



MORI POINT CULTURAL HISTORY



Early history

Native Americans lived just south of Mori Point in a semi-permanent village named Timigtac.

1700s The Spanish mined the limestone quarry in the area to supply whitewash for San Francisco's Presidio buildings.

Late 18th/Early 19th century—1848 Spanish and Mexican occupation. Land used for grazing cattle, woodcutting, hunting, and farming. In 1839, Rancho San Pedro, covering most of present-day Pacifica, was granted to Francisco Sanchez.

1848—1880s Following the formal transfer of California to the U.S. in 1848, the American government recognized Sanchez's land grant in 1853. Ranching and woodcutting increased in intensity.

1880s Stefano Mori, an Italian immigrant, bought part of Mori Point in the 1880s (sources disagree on exact date). Stefano built a house on the northwestern corner of the point, and the family grazed cattle and horses and raised Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and artichokes. A kitchen built to feed ranch hands and rooms built to house them eventually became Mori's Point Inn—a roadhouse for travelers between San Francisco and Half Moon Bay.

1920s During Prohibition, Jack Mori, son of Stefano, began serving alcohol at the roadhouse. Bootlegging operations soon followed. According to Doug Hart (who later operated the inn), the Moris' bootlegging days ended after a running gunfight on the beach between "Prohies" (Prohibition agents) and rumrunners. Jack was arrested in 1923, and federal agents confiscated 24,000 cases of whiskey from the family farm.

1932 Ray Mori, Stefano's other son, took over operation of the restaurant.

1940s Mori Point was the site of a gravel and sand extraction operation during World War II.

1950s Anton LaVey, future head of the Church of Satan, played organ music at Mori's Point Inn.

1953 Doug Hart, who had worked at the roadhouse since the early '20s, leased the bar and restaurant and ran Mori's Point Inn until it closed.



Mori's Point Inn, circa 1950s

1965 The inn was condemned and police led Hart away in handcuffs because he refused to leave.

March 22, 1966 The inn burned down. According to a report in the Pacifica Tribune: "Historic old Mori's, not to be outdone by the wrecker's hammer, went out in a blaze of glory all on her own Friday night. The old landmark died the way she lived—in a bawdy and spectacular fashion...."

1971 "Harold and Maude" released. The final scene of the movie, in which Harold drives off a cliff, was shot on the bluff at Mori Point.

1973 Coastside Motorcycle Club leased the area for use as a dirt track complex. Monterey pines were planted along primary bike routes.

1984 Developers proposed to construct a 275-room hotel and conference center, 60 single-family homes, and a horse show arena. This proposal is approved by the City Council in 1988. "Pacifans for Mori Point" filed a lawsuit seeking reconsideration of the project based on an incomplete environmental impact report.

September 21, 2000 Trust for Public Land purchased Mori Point, with help from California Coastal Conservancy and Pacifica Land Trust.

September 2002 Mori Point transferred to the National Park Service (NPS).

2007 NPS and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy staff and volunteers completed the first phase of restoration and trail work at Mori Point.