

Point Pinole: A Place Apart

Point Pinole has long been an out-of-the-way place. For this reason it endures today as a quiet park of bay vistas, breezes, and peaceful woods. It was not always this way.

For nearly 80 years, from 1881 until 1960, this place teemed with sights and sounds of dynamic manufacturing. The dangerous work happened here because few neighbors lived nearby.

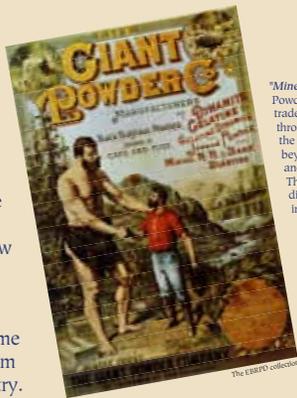
Today, railroad grades still criss-cross the land, leading from bunker to bunker, under eucalyptus trees planted to buffer explosions. Gone are the yellow houses of the company village, and the whistle-stop Giant train station.

Through the early days, before Giant went into operation here, the Huchiu Ohlone tribe gathered shellfish by the bluffs. Mexican ranchers ran longhorn cattle here, and later Sobrante Village was home to Croatian fishermen near the shallow eastern cove.

Much has changed since then, but the land has come full circle, returning to calm after years of noisy industry. Explore it and discover traces of the past.



An Oakland-bound Southern Pacific steam locomotive thunders past the Atlas Powder Company's Giant Station at Point Pinole. EBRFD Collection Courtesy Louis E. Stahl Jr.



"Miner's Friend" – This is the Giant Powder Company's lithographed trademark which was a familiar sight throughout the west and especially in the Mother Lode during 1870-90 and beyond. Note boxes of Giant Powder and the line "the Miner's Friend." The statement "for...bank blasting" did not refer (officially) to financial institutions.

"Fishing on the Bay"
Photo depicts Antoine Petrich Sr. (on shore), Antoine Petrich Jr. (in boat), and friends near the fishing village of Sobrante in a traditional Croatian fishing boat called a "kangaroo" which Petrich Sr. built himself. -circa 1912



The Petrich family collection

