

12 June 2020

Ms. Julianne Polanco,
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

RE.: Application for Registration of
California Historical Landmark,
Francis Drake's 1579 New Albion

Dear Ms. Polanco:

It is a pleasure to offer this letter in support of the Application for Registration of "Francis Drake's 1579 New Albion" as a California Historical Landmark (CHL). I would be grateful if you would share this endorsement with members of the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) for their consideration prior to voting on the Application.

As an archaeologist, author, retired university professor, and former member of the SHRC (1987-1990) with 60 years of professional experience in California, I am well acquainted with the state's cultural heritage and historic preservation programs. I am also quite familiar with the history and archaeology of the Point Reyes area, especially as they pertain to Francis Drake's time there in 1579, based upon the work of scholars from the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State University, the Drake Navigators Guild, Santa Rosa Junior College, the National Park Service, and others, including my own field and library research on these topics beginning in the early 1960s.

The subject Application clearly establishes Francis Drake's 1579 New Albion* as eligible for registration as a CHL (cf. Pub. Res. Code. §5031(a)). The proposed Landmark is comprised of sites and features representing events of statewide (indeed, national and international) significance and having anthropological, cultural, political, scientific, and religious values. Moreover, it is truly unique—the only historical resource of its type anywhere—and is associated with an individual, Francis Drake, who profoundly influenced the history of not only California but also Europe and the Americas. Importantly too, the area encompassed by the nominated CHL is in superb condition, retaining beautifully its integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

To highlight key points: Francis Drake at New Albion was the first to claim for England a domain that ultimately would become part of the United States; Drake's visit in 1579 was the earliest contact between English and native peoples (i.e., Coast Miwok) in California; and his visit marked the first appearance in California of the English language, Protestant religious services, and African Americans. It also witnessed the first English encampment, fortification, smithy, and ship carenage in North America. Last but certainly not least, Drake's temporary base near the bay that bears his name was an essential stop on his circumnavigation of the globe—a heroic voyage that contributed greatly to the shifting balance of power from Spain towards England during the late 16th century and to the rise of the British Empire. Exceedingly rare in California are places that can claim such historical significance as New Albion.

Students of the *Golden Hind*'s 1577-1580 voyage know that during the past century some people have questioned whether Drake actually landed at his eponymous bay, preferring to believe that his five weeks on the West Coast were spent elsewhere in California, Oregon, or even beyond. Fortunately, as research results have accumulated over time, the errant views have largely been laid to rest. It is now obvious to virtually all Drake scholars that the geographic "best fit" is with the Point Reyes area when one considers the navigational factors, suitable harbor, latitude, summer weather, terrain, white cliffs, biota, and Coast Miwok houses, customs, artifacts, and vocabulary recorded by Francis Fletcher, Drake's Chaplain, at the time of the 1579 visit.

The compelling case for New Albion being at Drakes Bay is further strengthened by archaeology. Despite thousands of archaeological survey and excavation projects throughout the Pacific states over the past 150 years, abundant 16th-century artifacts have been found *only* at what is now Point Reyes National Seashore. While some of these artifacts surely came from the 1595 wreck at Drakes Bay of the Manila Galleon *San Agustín*, captained by Sebastião Rodrigues Soromenho (Sebastián Rodríguez Cermeño), the others must have been left by Drake. For example, two distinct lots of Wan Li, Ming Dynasty Chinese porcelains occur at Indian habitation sites within the National Seashore: (1) surf-tumbled sherds, assumed to have washed ashore from the storm-battered *San Agustín*, and (2) cleanly broken pieces without trace of surf abrasion, most probably representing ceramic vessels left behind when the *Golden Hind*, newly watered and provisioned (not to mention laden with 26 tons of silver and a half-ton of gold), sailed away from the white cliffs on her way westward towards the Maluku (Moluccas) Archipelago. The clincher is that each of these porcelain lots is distinctive not only in the presence or absence of sand-abrasion, but also in terms of decorative motifs, paste, and geochemical "fingerprints" (i.e., trace element composition) as determined by energy-dispersive X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis.

By extraordinary coincidence, two late 16th-century European sea captains landed on or very near the shore of Drakes Bay. The first, in 1579, successfully careened and refitted his galleon *Golden Hind* and then sailed on to knighthood and later to further glory by defeating the Spanish Armada. The other's fate was to see his Manila Galleon *San Agustín* being hammered to pieces by an unexpected storm and then to row a launch with his surviving crew all the way down the California coast to Mexico and an ignominious future. It is the former individual and his activities just west of Point Reyes that are to be memorialized by registration of "Francis Drake's 1579 New Albion" as a California Historical Landmark. Without hesitation, I strongly recommend the SHRC's approval of this proposed registration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Moratto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael J. Moratto, Ph.D., RPA
Consulting Archaeologist
22301 SW Stafford Rd.
Tualatin, OR 97062
Moratto1850@gmail.com

*New Albion, derived from *Portus Novae Albionis* (“the Port of New Albion”), was named by Drake with reference to the white cliffs at Drakes Bay and their striking resemblance to the chalk cliffs of Dover, England, which the Romans had called *Albion* (“Whiteland”). Since the old Latin name *Albion* had been applied not only to Dover’s cliffs but by extension to all of England, Drake’s term *Novae Albionis* cleverly meant “of New England.” Thus, Drake in California had claimed America’s first New England.

Cc:

William Burg, State Historian II
Registration Programs and Environmental Compliance
Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

Adam Sriro, Chair
State Historical Resources Commission
c/o State Office of Historic Preservation
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816



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WEST COUNTY
MUSEUM

June 16, 2020

ref: Drake's Cove CHL

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WSCHS

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www.wschs.org

William Burg, State Historian
Office of Historic Preservation
California State Parks
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

by email to william.burg@parks.ca.gov

Dear Mr. Burg:

The Western Sonoma County Historical Society has been serving the people of western Sonoma County and visitors alike since 1974.

Over the years, we have examined the 16th century voyages along our coast – Drake, Cermeño, Vizcaino. We have heard speakers and presented exhibits in our West Sonoma County Museum, the old Petaluma and Santa Rosa Railroad depot. We know that Drake was the first Englishman to travel along our County's shores and the first to draw it as he approached and rounded Point Reyes Head.

We recognize the importance of history. It is valuable to preserve the past so we know the past, can learn from it, and become better citizens.

We understand that the State Cultural Heritage Board is considering making Drake's Cove a State Historical Landmark. Among the thousand-plus such Landmarks, the Drake site would be among the most important. Our Board of Directors formally supports "filling in this hole" of our earliest history.

With best regards,
Teresa Ramondo
Teresa Ramondo
President

From: [John Sugden](#)
To: Burg, William@Parks
Subject: Drake's Cove California Historical Landmark
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020 4:10:43 AM

William Burg,
State Historic Preservation Office.

Dear Dr. Burg,

I am writing in support of suitable recognition of Drake Cove as the scene of Drake's historic visit to what is now California in 1579. I am an English historian, and have written a book and several articles and book reviews about Drake.

As you will know, Drake refitted the 'Golden Hinde' in California in preparation for a round the world voyage, which had now become inevitable. His return to England by the Straits of Magellan was out of the question. The fabled Northwest Passage was merely a theoretical concept, and one that Drake had tested insofar as current geographical thought in England went, and found wanting. A proposal to return by means of the Isthmus of Panama was also impractical. Given the closure of these options, Drake accepted that he would have to circumnavigate, although relatively little was known in England of many of the regions through which he would have to pass. Nevertheless, Drake managed to reach England in 1580 after a voyage of 50,000 miles. It was the second circumnavigation, and the longest single voyage yet known to have been made by anybody, but it would not have been possible without the respite that Drake found in California. His sojourn in California was also an interesting milestone in the relations between the Europeans and Native Americans. Drake established a good rapport with the coastal peoples. Anthropologist Robert F. Heizer has long since given us valuable accounts of this.

The site is also, in some respects, almost the birthplace of Anglo-America. England had no colonies in North America at that time. Following John Cabot's discoveries off Newfoundland at the end of the fifteenth century, English sailors had become familiar with that area as a fishing ground, but it was not until 1583 that Newfoundland was formally annexed for England by Humphrey Gilbert. Drake arrived in the Pacific in 1578, and claimed "Elizabeth Island" for England - technically her first overseas possession. We now know that this was Cape Horn, but the English claim was never followed up. Drake's next and far more significant claim was made in Drake's Cove in California in 1579. He named the territory New Albion. We're not sure about the extent of this claim. The Nicola Van Sype world map of Drake's voyage, which we think was printed about 1583, marks New Albion as sweeping across the whole of America to the Atlantic coast. Whatever, although New Albion (at least in terms of the west coast of North America) was never occupied after Drake left, the claim probably added impetus to the subsequent colonisation ventures of Gilbert and his half-brother, Walter Raleigh, whose

patent from the Queen in 1584 led to the famous settlement at Roanoke.

Drake's Cove was recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 2012, but it has not yet been so recognized by the California State Preservation Office. I understand that a proposal is now before you for some form of recognition. It is an internationally significant place historically, and I wanted to give my full and enthusiastic support to the application.

May I also take this opportunity to wish you all well and safe in these challenging times. The news is very worrying. Please play safe and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,

[Dr.] J. Sugden

From: [Gordon Miller](#)
To: [Burg, William@Parks](#)
Cc: [Michael Von der Porten](#)
Subject: Drake's Cove CHL
Date: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 4:11:10 PM
Attachments: [A Fair & Good Bay.tiff](#)

Dear Mr. Burg,

Twenty years ago, the late Ray Aker took me out to the coast where Francis Drake careened the *Golden Hind*, in preparation for my painting of the site. I was struck, not just by its historical importance, but also by the magic of the place.

I am aware that there is an application to have it recognized as a California Historic Landmark. I am not sure if a Canadian can lend any weight to the process, but I can think of no place more worthy of the designation.

sincerely,

Gordon Miller



From: [Carolyn Shepard](#)
To: Burg, William@Parks
Subject: Drake's Cove CHL
Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 1:40:22 PM

June 17, 2020

William Burg
State Historic Preservation Office
California

Dear Sir:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Drake's Cove as a California Historical Landmark. This landmark designation would officially recognize the landing of Sir Francis Drake at Drake's Cove in 1579 and claiming the land as New Albion.

I am the daughter of the late Raymond Aker, who served as President of the Drake Navigators Guild for several decades until his death on Jan. 4, 2003. My father dedicated 50 years to the research and advocacy of this site along with so many others, drawing on their combined expertise of navigation, historical documents and charts, historical ships, porcelain dating, Native Americans on this site and much more.

The Drake Navigators Guild published the [Report of Findings Relating to the Identification of Sir Francis Drake's Encampment at Point Reyes National Seashore – A Research Report of the Drake Navigators Guild](#), by Raymond Aker in 1970 to be presented to the National Park Service, Western Region. This is an extremely comprehensive and well researched report of 450 pages offering proof of this site as the place where Francis Drake careened his ship, the Golden Hind, at Drake's Cove in 1579.

We now have a National Historic Landmark designation, and it is time that we have a California Historical Landmark designation. Unfortunately, all of the original members of the Drake Navigators Guild, who dedicated so much time and energy to this project have now passed away. Now is the time to honor their labor and knowledge with an official California Historical Landmark designation.

Respectfully,

Carolyn Aker Shepard

1161 Granada Street

Belmont, CA 94002

From: [Eric Stanley](#)
To: Burg, William@Parks
Subject: Drake's Cove CHL
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 11:34:18 AM

Dear Mr. Burg,

I am writing in support of the designation of the Sir Francis Drake Landing site as a California Historic Landmark. I am familiar with the subject of the site and have often referenced its significance regionally in my own work. The significance of the landing, resulting interactions, and history that surrounds Drake's journey makes it unquestionably worthy of the state designation, even aside from any consideration of Drake as an individual historic figure.

Thank you for your consideration and your work on the nomination.

Sincerely,

Eric Stanley

--

Eric Stanley

Associate Director and Curator of History

Museum of Sonoma County

425 Seventh Street

Santa Rosa, CA 95401

707.579.1500 x 103



From: [Gary Lowell](#)
To: Burg, William@Parks
Subject: Drake's Cove CHL
Date: Monday, June 15, 2020 9:34:34 AM

William Burg
State historian

Dear Sir -

I am writing in support of the nomination of Drake's Cove as a California Historic Landmark. I've followed the topic over several years and I am in agreement.

Thanks,
Gary

From: [BRUCE KEEGAN](#)
To: [Burg, William@Parks](#); [Michael Von der Porten](#)
Subject: Drake's Cove CHL
Date: Monday, June 15, 2020 7:57:51 PM

Dear Commissioner Burg:

This note is in support of your recognising Drake's Cove as an historic site commemorating Francis Drake's arrival in 1579. Where he spent 5 weeks dealing with the natives as he careened his ship, Golden Hind.

The evidence of his visit is found in over 16 middens in the form of 16th century Chinese porcelain.

Best regards
Bruce Keegan

From: [Reed Dillingham](#)
To: [Burg, William@Parks](mailto:Burg.William@Parks)
Cc: sdubya@tutanota.com
Subject: Nomination of Drake Landing Site at Drakes Bay, California
Date: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 9:11:36 AM

July 8, 2020

Mr. William Burg@parks.ca.gov

Dear Mr Burg –

I am writing to support the nomination of “Drake’s Cove” at Drake’s Bay as a State Historical Landmark. As you no doubt know, “Drake’s Cove” is the small cove on the west side of the Estero as it meets Drake’s Bay. As demonstrated, 50 years of research and archeology have definitively shown that this site is the location where Drake and his crew spent a month in May and June of 1579 as a respite from their voyage around the world, the second after the earlier voyage of Magellan. The significance of this site is that it was the first English landfall in the present-day United States and one of the first European land-falls on the west coast of the United States. As someone who grew-up with the California school system, we so often saw the birth and early years of our country as events that happened 3,000 miles away, historical but with not very much immediate relevance to our lives and environment. Drake’s landfall and the development of California Missions are examples of deeds that bring the early history of the United States to the west Coast.

My own interest in the Drake story and his camp site at Drake’s Bay started as a 10-year-old boy who accompanied his father, Matthew Dillingham, on trips to Drake’s Bay in search of various physical indications of the camp. Pieces of porcelain, small metal artifacts, agglomerations of stone were all part of the puzzle. The viewpoints of my father’s friends and colleagues in the search were well-researched from various points of view. Diaries, recorded history, Chinese porcelain styles, Elizabethan seamanship, among others, all had their stories to tell. My own boyhood fantasy – usually brought-up while bored waiting for the adults to finish what they were doing - was to find a “jeweled dagger” accidentally left behind by Drake. Needless to say, that did not happen. But in the end, the more important “jewel” that was discovered was the historic truth about the site and its significance.

Due to recent events in our country, there have been a number of commentaries about Drake’s personal character. Certainly, his early slaving trips to Africa and Brazil, can never be excused. His actions against Spanish colonies on the west coast of South American, however, are different. The context of people and history, when viewed from the 21st Century, is very different from our own. The Spanish – one of the “victims” of Drake’s actions – were themselves quite ruthless in enslaving the indigenous peoples. And, in fact, many of the native peoples were themselves quite vicious as exhibited by Aztec human sacrifice as well as the bloody battles and enslavement by the Maya. The designation of the Drake landing site as a State Historical Landmark does not “honor” Drake but rather shows the location of a historic event. In the end, many of the people who have made major accomplishments in world history have not been “nice” but they played important parts in the forward lean of history, parts that have affected us all.

Please accept my endorsement for designating Drake’s Cove a State Historical Landmark.

Reed Dillingham
Berkeley, California

June 3, 2020

William Burg
State Historian
Sacramento, California
email: william.burg@parks.ca.gov

ref: Drake's Cove CHL

Dear Mr. Burg & Members of the California State Historic Resources Commission:

I write in support of the Drake's Cove California Historic Landmark.

I am the biographer of the late Captain Adolph S. Oko, Jr. and his wife, Gladys. This is documented in my *The Odyssey of a Ship with Three Names*, University of Nevada, Reno, Center for Basque Studies, 2014.

I have studied closely Captain Oko's papers, records and calculations held at the American Jewish Society and at the Bancroft Library. I have seen him as a sailor, as a navigator and as a problem-solver. He was effective in each of these roles. Those traits enabled him to be effective in the *Kefalos* voyages and in his other work. My late father, Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, was a mess boy on the *Kefalos* on the vessel's voyage from Tampico to Tel Aviv in 1948. He was able to observe first-hand the captain's important actions at key moments during the crossing of the Atlantic.

In his post-sailing career, Captain Oko spent considerable effort examining the landing of Francis Drake at Drakes Bay and in working with people of many disciplines in examining many details of the evidence in that landing. Captain Oko was able to bring a seaman's point of view to the matter. Drake's landing at Point Reyes was the solution to a *seaman's* problem.

Returning to California, Captain Oko reinvigorating the Inverness Yacht Club and taught sailing methods/techniques to young would-be sailors on Tomales Bay.

In June 1964, Captain Oko published *Francis Drake and Nova Albion* in *The California Historical Quarterly*.

While the landing of Drake at Drake's Cove is of national and international importance, it clearly is a key part of California history. Having the State of California appropriately acknowledge and mark the site will help resolve a long-standing oversight.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of additional assistance with this significant initiative.

Sincerely,

Renato Barahona
Professor Emeritus
Department of History
University of Illinois at Chicago
Email: barahona@uic.edu

To: William Burg, California State Historian,
william.burg@parks.ca.gov

Re: Drake's Cove CHL

Dear Mr. Burg,

I am writing to support the nomination of Drake's Cove as a California Historical Landmark. I note that this nomination specifically recognizes the 1579 California landing site of Sir Francis Drake's circumnavigation as Drake's Cove within Drakes Bay and his land claim of Nova Albion for Queen Elizabeth I of England. As such it would offer a more precise location for Drake's true landing site than does the National Historic Landmark designation and would recognize the achievements of his voyage.

My opinions are based upon two centuries of accumulated scholarly research by professional nautical historians. This documentation has provided an overwhelming weight of evidence in conjunction with more recent research by members of the Drake Navigators Guild over the past 50 years. Studies by the late Ed Von Der Porten and Clarence Shangraw have furnished the only available tangible evidence of Drake's careenage at what is now Drakes Bay in their analysis of Chinese porcelain sherds from the Golden Hinde. Other convincing primary evidence is derived from the diary of Francis Fletcher, the expedition chaplain, as the only first-hand account of the anchorage site (38 degrees N latitude under the white cliffs found at Drakes Bay) and its indigenous peoples' culture and language-- evidence to be encountered nowhere else along Drake's circumnavigation route.

More than 75 years of ethnologic scholarship have associated the native Coastal Miwok culture and language with the account of Drake's anchorage site. The flora and fauna of the Point Reyes peninsula also are characteristic of Drake's landing site within Drakes Bay.

The Drake Navigators Guild research has correlated the *Porta Nova Albionis* inset of the Hondius Broadsheet map with the Drake's Cove site. Numerous renowned mariners and nautical historians have

confirmed the unique suitability of Drakes Bay and the Cove within for the purpose of Drake's careenage.

In consideration of the accumulated evidence, international bodies of eminent professional scholars and academics believe the evidence to overwhelmingly favor Drake's Cove as the true landing site; no other proposed site fulfills all of these objective scientific criteria. This amassed cumulative evidence led to the designation of the Drakes Bay Historical and Archeologic District as a National Historic Landmark. By the U.S. Department of the Interior in 2012.

No other Drake anchorage anywhere in the world has been as deeply researched as the landing site at Drake's Cove, which is now a significant part of our local, state and national heritage. It is part of the 'world encompassed' and is the site of the first Protestant religious service conducted in the New World. It exemplifies Drake's humane and caring treatment of his crew and the gentle courtesy shown to his captives. His respect for indigenous peoples and cultures was so unlike that of European conquistadores and his concern for the health and wellbeing of his sailors led to provision of effective prophylaxis against scurvy. Drake's moral qualities also exemplify a rectitude unusual among the 16th century explorers, for which we honor his persona as an icon and example of association with which we are justly proud. Confirmation of this nomination as a California Historical Landmark would afford to all Californians a recognition of the importance of Drake's achievements on his 1579 visit to our state.

Cordially yours,

**Samuel D. Spivack MD
Member, Board of Directors
Drake Navigators Guild**