

December 27, 1977
Memorandum to Gary Bales
From Vern Yaadon

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City personnel completed an archaeological evaluation of the Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation in order to determine if there were any prehistoric or historic structures to be placed on the reservation. The evaluation was conducted by the City Museum Department in 1977 and the City Museum Department is currently conducting an archaeological evaluation of the Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation. The results of this evaluation have been discussed by personnel of the City Museum Department.

Memorandum

To: Gary Bales, City Manager
From: Vern Yaadon
**Subject: Edwards - Breshini Archaeological Evaluation of
The Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation**

Dear Gary:

I have read the above report and feel as you do that it unjustly and blatantly accuses the city. My responses would be as follows.

The City of Pacific Grove has a long history of interest in the Point Pinos Lighthouse Reservation, the light station and the Coast Guard personnel with whom we have always had good relations. In 1900 the city made an agreement with the U. S. Coast Guard to build 1/2 of an 18 hole golf course for public recreation and benefit, setting a precedent towards the reservation's use as open space. Legal counsel was obtained at the Federal and City level. To the best of our knowledge all Federal and State laws then applicable were followed. In 1900 the city, recognizing the difficulty of law enforcement in continually public misuse of the Light-house Reservation along Ocean View Blvd., requested and received permission to annex the area. This immediately brought under control camping and overnight use of camping vehicles which at times numbered over 100 per night. It brought under control collecting of intertidal life and commercial usage of the reservation. In 1900 the city sought and received a license from the U. S. Coast Guard to open the Point Pinos Light Station as a public museum. Expenses for guides and upkeep have been born by the city and administration has been under the City Museum Department.

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City personnel completed nomination papers for the U. S. Coast Guard in order for this most important historical structure to be placed on the National Registry for Historic Places. In 1977 the city received permission to begin restoration of the Point Pinos Lighthouse building using CETA employees who have been directed by personnel of the City Museum Department.

The archaeological features of the Monterey Peninsula have long been known and it is generally conceded that the immediate coastal middens were chiefly processing areas for utilizing marine resources. Archaeological evidence to date appears to bear out this hypothesis including the recent archaeological excavations along the Monterey Bay areas of Monterey and Pacific Grove. Village sites of much greater importance than any conceivably associated with the Lighthouse reservation are known to have been under the present City of Monterey and along the wave terrace near Pt. Hoo south of the Coast Guard property in question. It is also assumed that other such sites are under the City of Pacific Grove between Lover's Point and Hopkins Marine Station since numerous burials have been found here at various locations and free running water was available.

The City recognizes that archaeological sites are important and regrets that vandals, and general public usage, along with natural erosion caused by native animals and storms, have degraded midden sites within the Reservation borders. It wishes to point out that much of the damage to the sites are a result of traffic conditions brought on by greatly increased visitor usage and poorly conceived parking arrangements accomplished prior to annexation.

A long term effect on the middens of the reservation has been the continued attrition brought about by massive Pacific storms. In 1960, for example, the midden site known as Mnt 130 was badly washed with considerable of its edge and surface area eroded away. Similar problems were encountered at sites 132, 127, 397 and 123. The very nature of Point Pinos itself and the characteristics of the middens indicate that Mnt 130 was much more extensive in former years. It may well have been part of Mnt 127. There is little doubt that the wave terrace of the point extended seaward. There can also be little doubt that local Indians made use of the extended headlands.

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Were the U. S. Coast Guard accept the precepts of the report, it would have to close the Reservation to all public use denying tens of thousands of people the right to hike, bike, photograph and pursue other recreational experiences such as tide pool exploration or even rock throwing to see the splash created. A sea wall would have to be created to protect against winter storms and particularly 10 year and greater storms which have in the past been sufficient to cause closing of the roadway and as written in the Lighthouse logs sufficient to destroy many feet of fencing which once ringed the reservation.

No one could deny the splendor of Point Pinos as one of the truly magnificent scenic headlands of the United States. The City of Pacific Grove had adequately demnstrated an interest and an ability to protect and enhance the features of this property for the benefit of many thousands of people. It would continue to do so were the property to be transferred to its jurisdiction.