

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 the sights and sounds of dynamite 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.

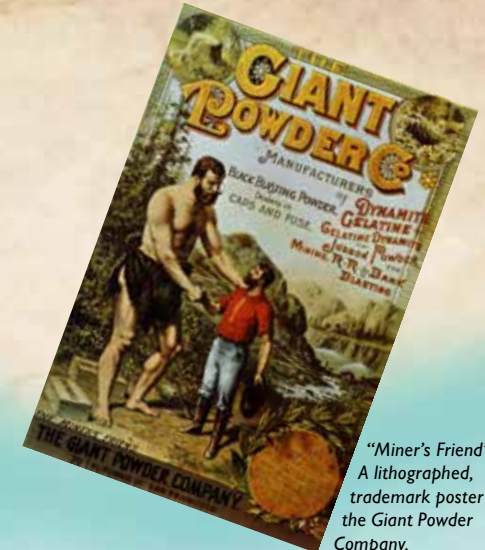
Through the early days, before Giant Powder Company started operations here, the Huchiun Ohlone tribe gathered shellfish by the bluffs. Mexican ranchers ran longhorn cattle, and Sobrante Village was later home to Croatian fishermen near the shallow eastern cove.

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 train station at Point Pinole.

EBRPD Collection, courtesy of Louis L. Stein Jr.



"Miner's Friend"
A lithographed, trademark poster of the Giant Powder Company.

EBRPD Collection

"Fishing on the Bay"

Fisherman Antoine Petrich Sr. (on shore) watches a traditional Croatian fishing boat near the fishing village of Sobrante, c. 1912.



Portion of 1908 Contra Costa County map courtesy of Bancroft Library

