface like 'just fun,' what we offer—memories, community, ritual—goes deep inside the hearts of our clients. There is a hunger in both the adults and children for the beauty, joy, trust and decency that we provide through our different programs, a mandate different from what other agencies provide for the homeless."

THIS IS ONE GIRL'S FIRST VISIT to the Beach House. She squeals at the sight of a spiderweb on the porch. As she hikes up the hill, the loud, cold wind seems to bother her more than it does the



By nightfall the children were back at this shelter.

others. When she reaches the top, she begins to cry and hurries back down, clutching the hand of an adult volunteer.

Many homeless children rarely get out of their immediate neighborhoods, and some don't even have words to describe the ocean, volunteer coordinator Sarah Kennedy said. She has had to explain what waves are, and a few children were surprised to learn that the water is salty. One girl was afraid to touch a tree: "She told me it was covered with bacteria." But when this girl returned to the shelter where she and her family were sleeping at the time, she stepped casually over the foot of a man in police handcuffs who was lying in the doorway.

One of the boys on today's trip, a bit taller than the rest and, at nine, the oldest, stays apart from the others, quietly throwing rocks off the bluff. Earlier in the day, at the shelter, he'd had to watch as authorities took his best friend away from his parents. Shelter life is full of noise—arguments, sirens, and other discord. Dozens of bunk beds are crammed into a single room, and children have no quiet place to retreat to. That's why adults at the Beach House will often simply let a child hang out on the lawn, draw a picture, or spend time quietly alone.

Rodeo Beach is a mere half-hour's ride away from the grim streets where the children live, but it can open up a larger world. "Nature doesn't have to be something foreign," says Jeanie Kortum-Stermer. "Dark skies at night don't have to be menacing." ■

Bill O'Brien is a freelance writer based in Oakland.





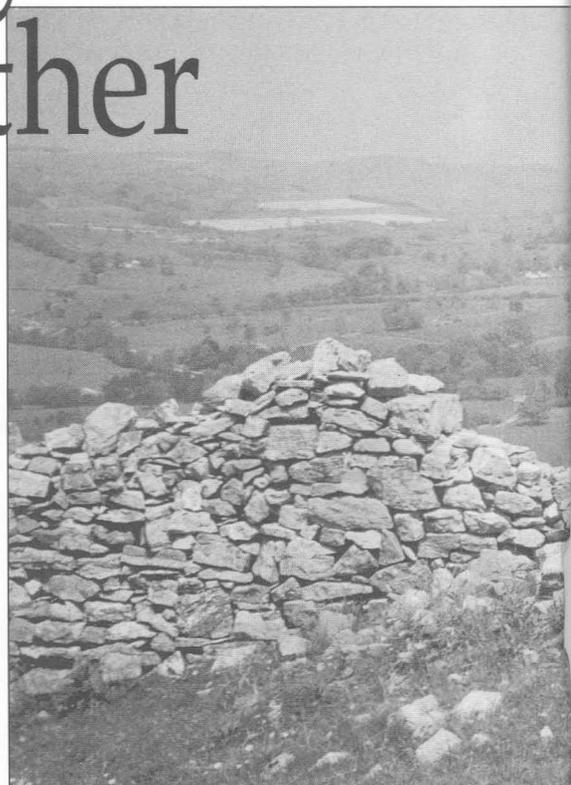
USHA MOSS

Bringing the City & Country Together

ELLEN RILLA

KNOWN AS "AGRITURISMO" in Italy, "farm tourism" in England, and "sleeping in the straw" in Switzerland, agricultural tourism is well established in Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. In this country it's not yet a familiar concept, but it's starting to catch on, especially in coastal California and New England. Some hard-pressed family farmers are discovering that they can supplement their income by offering overnight accommodations, farm visits, nature walks, and other activities to the public.

There's a ready market for such activities, which can help to bridge the gap between



ELLEN RILLA

farm and city dwellers, to the benefit of both. Many urban residents long to experience more of the countryside than they see from the highways, yet few have relatives or friends who are farmers. They also want to know more about locally grown food, particularly organic food.

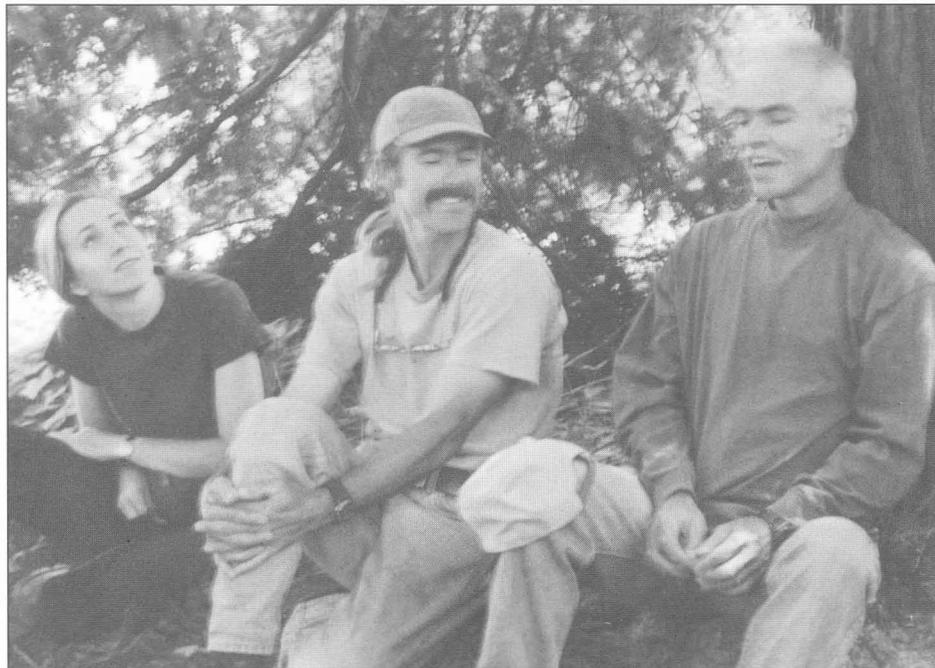
The term agritourism (farm tourism on the East Coast) refers to any farm-based business offered "for the enjoyment and education of the public, to promote the products for the farm, and thereby generate additional farm income," according to Desmond Jolly, director of the Small Farm Center, University of California, Davis. It encompasses overnight farm stays, "u-pick" operations, roadside stands, pumpkin festivals, and varied other activities, such as birdwatching hikes across farmland, with lunch on a haywagon, overlooking a flock of grazing sheep. Income is these farmers' first objective, but not the only one. "Farmers realize

that to survive, they need to educate the public," says Constance Washburn, education director of the Marin Agricultural Land Trust.

As a University of California Cooperative Extension farm advisor, I help family farmers and ranchers find avenues to sustain themselves. In 1998, while on a sabbatical leave, I took a three-month trip to look at farm

tourism operations in England, Vermont, New York, and Connecticut. I visited and interviewed 100 farm entrepreneurs, gleaned information about their business, marketing, and why and how they began agritourism ventures.

England has a countrywide farm holiday organization that offers a farmstay directory at tourist and visitor centers and on the internet. In



DEWEY SCHWARTZENBURG

Left: Outbuildings at Chileno Valley Bed and Breakfast

Right: Shepherd Bliss (right) chats with visitors at Kokopelli Farm.

Below: The author at Bent Farm, Exmoor National Park, England



France, hikers and bicyclists can follow a map along a network of trails from farm to farm. All European Community (EC) countries have government-supported organizations, linked in a common network, to promote agritourism, and many offer financial aid to farmers who participate. Some Eastern European countries, including Slovenia and the Baltics, are following the EC countries' model. To encourage farmers to participate in the farmstay services, the British government offers financial incentives, which make various strict regulations easier to take.

In the United States, so far, no federal and little state support has been available, with the notable exception of Vermont, where the Department of Agricultural Foods and Markets has published maps and guides to more than 200 working farms and forests, and to markets, farm stands, dairy farms, maple syrup operations, bed

and breakfasts, and farm vacations. The recently formed Vermont Agritourism Association operates statewide.

Among its members are Bob and Beth Kennett, who with their two sons grow apples and run a herd of 155 Holstein dairy cows on their Liberty Hill Farm, off a rural road in the heart of Vermont's Green Mountains. In 1993 they opened a B&B—seven guest rooms in their 18-room, 150-year-old farmhouse. To their surprise, guests wanted to stay longer than overnight. The Kennetts now rent the rooms on a weekly basis to families, most of whom return repeatedly to experience farm life with a farm family. That includes the daily ritual of eating together—something many urban families no longer have.

"Your customer is three to four generations removed from the farm and they've seen the Disney cow, and Ben and Jerry's cow, but not the real cow," observed University of Vermont Extension Specialist Bob Townsend at a recent agritourism workshop. "They

want to see the real thing, to see and talk with the farmer."

California's Just Starting

IN CALIFORNIA THERE IS NO organization to promote agritourism, although I believe there is a wide-open market with great potential. I base that belief on the successes I witnessed in New England and Britain. A few farmers have begun to tap into this market, especially in coastal areas that, like Vermont, have a strong dairy industry and are within easy driving distance from major cities. Some initiatives have been begun in San Diego and Monterey Counties, and in Sacramento a bill is in the works to enable farmers statewide to participate more readily.

A clue to the untapped potential is the enormous popularity of the farm tours and hikes that the Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT) has been offering every three months since 1996 for groups of 20 to 70 people, for

\$12–\$15, with proceeds going to the land trust. These excursions fill up so quickly that "we've stopped advertising in the newspaper," says Washburn. Some more "high-end" tours are being considered, perhaps daylong trips with lunch. These would cost more, with some of the proceeds going to the host farmer's. MALT has also published an audio cassette, narrated by actor Peter Coyote, which allows people to take their own tours.

Some activities now designated as agritourism, such as "u-pick" fields and roadside stands, have long been part of the rural landscape. Efforts to promote them regionally have been scarce except in Sonoma County where, since 1973, Sonoma County Farm Trails, a nonprofit organization of farmers and food producers, has been publishing a map and guide, updated each year, to farms that welcome visitors for shopping, picking, tours, and other activities.

Farmstay bed and breakfasts are still in their infancy, but early results are

Preserving Tradition

THE ONCE-ELEGANT ITALIANATE HOME Sally Gale's great-great-grandfather built in the beautiful Chileno Valley had turned into one of those derelict structures one sees along lonely country roads—sad reminders of long-gone family farms. With windows boarded up and porches sagging, it stood surrounded by barns inhabited only by bats, swallows, and mice.

Then in 1993, Sally and her husband, Mike, came back from Hawaii and brought the old house back to life. "We did it out of respect," she says. "It was a crazy thing to do, but we did it. I really feel that we're part of a movement to preserve the culture of this place."

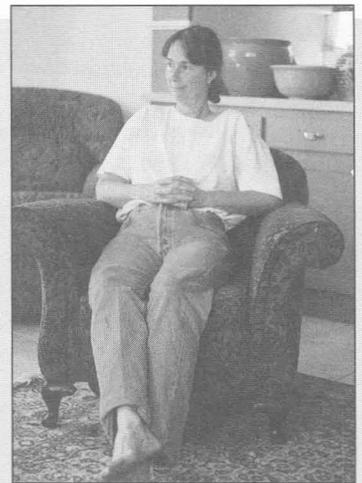


SALLY GALE

Back in the 1850s, when Sally's great-great-grandfather, Charles Martin, arrived in this area, dairy ranching was the major economic activity in western Marin and Sonoma Counties. Martin had come to California from Cevio, Switzerland, during the Gold Rush. He found his way to the Chileno Valley, bought the 600-acre ranch, and built a handsome home in 1883.

Sally did not grow up here, but "we came here often," she says. "Ours was a warm, extensive family. I was very attached to this land." She joined the Peace Corps, married another Peace Corps volunteer, and they lived in Hawaii for 21 years, raising three children. Mike headed Action, the federal agency on volunteerism (now the Corporation for National Service); Sally worked as a pediatric social worker. In 1993, when their son entered the University of California, Berkeley, they sold their home on Oahu and moved to Sally's ancestral homestead, which by this time had been standing vacant for seven years.

When a contractor looked at the derelict house, he advised them to tear it down. But they saw that the basic structure was sound and opted for restoration. It took five years and all their assets. Sally cashed in her retirement savings. "While we were working, a lot of



Sally Gale

USHEA MOSS

Rounding up sheep for shearing at Flowers Farm, Peak District National Park, England

promising. In Marin County, Sharon Doughty, whose grandfather came from Portugal "when there were elk in these hills," and her husband, Steve, opened their Point Reyes Vineyard Inn last year in a house that stood on ten acres they purchased the year before, next to their 800-acre dairy and two-acre vineyard. "We have four adult children who want to make a living on the property," Sharon says, "so we need to diversify." The house is just off Highway 1, half a mile from Tomales Bay. Guests find the place by seeing a bright, highly visible sign, by word of mouth, or on the internet. To get the farmwork done, the Doughtys hang out a "No Vacancy" sign most Mondays through Wednesdays.

At first, the Doughtys were reluctant to invite guests to walk near large animals on the ranch, but they concluded



ELLEN RILLA

that "ignorance about how our food is grown is a greater threat to farmers than liability. Most guests come away with some understanding of the strict rules under which food is grown and the need to preserve farms for farming," says Sharon.

A Niche, Not a Panacea

NOT ALL FARMERS COULD or would want to get into agritourism. In this type of venture, critical elements include sincere interest, a personality that is outgoing and

people stopped by and many told stories. Mostly they were stories of loss. Neighbors stopped by to tell us how glad they were to see what we were doing. It caught their imagination."

Meanwhile, Mike and Sally Gale were wondering: "How can we make some money and still be ranchers?" That's when the idea of opening a bed and breakfast occurred to them. "It was a natural fit," she says.

They repaired the barns and bought some cattle. They planted native shrubs and trees along the streams and fenced them to keep the cattle out and improve habitat for migrating songbirds.

With the help of a local naturalist, they put an owl box in the big barn. Before long, an owl had moved in, then a second, his mate. One June day, Sally was delighted to see two fuzzy owlets perched on the rafters: a whole owl family.

They opened in June 1998 with four rooms and in May this year added a cottage, the old creamery, which they had remodeled and then lived in while restoring the house. They invested in a website, www.chilenobnb.com, that describes their Chileno Valley Ranch and Bed and Breakfast, "the quiet world of long ago," showing the house, its history, some breakfast recipes, and the hosts. The site links to sources of information about the Point Reyes National Seashore, the historic town of Petaluma, and other nearby destinations.

Guests may stroll through the hills, watch birds along the three streams that run through the property, observe butterflies and hummingbirds in the rose garden, and help feed the cows. "We put them on the truck when we're feeding hay," says Sally. "The cows gather round and their breath is hot and steamy. Guests are very interested in cows."

As she shows the guests around, and treats them to chocolate cookies baked by her mother, who lives nearby, Sally also tries to educate urban people about farming issues. She hopes she's building bridges that will help farming to survive in the region. She intends to live the rest of her life on the Chileno Valley Ranch. —RG



SALLY GALE

patient, land and water resources sufficient to accommodate the chosen venture, capital for start-up and conversion costs, and an accessible location.

"You need to be willing to experiment by trial and error and be willing to make mistakes," advises Sharon Doughty. "Our B&B is a completely different business than our dairy or our wine-tasting room and needs to be treated as such. Be sure to complete a careful economic analysis. You need a different mindset and set of skills. You

need to enjoy being with and sharing your life with your guests."

How farmers get into agritourism varies widely. Some years back, Rita Cardoza, a longtime rancher who raises a diversity of crops and animals in Sonoma County, started to grow pumpkins for families who wanted to pick their own for Halloween. "But I started getting people who didn't come for the pumpkins. They came to touch us, to see what country life was about," she says. "That helped me to realize we

have something they don't have. I grew up gathering eggs, picking berries."

So she created an annual harvest festival that brings some 6,000 people to the family's 1,700-acre ranch in the course of one autumn month. There's a haystack for jumping up and down on, pumpkins to choose, animals to pet, and there are hayrides. Having been a teacher, as well as a child, Rita Cardoza knew what was fun. As children eat their lunches, a wandering turkey may leap up on the table and

A Slow Food Movement Enterprise

IN 1992, AFTER 25 YEARS AT HARVARD and John F. Kennedy Universities, Shepherd Bliss shifted his teaching and counseling work to a far more subtle and congenial place—a small organic farm in Sebastopol, Sonoma County. Instead of standing in front of a blackboard lecturing on religion and psychology, he now offers tours of his two-acre spread, where he raises boysenberries, apples, chickens, and honeybees.

These unique tours begin with a quiet moment in a redwood grove, then meander past the vegetable garden, the chickens, and the berries, past ancient oaks, and through a meadow to a creek that flows into a marsh where an endangered lily grows. En route it becomes clear how everything fits together.

Bliss doesn't lecture. Instead he invites visitors to notice. If someone asks about the tall bamboo poles around the chicken pens, he'll explain that they deter hawks, though not ravens. He may add, as he did on this late spring afternoon: "The chickens

give me eggs, cultivation, beauty. They eat snails, they recycle, and they go in on their own." His flock numbers about 80 and includes up to 23 varieties. He enjoys the diversity. He sells the eggs directly to customers. As the rooster wanders by he may add, "Some people don't like roosters because they're a bother, but I think a flock needs a rooster."

Why the newspapers weighed down by oranges under the boysenberries? The papers are mulch; the oranges keep them in place and add acidity to the soil. Bliss gets juiced oranges free of charge. He also adds woodash, from neighbors' fireplaces. "My berries cost a lot of money—about \$4 a pound," he says. "At first I sold them low, but other farmers said, 'That's unfair, you have a premium crop.'" About 400 customers come to pick and buy, including "a lot of older people who are used to making pies."

The tour may diverge into talk of economics, aesthetics, or wildlife conservation, depending on individual interests. Bliss takes his time. He is a teacher, and part of the slow food movement. For an organic farmer, satisfaction comes as much from process as from product. When someone notices a scythe propped against the house, Bliss says that by using this tool instead of a power mower he can spot baby oaks in the grass and cut around them. A neighbor adds, "You get into a rhythm. You hear the cutting and smell the hay."

Bliss, who comes from an Iowa farm family, realized he "belonged on the land" in the 1970s, after reading Helen and Scott Nearing's *Living the Good Life* and then visiting their farm in Maine. He chose to farm in Sonoma County, partly because it's a leading organic farming region. Now kindred spirits come to learn from him. Today's group includes Stuart and Denise Schroeder, who are starting an "all human- and horse-draft farm" five miles toward the coast, where they will offer environmental education with a taste of living history.

Recently Bliss has been doing Y2K tours. "Gardening is a good thing to do, even if nothing happens," he says, "and chickens are a good solution to Y2K."
—RG



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: DEWEY SCHWARTZBURG





USHA MOSS

try to snatch a sandwich. That's all right. "We have a motto: We can do anything for a month," Rita says. "We are maxed out at a month—especially if you are a quiet person, like my husband. But that month pays the bills."

On May 27 Sharon Doughty and Rita Cardoza shared their experiences at a workshop, "Agritourism: Harvesting the Hidden Assets of Your Farm," at the Walker Ranch in Marshall, Marin County. Also among the speakers was Karen Bates, whose family has a self-service farm stand, a small B&B, and also offers cooking classes and produces a cornucopia of apple-related products at their 20-acre farm in the bucolic Anderson Valley, Mendocino County.

They bought the farm in 1993. It came with 1,000 apple trees bearing 30 varieties of apples. "The real estate guy wanted us to believe we could pay for the whole farm in three years. We didn't believe this, but reality was worse than we expected. Just the conversion from conventional farming practices to organic was enough to make us reconsider what we had got-

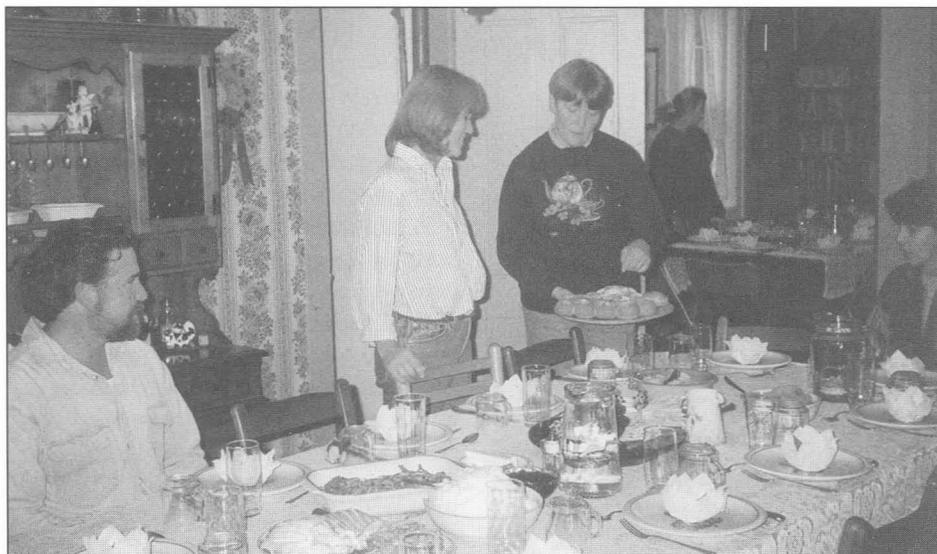
ten ourselves into." By diversifying, they have kept going. Her advice to other farmers considering agritourism: "Go slow and take it one step at a time, as it can take over. We could spend the entire day just talking with customers because that's what they want, but the apples still need to be picked and processed at the end of the day."

Some ventures take a farmer into

Top: Looking toward restored riparian habitat at Chileno Valley Bed and Breakfast

Bottom: Dinner time at Liberty Hill Farm, Vermont

bewildering bureaucratic mazes. When the public is invited to the farm, liability, public safety, and health code issues arise. George and Elaine Work enjoyed a farmstay in New Zealand and, upon returning to their beef cattle



ELLEN RILLA



Liberty Hill Farm, Vermont

ranch in Monterey County, were inspired to develop something similar. But they soon came up against the local health department. Because their farm is in an isolated area, they had planned on serving dinner with the family. But that meant they would need to abide by regulations written for restaurants. "We couldn't justify building a restaurant on our property just so we could have some guests," George said. "Our primary business is our ranch."



The work predicament became a catalyst for remedial action. The California Farm Bureau and the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), a grassroots advocate group, crafted AB 1258, the California Agricultural Homestay bill, to exempt farmers from some requirements that better suit hotels and restaurants. The bill, introduced by Assemblywoman Virginia Strom-Martin, was signed by the Governor on July 27.

Public issues must be worked out as well. Richard Rogers, a Sonoma County planner, told of a winery that serves as a venue for weddings every weekend, charging \$2,000 to \$3,000 "just to step on the grounds, not including catering, wine, and other things. It's a half-million-dollar business for the winery," he said. But what about traffic, noise, water use? Where is the line to be drawn? In England, at least one county requires that farmers taking in paying guests reap most of their income from farming.

While coastal farmers in Marin and Sonoma are in the forefront with farmstay ventures, other areas are taking a look at their options as well. In Mendocino, the county Economic Development Office, Cooperative Extension, and others have completed a Tourism and Economic Development plan that incorporates agritourism. CAFF is also organizing and supporting efforts in Sonoma, Monterey, El Dorado, and

other counties. The Small Farm Center, based at the University of California, Davis, has a \$200,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Fund for Rural America for agritourism projects in the Monterey/Salinas and San Diego areas. In San Diego, Michael Dimock, of Sunflower Strategies Consulting, says: "There is a large population of small growers and farmers who are excited about agritourism and about the opportunity to diversify their on-farm income."

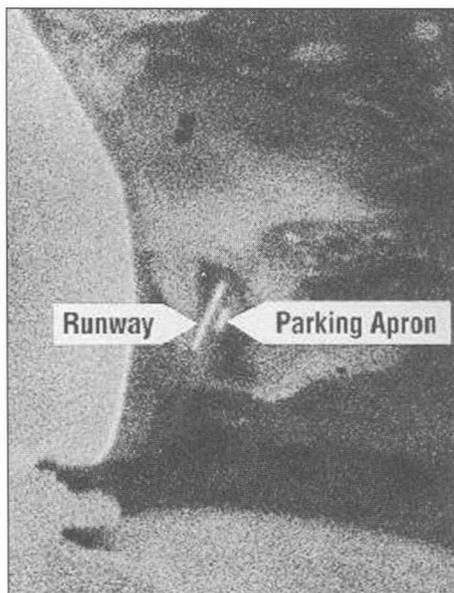
A natural ally would be nature tourism, particularly wildlife watching, one of the fastest-growing sectors in the travel industry. Farmers who restore streamside habitat, protect wetlands, and create favorable conditions for songbirds are cultivating this market's potential. Conservationists working to protect open space around cities are also beginning to appreciate farmers. (See "Your Farm Is My Greenbelt," *Coast & Ocean*, Winter 1995.)

In England, the National Park Authority is encouraging farmers to shift from single-purpose industry that is concerned only with food production to multipurpose industry concerned with a wider range of on-farm activities. These include provision for tourism and recreation, woodland management, and conservation of landscape, wildlife, and historic features. One of the biggest differences I noted between England and the United States is the level of awareness of public officials of how important farms and farmers are to the maintenance of the beloved landscape. Pride of place generates a concern about farmers' ability to maintain their livelihood. ■

Ellen Rilla is a farm advisor/director with the University of California Cooperative Extension office in Marin County. While continuing her interest in agritourism, she is also working on a study of agricultural easement programs in Marin and Sonoma Counties. She can be reached at: phone and fax: (415) 499-4209; e-mail: erilla@ucdavis.edu.

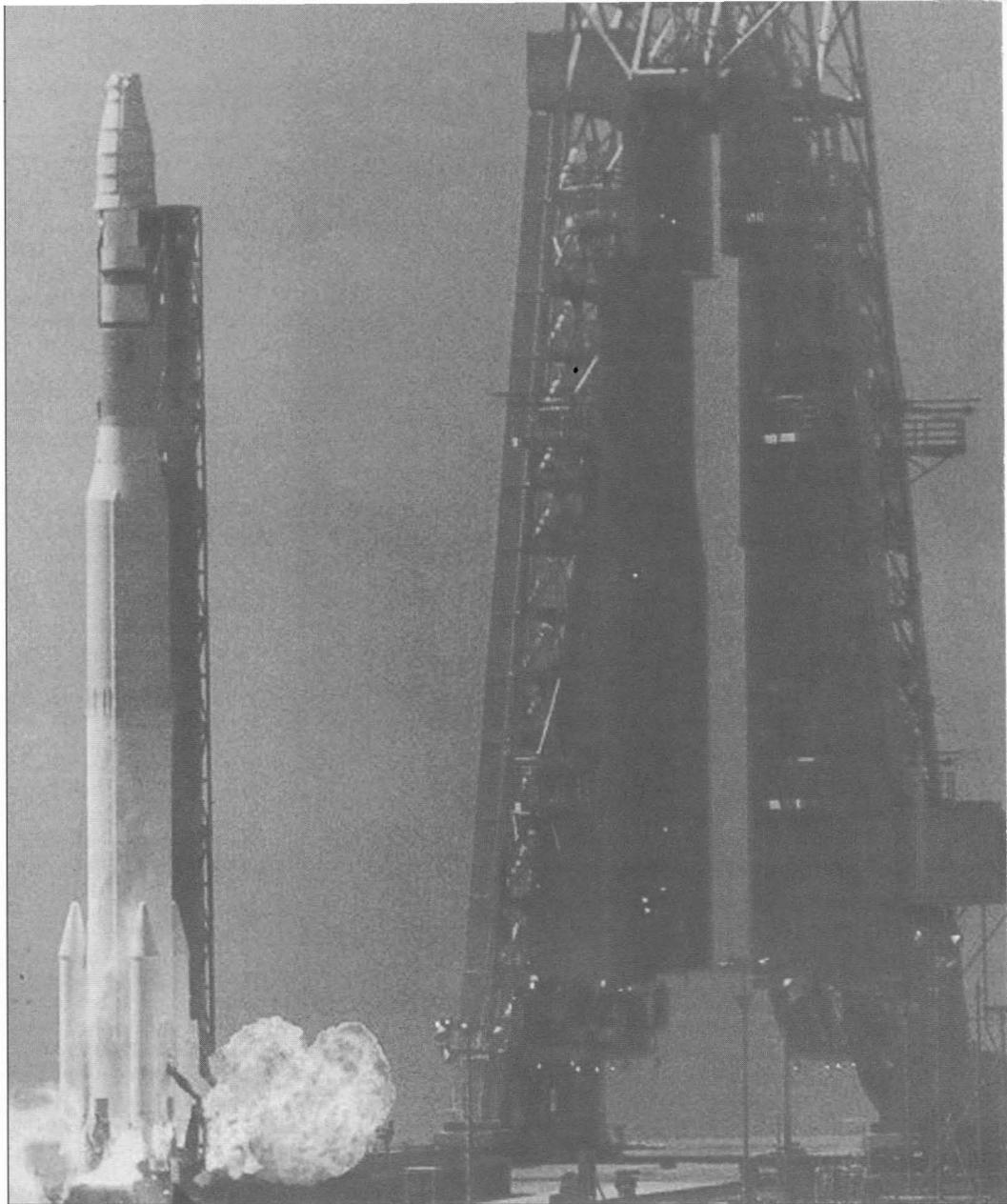
See page 38 for additional agritourism contacts.

Secret Science on the California Coast



JOHN CLOUD

IN 1955, WITH COLD WAR anxiety skyrocketing with the news that both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed hydrogen bombs, President Dwight D. Eisenhower made a remarkable proposal to his Russian counterpart, Premier Nikita Khrushchev. He suggested that each country allow the other to conduct reconnaissance flights in the air and from space over the other country, and that the imagery



Left: The first Corona image, at 60-foot resolution (Vandenberg Air Force Base), was taken in August 1960.

Above: Thor booster blasts off.

obtained be given to the United Nations. Under such conditions of “Open Skies,” as the proposal was called, both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. would better know their enemy’s assets and plans, the possibility of surprise attacks would be minimized, and both countries could manage their affairs with the increased confidence that greater knowledge provides. The Soviets (and elements within the U.S. military) rejected

“Open Skies,” however, and the concept abruptly disappeared.

Thereafter, the United States and the Soviet Union proceeded separately and in secret to gather the information each needed to defend against the other’s long-range missiles. In 1958 the Air Force abruptly canceled a planned satellite system that was classified but had been publicly acknowledged, and reconstituted it as the supersecret Corona reconnaissance satellite program. It was organized under the new Keyhole security protocols, the most secret security orders in American history.

The Corona satellites launched from pads set in coastal sage scrub at Vandenberg Air Force Base, on the coast of Santa Barbara County, arched up over the Channel Islands and out to space.

Now, nearly half a century later, a

new generation of earth science satellites is being launched from Vandenberg, to gather the earthly data critical to understanding global climate change in a world now threatened by many dangers beyond the continuing menace of nuclear weapons. It was Eisenhower's "Open Skies" idea that, ultimately, made the new earth satellites possible, although few people know the story.

Cold War Science

CORONA WAS ONLY ONE of many path-opening military technologies designed and built and launched in southern California during the decades of the Cold War. It was created by the same small alliance that had earlier crafted the U-2 spy plane, and would later create the SR-71 Blackbird spy plane.

The Air Force's Western Development Division in El Segundo commissioned the Lockheed Corporation as the lead systems integrator over a web of companies contracted to perfect or invent from scratch the many separate technologies that had to work perfectly for Corona to succeed. Small, elite teams of engineers and fabricators

worked in compartmentalized secrecy, paid out of "black" unlisted budgets that came directly from the office of the CIA's director.

Corona featured an evolving series of marvelously sophisticated cameras that used a special polyester film base designed just for the program—though we all use it now, under its later name "mylar." After the cameras photographed the world from polar orbit, the exposed film was jettisoned back to earth near Hawaii, in a capsule fitted with a parachute designed to be snagged by special planes. The capsules were designed to float, so that if the plane missed, Navy boats could retrieve them. In case even the boats missed, the capsules were fitted with salt plugs (tested in the Santa Barbara Channel) that would dissolve after two days in the ocean, causing the capsule to sink beneath the waves, so the films could never fall into enemy hands.

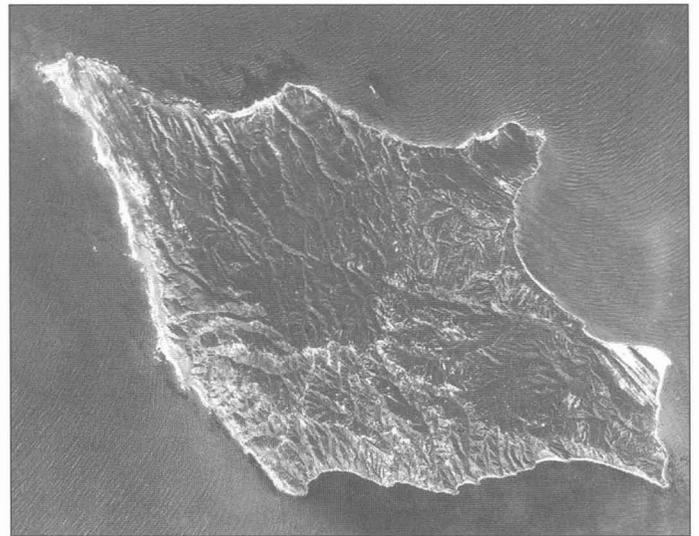
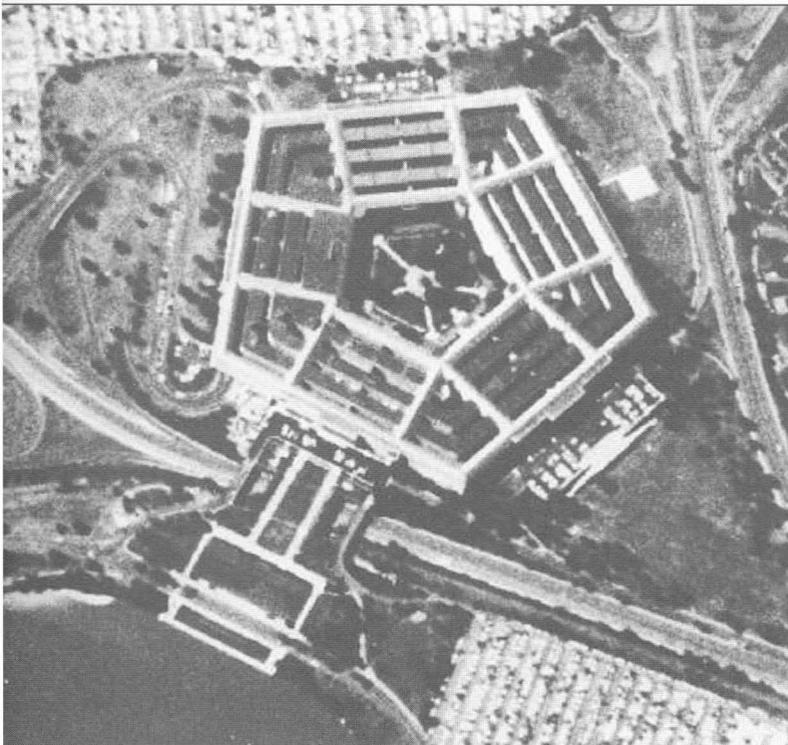
Many complex systems had to work perfectly for Corona to succeed. Many discouraging

failures preceded the first successful retrieval of a capsule, in August 1960.

The Corona Program continued until 1972, when it was replaced by more advanced, still-classified systems, such as Big Bird, which use digital imagery. It was not until late 1995 that the U.S. government finally acknowledged the existence of Corona; now it has been declassified, along with all 800,000 feet of its film.

Corona was so successful that it had consequences reaching far beyond its original mission. It was so secret that we are only now beginning to understand the revolution in geographic understanding it created. It was designed to spot Soviet ICBM bases

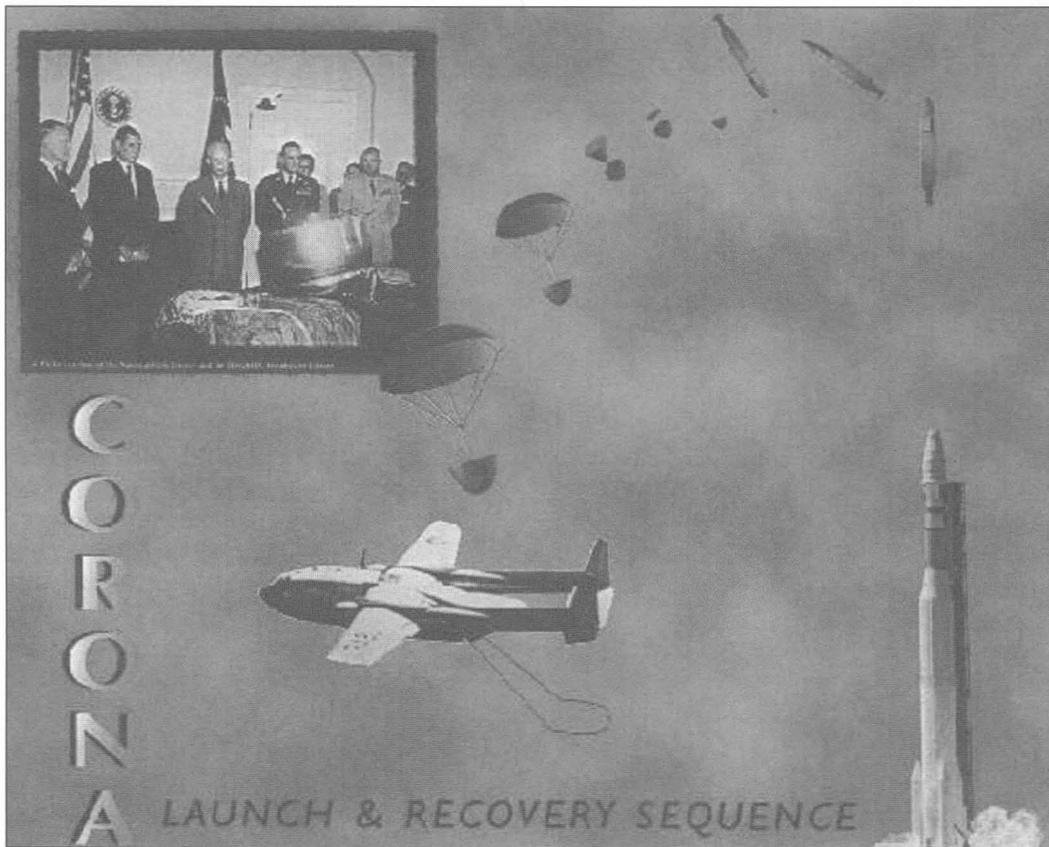
**Lower left: Early Corona photo of the Pentagon
Below: A Corona image of Santa Rosa Island, one of California's Channel Islands**



More Satellite Images

Two new NASA web sites provide satellite images using the latest technology. The Landsat 7 site, ltpwww.gsfc.nasa.gov/LANDSAT/CAMPAIGN_DOCS/MAIN/Education.html, has images at higher resolution than earlier Landsats. Landsat 7 was launched in April 1999. The Earth Observatory site, earth-observatory.nasa.gov, has a wider range of information, as well as images from a variety of satellites. A primary feature of this site will be data about all facets of earth systems science provided by Terra, a satellite to be launched in July.

These sites were recommended to us by Ron Mader, author of *Mexico: Adventures in Nature* and shepherd of a good e-mail list for U.S.-Mexico border issues: us_mexborder@valley.rtpnc.epa.gov.



Launch through recovery, with Eisenhower press conference inset. The plane trails a loop used to pull the satellite from the sea.

Photos from Corona web site

All Corona photography is now declassified and can be ordered through the U.S. Geological Survey. To find the photographs, and in most cases to be able to see browsing-quality versions of the photos, check: edcwww.cr.usgs.gov/webgis, then click on "Corona satellite photography" in the right box.

with high-resolution Keyhole cameras, and also to map the bases' positions using lower-resolution Argon cameras. The systems worked so well that in short order the CIA was using Corona to map the world.

Corona also was the catalyst for a series of secret alliances between the intelligence community and such nominally civilian federal agencies as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The CIA has a mandate to map outside the U.S. but not inside the country. USGS has a mandate to map the U.S., but not outside the country. Corona blurred those distinctions because the CIA and the USGS worked together. It led to the establishment of guarded, top-secret laboratories concealed within their facilities. Corona and the industrial-strength image-processing systems designed for Corona were used to remap the country at one map scale twice, and to evaluate all 1:24,000 topographic maps for revision. Many maps were entirely revised using Corona, a fact to which the USGS subtly alluded on the maps' legends. To

this day modern topo sheets note that they were created using aerial photography "and other source data."

For the last third of this century, mapping of the United States has been accomplished almost exclusively by means of intelligence satellites. By the mid 1960s Corona cameras could make stereo photographs, which allowed cartographers to derive the relief of terrain below the satellite. The huge volumes of Corona imagery, and the vast areas it covered, triggered advances in satellite geo-referencing, digital processing, and image conversion that led to digital elevation data, geographic information systems (GIS), and the Global Positioning System (GPS).

The clandestine collaboration among American agencies bore fruit in other areas as well. In 1969, in the midst of the devastating Santa Barbara oil spill, the USGS needed to evaluate damage to marine life and coastal margins caused by the oil billowing into the channel. Because the agency didn't want to wait the weeks it would take for Corona films to return to earth from orbit, it requested the CIA to fly a secret U-2 mission to photograph the channel. Taking advantage of the collaborative

systems already in place for a decade under Corona, USGS scientists were examining the film in their top-secret lab in Reston, Virginia, the day after the U-2 returned to its home base.

The Santa Barbara oil spill was so large and disturbing that it became a catalyst for the environmental moment. That movement, indeed all modern global response to the challenges the planet faces, is now vitally dependent on the data that stream down to us from satellites monitoring climate and land use. These satellites, in turn, all had their origins in another set of dramatic events very different from the spill. Because "Open Skies" was crafted in utter darkness, it has taken a third of a century for the story of the concealed origins of modern earth science to be revealed. ■

John Cloud is a Ph.D. candidate in geography at UC Santa Barbara. Funded by the National Science Foundation, he is writing his dissertation on the secret geographic applications of Corona and the clandestine roots of modern earth science.

For further information on the research, check: www.geog.ucsb.edu/~kclarke/Corona/Corona.html

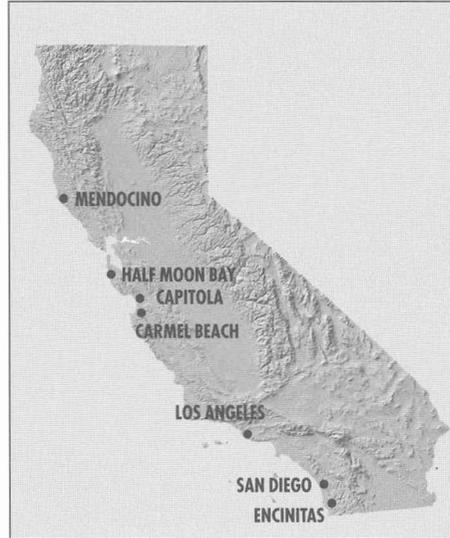


Coastal Conservancy News

FOR BIRDS AND THE BEACH IN ENCINITAS

THE SAN ELIJO LAGOON Conservancy will restore tidal circulation to the lagoon behind Cardiff State Beach, in Encinitas, using \$1 million approved by the Coastal Conservancy in May. The project will improve habitat for wildlife in the lagoon, and for surfers, swimmers, and sunbathers on the beach.

Migratory shorebirds and waterfowl in large numbers visit San Elijo Lagoon, and 72 sensitive or endangered species are among residents. Humans in large numbers flock to the beach as well. During the past few decades, however, pollutants have been accumulating in the lagoon because the lagoon's mouth has failed to open except for a few weeks each year. When the mouth did open, the pollutants were released; as a result, the beach has occasionally had to be closed for up to a week. Bridge construction across the lagoon and land use changes in the watershed are the



main culprits, leading to diminished tidal circulation.

The Conservancy's money will be pooled with contributions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the County of San Diego, local businesses, and residents to create a \$1.6 million endowment to keep the lagoon mouth open by

periodically removing sand and cobble from the lagoon mouth. The sand will be used to replenish the beach.

SAN DIEGO BAY WETLANDS PURCHASE

TO PROTECT A CRITICAL HABITAT link between San Diego Bay and the Otay River Valley, the Conservancy granted more than \$3 million to the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association in May to acquire a 120-acre property. One of the few private holdings within the publicly held lands of south San Diego Bay, this property contains a rare combination of shallow marine, salt marsh, and freshwater habitats. Most of the acreage is expected to become part of the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge; the rest will be added to Otay Valley Regional Park.

BEACH WHEELCHAIRS FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY

WITH \$20,000 FROM THE Coastal Conservancy and an equal sum from the Coastal Commission, the Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors will buy 18 lightweight balloon-tired wheelchairs suitable for travel across sand. They will be available free of charge at as-yet-unspecified beaches.

NEW STAIRWAY TO CARMEL BEACH

THE WOODEN STAIRWAY near 12th Avenue, built after 1982-83 storms destroyed an earlier stairway, has often been closed for repairs, so people have been walking directly down the bluffs to Carmel Municipal Beach, causing severe erosion. In May, the Conservancy allocated \$165,000 for a new and sounder stairway, to be constructed by the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea. The City has committed \$500,000 to rehabilitate beachfront structures, including seawalls and stairs.

DOUG GIBSON



Restoring tidal circulation to San Elijo Lagoon in Encinitas

CAPITOLA WHARF IMPROVEMENTS

THE CITY OF CAPITOLA, in Santa Cruz County, will add 75 bicycle parking spaces and 10 new benches to its wharf, and replace decking at the wharf's outer end, with \$285,000 in Conservancy funds approved in May. The Wharf, built in 1857, extends 300 yards into Monterey Bay. The City has committed \$550,000 for wharf repair and improvements.

BRIDGE FOR COASTSIDE TRAIL IN HALF MOON BAY

A BRIDGE MADE FROM a 45-foot railroad flatcar, donated by Redwood City, will be installed across a drainage channel in Half Moon Bay with the help of \$28,000 from the Conservancy. It will be open to walkers, wheelchair riders, bicyclists, and horseback riders.

MENDOCINO COUNTY BEACH AND BLUFF

THE CONSERVANCY APPROVED a grant of \$1,855,000 to the Mendocino Land Trust in May to enable it to buy and manage 75 acres of beach, blufftop, forest, and grasslands near the town of Caspar. The funds will be used to purchase three parcels that include part of Caspar Beach, about one-half mile of land on the south bank of Caspar Creek, an adjacent blufftop, and a former agricultural parcel that contains the southernmost stand of Sitka spruce on the West Coast. All three parcels are along the potential route of the Coastal Trail. The Land Trust hopes to transfer the beach and bluff parcels to California State Parks in the future. The current State Parks budget is too low to provide operation and maintenance expenses.

The Conservancy also approved \$60,000 to the Land Trust for preacquisition costs and studies needed for the purchase of Glass Beach on the north end of Fort Bragg.

Other News

REAL-TIME BAY INFORMATION

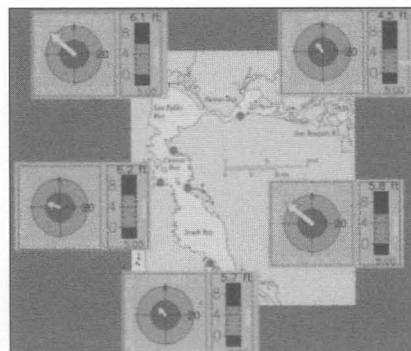
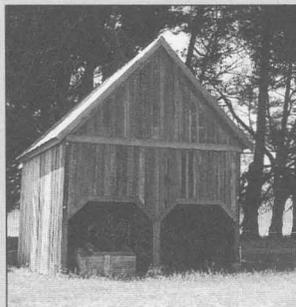
MOMENT-TO-MOMENT information on air and water conditions in the San Francisco Bay region is now available free of charge on the Internet. Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (P.O.R.T.S.) provides observations, updated every six minutes, of tides (water level), currents, winds, air pressure, water and air temperature, and salinity and specific gravity from sensor stations around the Bay. This information is valuable as a safety program for merchant shippers, but is also useful for fishers, recreational boaters, wind surfers, scientists, and others. It is offered by the nonprofit Marine Exchange of the San Francisco Bay Region, in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, NOAA's National Ocean Service, and the California Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response.

The observations are presented as raw data and in graphic displays, maps, and models. Short-term forecasts of tides and currents are also shown, along with comparisons of observed and predicted data. Continued funding for the program depends on the number of users.

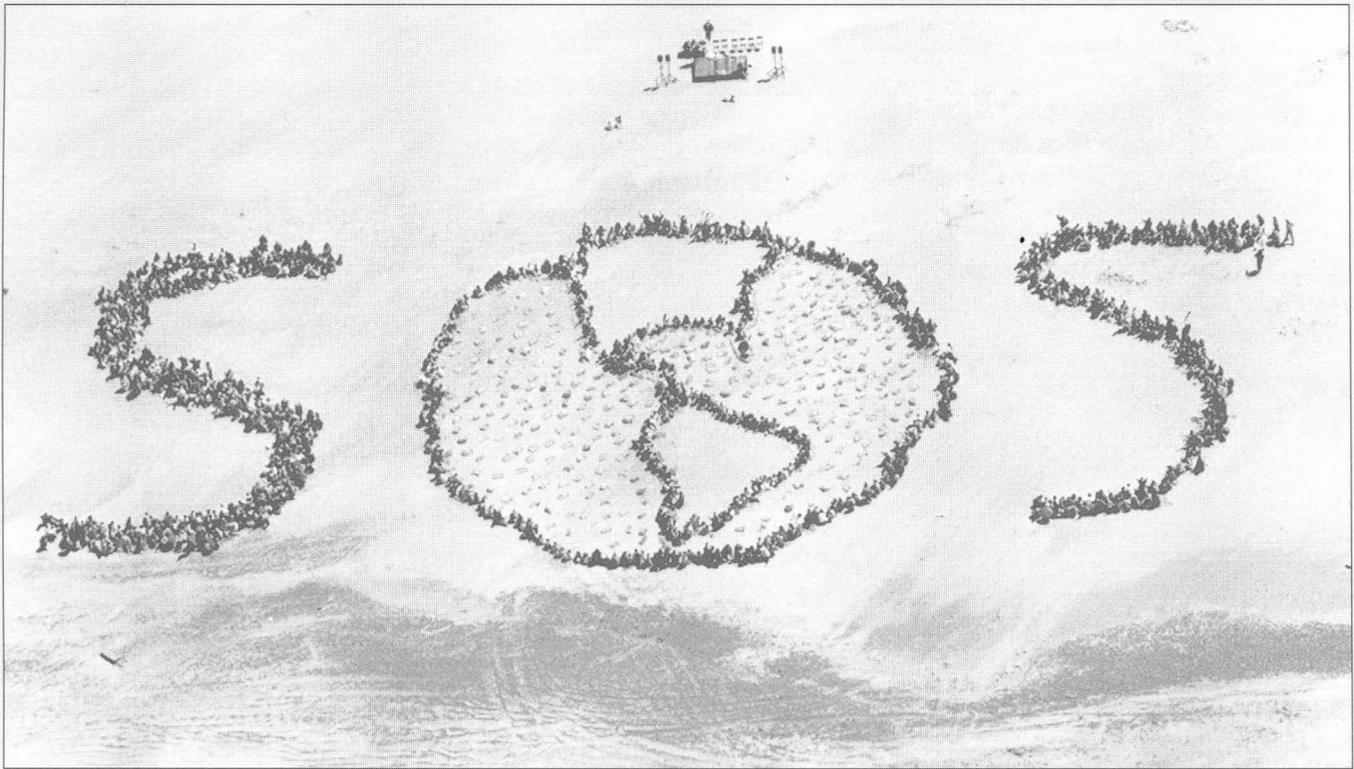
P.O.R.T.S. data are available at www.sfmex.org or by phone: (707) 642-4337. For more information, call Bruce Clarke at Marine Exchange: (415) 441-6600. ■

Agritourism Contacts

- Desmond Jolly, director, Small Farm Center, University of California, Davis, CA 95616-8699; (530) 752-8136; sfc@ucdavis.edu; www.sfc.ucdavis.edu. Contact the Center to become part of a new agritourism workshop or for other information.
- Eileen Hook, rural tourism liaison, California Division of Tourism, 801 K Street, Suite 1600, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 322-1266
- Constance Washburn, Education Coordinator, Marin Agricultural Land Trust, P.O. Box 809, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956; (415) 663-1158; www.malt.org
- Michael Straus, Beyond Organic: Public Relations and Food Marketing, 22890 Highway 1, Marshall, CA 94940; (415) 289-6958; www.beyondorganic.com
- Sonoma County Farm Trails, P.O. Box 6032, Santa Rosa, CA 95406; (707) 571-8288 or (800) 207-9464; www.farmtrails.org
- University of California Cooperative Extension Office, Monterey County, 1432 Abbott St., Salinas, CA 93901; (408) 759-7350; Fax (408) 758-3018
- University of California Cooperative Extension Office, San Diego County, 5555 Overland Ave., Bldg. 4, San Diego, CA 92123; (858) 694-2845; Fax (858) 694-2849
- Karen Bates, The Apple Farm, 18501 Greenwood Road, Philo, CA 95466; (707) 895-2333
- Shepherd Bliss, Kokopelli Farm, 1543 Cunningham Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472; (707) 829-8185
- Rita Cardoza, Cardoza Ranches, P.O. Box 551, Petaluma, CA 94953; (707) 762-2065
- Sharon Doughty, Point Reyes Vineyard Inn, P.O. Box 1177, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956; (415) 663-1552
- Mike & Sally Gale, Chileno Valley Bed & Breakfast, 5105 Chileno Valley Road, Petaluma, CA 94952; (707) 765-6664; www.chilenobnb.com



P.O.R.T.S. website shows winds and tides.



COASTAL COMMISSION

COASTAL CLEANUP DAY COMING

WHAT DO A PINK GOLF BAG, A FULL BOTTLE of Prozac, and 333,876 cigarette butts have in common? All were found on California beaches last year on Coastal Cleanup Day, when some 50,000 volunteers hauled 789,145 pounds of debris from beaches, rivers, streams, and highways in coastal watersheds.

What treasures will be discovered this year? Come and find out. The 15th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day takes place Saturday, September 18, from 9 a.m. to noon, along the state's entire 1,100 mile coast and at many inland sites. As far inland as Lake Tahoe and the San Joaquin River in Fresno, people will be bending down to pick up trash and bag it in blue plastic.

Those who start to grumble that some of the trash on our beaches was dumped in international waters or even other countries can take comfort in the fact that 50 states, four U.S. territories, and 80 countries are participating in International Coastal Cleanup, organized by the Center for Marine Conservation.

Most numerous among items picked up each year are cigarette filters. The number reported by volunteers was 40 percent higher in 1998 than the previous year, while the total number of debris items increased by 33 percent.

"California has outlawed smoking in bars and restaurants, so smokers are going outside. Few consider that if they drop a butt on the sidewalk, it will go down the storm drain," says Becky Steckler, statewide coordinator of Coastal Cleanup Day for the California Coastal Commis-

sion, searching for an explanation. "We need to help people realize that cigarette butts are trash, and trash in the street means trash on the beach."

Trash on the beach not only looks bad, it endangers birds and marine animals that may mistake it for food. It can entangle them or block their digestive tracts, causing them to become ill or even starve.

The success of Coastal Cleanup Day depends on the hard work of local volunteers and organizers. Heal the Bay in Los Angeles County brought out 12,216 volunteers last year and recruited hundreds of local groups as organizers for beach, river, and marina cleanups. Delta Keeper and the Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority were among those joining in for the first time. Caltrans encourages Adopt-A-Highway volunteers to turn out on Coastal Cleanup Day, to drive home the connection between beach debris and upper watersheds. A soft drink carrier dropped on a street or tossed on the roadside from a car window may travel by wind and storm drain to the ocean and be washed back ashore by waves.

To participate in California's Coastal Cleanup Day, or learn of sites where volunteers plan to gather, call the Coastal Commission at (800) COAST-4U or visit the Commission's website: ceres.ca.gov/coastalcomm/ccd/ccd1.html.

Coastal Cleanup volunteers signaled SOS for coasts and oceans in 1998. The trash they collected is in bags that show up as blue oceans in the color version of this image.

Nibbling

continued from page 11

Monterey County. The study was based largely on records of permit actions by local governments and the Commission, with a focus on the years between 1983–93. A similar ReCAP was completed in 1998 for the 32-mile Ventura County–Malibu area, from Point Mugu to Topanga Canyon. A third is planned in San Luis Obispo County.

The Monterey Bay study found that the public's ability to use coastal access sites had become more constrained, even while some major access facilities were built. In the Ventura–Malibu area, parklands were expanded, but public access was lagging. Two County beach areas including blufftop area suitable for parking in Malibu—Dan Blocker and El Sol Beaches—are not open, while Malibu Bluffs State Park, bought in 1979 with \$6.8 million in bond funds, is still being “temporarily” used for community ballfields. Signs stating “Private Beach” and “Private Property” were on beaches “throughout much of the ReCAP area.”

The Fortified Coast

A MAJOR FINDING in the Monterey Bay ReCAP study was that “current coastal policies support the use of public shoreline and public resources to protect private property, and if the current situation continues, more and more of the shoreline will be lost as a public resource.”

Riprap and vertical walls to protect private properties are usually built on the public shore at “substantial public cost, both in terms of subsidies such as low-interest loans, disaster relief funds, and joint public/private ventures, as well as loss of beach area, beach access, and coastal aesthetics.”

Because riprap walls encroach at least 20 feet onto the public beach and vertical walls take up at least four feet, the public has already lost 25 acres of beach to these structures on Monterey Bay and could lose about 60 with continued implementation of existing policies. That's not counting the damage to

beaches from loss of sand from the bluffs, a natural source of beach replenishment. In Monterey Bay more than one-eighth of the shoreline was already armored in 1993, and one-third is likely to be in time. In Malibu, 45 percent of the shoreline—14.8 of 32 miles—was armored, to protect the Pacific Coast Highway as well as private property.

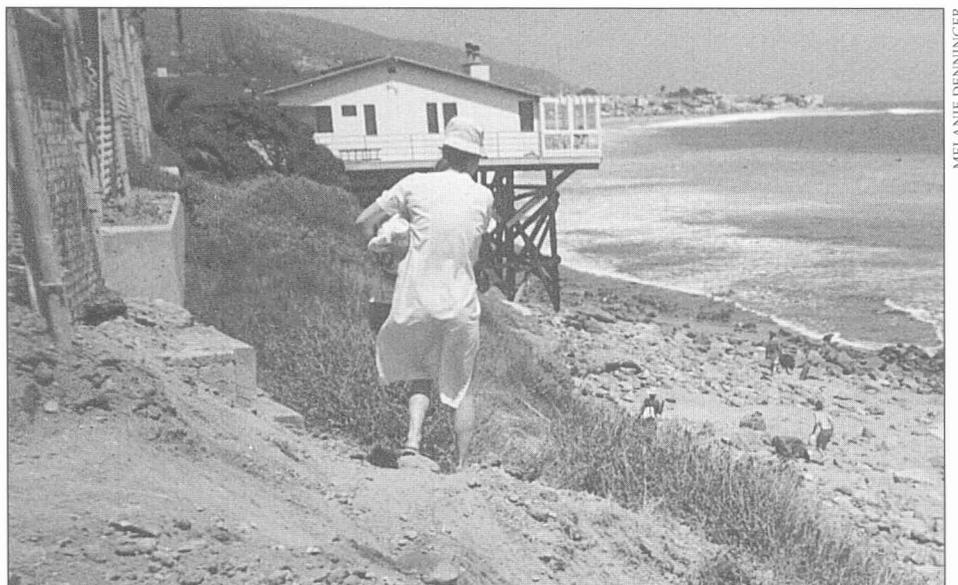
“As the shoreline continues to erode, the beach in front of these walls will become smaller and ultimately the walls will be in the surf zone with little or no beach,” the Monterey Bay study states. The continued fortification of the California coast seems virtually unstoppable.

In Oregon, seawalls are simply illegal. If you build in harm's way, you must be ready to accept the damage. In California, the Coastal Act discourages such armaments but leaves giant exceptions. If a structure is endangered, the current interpretation of the Act is that it can be protected. In an emergency situation, structures are allowed without the customary permit process (though a follow-up regular permit is required to make this work permanent). And, if it is destroyed by a natural disaster, it can be rebuilt without a permit, as long as it is on the same site and no more than 10 percent larger or higher.

The Coastal Commission has been trying to put the brakes on the process by requiring that people who seek to build in hazardous areas forego their

option to build protective barriers, even in emergencies. During its four-day July meeting, which lasted more than 12 hours without a dinner break, the Coastal Commission considered several proposed seawalls and other fortifications. In two central coast cases, blufftop residential development was allowed only with the condition that no shoreline armoring would be allowed in the future. The property owners were required to record this prohibition in their deeds.

With more funding available to the Coastal Conservancy and the Coastal Commission, some new initiatives are under way to address several aspects of the cumulative impact problem. The Commission, in consultation with the Conservancy, has developed a Public Access Action Plan to serve as a framework for guiding future actions by the two agencies. Priorities include: concerted effort to open trail easements to the public, steps toward completing the California Coastal Trail, identifying and securing prescriptive access rights to informal trails, and efforts to reduce or eliminate public financial assistance to property owners who build in known hazard zones. The combined effect of these separate measures—together with acquisition of lands for their protection—could go a long way toward securing the California coast's future for the benefit of the crowds to come. ■



MELANIE DENNINGER

The Coastal Conservancy is working to develop a beach accessway from this bluff in Malibu.



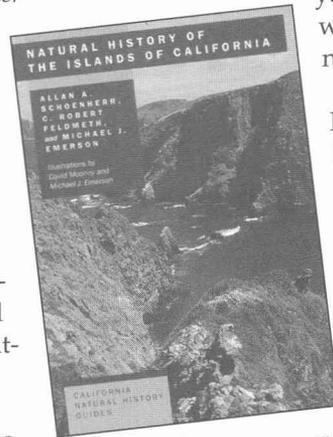
Natural History of the Islands of California, by Allan C. Schoenherr, C. Robert Feldmeth, and Michael J. Emerson. Illustrations by David Mooney and Michael J. Emerson. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999. 502 pp., \$45 (hardcover).

CALIFORNIA'S ISLANDS serve as time capsules, capturing moments along a complex evolutionary path to present-day California. They come in many shapes and forms—some are rocky, volcanic outcrops, others are peaks of sunken landmasses. Each affords a unique and often remarkable opportunity to experience and understand the geologic, natural, and cultural history that shaped California but has long since disappeared on most of the mainland. *Natural History of the Islands of California* offers a close view of the eight Channel Islands, Año Nuevo, the Farallones, and the islands of San Francisco Bay. In this hefty volume the authors provide an in-depth field guide for students, natural history buffs, and anyone who has stood on shore staring in fascination at these islands.

Lessons in science are skillfully balanced with colorful anecdotes. We learn why life-forms on islands tend to be unique, and glimpse organisms that survive only here. At San Miguel Island, off the Santa Barbara County coast, there is evidence of pygmy elephants (*Mammuthis exilis*, the "exiled mammoth"). The authors explain how various life-forms might have arrived on these isolated landmasses—by swimming, rafting, flying, floating, or, because California perches precariously on the edge of two tectonic plates, perhaps by "vicariance" (transportation by plate tectonics).

This may explain how highly sedentary animals such as the island night lizard (*Xantusia riversiana*) could have arrived on three of the Channel Islands. Its mainland counterparts now occur in Cuba and Central America. Some scientists speculate that the

island night lizard evolved on San Clemente Island tens of millions of years ago, when it was attached to northern México.



Schoenherr, Feldmeth, and Emerson also recount dramatic stories of explorers, missionaries, and the military. They shed light on questions such as why bison

roam Santa Catalina Island, who the "lone woman of San Nicolas Island" may have been, why the monument honoring Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo's expedition to explore the coastline "until its end and secret" is located on the wrong island, and whether San Miguel Island still belongs to México. Also discussed is the destruction caused by nonnative plants and animals brought by early settlers, and the difficult task now facing land managers who are trying to eradicate these species. Feral goats, pigs, and sheep, first introduced by missionaries, are out of control on some of the Channel Islands. On San Clemente Island, now managed by the U.S. Navy, feral goats have munched through native plants and dug up the earth like four-footed rototillers, creating a virtually barren landscape.

"To go ashore in a small boat, and then climb a rugged canyon and view unique plants and animals as one ascends to the summit, is to me one of the most thrilling experiences a naturalist can have," wrote one of the authors, the late Robert Feldmeth. "This book was written to allow visitors to California's islands to share that excitement and to learn something about their geology, flora, fauna, and prehistory."

Natural History of the Islands of California will pique many readers' interest, and provide them with a key for unlocking the vast field of island

natural history. As the authors state: "Californians are truly fortunate to have these world-famous islands at their doorstep. Natives and visitors alike should not miss the opportunity to explore them whenever possible." Most of California's islands are owned by public agencies, and many are accessible to the public. With this book, their exploration, be it on foot or from an armchair, will be a richer experience.

Elizabeth Riddle is associate director of the University of California Natural Reserve System.

Holistic Management: A New Framework for Decision-Making, Second Edition, by Allan Savory with Jody Butterfield. Island Press, Covelo, CA, 1999. 616 pp., \$50 (hardcover), \$30 (paper).

HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT: *A New Framework for Decision-Making* is an essential manual that should be required reading for all land and resource managers. Allan Savory has applied 40 years of experience to develop an approach to management that would enable people to make decisions that satisfy immediate needs for land resources while helping to preserve these resources for future generations.

In this new and revised edition, the scope of the process outlined in the first edition (1988) is expanded, and the concept is presented in a more simplified and concise format. Savory shows how holistic management can be applied to any resource use situation, be it range management, a farm, park, corporation, or even personal life. He outlines a process that considers social, environmental, and economic realities for short and long-term land management goals, and shows how holistic decision-making today will affect the environment in the future.

Stephanie Larson is livestock and range advisor at the University of California Cooperative Extension in Sonoma County.



JOEL ALBERT

What we're watching for in the next issue: California's island perils and pleasures . . . Endangered species chess off the Santa Barbara coast . . . feral cats on Natividad . . . a view from the Farallones . . . the big mess caused by small oil spills and what can be done . . . and more.
Coast & Ocean, Autumn 1999



Coastal Conservancy

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