PROCESSING THE ANGEL ISLAND STATE PARK COLLECTION: EXPLORATIONS OF
NATIONALISM, MEMORY, AND PLACE

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by

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Abstract

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The Angel Island State Park Collection, located at the California State Parks Archives is comprised of documentary material recording the history of Angel Island prior to and following the island's designation as a state park. Processing the Angel Island State Park Collection involved arrangement and description, the creation of a finding aid, and the digitization of reports, histories, and photographs. The project culminated in the creation of two small exhibits highlighting significant aspects of the collection.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Lola Aguilar for her guidance and advice throughout my time in the program and supporting my thesis project of processing the Angel Island State Park Collection. I would also like to thank Larry Bishop for always being willing to assist me and answer questions about designing and fabricating museum exhibits, and digitizing photographic material. Thank you to Lee Simpson, my first reader for her guidance and feedback.

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CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

Located in the heart of the San Francisco Bay, Angel Island State Park is a premier location for recreation and for exploring historical sites that date back to the Civil War. Angel Island State Park is jointly owned and operated by California State Parks and the State of California. The island features numerous recreational opportunities including scenic hiking trails that offer 365 views of San Francisco and Marin county as well as quiet campgrounds that offer an easy escape from busy city life. In addition to recreation, the island draws visitors who are looking for an opportunity to learn about the history of the Angel Island Immigration Station and witness the living conditions faced by immigrants upon arriving in the United States.

A large portion of the documentary record that tells the story of Angel Island State Park is located at the California State Parks Archives (CSPA). CSPA was established in 2001 to preserve the documentary record of Parks for future generations of Parks employees and to provide the general public access to these important records. The Angel Island State Park Collection consists of records that document the history of the island prior to its designation as a State Park, as well as the administrative history of the Island as a State Park.

Prior to undertaking this project the collection was shelved and housed in archival boxes sitting on the shelves in the CSPA archival storage room; but it was unprocessed. Each box contained a mixture of types of records with various subject matters, making the collection difficult to utilize by both the Archives staff and
researchers. The goals of this project were to create a finding aid to allow for ease of access to the materials in the collection, encode the finding aid and make it available on the Online Archive of California, and create exhibits that highlight significant aspects of the collection with the hope that people will access it for research.

Prior to its designation as a California State Park, Angel Island served an array of functions. Starting as the location of a cattle ranch during the Mexican period, it changed to a military installation that operated as a quarantine station, then a troop staging ground, and later a missile battery starting in the early 20th century. Regardless, the island is most commonly known for its place in US immigration history. From 1910-1940 Chinese, Japanese, European, and South American immigrants were detained at the Immigration Station at Angel Island. There they faced poor living conditions, hours of interrogation, and public humiliation.

The story of United States immigration is writ large in the national myth with the renowned Lazarus poem that is inscribed in bronze at the base of the Stature of liberty, “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” The situation faced by immigrants coming into the country was often not that of open arms and acceptance, as the poem implies; for many immigrants even those from Western Europe, their arrival on US shores was met with skepticism and apprehension. This is especially true for the immigrants arriving on the West Coast at Angel Island.
The documentary collection at the California State Parks Archives preserves the records, history, and policies of Angel Island State Park and, to a lesser extent, the history of Angel Island starting with the Military’s presence on the Island. Before delving into processing the collection, I contacted various departments within state parks with records pertaining to Angel Island and requested a transfer of any documents that had not yet been transferred to the archive. The Central Records Office and the Angel Island State Park agreed to transfer their archival material. Transferring documents from the Island was done in phases, with multiple trips to the island to evaluate the material, complete the necessary paperwork, and properly pack the documents for transfer.

Processing the Angel Island Collection included a number of tasks beyond arrangement and description. I digitized all reports and photographs, compiled a map inventory, mended maps, and encoded the finding aid. At the end of the project the finding aid was made available on the Online Archive of California and the California State Parks Unit Data File.

The Exhibit for the Archives Crawl consisted of ephemera, original documents, and small artifacts highlighting the collection by focusing on the island’s evolution from a military installation into a state park. The following pages provide a brief history of Angel Island, the methodological framework used for processing the collection, and a description of the exhibits created for outreach efforts to promote CSPA and the processed collection.
CHAPTER II – A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANGEL ISLAND

This chapter explores the myriad ways institutional policies and practices on Angel Island reinforced and shaped national understanding of ethics, national identity, and collective memory. Part One, Island of the Undesirable, provides a discussion of the early history of the island, starting with an overview of the island’s use prior to and during the first wave of U.S. Army occupation of the island, 1863-1905, and ends with the establishment of the National Quarantine Station in 1891. Part Two, Way-Station for the Unwanted, begins with a discussion of the mechanism that was established on Angel Island to monitor and exclude unwanted immigrants, the National Quarantine Station. Part Two then follows the changing legal, social, and cultural environment of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that led to further immigration restrictions. The Angel Island Immigration Station is used as a case study to analyze how anti-immigrant sentiments shaped immigration policies and practices and how these policies and practices enacted on Angel Island continue to shape immigration policies today. Part Three, An Unexpected National Landmark, begins with the California State Parks Commission’s consideration of acquiring Angel Island showing how changing attitudes within California State Parks and among the general public reflected and reinforced the island’s strength as a collective memory site.

Island of the Undesirable

Prior to the U.S. Government claiming the island, it was utilized as a safe place for unlawful activities because of its removed and remote location within the bustling
bay. Angel Island was first charted by Spanish explorers in 1775 seeking shelter in the coves of the island following a violent storm that left the San Carlos nearly stranded on the shores of Ayala Cove. The captain of the vessel, explorer Juan Manual de Ayala, and his men spent a few months on the island repairing their ship and recovering from their voyage all the while biding their time by charting the island and the surrounding area. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Coast Miwok – who for centuries used the island as a hunting and fishing outpost – continued to use the island but were in competition with Spanish explorers, bootleggers, smugglers, and Russian fur traders. The island was utilized as a temporary post by many, often as a site of operations for illicit trade and other unsuitable dealings as it was outside the bounds of any legal authority. Portions of the island would continue to operate under this assumption through the nineteenth century.

Angel Island’s first official occupant arrived in the early 1800s. In 1837, the island was granted to Antonio Maria Osio by order of the Government of Mexico. Osio himself never took up permanent residence on the island, but under his authority he dramatically altered the landscape turning it into a cattle ranch, and allowing vessels traveling through the bay to come onto the island to replenish their wood and water supplies. In various early nineteenth century travel and diary accounts the island was often referred to under the name ‘Wood Island,’ as it was one of the few spots along the

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California coast line that was easily accessible for replenishing supplies of food and water.\(^3\) The island’s easy accessibility to passing ships, coupled with its notoriety as a outpost for illicit trade, the wood supply was quickly depleted.\(^4\)

The 1846 Bear Flag Revolt brought about the beginning of the end of Osio’s ownership of the island, including his established cattle ranch. President Millard Fillmore issued an executive order on November 6, 1854 “reserving ‘for public purposes’ certain lands around the bay, including Yerba Buena Island, Alcatraz Island, and Angel Island.”\(^5\) Osio contested this claim taking the case all the way to the Supreme Court where the ruling was upheld granting the land to the US Government.\(^6\) The taking of the island by the US Government marked the end of the island’s use as an outpost for illegal trade; but it continued to be the preferred site for other types of illegal activities.

The adoption of the original California State Constitution brought with it a ban on dueling. In order for this ‘gentlemen’s sport’ to continue, remote locations were needed. For those elite in the San Francisco Bay who wanted to continue to settle their scores by dueling, Angel Island became the perfect location. In his thesis *The History of Angel Island*, Creighton Fox Norris dedicated an entire chapter to the history of dueling on the island. The most famous case he describes, was met with considerable fan fair. Approximately 1,000 spectators from around the Bay traveled to the island to watch the

\(^3\) Norris, *The History of Angel Island*, 9.
\(^6\) *The U.S. Appellant vs. Antonio Mario Osio*, 64 US 273 (1837).
spectacle. This duel between San Francisco newspaper editor George P. Johnston and Senator William I. Ferguson took place on September 21, 1858. After four failed shots, Ferguson was shot in the leg and weeks later succumbed to his injuries.

During the 1800s Angel Island was not only utilized as a site for illicit and undesirable activity but also for individuals that were undesired and deemed unfit to participate in American society. Between President Filmore’s claim of the Island in 1854, and the construction of batteries and Army barracks in 1863, Angel Island was used by squatters, convicted criminals, Indians, and the diseased. While Alcatraz and San Quentin prisons were under construction a number of convicted criminals were housed on Angel Island and were used as laborers at the Angel Island Rock Quarry. Rock quarried from the island was used in the construction of Alcatraz, the California Bank building at Sansome and California Streets in San Francisco, construction of the San Francisco Presidio, and at Army installations on Angel Island. During civilian operation of the quarry, prisoners were housed in ships anchored off shore. Operations were temporarily suspended after the prisoners rebelled and a number escaped. Once Alcatraz opened prisoners were ferried to the island in the morning to work in the quarries and at the “Alcatraz garden,” and ferried back to Alcatraz in the evening.

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9 Norris, *The History of Angel Island*, 16.
On November 7, 1863 orders were issued for the erection of an Army Camp on Angel Island to assist with the defense of the San Francisco Bay during the Civil War. Batteries were placed at Point Blunt, Point Stewart, and at the newly established Camp Reynolds. It was eventually discovered that the batteries were improperly placed and would provide insufficient harm to passing enemy ships. As a result the camp was shut down in 1866 only to be reopened six months later as a general depot for receiving and distributing recruits. The majority of the soldiers who passed through Camp Reynolds were providing service in the fight against the Indians in the West. Later soldiers were processed at Camp Reynolds during the Spanish-American War. During the Spanish-American War there was general concern for the soldier’s health from fighting in the “disease ridden” Philippines, and the spread of “contagions” upon their return home. The Army established a detention camp at Quarry Point to treat and isolate returning soldiers during the period of disease incubation. Once the war was over the Detention Camp became a Discharge Camp. By 1905, 87,000 men had been discharged from Quarry Point and reintroduced into American Society.

In 1869 Dr. Edwin Bentley, Assistant Surgeon General U.S. Army wrote, Angel Island. In it he provides one of the few detailed descriptions of the Indian detention camp at Camp Reynolds. In his book he writes,

Indian prisoners which have been sent to this post from Arizona for safe keeping… were confined for a time but their squaws have been sent to them and they have been furnished with tents, clothing, and rations, and

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12 “Protection to Returning Volunteers: Camp of Detention at Angel Island to Quarter Over 1500 Men,” San Francisco Chronicle, July 1, 1899.
13 Youngling, Angel Island, 9.
they enjoy the freedom of the island and the liberty of free intercourse with the men. Indeed, I am informed that it is not an unusual procedure when Indians of note are captured from unfriendly tribes to keep them under partial restraint, until they have learned many of the customs and habits of our army, the various calls, etc., and then, either escape or are allowed to return, thus being educated to an unpardonable extent, in a way that make them a more formidable as combatants, and more incorrigible as enemies.\textsuperscript{14}

The use of Angel Island as a secluded place to house those that were considered dangerous, and uncivilized was a trend that was repeated again and again as ideas of citizenship and nationalism changed. Indians were not the only groups of people to be subject to ‘civilizing’ missions on the island. Efforts were made to re-civilize soldiers returning from their overseas posts. Angel Island was used to reintroduce soldiers into society starting with soldiers returning from the Philippines in 1899, and again with soldiers returning from the fight in the Pacific during World War II.\textsuperscript{15} Similar efforts were also made to civilize detained immigrants by missionaries who were stationed on, or made frequent trips to the island. From the time the U.S. government took possession of Angel Island it became a viable detention site for anyone that the U.S. Government wanted removed from the general populous under the auspices of protection and security.

Way-Station for the Unwanted

The Angel Island Immigration Station opened in 1910 marking a new era of immigration policies and reform. The policies and practices utilized at the Immigration

\textsuperscript{14} Edwin Bentley, \textit{Angel Island 1869}, 7.

\textsuperscript{15} The Angel Island State Park Collection contained a number of War Department Issued Pamphlets and booklets titled \textit{Information for Soldiers going back to Civilian Life}, dating from 1899 to 1944.
Station reflected hierarchical conceptions of race that were socially, politically, and legally enforced during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In the build up to and in the wake of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act the nation was fraught with tension. The uncertain job market and steep economic decline brought about the rise of nativism and the construction of an American national identity that was rooted in the Western tradition. By its very nature, American national identity included individuals of the white race – specifically those of Western European ethnicity – and excluded immigrants from other races and ethnicities that fell outside of this scope.\(^\text{16}\)

The rise of nativism and nationalism in the mid to late nineteenth century on the West Coast varied from East Coast rhetoric. US identity politics on the West Coast focused on anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiment, as opposed to anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiments that were prevalent on the East Coast during the same period. This new conception of American-ness was reinforced through legal restrictions on immigration and the unequal treatment faced by immigrants arriving in the US. Angel Island highlights the contradiction within the national myth which celebrates America as a melting pot and a nation of immigrants, yet enacted polices of entrance and exclusion that only allowed ease of entrance for upper class Northern Europeans.\(^\text{17}\)

The history of immigration through the lens of Angel Island is particularly important since the institutional practices that were created there as the result of


legislation and interaction between immigration officials and immigrants continues to inform immigration policies today. The unequal treatment of immigrants arriving in the U.S. that was based on race and economic status was a brutal and humiliating experience for many. For Asian immigrants, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act revoking the right to become naturalized citizens further devalued and dehumanized them by denying them equal participation in the nation.

The following discussion provides the historical context that led to immigration restrictions and the creation of the Angel Island Immigration Station. The discussion starts with the development of a legal framework that was created to restrict immigration and the social and political climate that pushed for the legislation. It then delves into a discussion of the administrative practices at the Immigration Station, how those practices were unequally wielded, and how immigrants responded to their detention on the island.

To fully understand the polices and practices that were utilized and the effects they had on immigrant communities on the West Coast it is important to understand the social, political, and legal framework that allowed for this institutionalized racial injustice. Prior to World War I immigration to the US was virtually unrestricted. Immigration restrictions resulted from a number of factors; the main culprits being economic instability and the rise of nativism. Following the economic decline in the wake of the Gold Rush, white citizens on the West Coast were rallied by fears of losing their jobs to immigrants who were willing to work for lower wages. This insecurity

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resulted in the rise of nativism, which was responsible for a series of racially motivated attacks against Chinese workers up and down the West Coast and the passage of anti-Chinese legislation. Starting in the 1850s laws were passed aimed at limiting Chinese ability to procure housing, earn a living, and retain customs. Examples of laws include San Francisco’s 1870 Cubic Air Ordinance which forbade people of Chinese descent to rent rooms with fewer than 500ft of air per person; the 1870 Sidewalk Ordinance prohibited Chinese people from using poles to carry laundry; and the 1873 Queue Ordinance required Chinese men to cut their hair short. The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act (Exclusion Act), which barred entry to Chinese laborers but allowed Chinese merchants, tradesmen, students, and travelers entry, laid the foundation for further immigration restrictions. In the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act immigration was further restricted on the grounds of health, national origin, and class. Erica Lee argues that, “[i]mmigration law thus emerges as a dynamic site where ideas about race, immigration, citizenship and nation were recast.”

From the 1880s through the 1930s many histories of California included a section on the economic, social, and moral impact of the Chinese on the state. In Rockwell Hunt and Nellie Sánchez’s *A Short History of California* first published in 1929, they argued that although anti-Chinese legislation was based on racial prejudice and political

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20 Lee, *At America’s Gate*, 7.
21 Sections discussing issues surrounding Chinese immigration were included in Hubert Howe Bancroft’s seventh volume of his *History of California*, similar unfavorable mention can be found in Selig Perlman’s *A Theory of the Labor Movement*, and Woodrow Wilson’s *History of the American People*. 
ambition, the overall effect on the nation had been overwhelmingly positive.\textsuperscript{22} In the concluding paragraph in their chapter titled “The Chinese Question” they state, “[t]he history of Chinese immigration is not a record in which the Californian can take unmixed pride,… yet few thoughtful students will now deny the contention that exclusion has in fact been of distinct benefit to the state and the nation.”\textsuperscript{23} During this time period ideas that the Chinese were incapable of assimilation, were morally corrupt, and were swindlers and thus necessarily needed to be excluded from gaining full citizenship and participating in national life were common among historians and the general public.

The rise of anti-immigrant sentiment that rose after the decline of the Gold Rush came to be institutionalized beginning with the policies put in place first by the Marine Hospital Service and later under the more expansive direction of the U.S. Public Health Service. In the 1880s and early 1890s Quarantine Stations were were opened to record, treat, and keep out infectious diseases. These stations aimed to protect the American people from the spread of infectious diseases but, the policies and practices implemented at these stations had obvious anti-immigrant undertones.\textsuperscript{24}

In 1891, the Angel Island Quarantine Station opened for operation. Located in Hospital Cove, later renamed Ayala Cove, the station was initially a port where ships suspected of carrying infectious disease were isolated for inspection. During its sixty-


six years of operation the Station was comprised of approximately fifty buildings including a 400-bed detention barracks, a hospital, laboratories, a disinfecting plant, and quarters for employees. The Quarantine Station at Angel Island is significant because it marked the first institutional attempt at excluding immigrants and it was the first institution on the island to inspect and detain Chinese and other immigrants that did not fit with the homogenized view of what it meant to be American.

In *Contagious Divides*, Nayan Shah analyzes the language and technologies of medical science used by government bureaucrats that articulated, through public health reform movements, racial, class, gender and sexual boundaries. He argues, at the turn of the century “‘health’ and ‘cleanliness’ were embraced as integral aspects of American identity; and those who were perceived to be ‘unhealthy,’ such as Chinese men and women, were considered dangerous and inadmissible to the American nation.” The Angel Island Quarantine Station played a significant part in enforcing and regulating policies of exclusion based on ethnically biased types of diseases and their corresponding treatments. Prior to the opening of the Immigration Station ships carrying foreign goods and passengers were evaluated, sanitized and treated at the Angel Island Quarantine Station. Upon their arrival passengers were separated by race – Chinese, Japanese, and White – then evaluated, treated, fed and housed in separate quarters. Under the guise of protecting the health of the public unwanted immigrants of perceived low class and race were denied entry. This racial separation was also used at the

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Immigration Station with the addition of gender separation. Interestingly soldiers retuning from the War in the Philippines in 1899 were not treated at the Quarantine Station but were treated in a separate hospital at East Garrison (Fort McDowell).26

Anti-immigration legislation disproportionately affected immigrants arriving on the West coast. Prior to the Exclusion Act approximately one percent of the those seeking to emigrate into the US were excluded, mainly due to an illness or disability. During the duration of its operation Ellis Island immigration officials excluded approximately five percent of immigrants, the majority of whom were almost immediately landed.27 In addition, the length of detention on Ellis Island was significantly shorter, lasting hours to days, as compared to the detention faced by immigrants arriving at Angel Island, which could last months to years. The situation at Angel Island was vastly different. The exact number of deportations is not available, partially due to the loss of documentation at the Immigration Station because of a fire in the administration building; however, estimates for the percentages of immigrants detained at Angel Island is approximately eighty percent.28 Immigrants arriving in first class cabins, and of European decent were either landed immediately, avoiding

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26 July 1, 1899 “Protection to Returning Volunteers: Camp of Detention at Angel Island to Quarter Over 1500 Men” San Francisco Chronicle: “There will be no risks of disease taken with the volunteers when they return from the Philippines. The presence of the plague in the ports of Asia has roused the department to take action toward preventing its presence here through the medium of the returning troops, and to that end there is now being established on Angel Island a ‘camp of detention’ for such regiments as are found to have been exposed to contagion.”


28 Werner, Passages to America, 125
inspection altogether or were briefly detained and landed hours later.²⁹

By the time the Angel Island Immigration Station opened in 1910 the poor treatment of Chinese Immigrants was well established. After passage of the Exclusion Act Chinese immigrants were detained in a Pacific Mail Steamship Company shed in San Francisco. The conditions of the ‘detention shed’ were deplorable and the facility was inadequate for stopping escape and thwarting the passage of coaching information—information immigrants needed to pass interrogation. In 1902, the Commissioner-General of Immigration declared that the detention shed was so “disgraceful—cramped in dimensions, lacking in every facility for cleanliness and decency that it is necessary to insist upon an immediate remodeling thereof.”³⁰ The construction of the Immigration Station at Angel Island was envisioned as a state of the art facility with modern amenities, that would also be remote enough so as to ensure the validity of the immigrants testimonies, and thwart escape. Yet, Erika Lee and Judy Yung note that a “1909 government inspection found that the facility suffered from a long list of deficiencies, including shoddy construction, a lack of fire protection, and a limited water supply.”³¹ Nothing was done to remedy these deficiencies and they would eventually cause the closure of the Immigration Station in 1940.

In *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*, Erika Lee and Judy Yung provide a thorough overview of the disparity between the treatment of immigrants of

different races, classes, and genders. Upon arrival at Angel Island all immigrants were subject to medical inspections. The inspections were increasingly invasive based on class and race. First class passengers arriving at the island received a cursory examination and then were free to board a ferry and allowed to land.\textsuperscript{32} The other immigrants were immediately separated into groups first by gender and then within each gender by their racial designation White, Chinese, or Japanese. They would remain in these groupings for the duration of their stay. Immigration officials took great care in maintaining separation between the groups with no communication allowed until they were deported or admitted into the country.\textsuperscript{33} Third class passengers, Chinese, and Japanese immigrants, faced the harshest medical inspections at times requiring further tests and closer scrutiny.\textsuperscript{34}

Chinese immigrants, travelers, and returning citizens undeniably faced the harshest treatment at Angel Island. Lee and Yung state, “seventy-six percent of all Chinese applicants were ferried over to the island, compared to only 38 percent of non-Asians.”\textsuperscript{35} In addition, Chinese immigrants “had the highest rates of detention compared to other groups, made up 70 percent of the entire detainee population, and their average stay was for two to three weeks, the longest of all immigrant groups.”\textsuperscript{36} The treatment that they faced at the station by immigration officials and interrogators was also much harsher. At any given time the station employed six Chinese interpreters and usually

\textsuperscript{32} Lee and Yung, \textit{Angel Island}, 32.
\textsuperscript{33} Lee and Yung, \textit{Angel Island}, 34.
\textsuperscript{34} Lee and Yung, \textit{Angel Island}, 37-38.
\textsuperscript{35} Lee and Yung, \textit{Angel Island}, 70.
\textsuperscript{36} Lee and Yung, \textit{Angel Island}, 70.
only one Japanese interpreter, this was because in an effort to make sure interpreters were not providing information to assist the immigrants a new interpreter was brought in every hour as the interrogation continued.\(^{37}\) In *At America’s Gate*, Erika Lee argues that the harsh treatment faced by the Chinese was due to the fact that Government officials had considered it “their duty to find reasons for the exclusion of as many Chinese as possible.”\(^{38}\)

Japanese immigrants were the second largest immigrant group to arrive at Angel Island. Lee and Yung estimate that 85,000 Japanese immigrants passed through Angel Island and less than one percent were excluded or deported.\(^{39}\) Similar to the Chinese, Japanese immigrants were subject to harsh immigration laws. After passage of the Exclusion Act, Japan negotiated the Gentleman’s Agreement in 1908 that halted the issuance of passports to laborers. Nearly all Japanese people arriving at Angel Island were detained for weeks or months depending on medical treatment or waiting for results on appeal decisions to exclude them.\(^{40}\) The Japanese immigrants who faced the highest degree of scrutiny were Japanese “picture brides.” Lee and Yung note that as a result of fears of an influx of Japanese prostitutes, US immigration stations were ordered “to be on the lookout for Japanese prostitutes and anyone ‘likely to become a public charge.’”\(^{41}\) Like nearly all of the other immigrants who faced detention at Angel

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\(^{38}\) Lee, *At America’s Gate*, 69

\(^{39}\) Lee and Yung, *Angel Island*, 113.

\(^{40}\) Lee and Yung, *Angel Island*, 114.

\(^{41}\) Lee and Yung, *Angel Island*, 117.
Island the Japanese despised being treated like prisoners and convicts but compared to other Asian immigrant groups few Japanese immigrants were turned away. Although French travelers and immigrants were not typically subject to detention and harsh medical inspections, an account by a French traveler, Jean Gontard, provides an account of the difficulties faced upon arriving as a second or third class passenger. Upon arrival at Angel Island Gontard and his wife were detained and were subject to medical inspections, which he recalls were a particularly difficult ordeal for his wife Bertha Gontard. In his travel writing he describes the island as follows, “The Golden Gate! Angel Island!... What bitter derision is contained in these words, so engaging in appearance! *Latet anguis in herba!* (A snake lies concealed in the grass!)”

Detention and inspection at Angel Island, though more harsh and prolonged for certain immigrants, was a difficult ordeal for all who were processed at the station. Immigration policies relating to entrance and exclusion that were implemented, and refined, at Angel Island helped to reaffirm US national identity. The standards for determining who could enter and potentially become US nationals, and who would be subject to exclusion and deportation, continues to influence US immigration policies and practices to this day.

Soon after the closure of the Angel Island Immigration Station the memory of the prison-like conditions that immigrants faced there were quickly forgotten. However, these memories were not completely lost and are now part of the restored and preserved

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site at what is now Angel Island State Park and within the documents of the Angel Island State Park Collection.

An Unexpected National Historic Landmark

The California State Parks Commission, the governing body that approves new accessions and park policy, began investigating the possible acquisition of Angel Island in 1948. The process halted because of concerns of cost of operation, preservation and maintenance issues, and transportation both on the island and to and from it. In 1954 the Commission approved the proposal put forth by Commissioner Charles Kasch, at the behest of a number of citizen groups, for the acquisition of Ayala Cove (at the time Hospital Cove). In 1962 the Army decommissioned the Nike Missile sites on the south end of the island, turning the remaining lands held by the military over to California State Parks.

From the time the immigration station closed in 1949 to the rediscovery of the Chinese poetry in the men’s barracks in 1974, the Angel Island Immigration Station was effectively erased from American historical consciousness. That is not to say that people forgot that there was an Immigration Station at Angel Island but, that they forgot what the Immigration Station meant to the thousands of immigrants who passed through its gates. Amos Funkenstein argues,

We naturally ascribe historical “consciousness” and “memory” to human collectives – family and tribe, nation and state. Nations are meant to remember their heroes “forever”; to perpetuate the memory of a person means to embed it in the collective memory, which forgets only failures and sins.43

That the Chinese poems had to be rediscovered by a park ranger who as a result was able to gather community support to save the remaining structures at North Garrison from demolition, highlights how national historical consciousness allows not only for the forgetting of individual failures and sins but also governmental and societal failures and sins.

In the early phases of the investigation there were worries about the costs of maintenance of structures, transportation, water supply, and the sites viability as a State Park or recreational area.44 In November 1948 Commissioner Kasch formally submitted a report upon the acquisition of Angel Island for consideration of the Commission. The acquisition was denied on the grounds that operations would be too costly.45 In 1954 Commissioner Kasch submitted another proposal for the acquisition of Angel Island, this time for a portion of the island, Hospital Cove (Ayala Cove).46 This time it was approved by the Commission and plans were put in motion to evaluate the “historical area” of the island.47 It was not until the 1960s that the island, with the exceptions of Point Blunt and Point Stewart, was completely operated by CSP. Angel Island’s

47 It is not clear from the description provided as to what they were considering the “historical area.”
designation as a State Park and not a State Historic Park reflects the initial vision of the park that was dictated by the creators of the Angel Island General Plan.

From CSP’s acquisition of Ayala Cove in 1954 to the discovery of the Chinese Poetry in the dilapidated Men’s Detention Barracks in 1974 Angel Island State Park operations were focused on turning the park into a premier recreational attraction. *Report and Recommendations on Angel Island: 1769-1966*, contracted by Parks and written by Marshal McDonald and Associates, an architecture and planning firm, provided recommendations that the park followed into the 1970s. The report, published the same year the National Historic Preservation Act was passed, included a historical overview of the entire park and provided recommendations for interpretation, exhibit spaces, and ways to enhance recreational opportunities on the island. In the report they state that, “because of its central location in regard to the population of the metropolitan area, [it] must be used to its maximum potential for recreation purposes” and that, “historical interpretation and the preservation of the historical sites and buildings on Angel Island are only one aspect of the general recreation pattern.”

To accommodate the projected 15,000 people a day, Marshal McDonald associates recommended preserving certain aspects of the built landscape and the removal of others.

For North Garrison McDonald and Associates recommended that the site “should be cleared of all structures except the two original barracks.”

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recommended that the barracks buildings should then be used to interpret the events that occurred from 1900 to 1910 leading to the opening of the Immigration Station and the other barracks be used to interpret the Indian story of the island. In 1966 no plans were made to interpret the immigrant experiences on the island. The report was written solely to maintain the federal stipulation that when Angel Island was developed as a state park it needed to be a historical park. The interpretative focus provided by the report highlighted the American development of the State and the development and growth of the Federal Government, especially where sites could be intertwined with recreation on the island rather than a complete history of the site.

In the 1960s and the 1970s the removal of historic structures from Park lands was widespread. A number of buildings were removed during this period to make room for recreational amenities such as campgrounds, and picnic areas. In the early 1970s, following the recommendations of the McDowell report the eight Immigration Official cabins where destroyed. The eight cabins were designed by famous California architect Julia Morgan. Richard Longstreth argues that in cultural landscapes studies key components that are significant to the physical character as well as insights on its evolution have typically been ignored. The recommendations proposed in the 1966 McDowell report obviously ignored the significance the site as a cultural landscape.

In 1966 the memories of immigrants of Angel Island were not considered an important or even necessary part of the national historic consciousness. Starting with its

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creation in 1983 the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation sought to create public awareness of the historical significance of the Immigration and the preservation issues faced at the site. Examples of their work included the creation of new museum exhibits to be placed in the station and the creation of Felicia Lowe’s documentary *Carved in Silence*. Their efforts were successful in bringing Angel Island back into American historical consciousness. The acceptance of the nomination of Angel Island Immigration Station as a National Historic Landmark in 1997 supports historical memory theorists in their assertion that memories are constructions that reflect the needs and wants of a particular time. In his book Robert Barde states,

That Angel Island has exerted this power over our imagination is, in some ways, a natural occurrence. Our historical memory easily ignores physical objects that are no longer present in favor of ones that are. In other ways, our preoccupation with Angel Island’s Immigration Station is a ‘socially constructed’ phenomenon, the product of the political process of generating interest-and funds- to rehabilitate what remains of the Immigration Station. The many community groups and scholars involved in this process know the importance of having a reference point that can be seen, visited, touched, and easily invoked. To stand in the Detention Barracks dormitory and read the heart-rending poems incised in its walls is a powerful experience, one that captures the Chinese Exclusion Act and its successors, discriminatory laws in force from 1882 to 1943.

The rediscovery of the poetry and subsequent restoration of the remaining Immigration Station buildings allowed for the Immigration Stations inclusion into the official national memory. New legislation continues to be passed to further restoration efforts and maintain the site so that there can be a physical site to remember the trials and

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52 Lee and Young, *Angel Island*, 308.
53 Lee and Young, *Angel Island*, 308.
tribulations that Chinese, Japanese, and other unwanted immigrants faced upon arriving on the shores of Angel Island.

In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson defines a nation as an “imagined political community” and argues that “nation was conceived in language, not in blood, and that one could be ‘invited into’ the imagined community.”\(^5\) Nowhere is this more apparent than in the history of Angel Island. The immigration station at Angel Island is at once a symbol of America’s racist policies of exclusion and dismissal from the “imagined community,” and is a National Heritage Site officially denoting it and the memories of the immigrants who faced exclusion into the official national historic memory and the “imagined community.”

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\(^5\) Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 145.
CHAPTER III – ARCHIVAL PROCESSING METHODOLOGY

History of The California State Parks Archives

The California State Parks Archives (CSPA) was established in 2001 following an agreement between former CSPA Archivist Victoria Yturralde and the California State Archives (CSA) - the original repository for California State Parks archival material - allowing for the transfer and establishment of an independent repository for Parks records. California State Parks (CSP) brokered the agreement with the CSA to gain control over accessions and overall collections management. The material kept under CSA administration appropriately aligned with the mission and purpose of that archive but did not correlate well with CSP’s mission and daily operations. As a result, some material was unfortunately lost or discarded under CSA care. Additionally, a few park collections remain incomplete due to CSA policy, which requires that collections processed at the State Archives remain in that repository. As part of the agreement unprocessed park unit collections were transferred to the newly established CSPA. At the same time the CSPA collections were growing, with material being accessioned into the Archive from park units and division offices, including Angel Island State Park.

The bulk of the holdings at the CSPA consist of reports, maps, histories, bibliographies, correspondence, and records. These pertain to the growth of the California Skate Parks system as a whole, as well as individual park units. The types of collections in the CSPA holdings include special collections, stewardship collections, and division histories. Holdings at CSPA primarily consist of documents created by
parks staff and contractors. The purpose of the CSPA is to preserve the documentary record of Parks for future generations of Parks employees, and more importantly, for the benefit of the public Parks serves. The mission of the Archive is as follows,

The Archives cares for and provides access to documents that tell the story of the State Park System in California and the Department's stewardship collections. The mission of the Archives is to acquire, organize, preserve, and provide access to the cumulative body of reference documents and electronic data required for effective stewardship of the full range of natural and cultural resources present in the State Park System.  

Processing collections allows the Archivist to gain intellectual and physical control over the material and facilitate access to the collection. Collections are processed in accordance with SAA Best Practices, Describing Archives a Content Standard (DACS), and following the theoretical principles defined by Mark A. Green and Dennis Meissner in their seminal article “More Product Less Process.” Each processed collection includes an administrative information and history, date range and bulk dates of the material, a descriptive summary, related collections, the scope and content of the collection, series descriptions, and a box inventory. Most recent processed collections also include two appendices: a map index, and a photographic material thumbnail index to allow for searchability of those items without having to pull this material from the collection.

The CSPA is a government archival institution, responsible for the management

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of the institutional records as well as the history of California's natural and cultural resources. Daily operations at CSPA include processing collections, scanning and uploading reports, processing research requests, and managing incoming material. All material accessioned into the collections is rehoused and shelved for long term preservation until the material can be processed, folded, and entered into a finding aid. Since the Archives’ establishment only a select number of collections have been processed. Typically, State Historic Parks are given priority over other Park unit designations due to request demands. The Angel Island State Park collection was chosen despite its designation as a State Park due to the Park's noteworthy historical significance and for the potential research value of the collection’s holdings.

The following chapter provides an overview of the methodology and timeline used for processing the collection, and includes a description of implemented preservation policies and practices, concluding with a section discussing the platforms utilized for making the collection accessible.

Accession and Appraisal

The Angel Island State Park Collection was selected because of its research value and size. The Collection consists of thirty-two linear feet of material making it one of the largest unit collections at the CSPA. The Island’s popularity as a destination for recreation coupled with its historic uses as a military installation, Quarantine Station, and Immigration Station make it a popular collection to research by historians, archaeologists, interpreters, State Parks employees, and the general public. Prior to processing the collection, the collection’s contents were almost completely unknown.
Some of the interesting discoveries made while processing include an assortment of oral histories conducted by Parks interpreters and historians, copies of plans for cabins designed by famous California architect Julia Morgan, original copies of ship plans used at the Quarantine Station, and “disinfected” tags from 1889. The majority of the collection consists of documents created during the park era, 1953 to the present. These documents highlight the Park’s history and development, and the changes that were made as a result of shifting policies and differing perspectives on the Island’s significance as a CSP resource. From the 1950s-1970s the park was marketed as a premier site for recreation and escape from city life. The 1974 rediscovery of the poetry carved in to the Men’s Barracks at the Immigration Station shifted the primary focus away from the islands natural resources to its cultural resources. The remnants of the poetry renewed the public and the CSP’s interest in the Island’s history and its significance as a National Historic Landmark.

After selecting the Angel Island State Park Collection, the archivist researched the history and geography of the Island. This initial research proved invaluable. The Park consists of four main sites — Ayala Cove, North Garrison, East Garrison, and West Garrison — each with a unique history, and different periods of construction, operation, and use.\(^{58}\) Understanding the history and location of each site made the first stages of

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\(^{58}\) During the preliminary research the archivist discovered that place names on the Island changed with relative frequency into the 1970s. For example: Ayala Cove’s was at various times known as Winslow Cove, and Hospital Cove. Creating a record of place names made arranging the material swift and accurate.
processing more efficient and productive.

The next step was to research and contact all divisions and units that create or collect documentation relating to Angel Island State Park. The repositories contacted included California State Parks Central Records, the Bay Area District Office, Northern Service Center, and Angel Island State Park. No response was ever received from the Bay Area District, and the Northern Service Center had transferred all necessary material to the archive as of June of 2015 and had no new material to transfer. Central Records transferred approximately five linear feet of material, the bulk of which was correspondence. Those contacted at the Angel Island State Park were initially very responsive and cooperative but in the end the transfer fell through.

The material transferred from Central Records dated from 1952-2003. Because of different policies and standards of care used by records management professionals, the material housed in Central Records is not stored using archival standards of best practices. The documents transferred were hole punched and stored in acidic two prong folders. In addition, maps were stored folded and stuffed in acidic accordion folders. With the transfer of these records the archivist was able to rehouse all material, arrange them in chronological order, and relocate the documents to a more stable environment.

Initial contact with the Park, regarding the transfer of historic two dimensional materials, seemed promising. The State Park Interpreter I at Angel Island State Park, Casey Dexter-Lee manages the collections on top of all of her other duties as an interpreter. She was initially very receptive to having someone from the Archives out to the island to evaluate the contents of their documentary collection and assist with
creating a plan to transfer the material to CSPA. The transfer of this material is important because of the possibility they face for further damage and deterioration.

In 2010 the Archives Room located at Angel Island flooded. The problem was the result of a roof leak directly above the room. Parks’ staff discovered the problem on April 16, 2010 after forcibly opening the door which had swollen shut from the amount of water that had accumulated. As a result, there was extensive damage to the material caused by the moisture and mold that had accumulated on the material. The material has since been evaluated and stabilized by a conservator. However, the documents are now housed in a storage room in the Immigration Station Barracks that experiences large fluctuations in temperature and humidity, and direct light exposure. The preservation concerns for these records are considerable.

After an initial trip to the island to survey the collections and create a brief inventory, attempts to contact Casey were unsuccessful. The Archivist was forced to move forward with the project and with the hope that the material will be transferred and incorporated into the collection in the future.

Once all of the possible accessions were secured the archivist started the process of appraising the records in the collection. Appraisal is the process of evaluating the contents of the collection to assess the value of the material to be retained. Records are accessioned into the Archives either one document at a time, or in shipments of records. The items that are shipped to the Archives typically arrive in boxes full of documents absent of any easily identifiable arrangement or simple box inventory. Usually they are packaged to fit the greatest amount of material into the fewest number of boxes,
resulting in a mix of formats, and types of records in each box.

The disarray of the original collection, the result of hurried shipments and numerous accessions, made the task of appraising the contents difficult. Instead of assessing each box individually the archivist first surveyed the collection and created a box inventory. This process is completed in order to become familiar with the contents of the collection to make informed decisions during appraisal. To make the job of appraisal even more efficient the archivist sorted the documents into rough series. When that was completed the archivist discovered that there were a significant number of duplicate copies of reports, and approximately four linear feet of photocopied articles and chapters from books. CSPA policy dictates that two copies of any given record are retained. When more than two copies of a record were discovered their conditions were assessed and evaluated and the two best copies were retained.

The discussion about what to do with the photocopied research material was more difficult to assess. A number of factors were considered when deciding what to do with this material. First, the archivist had to research who made the copies and how they were accessioned into the collection. It was discovered that the documents originated from the Office of Interpretation (OIS) from that department’s research files and were added to the collection in 2001. After consultation with the CSPA Archivist II, Lola Aguilar, it was decided that the copies should be removed from the collection. Two important considerations that led to the decision to remove the material were the “Idea of Uniqueness” and the relevance of the content of the copies to the collection as a whole. In James O’Toole’s 1994 article he discusses the various factors used to denote
the “uniqueness” of archival records and the usefulness of this concept for theory and practice. The attributes that make a record unique according to O’Toole are the singular nature of the record, information it contains, the ways they were produced, or their nature as a whole.59

The copies contained in this collection are not one of a kind, they are reproduced from other text that exist elsewhere. Additionally, it is not clear how these documents were used by OIS, if ever. There are employees at CSP that are notorious for printing and photocopying articles and other sources of information that contain material that interests them. Similarly, the majority of the material was published between 1975 and 1990 rendering the contents out of date. For these reasons the photocopied material was removed during appraisal.

At the end of the Acquisition and Appraisal phase of the project the size of the collection was reduced from 41 liner feet of material to 32 liner feet. For this phase of the project it took approximately one week to complete the box inventory, but the accession phase lasted approximately two months to become fully resolved. Since, the archivist was not sure about the Park accession, she decided to move forward with arranging and describing the collection.

Arrangement and Description

The primary purpose of the archiving efforts at CSPA are threefold, gain

intellectual and physical control of the collection, preserve the material in the collection, and make the collections accessible. The collection was arranged and described in accordance with Society of American Archivists (SAA) best practices, Describing Archives a Content Standard (DACS), and the Online Archives of California’s guidelines. Other factors — including CSPA’s guidelines and practices, existing CSPA finding aids, as well as additional influential work on archival methodology and practices — were also considered. Of special consideration were the principles dictated by Mark A. Green and Dennis Meissner in their article “More Product Less Process.”

As previously stated the material accessioned into the Archives typically arrives in a state of disarray absent of any useable or identifiable original order. One of the most difficult aspects of processing the collection was arranging the material into organized functional series. For this reason, Sue Breakell’s description of the archivist, and most importantly the archives’ function was used to guide the arrangement of the collection. Breakell states,

The archivist’s function is at once more important than ever and more devolved, with users wanting their own control and ownership of their personalized research resources…The better the archivist can understand the context of the user’s interaction with archives, as well as the context of the archives they want to see, the better we can both engage with discussion and accommodate the changing needs of our audiences.


This concept was critical since the series order and document arrangement is not always obvious. Having a purpose, such as user interaction, to guide decisions about arrangement kept the process consistent throughout the arrangement of the entire collection.

The purpose of arrangement and description is to make the documents in the collection accessible for both the archivist and the researcher, and to gain physical and intellectual control of the material. Accessibility in this case refers to ease of location—the ability to search for and then physically locate the material. For the purposes of this project arrangement is defined as the process in which the archivist gains physical and intellectual control of the records by, “imposing an external and artificial structure on archival materials, usually according to hierarchical levels.” The definition of description used for this project is the one put forth in DACS. Description is defined as, “the creation of an accurate representation of the archival material by the process of capturing, collating, analyzing, and organizing information that serves to identify archival material and to explain the context and records systems that produced it, as well as the results of these processes.” Arrangement and description are intertwined processes that complement each other. The material in the Angel Island Collection was arranged first, then a folder description was assigned to each grouping, with the full description resulting in the creation of the Guide to the Angel Island State Park

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63 Laura A. Millar, *Archives Principles*, 146.
Collection. Throughout the process the documents were arranged in a systematic way that could be easily translated into a descriptive finding aid. The following pages describe the full process that was used to arrange and describe the holdings.

Though the documents are often unwieldy when shipped to the archive; the accessioning process and the state of the records does have bearing on how the collection is processed. Many archival theorists proclaim that original order, provenance, and *respect des fonds* are the core principles on which arrangement and the archives meaning are based.\(^6^5\) Original order is the original intellectual and physical arrangement created by the records original creator with consideration to how the documents were filed, used, and their date of creation.\(^6^6\) Original order is only practical if the records ‘original order’ is maintained during transfer from the creator to the archive.

Archival provenance is based on the history or biography of the creator: “the person or organization producing the records determines their content.”\(^6^7\) Provenance is typically used when processing an individual's collection. The principle that guides the management and arrangement of records and archives at the CSPA is *respect des fonds*. *Respect des fonds* is a combination of the two previous principles. The two concepts that define *respect des fonds* is defined by Laura A. Miller as, “first, archives from

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\(^6^6\) Laura A. Millar, *Archives Principles*, 97.

different creating agencies should not be intermingled: and second, that the original order in which materials were created and used should be respected.” The majority of the records and archives that are delivered to CSPA arrive in banker boxes that are haphazardly labeled and contain documents that may have at some point been filed or arranged in a functional manner during their use at their originating institution, but no longer possess the integrity of their original order.

From the initial box inventory, nine series were easily identifiable. These series were: Correspondence, Interpretation, Histories, Publications, Ephemera, Photographic Material, Cartographic Material, Reports, and Restricted Material. The series were recognized in accordance with DACS and were selected to correspond to other finding aids for CSPA collections. DACS is a cataloging standard officially approved by the Society of American Archivists in 2004. The guide incorporates international and regional standards - General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)) and the International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families (ISAAR (CPF)) - creating a distilled user friendly guide. With the internet increasingly becoming the main source of reference for academics and the general public, the SAA revised DACS in 2013 to include information and descriptive standards specific to web technologies. These include the Web, XML, and EAD to assist archivist and encourage them to put their collections and finding aids on the web.

According to DACS there are two acceptable levels of description. Single-level

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69 *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*, 137.
description, requires the minimum number of DACS elements, and multi-level description describes archival materials at multiple levels. At CSPA a multi-level description approach is used for all processed collections. The finished finding aid must include all of the elements required for a single-level description of the collection as well as description at the series, subseries, folder and occasionally the item level.

Referring back to the initial survey and box inventory created following the accession process, it appeared that the records were boxed in the order they were accessioned. The records in this collection were accessioned over time starting in 2001. Each box contained an assortment of types of documents — correspondence, ephemera, publications, etc. — and usually varied in subject matter. For example, correspondence was found in boxes 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 30, and 48. This inventory was then used to create a processing plan for the first first phase of arrangement which included; series identification, rough sorting, and separation of oversized material, media, and photographs.

The documents originated from the Park Unit, Office of Interpretive Services, Northern Service Center, Archaeology, History and Museum Division’s “Dungeon files,” and Central Records. The records from the Park, OIS and Northern Service Center were boxed in their original folders with labels identifying their creator. The OIS documents were the only records in the unprocessed collection that had any semblance of order but, it was not maintained for a number of reasons.

Retaining the documents arranged in the original order would have made locating specific records difficult for the archivist and researcher. Additionally, the majority of
the records consisted of photocopies and were discarded during appraisal. Lastly, the documents were arranged into broad themes but were not arranged within those themes. For example, there were five folders with the label “Immigration Station;” each folder contained a mix of materials ranging from articles to maps carrying various publication dates. The materials in the folders were not arranged alphabetically, chronologically, or even by size. With the initial nine series identified, the material was removed from its original box and separated into these series setting aside the remaining material for later identification and sorting. In addition, any maps or documents with obvious preservation needs were set aside for later evaluation.

Documents identified as belonging to the restricted series were treated with special care. The restricted series consists of reports containing culturally sensitive material, and archaeological and cultural site maps. Access to these records is restricted to CSP Cultural Resources staff and researchers who receive permission from the division or CSPA archivist. Any duplicate restricted material — beyond two copies — is shredded to preserve confidentiality.

Upon completing the initial sorting of the nine initial series, the largest series, Reports and Correspondence, were arranged and foldered to create space for further processing. The Reports were arranged alphabetically - articles were not disregarded as is normally the case - to correspond to the California State Parks Unit Data File (UDF), and are located in Box 38:01 through Box 55:06. The UDF will be discussed more thoroughly later in this chapter under “Preservation.”
Correspondence was arranged and described following Reports. Both of these series were the most straightforward in terms of arrangement and description. Reports were arranged alphabetically and correspondence was divided into subjects and arranged chronologically - from oldest to most recent. A systematic and clear arrangement is critical. Archivist Kathlene Roe notes, “[a]rrangement and description are essential to ensure that the records so carefully and conscientiously brought into the archives are indeed comprehensible and accessible for reference purposes.”

Since material is continually being added to each collection arrangement and description are also important for identifying which incoming material needs to be kept and accessioned and what material, if any, can be passed over or recycled.

Of the remaining series Histories, Publications, and Ephemera were arranged alphabetically or chronologically. One of the two most challenging series to arrange was the Interpretation series. Angel Island has a number of geographical points of interest each with unique interpretation needs. In order to make the series as accessible and as easily searchable as possible, the archivist divided the series into five subseries: Park (meaning park wide), North Garrison/Immigration Station, West Garrison/Camp Reynolds, East Garrison/Fort McDowell, and Natural Resources. Each subseries is arranged alphabetically and contains research materials, interpretation plans, and exhibition materials specific to that site.

During the initial process of arrangement and description it became clear that the

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current supply of folders would not be enough. The archivist completed as many series as possible and completed other tasks while waiting for the shipment of folders to arrive. During this time the map inventory was completed and approximately thirty reports were scanned and uploaded to the UDF.

Initial arrangement of the first nine series was completed in five weeks. Upon completion the remaining material was sorted into series and arranged, with some of the material that was unidentified during the first pass being added into the first nine series. Six additional series were added: Subject Files, Facilities and Structures, Legal Documents, Financial Documents, Scrapbook, and Media. The remaining series were arranged chronologically and alphabetically, with the exception of subject files. The subject files series was broken into six subseries. These series were General Plan, Transportation, Oil Spill, Peace Tower, Presidio Army Museum, and Archaeology.

Once a collection is arranged a finding aid is created to provide a complete description of the provenance and contents of the collection. A finding aid is a reflection and description of the intellectual order imposed on the documents. It serves as a tool for locating documents and a system for managing documents added to the collection. The finding aid was created in accordance with DACS using a multilevel description approach. DACS mandates that:

A finding aid may consist of only one level of description (single-level descriptions), or it may include many different levels of description (multilevel descriptions). A finding aid that consists of multiple levels of description may provide information at successively narrower levels of arrangement (such as subseries, files, and even items) for some series while confining information to a single level of hierarchy for others. \(^7\)

\(^7\) Describing Archives: A Content Standard, 7.
The Angel Island State Park collection was arranged in fifteen series, with two of the series divided further into subseries. In addition, the archivists at CSPA instituted a policy of providing a map index and photographic material thumbnail index to the institutional finding aid that is available from the archive and is published on the UDF. These indices are included in the finding aid as appendices.

In an effort to increase the accessibility of the collection the finding aid was encoded and published on the Online Archive of California (OAC). The OAC is an online platform launched in 2001 to provide a single database for California archives, libraries, and museums to utilize to promote their repositories and publish finding aids of processed collections. The site was developed by the University of California, Berkeley following their initiation of the development of Encoded Archival Description (EAD). Following the completion of a CSPA finding aid the archivist encodes and uploads it to the OAC where it is easily accessible to the general public. The appendices do not appear on the version available on the OAC because the platform does not support the addition of this information.

Preservation Needs

There are numerous factors that are considered to preserve the archival collections at CSPA. Everything from the physical condition of the records to the environment they are housed in is all regulated and maintained daily. The following section includes an overview of the collection facility, steps taken to extend the lifespan of the physical documents, minimal conservation measures taken, and methods used to digitize the records as an added precaution against damage and easier access to the
records.

The general public often sees the role of archives as a guarded storage facility that exists to preserve historic documents for the sake of preservation. In reality, the preservation of archival material is undertaken to insure the informational value of the records remains intact for future use. Preservation involves all of the processes undertaken to protect archival material from damage and deterioration through proper handling, storage, and managing of environmental conditions; not to be confused with conservation or restoration which involve the use of chemical and physical treatments, or the process of repairing or treating an item to return it to its original appearance.® Preservation remains a top priority among archives professionals, while conservation and restoration are only undertaken under extreme circumstances. Archives differ from libraries or other records repositories. As O’Toole articulates, “materials in archives are separated from the great mass of all the records ever created and are marked for special attention and treatment because they possess what is frequently identified as permanent value.”® It is for this reason not all records that are accessioned or offered to the CSPA are kept and processed. The documents that are processed and preserved are those deemed to possess enduring value.

In the 1980s archivists began reconsidering the idea of permanence; challenging the distinction between permanence and enduring value.® Archivists have come to the

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® Laura A. Millar, Archives, 74-75.
realization that preserving documents in their original form or in perpetuity may not be the most practical practice even a reality. With the best care available documents will continue to deteriorate, but with proper storage and handling their lifespan can be greatly increased. Additionally, many archives and archivists have begun to shift their focus to digitization efforts as a means to both preserve archives and make them more accessible. However, as will be discussed toward the end of this section, digitization also has its own set of preservation issues.

When California State Parks received a bond to upgrade its Archives and Museum collection facilities one of the primary goals was to find a building and location where the collections could be protected, and their lifespan could be extended. The new facility is located in a former Cold War storage facility on the decommissioned McClellan Air Force Base, McClellan, California. The facility selected was adequately suited for a number of reasons. The building is not located in a floodplain like the previous facilities, the walls range from six to twelve-inch-thick concrete that is ideal for maintaining a stable environment; and the building could be modified to provide the most up to date Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) technology and security features.

One of the most damaging environmental issues affecting archival material — aside from the obvious, fire and water — are large fluctuations in temperature and humidity which greatly affect the integrity of archival material. Fluctuations in temperature and humidity cause archival material to expand and contract, weakening the bonds holding the material together, over time making the material brittle and
Having a regulatory system such as an HVAC system to regulate the temperature and humidity, and filter out dust and other pollutants in the archival storage room is critical for long term storage and preservation. At CSPA the temperature of the storage room is set to stay between sixty-three and sixty-eight degrees, and the humidity at forty-five percent humidity. Temperature and humidity in the storage area and throughout the building are regulated by an offsite computer system and are monitored by that system, and as a precautionary measure by the archive staff using a Preservation Environment Monitor.

To further prevent deterioration, all archival materials are transferred from the containers that they arrived in, to acid free folders and boxes for long term storage. Storing archival material in acid free boxes and containers protects the material from a number of elements that can cause deterioration. By placing the material in boxes they are protected from the deteriorating effects of light, dust, and other harmful air pollutants. Archival quality boxes and containers are made out of neutral or acid free materials, meaning anything that measures below 7.0 on the pH scale. Archival material stored in acidic containers can become fragile. Over time acid from the container can leak into the archival materials discoloring and weakening the material.

Many paper based archival materials are manufactured with substances that are acidic. For example, newspapers, and paper made during the mid 1900s are both highly acidic. For these types of acidic papers there are a few remedies that can be used to

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75 Laura A. Millar, *Archives Principles*, 75.
76 Laura A. Millar, *Archives Principles*, 79.
extend the life of the documents, and preserve the informational integrity of the material. The most common remedies are storing acidic material together with acid free separation sheets between the papers, individually in acid free folders, digitize the materials, or — the method that is most commonly used at CSPA for newspapers and other highly acidic papers — photocopy the document onto archival quality paper which has a neutral pH. All newspaper clippings and documents with visible discoloration, due to acidic paper, were copied and the originals recycled or shredded.

It is the policy of CSP A to, whenever possible, store material without any folds or metal fasteners. All of the maps larger than legal sized paper (8 ½” x 14”) were removed from the collection and are stored flat in the map cases. Other oversized materials, such as photographs, reports and ephemera were removed and stored in an oversized materials box. Similarly, the media is stored together in appropriate boxes for permanent storage in the designated media aisle. All removed material has a corresponding removal slip foldered in the collection that includes a description of the material removed and its current/permanent location. Staples that appear to be in good condition with no signs of rust or decay are not removed in an effort to save time processing and to save costs in archival paper clips and folders.

The collection contained a number of maps that sustained damaged from improper storage or old age. Basic conservation was performed on the maps with significant damage consisting of tears larger than three inches, multiple tears, or brittleness affecting the integrity of the map. Conservation, as mentioned previously, is the practice of physically or chemically treating material to stabilize it and prevent
further deterioration. Archival conservation methods used are those that are easily reversible. The maps in need of conservation were cared for in one of two ways, mending using archival-quality removable document repair tape, or encapsulating using 3mil mylar sealed using ¼ inch clear polyester double sided tape. Nothing in the collection required more drastic conservation methods. If any were to arise the material would be evaluated — and if the funds were available — sent to a professional conservator.

In recent years digitization has been gaining in popularity and practicality as both a method of archival preservation and as a tool for sharing archival collections. One of the main components of processing a CSPA collection is digitizing all reports, unit histories, and photographs. Over 150 documents from the Angel Island State Park Collection were scanned and uploaded to the California State Parks UDF. Not all of the documents in a collection are scanned and uploaded due to the amount of time it takes to scan and upload a document. On average a report of one hundred pages takes six minutes to scan and twenty minutes to upload. The UDF gives all Park employees access to Portable Document Format (PDF)s of these documents for viewing online or printing as needed. Researchers also are given access to the UDF using a guest login. The UDF is located on the CSP intranet and can only be accessed through CSP computers and servers.

The photographs in the Angel Island State Park Collection were arranged chronologically within each type of material, and were scanned and named to correspond with their arrangement. The collection contained photographic slides,
negatives, and prints. The slides were removed from their non-archival sleeves and placed in 4 mil Polypropylene 120mm slide pages, negatives were stored by size in 4 mil polypropylene pages, and photographic prints were removed from the collection, placed in mylar sleeves, and stored in archival photo/print Boxes with the exception of the 8 x 10 prints stored with the collection.

Digital records pose their own set of preservation problems from storage to migration. The costs of storing digital data can be burdensome since the data needs to be backed up to several off site locations to ensure its safety. Additionally, the rapid pace of changing technologies calls for the frequent migration of files from outdated or obsolete software to new software. During migrations data gets lost and can be difficult to recover. In an effort to mitigate these factors all documents are saved in the most stable format available PDF/A’s for documents and as TIFFs for photographic material.

Theft and vandalism are also issues that are carefully considered when evaluating the preservation needs at the archive. Access to the building and every room within the building is limited by keycard access – with restrooms and break rooms as the exception. Access to the archival storage room is restricted to the archivists, building managers, and janitorial staff. To access the collections a researcher must submit a request and set up a research appointment. The facility is equipped with a research room that has windows on three sides and is monitored by the archivist or student archivists during the appointment. No bags, food, drinks, or pens are allowed in the research room. Proper handling of archival material is discussed with the researcher and they are provided with cotton gloves for handling photographic or delicate material.
Security, preservation, and conservation measures taken to safeguard the collection will greatly extend the life of the collection.

The processed Angel Island State Park collection will ease the future use of the material for archivists and researchers. There were a number of difficulties that had to be overcome to process this collection from running out of materials to making decisions about the arrangement. After completing the processing portion of the project two exhibits were created to highlight significant aspects of the collection. These exhibits along with the finding aids available on the OAC and UDF will increase awareness of the history of the park.
CHAPTER IV – EXHIBITING PROCESSED COLLECTIONS

For my Masters Project for the Capital Public History program at California State University, Sacramento, I processed the Angel Island collection and created two exhibits. Using the material from the collection I developed one exhibit to be displayed in the Cultural Resources offices at California State Parks Headquarters. The exhibit was titled, Angel Island’s Ayala Cove: From Quarantine Station to State Park. The exhibit focused on Ayala Cove, the first portion of the island acquired by State Parks, and highlighted the history and development at this site from its use as a Quarantine Station to its present function as the site of the Angel Island State Park Visitor Center. The exhibit featured a number of documents dating from the time of the Quarantine Station such as a “disinfected” tag, a US Marine Hospital medical book, and period photographs. Other items included in the exhibit were maps and photographs showing the changes that were made to the site turning it into a State Park. The purpose of the exhibition was to highlight the newly processed collection and promote the archives to State Parks employees.

The second exhibit was created for the annual Sacramento Archives Crawl. Geared toward the general public, the exhibit focused on how the public influenced the planning and use policies at Angel Island. The exhibit, titled “Public Involvement at Angel Island,” featured a large map of the island, petitions, questionnaires, news releases, pictures, and ephemera from cooperating associations. The goal of this exhibit was to promote Angel Island State Park, the overall State Parks Archival collection, and
to introduce viewers to the various types of materials that are available to the public in the Archival Collections at CSPA.

Exhibiting a newly processed collection, no matter the scale, provides an opportunity to promote the collection and a space for the archivist to answer questions. When researchers request a collection for research the archivist typically provides them with the requested information and then leaves them to perform their research, leaving little space for questions. Additionally, archivists are often reserved about answering certain questions in the research setting because they do not want to unduly influence researchers as a result of personal bias.

Exhibiting archives and participating in archives events expands the accessibility and awareness of archives to an audience that might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to an archive to learn about archival holdings. Collections can be displayed to convey the significance of what archivists do for an institution. Collections can also be displayed, as is the case during the Annual Sacramento Archives Crawl, in order to give the public a space where they can go to ask archivists questions and explore the holdings in a number of institutions all in one space. Whether it is to delve into their genealogy or to explore how their favorite state park was established, one of the primary goals for CSPA in exhibiting collections is to inspire those who would otherwise be unaware or uninterested in the pursuit of historical knowledge in the hope that they will pursue archival research.

Processing and presenting archival collections provides an opportunity to highlight the diversity in the development of American Society. The designation of
Angel Island Immigration Station as a National Historic Landmark provided official recognition and an adoption of the memories and the history of the site as part of the official narrative of US history. Archivists play a significant role in providing the documentary evidence that supports and bolsters that history. By participating in outreach efforts and actively presenting archival material to the public, archivists are fulfilling their professional mission as both archivists and as public historians. In these overlapping professions the core purpose of their work is to make the past useful and accessible to the public. This is a new concept that has been incorporated into the archival profession and is now explicitly stated in institution mission and vision statements for nearly all public archives. For CSPA this is one of the most important aspects of the work being done for what is the point of preserving and arranging these collections if they are never accessed?
Guide to the Angel Island State Park Collection
1839-2014
(bulk dates 1950-2010)

California State Parks Archives
McClellan, California

Contact Information:

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URL: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1080

Records processed by Margo Lentz-Meyer      Date Completed November, 2015

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Descriptive Summary

Title
Guide to the Angel Island State Park Collection

Collection Number
CSPA-231

Creator
Angel Island State Park

Extent
32 linear feet, including 3 map folders

Repository
California State Parks Archives
McClellan, California

Language
English

Abstract
Angel Island State Park, the largest island in the San Francisco Bay, is a park dedicated to the preservation of the island’s natural and cultural resources. The park was added piece by piece to the California State Park System over a period of eight years. In 1962, the island was turned over to the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The Angel Island State Park Collection is arranged in fifteen series: 1. Correspondence, 2. Histories, 3. Interpretation, 4. Subject Files, 5. Facilities, 6. Financial Documents, 7. Legal Documents, 8. Publications, 9. Ephemera, 10. Cartographic Material, 11. Photographic Material, 12. Scrapbook, 13. Media, 14. Reports, and 15. Restricted. Items span the years 1839-2014 with the bulk of the material falling between 1950-2010.

Physical Location
California State Parks Archives
Administrative Information

Publication Rights

For permission to reproduce or publish, please consult the California State Parks Archives archivist. Permission for reproduction or publication is given on behalf of the California State Parks Archives, Sacramento as the owner of the physical items. The researcher assumes all responsibility for possible infringement that may arise from reproduction or publication of materials from the California State Parks Archives.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Angel Island State Park Collection, CSPA-231: [box: folder number], California State Parks Archives, McClellan, California.

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Cultural and archaeological site maps are restricted. Reports with sensitive data may be restricted. Consult repository for details.

Acquisition Information

Angel Island State Park donated the majority of the material in this collection in 2002. Additional correspondence, maps, and reports were added from Central Records in 2015.

Accruals

The repository continues to add materials to this collection on a regular basis.

Processing Information

Margo Lentz-Meyer processed this collection and created and encoded its finding aid in 2015.
Administrative History

Angel Island State Park, the largest island in the San Francisco Bay, is a park dedicated to the preservation of the island’s abundant natural and cultural resources. The park was added piece by piece to the California State Park System over a period of eight years. In 1954 the California State Park Commission acquired Ayala Cove. In the following months Parks acquired additional acreage above the cove. In 1962 the island was turned over to the California Department of Parks and Recreation, with the exception of coast guard stations on Point Blunt and Point Stuart.

Prior to its designation as a California State Park, Angel Island served an array of functions. For thousands of years the island was used as a hunting and fishing outpost by the Coast Miwok. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Angel Island was used as a base for Spanish Navy lieutenant Manuel de Ayala’s survey of the San Francisco Bay, a storage site for Russian sealers, a hideout for smugglers, and a cattle ranch. On 6 November 1850 the U.S. government seized ownership of the island under President Millard Fillmore’s Executive Order, reserving “for public purposes” certain lands around the bay, including Angel Island.

During the Civil War the Army took control of the island establishing Camp Reynolds in 1863. Camp Reynolds became the first military installation on the island, constructed to serve as part of the Civil War’s west coast defense system. Located at West Garrison, the camp included sleeping quarters for over 200 soldiers, a chapel, bakery, trading store, hospital, school, and cemetery. The post served as a small town for soldiers stationed on the Island during the Civil War, and later to suppress Native American uprisings, and maintain the island’s gun batteries.

In 1891, the Angel Island Quarantine Station opened for operation. Located in Hospital Cove, the station was initially a port where ships suspected of carrying infectious diseases were isolated for inspection. During its sixty-six years of operation the Station was comprised of approximately fifty buildings including: a 400-bed detention barracks, a hospital, laboratories, a disinfecting plant, and quarters for employees.

In response to the global insecurities of the twentieth century, the U.S. military expanded significantly and an additional army post was established at East Garrison. In 1900 the Army posts at the Island were renamed Fort McDowell and in addition each site was given a new name. Camp Reynolds was renamed West Garrison, and new installations were developed at sites that became North Garrison and East Garrison.

East Garrison was initially developed to quarantine and process soldiers returning from operations in the Philippines during the Spanish American War. During World War I and World War II Fort McDowell was used for processing soldiers leaving for and returning from posts overseas. Fort McDowell served as an all-purpose site for soldiers.
It included a 600-man barracks, mess hall, hospital, Post Exchange, guardhouse, railroad ticket office, Wells Fargo Express Company office, and a number of recreation sites. Recreation has long been an important feature on Angel Island. During the Army period soldiers passed the time bowling, and playing baseball.

In 1910, the Angel Island Immigration Station opened. During its thirty years in service approximately 500,000 immigrants were processed. Immigrants from Asia, Europe, and South America passed through Angel Island, with Chinese immigrants making up the vast majority of immigrants processed. In 1940, the Immigration Station was relocated to San Francisco following a fire that destroyed the Administration Building. On February 4, 1941 the site reverted back to military and was used to process and detain prisoners of war during World War II.

In the 1970s Chinese poetry and other carvings were rediscovered in the Immigration Station barracks. Since then, Angel Island State Park has become a popular destination for genealogical research, for discovering the history of immigration on the West Coast, and has remained a popular site for recreation.
Scope and Content


Series one, Correspondence, consists of correspondence, memoranda, telegrams, and compiled correspondence. The series is arranged by subject starting with general correspondence and ending with bound volumes of correspondence copied from the National Archive. Series two, histories, documents the history of Angel Island from the Miwok to the U.S. Army’s Nike Missile Site. It includes timelines, bibliographic card files, theses, and histories written by parks employees and/or contractors. Series three, Interpretation is divided into five subseries: Park, North Garrison, West Garrison, East Garrison, and Natural Resources. The records included in this series consist of interpretation plans, exhibit plans, and guides.

Series four, Subject files is divided into six subseries: General Plan, Transportation, Oil Spill, Peace Tower, Presidio Army Museum, and Archaeology. The subseries consist of correspondence, meeting minutes, plans, and reports. Series five, Facilities and Structures, contains correspondence, building inventories, restoration project plans, and building descriptions and sketches. Series six, Financial Documents, includes proposed budget plans, project estimates, and project requests. Series seven, Legal Documents, consists of California Senate and Assembly Bills, agreements, and permits.

Series eight, Publications, encompasses articles, newspaper and magazine clippings, workshop materials, and guides not published by parks. Series nine, Ephemera, includes certificates, brochures, programs, flyers and postcards. Series ten, Cartographic Material, includes maps, plans and drawings. Series eleven, Photographic Material, consists of negatives, slides, and photographic prints. Series twelve, Scrapbook, consists of one scrapbook comprised of pictures and letters donated by an Angel Island park ranger. Series thirteen, Media, contains floppy discs, diskettes, audiocassettes, CDs, and DVDs.

Series fourteen, Reports, includes reports produced by State of California Department of Parks and Recreation and Parks contractors. Series fifteen, Restricted Material, consists of reports and maps that contain confidential, and culturally sensitive information.
Related Collections

Angel Island SP Photographic Collection

Indexing Terms

Angel Island (Calif.)
Angel Island Association
Angel Island Conservancy
Angel Island Immigration Station (Calif.)
California. Department of Parks and Recreation
Cultural resources
Esthetic resources
Miwok Indians
Natural resources
Recreational resources
San Francisco Quarantine Station (Angel Island, Calif.)
United States. Army. Camp Reynolds (Angel Island, Marin County, CA)
United States. Army. Fort McDowell (Angel Island, Marin County, CA)
Series Description


Correspondence is arranged chronologically and is divided into eleven categories. The largest, General Correspondence contains correspondence regarding park operations and maintenance. The subsequent categories are divided by location and subject. The content’s whereabouts for the years 1955, 1992-1998 are unknown.

Box 1: 01 General Correspondence, 1952.
02 General Correspondence, 1953.
03 General Correspondence, 1954.
04 General Correspondence, 1956.
05 General Correspondence, 1957.
06 General Correspondence, 1958.
07 General Correspondence, 1959.
08 General Correspondence, 1960.
09 General Correspondence, 1961.
10 General Correspondence, 1962.
11 General Correspondence, 1963.
12 General Correspondence, 1964.
13 General Correspondence, 1965.

Box 2: 01 General Correspondence, 1966.
02 General Correspondence, 1967.
03 General Correspondence, 1968.
04 General Correspondence, 1969 January-June.
05 General Correspondence, 1969 July-December.
06 General Correspondence, 1970.

Box 3: 01 General Correspondence, 1971.
02 General Correspondence, 1972.
03 General Correspondence, 1973.
04 General Correspondence, 1974.
05 General Correspondence, 1975.
06 General Correspondence, 1976.
07 General Correspondence, 1977 January-March.
08 General Correspondence, 1977 April-July.

Box 4: 01 General Correspondence, 1977 August-December.
02 General Correspondence, 1978 January-April.
03 General Correspondence, 1978 May-August.
04 General Correspondence, 1978 September-December.
05  General Correspondence, 1979.
06  General Correspondence, 1980.

Box 5: 01  General Correspondence, 1981 January-June.
02  General Correspondence, 1981 July-December.
03  General Correspondence, 1982 January-June.
04  General Correspondence, 1982 July-December.
05  General Correspondence, 1983.
06  General Correspondence, 1984.
07  General Correspondence, 1985.
08  General Correspondence, 1986.

Box 6: 01  General Correspondence, 1987.
02  General Correspondence, 1988.
03  General Correspondence, 1989.
04  General Correspondence, 1990-1991.
05  General Correspondence, 1999.
06  General Correspondence, 2000-2005.
07  General Correspondence, 2006-2009.
08  North Garrison/Immigration Station, 1977.

04  West Garrison, 1983.

Box 8: 01  East Garrison, 1984-1986.


03 Western Union Telegrams, 1953, 1969, undated.
04 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence; Angel Island Consolidated Correspondence File-Building Documents, Binder 1, 1870-1882.
05 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence; Angel Island Consolidated Correspondence File-Building Documents, Binder 2, 1883-1890.

Box 11: 01 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence; Angel Island Consolidated Correspondence File-Wharves and Transportation Documents, 1867-1889.
02 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence; Angel Island Consolidated Correspondence File- Water Supply Documents, 1867-1890.
03 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence; Angel Island Consolidated Correspondence File-Post Cemetery Documents, 1870-1883.
04 Pre-Park Bound Correspondence, Miscellaneous Documents, 1880-1883.


Series two is arranged alphabetically. The bulk of the material consists of oral history interviews with Chinese immigrants detained at the Angel Island Immigration Station. The series also includes research material, theses, and histories written by academic and park historians. Arranged from most general to most specific, in order to keep the oral histories in their original order.

Box 11: 05 General Histories, 1860-1986, undated.
07 Bibliographic Cards, undated.

Box 12: 01 Cultural History Timelines, 1966, undated.
02 Population Census, Angel Island, 1870-1940.
03 Geographic Name Change Information, 1/13/1966.
05 Bentley, Edwin. Angel Island, 1869, 10/15/1869. (2 Copies)
06 Harrison, Tom. Angel Island Unit History, 1975.
07 Lortie, Frank. Historical Background, undated.
09 Norris, Creighton Fox. The History of Angel Island, 1775-1951, undated. (2 Copies)
10 Royer, D.D. The History of Angel Island State Park, 10/9/1957. (2 Copies)

02 Research Oral Histories: Mr. Charles Thau, 10/7/1988.
06 Research Oral Histories: Paulo, an Italian POW from February 19, 1945-October 2, 1945, and Elviramara, undated.
11 Oral History Project: Background Information, 9/14/1990.
15 Oral History Project: Mrs. Fong, 22 in 1922, 1 week, 1977.
16 Oral History Project: Law Shee Low, 18 in 1922, 10 days, 1982.
18 Oral History Project: Mrs. Chong, 16 in 1926, 4 months, 1981.
19 Oral History Project: Mrs. Leong, 18 in 1928, 3 months, 1980.
21 Oral History Project: Mrs. Lim, 29 in 1938, 5 days, 1976.
23 Oral History Project: Mrs. Woo, 23 in 1940, 3 days, 1977.
25 Oral History Project: Mr. Quan, 16 in 1913, 3.5 months, 1976.
26 Oral History Project: Mr. Wong, 12 in 1913, 2 weeks, 1977.
27 Oral History Project: Mr. Gin, 6 in 1915, 3 months, 1977.
31 Oral History Project: Mr. Chew, 14 in 1920, 28 days, 1976.
32 Oral History Project: Mr. Yip, 26 in 1921, 1 year, 1976.
33 Oral History Project: Mr. S. Tong, 17 in 1921, 2 months, 1976.
34 Oral History Project: Mr. Tom, 17 in 1921, 2 months; Mr. Chan, 17 in 1924, 2 weeks, 1977.
36 Oral History Project: Mr. Chan, 18 in 1924, 2 weeks, 1990.
38 Oral History Project: Mr. Poon, 18 in 1927, 2 months, 1977.
40 Oral History Project: Mr. Lew, 19 in 1929, 40 days, 1977.
41 Oral History Project: Mr. Tsang, 18 in 1929, 1 month, 1986.
43 Oral History Project: Mr. Ng, 15 in 1931, 3 weeks, 1976.

Box 14: 01 Oral History Project: Mr. Tong, 20 in 1932, 6 months, 1976.
03 Oral History Project: Mr. Wong, 12 in 1933, 1 month, undated.
06 Oral History Project: Mr. Chow, 14 in 1936, 2 weeks, 1977.
08 Oral History Project: Mr. Leung, 24 in 1936, 4 months, 1975.
09 Oral History Project: Mr. Mock, 18 in 1937, 10 months, 1984.
10 Oral History Project: Mr. Dea, 17 in 1939, 3 months, 1977.
11 Oral History Project: Mr. Dea, 26 in 1939, 1 month, 1976.
13 Oral History Project: Mr. Wong, 17 in 1939, 3 months, 1984.
14 Oral History Project: Mr. Lowe, 16 in 1939, 2 months, 1977.


The interpretation series is divided into five subseries that correspond to topics and themes established by the State Park’s Interpretation and Education Division. They are as follows: Park (meaning parkwide), North Garrison/Immigration Station, West Garrison/Camp Reynolds, East Garrison/Ft. McDowell, and Natural Resources. The series includes interpretive plans, programs, guides, and exhibition materials. The series is divided into the five subseries based on location, with the exception of the final series natural resources.


The Park series encompasses parkwide interpretive programming, guides for teachers, evaluations of interpretive material, and exhibition and exhibit material. The series is arranged alphabetically.

22 Angel Island State Park Docent Manual, undated.
23 Angel Island State Park-Interpretation Master Plan, September 2012.
24 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Program Notes by G.R. Stammerjohan, undated.
25 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Prospectus, Draft 1, April 1973.
26 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Prospectus, Draft 2, 1/1/1974. (2 Copies)
27 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Prospectus, Final, December 1977. (2 Copies)
28 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Prospective Notes, undated.
29 Angel Island State Park-Interpretive Value, undated.

Box 15: 01 Dorfman Museum Figures Quote, 6/5/1990.
02 Evaluation of Existing Structures for Interpretive Uses, March 1971. (2 Copies)
03 Exhibit Graphics and Drafts, undated.
04 Exhibit Text, 1982-1985, undated.
Graphics Photocopies, undated.

Box 16: 01 History Trivia by George Stamerjohn, 10/13/1984.
02 Interpretation and Visitor Services, March 1980.
03 New Interpretive Signs, Draft, undated.
04 Park Assignment Questionnaire, undated.
05 Preliminary Thoughts (First Impressions), by Nellie Arnold, October 1980.
06 Procedures for Establishing and Operating Cooperating Associations, February 1977.
09 Teacher’s Guide Draft with Comments from R. Swanson, undated.
10 Teacher’s Guide Draft with Comments Unknown Source, undated.
16 The Institute for The Human Environment, Proposed Working Strategies, 10/19/1978.

Box 17: 01 Tile Rubbings, undated.


This series consists of interpretation material relating to the Immigration Station located at North Garrison. The series contains reports, interpretive plans, restoration plans, and guides. The series is arranged alphabetically.

03 A Teacher’s Guide to the Angel Island Immigration Station, September 1986. (2 Copies)
04 American with Disabilities Act Tour Proposal, undated.
05  Angel Island Immigration Station Barracks Phase 1, 8/22/1977. (2 Copies)
06  Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, 9/15/2009.
07  Angel Island Immigration Station Graphics File, 12/14/1987.
08  Angel Island Immigration Station Interpretive Plan Phase 2, December 1987. (2 Copies)
09  Angel Island Immigration Station Interpretive Plan, Revised, March 1988. (2 Copies)

Box 18: 01  Angel Island State Park Immigration Station Exhibit Text, 1982. (2 Copies)
02  Angel Island State Park Immigration Station Preliminary Interpretive Program, 1981.
03  Angel Island State Park Immigration Station Draft Interpretive Program, June 1985. (2 Copies)
04  Angel Island State Park Interpretation at North Garrison, 7/21/1981.
05-06 Angel Island State Park- US Immigration Station Hospital Interpretation Project Plan, July 2014. (2 Copies)
07  Background Information, undated.
08  Calligraphy Project, 1983 and undated.
09-10 Chinese Calligraphy Translations, Angel Island Immigration Station Barracks, undated. (2 Copies)
11  Chinese Certificates of Identity, 1886-1924.

Box 19: 01  Collections Inventory, 1990-1991.
02  Consulting Services for the Restoration of the Immigration Station Area at Angel Island State Park, 2002.
04  Furnishing and Exhibit Plans Detention Barracks, Immigration Station Angel Island, April 1990.
05  Guidelines for the Restoration and Interpretation of the US Immigration Station on Angel Island, 6/29/1981.
07  Interpretive Facilities Analysis Angel Island Immigration Station, May 1977. (2 Copies)
08  Interpretive Plan Phase 1: Angel Island Immigration Station Barracks, 8/22/1977.
10  Missing Persons Advertisements, 4/30/1913-9/21/1924.
14 Proposal for the Restoration of Detention Center, Angel Island, 7/10/1977. (2 Copies)

Box 20: 01 Recommendations for Development Priorities at North Garrison, Angel Island State Park, October 1985. (2 Copies)
03 Restoration Project, 2005.
04 Survey and Inventory Report, undated.
05 The Angel Island Immigration Station Historical Advisory Committee, 7/21/1976- 7/8/1981.
06 The Immigration Foundation Study, undated.


Arranged alphabetically, the series consists of interpretation material relating to the Environmental Living Program, Adopt-A-Building Program, and Camp Reynolds.

08 Angel Island State Park Environmental Living Program Teacher’s Resource Book, undated. (2 Copies)
09 Angel Island State Park Environmental Living Program Quartermaster’s Warehouse Camp Reynolds, 6/30/1983.
12 Angel Island State Park West Garrison, Environmental History, Dr. Noyes, Frank Lortie Files, 1980.
13 Angel Island State Park West Garrison, Interpretive Element, undated.
14 Camp Reynolds California Chronological History Excerpt from The Evans History of Angel Island, undated. (2 Copies)

Box 21: 01 Environmental Living Program Correspondence, 1982-1990.
02 Exhibit Text, 3/26/1984.
03 Post Returns, Camp Reynolds, Jan 1864-July 1898.

Material in this subseries is arranged alphabetically. The first seven folders consist of records copied from the National Archives. Additional records include interpretive plans and research material.

Box 21: 06  Angel Island Fort McDowell Quartermaster Corps Records, Construction Division, Completion Reports, National Archives Records Group 77, 1922-1942.


03  Angel Island Fort McDowell Quartermaster Corps Records, Construction Division, Infrastructure Inventory Records, National Archives Records Group 77, 1922-1942.

Box 24: 01  Angel Island State Park Collections Text, 11/6/1990.

02  Angel Island State Park East Garrison Visitor Center Interpretive Plan, 7/30/1988. (2 Copies)

03  Angel Island State Park East Garrison Visitor Center Exhibit Text, January 1990. (2 Copies)

04  Angel Island State Park East Garrison Visitor Center Exhibit Text, March 1990. (2 Copies)


07-08  Exhibits-East Garrison, undated.
09 Fort McDowell Angel Island, San Francisco Bay, CA, Summary of Basic Information, Appraisal by War Assets Administration, with Exhibits, 7/14/1947.
10 Fort McDowell, California Historical Monument Research, undated.
11 Fort McDowell, Grand Hotel USA, by Major Oscar W. Koch Cavalry, 11/19/1939.
12 Fort McDowell Research, 1867-1999. (1 of 2)

Box 25: 01 Fort McDowell Research, undated. (2 of 2)
02 Guard House Research, 1984.


Arranged alphabetically, includes interpretive programs, plans, guides, and notes.

06 Bibliography, undated.
08 Copies of Nature Area Guides, undated.
10 Graphics, undated.
11 Interpretation Notes, undated.
12 Interpretation Plans and Text, 1971, undated.


The Subject Files series is divided into six subseries and arranged alphabetically following correspondence. The six subseries are: General Plan, Transportation, Oil Spill, Peace Tower, Presidio Army Museum, and Archaeology.


Correspondence is first arranged chronologically followed by folders arranged alphabetically.

Box 25: 15 Park: Correspondence, 1953-1967.
16 Park: Correspondence, 1968.
17 Park: Correspondence, 1969-1981.
Box 26: 01  Park: Angel Island Preliminary General Plan Workbook, undated.
          05  Park: The Urban Arts Foundation Proposal to Establish a Center of Environmental Studies on Angel Island, 5/18/1977, undated.


Arranged chronologically.

          02  Cable Ferry Systems, Proposal and Exhibit Text, 11/21/1969, undated.
          03  Tiburon Ferry, 10/5/2005.
          04  Petition to the California Parks and Recreation Commission, undated.

Subseries 4.3. Oil Spill, 1977, undated.  7 ff.

This series is arranged chronologically.

Box 27: 05  Correspondence, 2/15/1977-6/2/1977.
          06  Report of Investigation, Bethlehem Shipyard, Pier 70, 2/10/1977. (2 Copies)
          08  Oil Cleanup Area Maps, 2/11/1977.


Subseries contains correspondence and information about the proposed project. The subseries is arranged by subject.
Box 27: 12  Correspondence, April-October 1977.
13  Background, November 1966, undated.


Single folder arranged chronologically.


This subject file contains articles about Angel Island State Park Ranger Dan Winkelman and role in the well-known *San Francisco Chronicle* cartoon *Farley*. The subseries also includes a bumper sticker, original *Farley* cartoon strips, and a gift certificate. The file is arranged chronologically.


**Subseries 4.7. Archaeology, 1961-2010.**  8 ff.

Arranged chronologically, contains: correspondence, memoranda, histories, and research materials.

Box 27: 16  Correspondence, 1961-1975.

Box 28: 01  Correspondence, 1976-1979.
02  Correspondence, 1980-1982.
03  Correspondence, 1983-1985.
04  Correspondence, 1986-2010.
05  Archaeology at West Garrison, 12/16/1981.


Arranged alphabetically by project location.

09  Park: Angel Island State Park Changes to the Area Development Plansheets 1-8, undated.
Park: Angel Island Sea Wall Project, undated.

Box 29: 01  Park: General Building Notes, undated.
08  Park: Facilities Checklist, undated.
10  North Garrison: North Garrison Building Inventory, undated.
13  West Garrison: Building Inventory and Restoration Budget Projections, undated.

Box 30: 01  West Garrison: Notes/Descriptions of Buildings 50-84, undated.
02  West Garrison: Sea Wall Sketches, 1972, undated.
05  Adopt a Building: Angel Island West Garrison Adopt-a-Building Program, Priorities for Restoration/Reconstruction, 4/12/1984, undated.
06  Adopt a Building: Area Plan Preliminary Schedule, Draft, undated.

Box 31: 01  East Garrison: 600 Man Barracks, 1985, undated.
03  East Garrison: East Garrison Seawalls Survey, undated.
04  East Garrison: List of Buildings, 6/14/1943, undated.
05  East Garrison: Officers Quarters, undated.
06  East Garrison: Post Engineers’ Office and Warehouse Field Notes, undated.


Correspondence, followed by folders arranged alphabetically by subject.

09 Application for HR11-Public Works Employment Act Program, undated.
11 Comfort Station, 1954, undated.
13 Cultural and Historical Project Funding/Budgetary Reports, 4/18/1985, undated.

02 Incinerator Project, 3/17/1964, undated.
03 Major Construction Project Request, 1/4/1968.
07 Notice to Bidders and Invitation to Bid-For the Operation of the Two Food and Beverage Concessions at Angel Island SP, 3/16/1989.
08 Office of Interpretive Services Project Plans and Budgets, 1969-1981.
09 Office of Interpretive Services Project Plans and Budgets, 1982-1983.
10 Office of Interpretive Services Project Plans and Budgets, 1984-1987.

Box 33: 01 Park Restoration Project Requests, 1963-1968.
04 Quarantine Station Restoration, 9/24/1940.
05 Underwater Cable, 7/1/1962, undated.


Arranged chronologically, includes copies of California Senate Bills, California Legislative Assembly Bills, agreements between the National Parks Service and California Department of Parks and Recreation, and permits.

Box 33: 06 Senate Bill No.13253 and Senate Bill No.2267, 1939, 1984.
07 California Legislative Assembly Bills and Resolutions, 1974, 1976.
08 Cooperative Agreement Between the National Park Service and the California Department of Parks and Recreation and Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, January 1999.
09 State of California Lands Commission, Permit No. PRC 5966.9, 1/1/1980.


Arranged alphabetically by type of publication and author, the series consists of articles, newspaper and magazine clippings, workshop materials, and guides published by non-parks affiliated publishers.

11 Deiwert, David J. The United States Immigration Station on Angel Island, undated.
15 Newspaper Clippings, 1880-1949.

Box 34: 01 Newspaper Clippings, 1952-1969.
02 Newspaper Clippings, 1970-1978.
05 Newspaper Clippings, undated.
07 Tour Guidebook, Angel Island Immigration Station Visiting Symposium, March 20-21, 1999.
08 Magazine Articles, 1959-1990.
10 Visioning Workshops Report: Angel Island Immigration Station, October 1999. (2 Copies)

Box 35: 01 Visioning Workshops Report: Angel Island Immigration Station, April 1999.
02 Visioning Workshops Report: Angel Island Immigration Station, June 1999.
03 Visioning Workshops Highlights: Golden Gateway Center- For the Migration and Immigration of People to the Pacific Coast, Draft, July 12 and 13, 1999.
05 Younling, Glen. Angel Island: Dimensions in History, undated. (2 Copies)


Ephemera is arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically within each type folder.

Box 35: 06 Brochures, 1950-2013.
08 Flyers and Postcards, 1992, undated.
09 Programs, 1952-2009, undated.
10 Quarantine Station Disinfected Tags, 1889, undated.


The cartographic material is foldered by size and is arranged chronologically within each folder. The majority of the cartographic material has been removed and is housed in flat file storage. See Appendix A for full list.

12 Immigration Station Maps, Drawings, and Plans, 1946, undated.
13 Inventory of Maps and Drawings, 1/14/1977.
14 Oversized Maps, 1839-2006.


The photographs consist of historic, project, landscapes, event, and collections photographs. The series is arranged by type of photographic material and chronologically within each type. Thumbnails of the scanned photographs in the collection are located in Appendix B.

Box 35: 15 35mm Black and White Negatives, December 1983, undated.
16 35mm Color Negatives, undated.

02 35mm Black and White Negatives-North Garrison, West Garrison, Chinese Artifacts, undated.
04 2 x 2 ½ Black and White Negatives, undated.
05 2 ½ x 4 ½ Black and White Negatives, undated.
06  3 ½ x 5 Black and White Negatives, undated.
07  8 ½ x 11 Black and White Negatives, undated.
12  Oversized Prints and Negatives, undated.
13  Oversized Panoramic Prints, undated.

Box 37: 01  8 x 10 Photographic Prints-Park, undated.
02  8 x 10 Photographic Prints -Ayala Cove, undated.
03  8 x 10 Photographic Prints-North Garrison, undated.
04  8 x 10 Photographic Prints-West Garrison, undated.
05  8 x 10 Photographic Prints-East Garrison, undated.


One scrapbook donated by Ranger John Biggio. Biggio was a ranger at Angel Island from 1967-1968. The series is arranged chronologically.

Box 37: 06  John Biggio, circa 1967-1968.


The media series consists of floppy disks, diskettes, microfilm, audiocassettes, VHS, CDs and DVDs. The series is arranged by media format and chronologically within each format.


Documents produced by California State Parks or Parks contractors are arranged alphabetically by title. Reports are arranged alphabetically by first letter of the report to coincide with the Department Unit Data File System.

Box 38: 01  A Plan for Angel Island State Park, undated.
02  A Plan for Providing Points of Embarkation and Transportation to Angel Island State Park, undated.
06-07 An Analysis of 44 Blue Gum Trees on Angel Island, Barrie D. Coatie and Associates, 1/28/2009. (2 Copies)
10 Angel Island Cultural Resource Inventory, 5/27/1977. (2 Copies)

03 Angel Island Immigration Station, Historic Structure Reports, Supplemental Appendices, October 2002.
04 Angel Island Immigration Station, Historical Report, 6/3/1977. (Copy 1)

Box 40: 01 Angel Island Immigration Station, Historical Report, 6/3/1977. (Copy 2)
02 Angel Island Immigration Station, Hospital Building, 100% Draft Historic Structure Report, 7/31/2002.
03 Angel Island Immigration Station, Hospital Building, Historic Structure Report, October 2002.

Box 41: 01 Angel Island Immigration Station, Hospital Historic Structure Report Supplemental, 4/30/2012.
03 Angel Island- Mainland Parking, Embarkation Facilities and Water Transportation, undated.
05 Angel Island State Park Area Restoration Program, 7/1/1964-6/30/1965. (2 Copies)
06 Angel Island State Park Deer Problem and Management Suggestions, Preliminary Draft, 12/13/1967.
08 Angel Island SP General Development Plan, 9/2/1977.
09 Angel Island SP General Development Plan Amendment for Angel Island Immigration Station, Preliminary, December 2005.
10 Angel Island State Park General Development Plan Expanded Tram Service Amendment, Preliminary, March 1996.
11 Angel Island State Park General Development Plan Expanded Tram Service Amendment, Final, May 1996. (2 Copies)

Box 42:01-02 Angel Island State Park: Immigration Station Area Restoration Budget Package, 3/15/2002. (2 Copies)
03 Angel Island State Park: Infrastructure Study and Analysis, March, 1996. (2 Copies)
04 Angel Island State Park Land Use Analysis, undated. (2 Copies)
05 Angel Island State Park Master Plan, Rough Draft, 8/10/1961.
06 Angel Island State Park Master Plan, 1962. (2 Copies)
07 Angel Island State Park Master Plan Draft, 1969.

05 Angel Island State Park Transportation Study, Draft, May 1978.
06 Angel Island State Park Transportation Study, Draft, September 1978.
08 Angel Island Wastewater Treatment and Disposal, Facilities Plan and Environmental Assessment, August 1978.

Box 44: 01-02 Archaeological Investigations at CA-MRN- 44/H, Final, July 2007. (2 Copies)
| Box 45: 01 | Belfor Invoice and Documentation: Angel Island State Park Mold Remediation, 5/10/2010. |
| Box 47: 01 | Cultural Resources Inventory: Angel Island Immigration Station Building Stabilization, Poem Restoration and Site Improvements Project, November 2002. (2 Copies) |
| Box 48: 01 | DPR 508: Notice of Exemption, 1/2/1979. |

08 Eucalyptus Removal Project: Angel Island State Park and Annadel State Park, Fall 1983.

Box 50: 01 Factual Data Report, Hospital Cove, Angel Island, Marin County, California, 11/1/1954. (2 Copies)
02 Feasibility study: General Development Plan Implementation Angel Island State Park, July 1987.
03 Ferry Landing Project: East Garrison, Angel Island State Park, September 1983. (2 Copies)
04-05 Focused Environmental Study: Restoration of Angel Island Natural Areas Affected by Eucalyptus, July 1988. (2 Copies)
06 Fort McDowell, Angel Island, Marin and San Francisco Counties, California, WAA Registry No. RSFLO: PNI, Fort McDowell W-CAL-191: Report on Application by Board of Supervisors, County of Marin, State of California for Transfer of Surplus Properties for a Historical Monument, April 1949. (2 Copies)

Box 51: 01 Fort McDowell: Angel Island, Marin County, CA, HABS No. CA-2721, 2002.
03 Golden Gateway State Urban Park: A Network of Human and Natural Services, December 1975. (2 Copies)
04 Historic American Building Survey Inventory, September 1966.

02 Hospital Building Rehabilitation: Draft IS/MND Angel Island State Park, Draft, December 2005.
03-04 Hospital Building Rehabilitation: Final IS/MND Angel Island State Park, January 2006. (2 Copies)
05 Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration Angel Island State Park Immigration Station Area Restoration Project, March 2003.
06 Installation of Historic Building Access Doors, Angel Island State Park, 6/30/1999. (2 Copies)
09 National Register of Historic Places: Inventory Nomination Form, 10/14/1971.
10 National Register of Historic Places: Registration Form, 10/15/1995.

Box 53: 01 Plan of study for Angel Island State Park, Clean Water Grant, June 1977.
02-03 Preliminary Recommendations for the Interior Restoration of the Buildings Remaining on West Garrison, Angel Island State Park, March 1984. (2 Copies)
05 Proposed Amendment to the General Plan, Angel Island State Park, Draft, December 1984.
06 Prospectus of Angel Island Park and Recreational Use, San Francisco Bay, California, 9/16/1953.
07 Recommendations for Development Priorities at North Garrison Angel Island State Park, October 1985. (2 Copies)
09 Recommendations for the Historical Recreational Development for Angel Island, 1966.

Box 54: 01 Report for Director Angel Island State Park, Draft, 8/9/1965.
03 Report and Recommendation on Angel Island Immigration Station, January 1976. (2 Copies)
04 Resource Inventory Angel Island State Park, Draft, 10/13/1976.
05 Resource Inventory Angel Island State Park, November 1977. (2 Copies)
06 Resource Inventory Angel Island State Park, Revised, December 1979.
08 Sanitary Engineering Investigation of Quality of Shellfish and Shellfishing Waters in Richardson Bay, December 1969.
12 Soil Survey of Marin County, California, undated.
14 State of California, Department of Water Resources Division of Planning-Investigation of Water Supply for Angel Island State Park, December 1960. (2 Copies)

Box 55: 01 Strawberry Recreation District, Marin County, California: Data Pertaining to Angel Island, July 1951.
02 Survey and Recommendations by the Food and Agriculture Team on Angel Island State Park, San Francisco and Marin Counties, California, 10/21/1974. (2 Copies)
03 The Plan for Angel Island State Park, 1969. (2 Copies)
05 Water and Mold in Archives Room, Angel Island State Park, 2010.
06 Visitors Inspection Report, 8/17/1982. (2 Copies)


Arranged alphabetically by report title.

04 Archaeological Site Condition Assessment Record (ASCAR) Site Inventory, 8/9/2002.
05 Archaeological Site Condition Assessment Record (ASCAR), 2003.
06 CA-MRN-45 Angel Island Catalogue, 3/16/1983. (2 Copies)
08 DPR 523: Primary Record, 2003.
09 Finding Aid for Angel Island, undated.
11 Immigration Station Excavation Pre-Mapping Notes and Pictures, 4/16/2003.
APPENDIX B

Sample of Encoded Archival Description

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The collection is open for research. Cultural and archaeological site maps are restricted. Reports with sensitive data may be restricted. Consult repository for details.

For permission to reproduce or publish, please consult the California State Parks Archives archivist. Permission for reproduction or publication is given on behalf of the California State Parks Archives, Sacramento as the owner of the physical items. The researcher assumes all responsibility for possible infringement that may arise from reproduction or publication of materials from the California State Parks Archives.

Angel Island State Park donated the majority of the material in this collection in 2002. Additional correspondence, maps, and reports were added from Central Records in 2015.

Margo Lentz-Meyer processed this collection and created and encoded its finding aid in 2015.

Angel Island State Park, the largest island in the San Francisco Bay, is a park dedicated to the preservation of the island's abundant natural and cultural resources. The park was added piece by piece to the California State Park System over a period of eight years. In 1954, the California State Park Commission acquired Ayala Cove. In the following months Parks acquired additional acreage above the cove. In 1962, the island was turned over to the California Department of Parks and Recreation, with the exception of Coast Guard stations on Point Blunt and Point Stuart.

Prior to its designation as a California State Park, Angel Island served an array of functions. For thousands of years the island was used as a hunting and fishing outpost.
by the Coast Miwok. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Angel Island was used as a base for Spanish Navy Lieutenant Manuel de Ayala's survey of the San Francisco Bay, a storage site for Russian sealers, a hideout for smugglers, and a cattle ranch. On 6 November 1850 the U.S. government seized ownership of the island under President Millard Fillmore's Executive Order, reserving "for public purposes" certain lands around the bay including Angel Island.

During the Civil War the Army took control of the island establishing Camp Reynolds in 1863. Camp Reynolds became the first military installation on the island, constructed to serve as part of the Civil War's west coast defense system. Located at West Garrison, the camp included sleeping quarters for over 200 soldiers, a chapel, bakery, trading store, hospital, school, and cemetery. The post served as a small town for soldiers stationed on the Island during the Civil War, and later to suppress Native American uprisings, and maintain the island's gun batteries.

In 1891 the Angel Island Quarantine Station opened for operation. Located in Hospital Cove, the station was initially a port where ships suspected of carrying infectious disease were isolated for inspection. During its sixty-six years of operation the Station was comprised of approximately fifty buildings including: a 400-bed detention barracks, a hospital, laboratories, a disinfecting plant, and quarters for employees.

In response to the global insecurities of the twentieth century, the U.S. military expanded significantly and an additional army post was established at East Garrison. In 1900 the Army posts on the Island were renamed Fort McDowell, in addition, each site was given a new name. Camp Reynolds became West Garrison, and new installations were developed at sites that became North Garrison and East Garrison.

East Garrison was initially developed to quarantine and process soldiers returning from operations in the Philippines during Spanish American War. During World War I and World War II Fort McDowell was used for processing soldiers leaving for and returning from posts overseas. Fort McDowell served as an all-purpose site for soldiers. It included a 600-man barracks, mess hall, hospital, Post Exchange, guardhouse, railroad ticket office, Wells Fargo Express Company office, and a number of recreation sites. Recreation has long been an important feature on Angel Island. During the Army period soldiers passed the time bowling and playing baseball.

In 1910 the Angel Island Immigration Station opened. During its thirty years in service approximately 500,000 immigrants were processed. Immigrants from Asia, Europe, and South America passed through Angel Island, with Chinese immigrants making up the vast majority of immigrants processed. In 1940, the Immigration Station was relocated to San Francisco following a fire that destroyed the Administration Building. On 4 February 1941 the site reverted back to military and was used to process and detain prisoners of war during World War II.

In the 1970s Chinese poetry and other carvings were rediscovered in the Immigration Station barracks. Since then Angel Island State Park has become a popular destination for genealogical research, for discovering the history of immigration on the West Coast, and has remained a popular site for recreation.

Series one, Correspondence, consists of correspondence, memoranda, telegrams, and compiled correspondence. The series is arranged by subject starting with general correspondence and ending with bound volumes of correspondence copied from the National Archive. Series two, Histories, documents the history of Angel Island from the Miwok to the U.S. Army’s Nike Missile Site. It includes timelines, bibliographic card files, theses, and histories written by parks employees and/or contractors. Series three, Interpretation is divided into five subseries: Park, North Garrison, West Garrison, East Garrison, and Natural Resources. The records included in this series consist of interpretation plans, exhibit plans, and guides.

Series four, Subject files is divided into six subseries: General Plan, Transportation, Oil Spill, Peace Tower, Presidio Army Museum, and Archaeology. The subseries consist of correspondence, meeting minutes, plans, and reports. Series five, Facilities and Structures, contains correspondence, building inventories, restoration project plans, and building descriptions and sketches. Series six, Financial Documents, includes proposed budget plans, project estimates, and project requests. Series seven, Legal Documents, consists of California Senate and Assembly Bills, agreements, and permits.

Series eight, Publications, encompasses articles, newspaper and magazine clippings, workshop materials, and guides not published by parks. Series nine, Ephemera, includes certificates, brochures, programs, flyers and postcards. Series ten, Cartographic Material, includes maps, plans and drawings. Series eleven, Photographic Material, consists of negatives, slides, and photographic prints. Series twelve, Scrapbook, consists of one scrapbook comprised of pictures and letters donated by an Angel Island park ranger. Series thirteen, Media, contains floppy discs, diskettes, audiocassettes, CDs, and DVDs.

Series fourteen, Reports, includes reports produced by State of California Department of Parks and Recreation and Parks contractors. Series fifteen, Restricted Material, consists of reports and maps that contain confidential, and culturally sensitive information.

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