



# FORT BAKER CULTURAL HISTORY



## EARLY HISTORY

Coast Miwoks, a Native American people, likely used the area as an encampment.

**1775** Spanish supply vessel *San Carlos* entered San Francisco Bay in support of De Anza's expedition. The pilot drew a chart of the Bay, naming features such as Punta de San Carlos (later Lime Point).

**1838** William Richardson granted Rancho Sausalito, a 20,000-acre Mexican land grant that included Punta Cavallo (the land around present-day Fort Baker; this name first used in the Mexican era, alluding to the area's horses, "caballo").

**1850** Following transfer of Alta California to the U.S. in 1848, Lime Point Military Reservation established from Point Cavallo to Point Bonita.

## FORT BAKER BEGINNINGS

**1866** After land speculator Samuel Throckmorton bought Rancho Sausalito, he sold the Lime Point tract to the U.S. government for military use in 1866.

**1867** Army begins work on supply wharf.

**1870-1876** Earthworks of Battery Cavallo built.

**1897** Lime Point Military Reservation renamed for Col. Edward D. Baker, a U.S. Senator killed while leading troops during the Civil War.

## GROWTH OF FORT BAKER

**1897-1905** Building of concrete fortifications and improved batteries during "Endicott Period."

**1901-1910** Colonial Revival-style housing, barracks, hospital, and administrative buildings built.

**1908** Fort Baker first officially opened to the public, for viewing of Teddy Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet" as it passed through Golden Gate.

**1917-18** This was a quiet period for the post and many of the big guns were dismounted.

**1922-1931** Fort Baker was garrisoned by a caretaking detachment of Coast Artillery troops from the Presidio during this time of military peace.



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Soldiers playing baseball on the parade ground at Fort Baker, circa 1905. (GGNRA Park Archives)

## WORLD WAR II ERA

As part of harbor defense, served as headquarters for mine-planting operations around the Bay.

**1941** A station hospital built at Horse-shoe Cove.

**1946** All coast artillery around the Bay deactivated.

## POST-WWII TO NATIONAL PARK

Served as headquarters of antiaircraft missile units and 6th Region Army Air Defense Command.

**1972** Fort Baker included in legislative boundaries of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

**1973** Fort Baker listed as Historic District in National Register of Historic Places.

## NATIONAL PARK TO BASE CLOSURE

**1980** Fort Baker included in General Management Plan for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area; idea of retreat center first proposed.

**1985** Army transfers 258 acres of land to the National Park Service (NPS).

**1989** Discovery Museum opens.

**1990** Coast Guard constructs its Golden Gate Station. Also, mission blue butterfly habitat restoration begins; conservation work continues to this day.

**1995** Army announces its plans to relinquish jurisdiction of remaining acreage at Fort Baker.

**2002** Final Fort Baker parcel transferred to NPS.

## FORT BAKER'S NEW CHAPTER OF SERVICE

**1995–2000** NPS planning process. Final plan for Fort Baker adopted by NPS with certified Environmental Impact Statement in June 2000.

**2002** NPS selects Fort Baker Retreat Group to enter into exclusive negotiations to create a retreat and conference center. Also, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy begins planning for an environmental institute at Fort Baker.

**2000–Present** Infrastructure work underway, supported by Congressional funds of about \$20 million; environmental cleanup undertaken by the Army.

**Fall 2006** Groundbreaking for Cavallo Point—the Lodge at the Golden Gate.

**June 2008** Grand opening of Cavallo Point lodge.

**Fall 2008** Parks Conservancy and NPS launch Institute at the Golden Gate.