
South Bay Historical Society Bulletin

April 2015

Issue No. 8



This 1911 postcard show boundary monument no. 255 near the Tijuana border crossing.

The San Diego-Tijuana Boundary Monuments

by Barbara Zaragoza

In 1848, the U.S.-Mexican War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty stipulated that Mexico relinquish 1.2 million miles of its territory to the United States in return for \$15 million. It also assigned a Joint U.S. and Mexican Boundary Commission to determine the exact location of the new boundary line.

The Commission consisted of a large caravan of men, including a commissioner and a surveyor for both sides. The drawing of the boundary line took two years to complete – from 1849 to 1851. The Joint

Commission erected 52 boundary monuments with #1 overlooking the Pacific Ocean in what today is Border Field State Park.

Boundary Monument #258

Boundary marker #1 was made of Italian marble and stretched 14 feet high. The Commission ordered it from a New York firm called "At the Sign of the Quadrant" and waited for it to be delivered by ship. Once the marble obelisk arrived, the Commission purportedly placed a time capsule underneath. Boundary monument #1 became a popular tourist attraction. By some estimates, more than 100,000 visitors came each year by the end of the 19th century. A stagecoach line was set up that ran

services between Old Town and the monument. A problem arose, however, in that tourists who came to this site broke off small chips as souvenirs. Over time, this significantly damaged the monument.¹



Monument No. 1 in 1890

With more settlement along the border, disputes arose over the boundary's precise location. Both countries recognized the need to resurvey the line more precisely. (Only six monuments existed in California.) From 1892 to 1894, the Barlow-Blanco Commission began to place 258 boundary monuments across 689 miles of border. They started in El Paso, Texas and designated it boundary marker #1. As a consequence, the last marker, once considered the initial point at the Pacific Ocean, was re-numbered 258.² (The numbering system still remains from the Barlow-Blanco Commission, however, there are now 272 boundary monuments across the same stretch, the extra 14 marked as A's and B's.)

Colonel J.W. Barlow, chief of the American Boundary Commission, described the often dangerous work. "We started in at El Paso and from that point worked West steadily to San Diego. We passed over much desert and some valleys that would be fertile if there was any way of storing water. We also passed over many mountain ranges, notably the Sierra Madres. A great deal of the country was rough and wild."³

When Barlow reached the Pacific Ocean, the boundary monument was in terrible shape. The Commission sent the obelisk to a San Diego marble yard to get it fixed. When they placed the monument back at the initial point, they protected it with a steel picket fence.



Monument 258 in 2015, viewed from the Mexican side, with military surplus landing mat fence installed in 1996.

Boundary Monument #255

Photographs show that the Commission also placed a similar picket fence around boundary monument #255, which still exists today at the San Ysidro Port of Entry. During this time, Tia Juana was a city that existed both on the U.S. and Mexican side. There were no fences or borders, only two custom houses erected by both governments in the 1870's. A devastating flood, however, destroyed the town of Tia Juana in 1891. Most residents then moved 300 feet above sea level to the city's current location on exclusively the Mexican side.

Boundary monument #255 washed away during that flood and the Barlow-Blanco Commission put up a new one about 1,000 feet away on higher ground with the accompanying steel picket fence. A postcard shows a stagecoach service arriving at #255, signifying that this monument was probably another tourist destination. It was also the only one made of granite.

Pictures show that during the 1911 International Workers of the World Insurrection in Tijuana, Boundary Monument #255 was the location where insurrectionists surrendered to Captain Alfred Wilcox. In 1917 officials gathered at this monument for a "Friendship Fiesta," including Governor Estaban Cantu, San Diego Mayor Louis J. Wilde and John D. Spreckels. By 1918 it was also a destination along the 60-Hour Overland Touring Sedan from Canada To Mexico.



Monument No. 255 and

This second boundary monument still stands in its same location in a parking lot on Mexican federal property. #255 is also right beside the one-hundred-year-old Tijuana-Tecate train station, which is still in operation.



Two Boundary Monuments #255

In 1979 an agricultural worker found the mid-section of the original boundary monument #255. At first, it caused quite a little flap as the Baja California newspaper *El Heraldo* said that since the marker was found in San Ysidro, it meant that this district of San Diego was actually part of Mexico.

It was, of course, a joke. The marker was put into a warehouse in Old Town. The San Ysidro Chamber of Commerce, however, insisted that it should return to San Ysidro. Local historian Joyce Hettich headed the selection site, although we are unclear what location she recommended. Whatever she said, a picture in an out-of-print book *San Diego & Arizona: The Impossible Railroad* shows the boundary monument sitting in front of the newly built San Ysidro Trolley of 1981. At some point, this "first" boundary monument was moved across the street where it remains today. You can see it beneath the Highway I-5 pedestrian bridge.

Boundary Monument #252



Monument No. 252

While tourists considered boundary monuments #255 and #258 to be famous spots, the others, all constructed of either iron or masonry, seemed less popular. Boundary Monument #252 is the last of the seven boundary monuments shared by the cities of Tijuana and San Diego. Currently located at the far end of the maquiladora warehouses in Otay Mesa, this monument is made of masonry. It's elegant, but also cracked. Dirt piles up alongside #252. Its dilapidated condition begs the question: "Who cleans and keeps up these boundary monuments?"

The International Boundary and Water Commission has been responsible for the upkeep of the boundary monuments as well as water-rights treaties between the two nations since its creation in 1889. The archives in El Paso hold the records of joint monument engineering and cleanings and show that the monuments were next maintained in 1926. The engineers created a report that included pictures of #255 and #258 with new paint on their steel picket fences.

The archives also contain a "Joint report of the principal engineers on a maintenance program for the international land boundary monument" that came out on November 8, 1973. At that time, the engineers proposed a permanent program of maintenance, explaining, "The monuments should be maintained as necessary to assure at all times their proper location, permanence, and visibility."

The report proposed that the monuments be inspected at least every five years and be maintained at least every ten years. The work and maintenance needed to be shared, with Mexico maintaining Monuments 1 to 79 and 206 to 258, while the U.S. was responsible for monuments 80 to 204-A. That meant all the boundary markers between Tijuana and San Diego were to be cleaned and maintained by Mexico.

Boundary Monuments #253, 254, 256, 257

Boundary monuments #253, 254, 256 and 257 still exist. They are made of iron and #257, in particular, sits atop a craggy mountain where migrants historically have come in wait of darkness in order to cross the border. The violence at this location can be seen by the bullet holes that penetrate through the iron.



Monument No. 253

Each of these boundary monuments also tells the story of a more contemporary history. In 1994 the Clinton Administration launched “Operation Gatekeeper,” wherein the federal government erected a recycled military landing mat across the entire U.S.-Mexico land border, ending several yards inside the Pacific Ocean, ostensibly trying to “part the sea.” The military landing mat was strategically placed approximately 2-3 feet away from the actual U.S.-Mexico boundary line, so that the decision to erect a wall could be made by the United States unilaterally.

According to Steve Smullen, the USIBWC Area Operations Manager, after the federal government erected the military landing mat, the IBWC insisted that they still needed access to the boundary monuments. Border Patrol acquiesced and created doors next to each monument. The doors were cut into the landing mat at an unknown date. They have a locked bolt on the American side only, for which border patrol and the IBWC have keys.



Monument No. 254, with graffiti on the Mexican side of the military landing mat fence

Like boundary monument #255, boundary monument #257 is on federal property and therefore difficult to visit unless you ask for permission. The others: #252, 253, 254, 256 and 258 are easily accessible to Mexican residents. The military landing mat, interestingly, has become part of the boundary monument history because graffiti artists on the

Mexican side often create installations along the walls. Migrants also etch on the landing mat, including names of their loved ones or the cities from where they have traveled.



Monument No. 256

After September 11, 2001, tightened security had a definitive impact upon the boundary monuments. Congress passed the REAL ID Act in 2005, which stipulated a double fence along the entire United States-Mexico border. Section 102 of the act gave the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security the right to waive any law that would impede the rapid construction of the walls. That included the National Historic Preservation Act that protected the boundary monuments. In particular, No. 258 at the Pacific Ocean was redesigned in 2011 so that the obelisk stood exclusively on the Mexican side and was cut off to Americans by a thick mesh fence.

While the boundary monuments still exist, they are generally unknown to most Americans since they are neither visible nor accessible on the U.S. side. Only curious historians and filmmakers from abroad venture to locate them, crossing into Mexico and searching the military landing mat for a sighting.

The obelisk on the Mexican side, however, has become a symbol of U.S.-Mexican relations. You can find a row of the obelisks, painted white, at the migrants camp near the canal in Tijuana. Along a

freeway near the border fence in Tijuana, a roundabout also has a red obelisk with crosses darting out like thorns. Across the street, a migrant group on the Day of the Dead in 1998 placed more than 300 crosses along the military landing mat to commemorate those who died trying to cross into the United States from 1995-1998. The group has added many more hundreds of crosses since then.



Monument No. 257

Notes:

1. Charles Hughes, "On the Boundary Line: The U.S. Military on California's Border with Mexico 1849-1948," Report for the California Department of Parks and Recreation, San Diego Coast District, January 2009, 13. Boundary Monument #1 was also known as 'La Mojonera'.
2. The border between the U.S. and Mexico follows the course of the Rio Grande (a natural boundary line) until it hits the land boundary that begins in El Paso, Texas and runs to the Pacific Ocean in San Diego. The total length of the border is 1,954 miles.
3. "The Boundary Survey," San Diego Union 27 Sept. 1894, 2.

The obelisk below, titled "In Memoriam," was created by artist Roberto Rosique during the Tijuana Sculptural Symposium coordinated by the Committee for Tijuana's Image and the International Association of Events for Monumental Sculpture in February 2005.



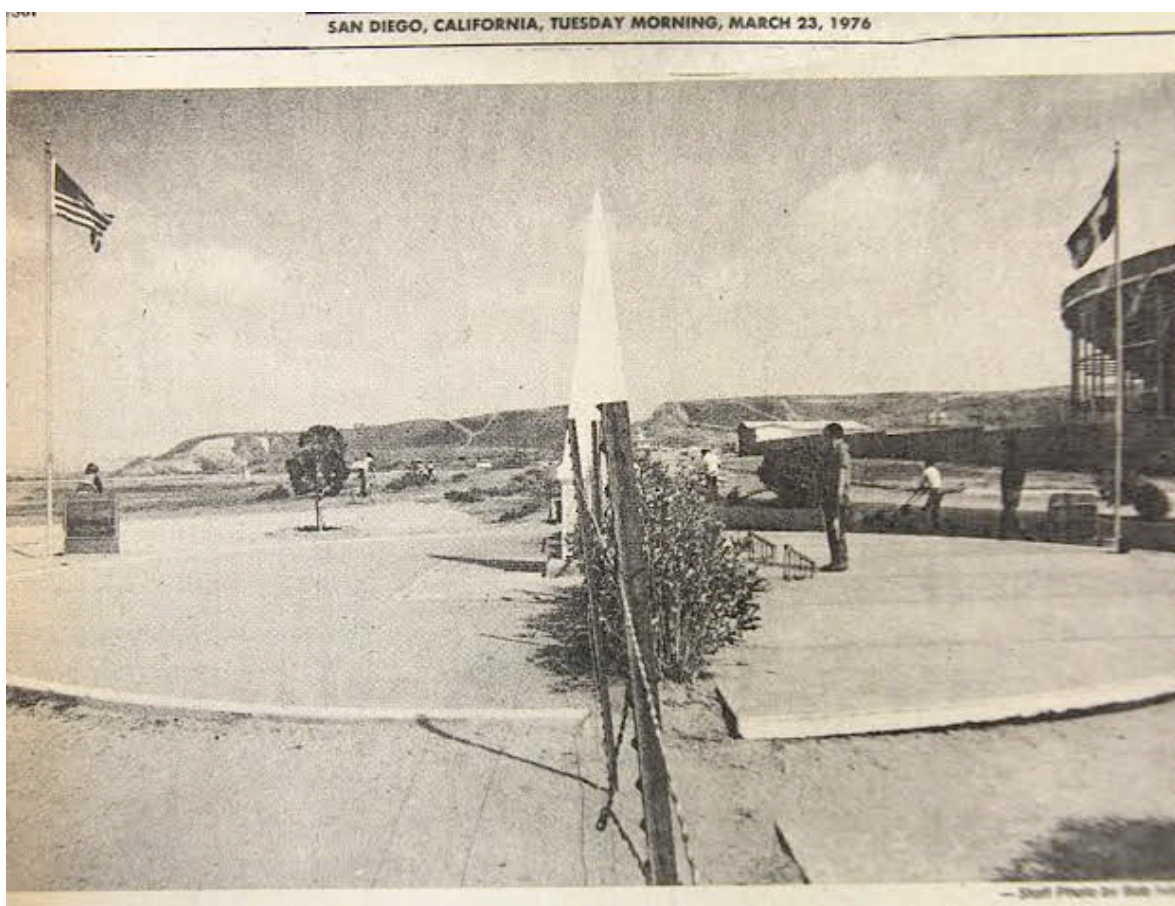


Above, Monument No. 258 straddles the border fence on Monument Mesa in 2008, shortly before the new border fence was constructed (below) cutting off all access to the monument except through a large gate that is opened to the public on weekends. The recycled military surplus landing mat fence, with white numbers painted on the surface, is visible behind the red webbed fence.

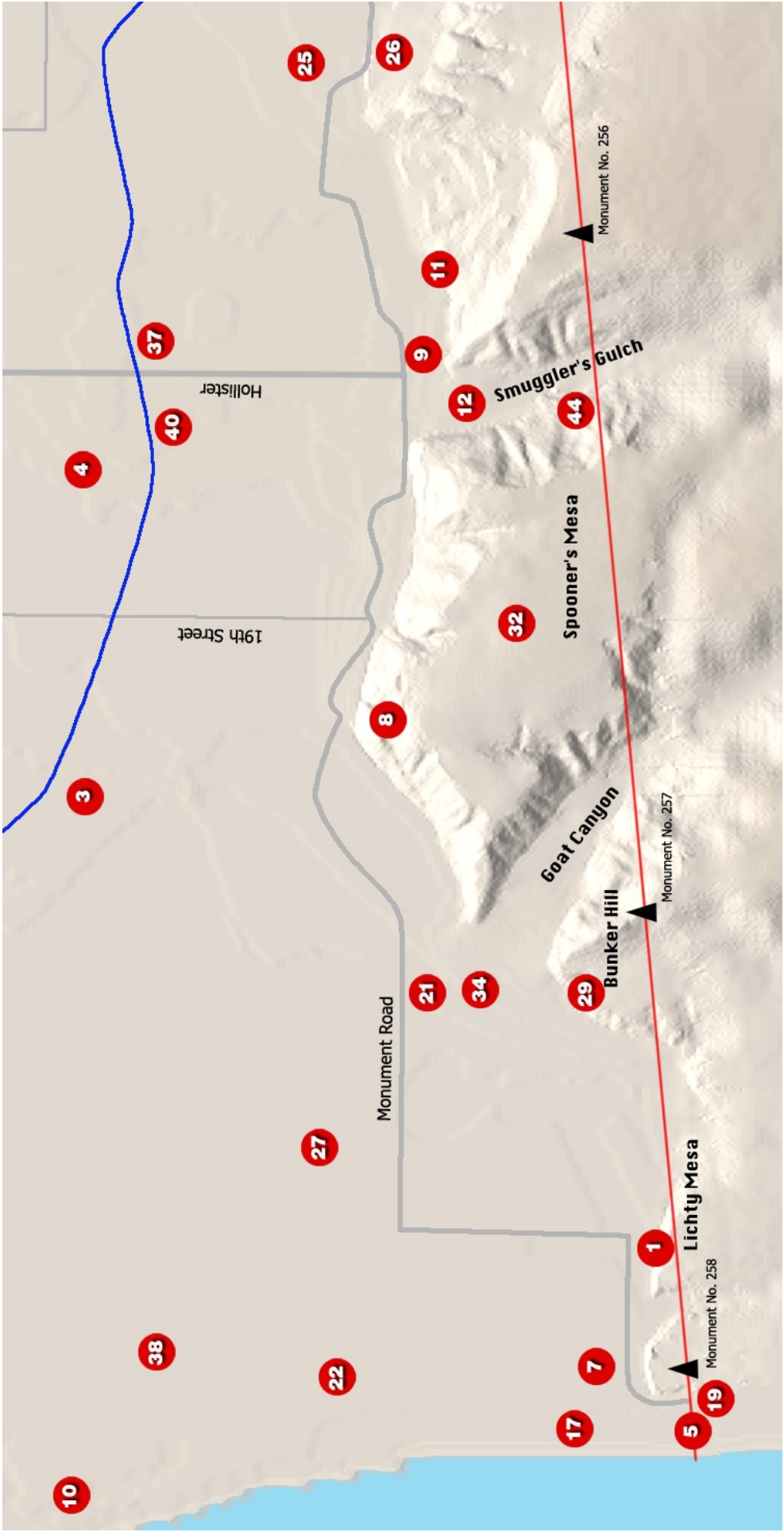




Above, Monument No. 258 in 2008, and below in 1976 showing the old barbed wire fence from the 1940s that was replaced by the tall metal fence in 1994.

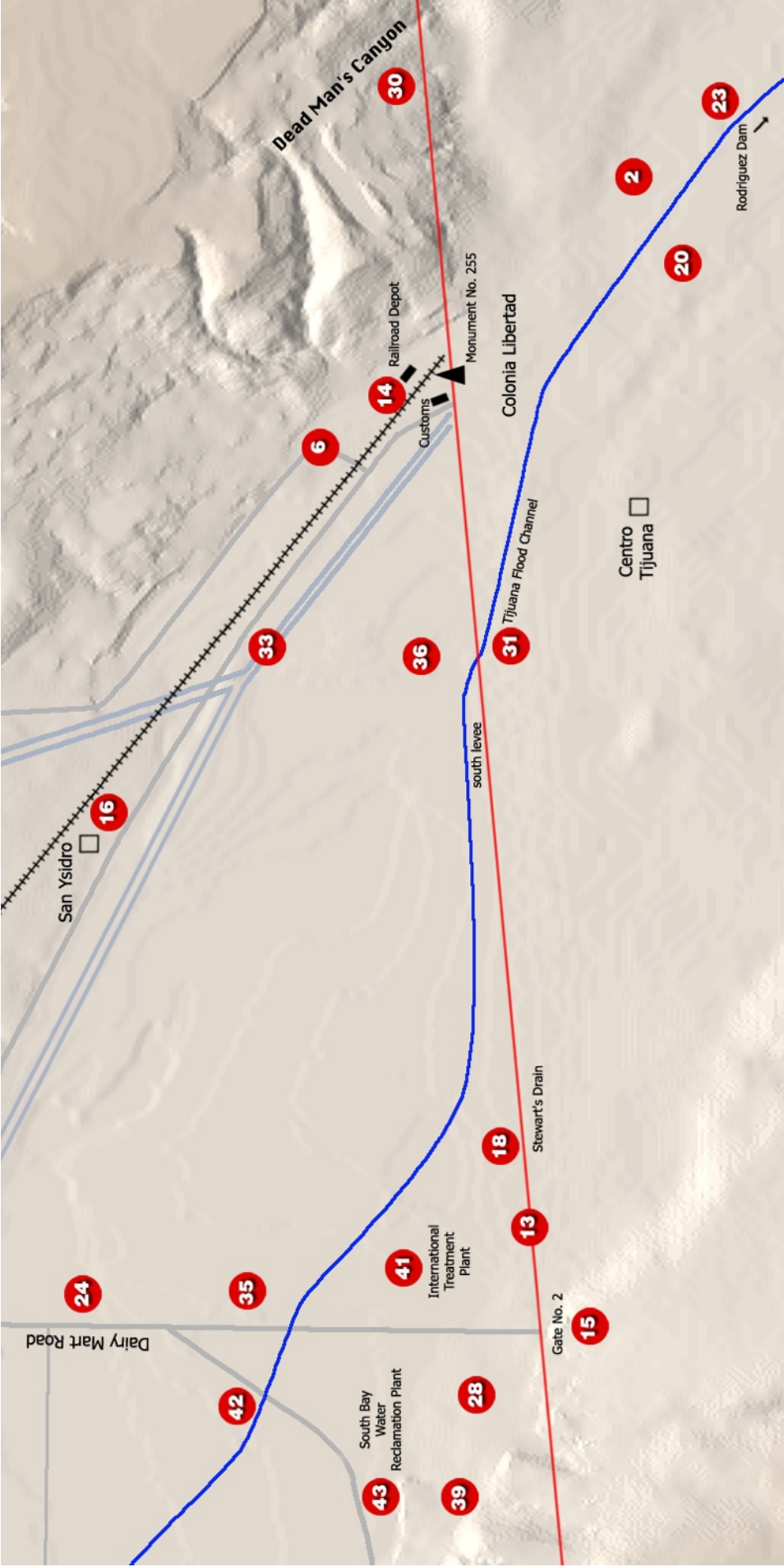


The Historical Border - West



See map key on page 11 to identify numbered locations

The Historical Border - East



See map key on page 11 to identify numbered locations

Key to Map Numbered Locations

1. Archaeologists have found evidence on the border mesas of Native American occupation beginning 9,000 years ago. Skeletal remains and artifacts found on Lichty Mesa were evidence of significant occupation for thousands of years. A major village called Melijo by the Spaniards was located along today's Hollister street north of Smuggler's Gulch.
2. Another village called Tijuana was located south of the present border and is the origin of the valley's name which the Spanish corrupted to Tia Juana, and later in the 20th century to Tijuana.
3. The first Spanish land expedition from Mexico in 1769 was led by Captain Fernando de Rivera with 25 soldiers from Loreto and Father Juan Crespi. After 51 days walking from Velicata, this expedition on May 13 entered the Tijuana River valley from Goat Canyon and camped on the south side of the Tijuana River near the Melijo village, at a site Crespi called Sancti Spiritu. On May 14 this expedition crossed the Otay River near Hollister Street, and continued on to the foot of Presidio Hill on San Diego Bay.



Smuggler's Gulch marker by Boy Scouts in 1965

4. The second land expedition with Father Junipero Serra followed the route of Rivera up Baja California, then entered the Tia Juana River through Smuggler's Gulch, and camped on the north side of the river June 30. On the following day Serra crossed the Otay

River and the Sweetwater River to reach the Presidio on the evening of July 1.

5. In June 1849, a survey team of the International Boundary Commission led by Major William Emory fixed the "initial point" of the boundary between Mexico and the U.S. on the beach below the bluff that became known as Monument Mesa. This point was one marine league south of the lower tip of San Diego bay as shown by the 1782 map of Juan Pantoja attached to Article 5 of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Captain Edmund Hardcastle, of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, and Ricardo Ramírez, of the Mexican Boundary Commission, dedicated the first boundary monument on July 14, 1851. It was made of marble and weighed over 8 tons. It was known as Monument No. 1 until the Barlow-Blanco Commission renumbered the monuments in 1894 and it became Monument No. 258.
6. The first settlement called Tia Juana began in 1865 with a general store of George Washington Barber on the American bank of the Tia Juana river where it crossed the boundary. This tiny settlement became a boom town in 1887 when Joseph Messenger and William Lane opened a general store, and lots were sold on both sides of the border. The flood of 1891 wiped out the town, and settlers south of the border moved to higher ground and established the Mexican town of Tijuana. A Mexican customs post was established in 1874 at the border crossing of the ranch to tax the trade between San Diego and Baja California. The settlement north of the border would later become San Ysidro.
7. Monument City was laid out in 1869 with a school and streets and a voting precinct for all of the Otay and Tia Juana valleys. Monument Hotel was planned in 1888 for a boom town called International City located near the boundary monument, but was never built.
8. Charles Mansir was a pioneer settler whose farm was considered "one of the best in the valley, with some of the finest specimens of tomatoes." His son Harry Mansir lived on a ranch on the northern side of

Spooner's Mesa and was known to frequently bring cattle from Mexico across the unguarded line to his ranch. When the Army patrolled the border during World War I, Mansir was required to apply for a passport.

9. A new Monument school house was built in 1889 on the south side of the Tijuana River. The building still exists at the intersection of Hollister Street and Monument Road, and is used as a private residence. The small one-room Monument School kept the distinction as the southwestern most school house in the United States until it closed in 1941. At that time it was considered to be the longest operating school in San Diego County.

10. Elisha Babcock took guests from his Hotel del Coronado on hunting expeditions in the Tijuana and Otay river valleys for duck and quail in the 1890s. He bought hundreds of ocean-front acres around the slough marshlands of the Tijuana River for his South Lake Gun Club. The Club was sold in 1911 to a group of wealthy sportsmen led by Roscoe Hazard and George Dannals.

11. James F. Wadham was a large landowner in the Tijuana River Valley, south and east of Monument Road. James brought his family from Missouri in 1871 and opened the first steam-powered grist mill in San Diego with Josiah Shaffer. When Shaffer moved to the southern end of San Diego bay to start the Salt Works, James F. Wadham opened a livery business and ran the stage station at the Mexican border in the 1870s. His son Fred W. Wadham was the sole customs house inspector at the border entry in Tijuana for 20 years after 1894. According to Joe Poggi, "In those days you could go back and forth across the line with no interference, no customs at all. The only customs that the United States had was just one man. That was old man Wadham, Fred Wadham. All he looked at was the horses. There was \$30 a head duty on the horses, and they smuggled quite a few horses from the Mexican side down this way because horses were scarce on this side. He was the only Custom Officer on the line then. They only looked after the horses." Fred's brother, Frank E.

Wadham, helped get the Monument School moved to Wadham property at the end of Hollister in 1889. Another brother, James E. Wadham, became an attorney and was elected mayor of San Diego 1911-13.

12. Smuggler's Gulch was settled by a dozen families before World War II, taking advantage of the abundance of fresh spring water. David Smallcomb began farming at the southern end of the gulch in 1900. William and Millie Coones were beekeepers after 1920. Hans Bruehlmeier came from Switzerland and planted avocado trees on the western side of the gulch in the 1930s. Ellen Satterslee dug 10 wells for a small water bottling plant.

13. The first border fence was a simple five-strand barbed wire fence built in 1910 to protect American cattle from Mexican tick fever. Henry Schnell was a local dairy farmer who was instrumental in getting the fence built to protect his cattle, and he helped patrol the fence with other local farmers at the south end of Dairy Mart Road. This fence was replaced by a 10-foot chain link fence in 1965 to keep out rabid dogs from Mexico. A new 10-foot tall, six-mile long fence from the ocean to San Ysidro was built in 1978. The new fence had a concrete base with four feet of expanded metal topped by seven feet of chain link fence, without the barbed wire that topped the old fence. From 1993 to 1996, surplus military landing mat was used to make a solid metal fence on the border.



Surplus military landing mat being installed in 1993.

14. The first passenger train on the San Diego & Arizona Railroad entered Mexico in July 1910. The line that was started by John D. Spreckels in 1907 would not be completed until 1919, but it proved popular for race fans who wanted to get to the Hippodrome track that opened in Jan. 1916 just across the border. The train stopped at the new depot next to Monument No. 255 and fans could easily walk to the growing number of attractions in Tijuana.

15. Gate No. 2 in the fence that was built in 1910 allowed animals to cross the border after inspection. The gate also became popular with Americans and touring companies as a shortcut to Tijuana. What is now Hollister Street was called Gate No. 2 Road, as it was the route from National Avenue at Nestor, south to Monument Road and then east to the gate.

16. The Little Landers colony was established in 1908 by William Smythe and later became San Ysidro. The San Ysidro Border Camp was established by the Army at San Ysidro during the Mexican Revolutionary period 1916-1920.

17. The Army established a camp named "Border Field" in 1916 near Monument No. 1. After the Army left, it was expanded by the Navy after 1940. The Border Field Auxiliary Landing Field included 35 buildings and a machine-gun range. The Navy used the area north of Monument Mesa Border for gunnery training on five moving-target machine gun ranges, designated Aircraft Gunnery Range Border Field. In 1970 the Navy declared Border Field Auxiliary Landing Field as surplus and turned ownership to the State of California to become Border Field State Park. Pat Nixon dedicated the park August 18, 1971.

18. Walter E. Stewart built his home in 1911 just east of Gate No. 2. He eventually owned 500 acres and was known as the "King of Potatoes" in the valley. After his first home was washed away in the 1916 flood, the site became known as Stewart's Drain.

19. Aztec City was a resort and racetrack planned in

1924 by Robert Bassity on more than 5000 acres fronting on the border and the Pacific Ocean near Monument No. 1, but it was never built. The resort included a landmark in the ocean near the boundary monument known as Point of Rocks.

20. The Agua Caliente resort and casino was opened June 23, 1928, by Wirt G. Bowman, Baron Long, and James N. Crofton. It was constructed by Fernando L. Rodríguez, brother of Baja governor Abelardo Rodríguez.

21. Joe Pollock had a thoroughbred ranch called the Ocean Therapy Ranch near Goat Canyon from 1930 to 1965 where he used two pools to exercise horses in salt water.

22. Mexico and the United States agreed in 1934 to build a sewage system to handle the growing population of Tijuana, Agua Caliente, Colonia Libertad and San Ysidro. The seven miles of sewer pipeline from the San Ysidro port of entry to the ocean was completed in 1938, and provided Imperial Beach with sewer service, but the pipeline was destroyed by floods in 1941.

23. Rodriguez Dam began to supply water to Tijuana in 1936. Construction had started in 1928 by then Baja Governor Abelardo Rodríguez.

24. Dairies prospered along the border. Henry Schnell's father started the Schnell dairy in 1888 that became Dairy Mart Farms in 1937 and gave its name to the road that ran from Schnell's farm to the border.

25. William Ober's dairy was established on 175 acres in 1902.

26. The Bay View Dairy of Louis Shelton delivered milk to Arden Farms 1937-75.

27. San Diego Mayor Harley Knox grew feed for his dairy cattle on his 360-acre farm in the 1940s.

28. Julius Hofer came from the Imperial Valley in 1952 and established his dairy near Gate No. 2.

29. As part of the region's coastal defense system in 1940, the Army created a fire control station and bunkers on Bunker Hill east of Monument Mesa, including a 50-foot tall radar tower on Monument Mesa.

30. The end of the bracero program in 1964 resulted in a growing number of illegal border crossings, especially in the rugged canyon area east of San Ysidro. After several murders in 1975 named one of the canyons Dead Man's Canyon, a special Border Crimes Task Force was formed, described in the 1984 book "Lines and Shadows," by Joseph Wambaugh. In 1994 Operation Gatekeeper focused increased Border Patrol enforcement of the Monument Mesa area and the south levee of the Tijuana River, as well as the Spring Canyon and Dead Man's Canyon area. The first federal agents assigned to patrol the border were the 75 Chinese Mounted Guards in 1904 who were given the task of enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Acts along the 5525-mile Canadian border and the 1954-mile Mexican border. Clifford Perkins became chief inspector of the Guards in 1911 and was head of the newly organized Border Patrol in 1924. He organized the Chula Vista sector with 14 agents in 1930. As a result of Operation Gatekeeper, the sector's force increased to 2,200 agents. In 2003 the Border Patrol became an agency within U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a component of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), with a national force of 21,000 agents.

31. Under the terms of the 1944 Treaty relating to the Tijuana River, the International Boundary and Water Commission in 1967 approved a joint Tijuana River Flood Control Project for the control of floods on the Tijuana River. The project consisted of a 2.7-mile concrete-lined channel for the Tijuana River in Mexico. The city of San Diego withdrew its support for a concrete-lined flood control channel north of the border in 1971, instead choosing to build a dissipater system to slow the water velocity.

32. Spooner's Mesa was named for Charles and Marion Spooner who built the Hereford Ranch on the

mesa top after WWI. The mesa was part of the 900-acre Border Highlands that private industry sought to develop. San Diego Gas & Electric considered building a nuclear generator on 100 acres near the ocean. Three cement companies held land along Monument Road at the foot of the bluffs. One company, Fenton, was extracting sand from the hill near Goat Canyon. Nelson and Sloan owned land nearby. Conrock planned a large development on Spooner's Mesa. Another company financed with Arab money planned a golf course with 9 holes in Smuggler's Gulch and an electric lift to take golfers to another nine holes on Spooner's Mesa, but it was never built. The county prohibited commercial development of the Highlands after 1981. The ruins and water basin of the Hereford Ranch are still visible in the center of Spooner' Mesa.

33. The road to the border became US 101, a paved two-lane highway in 1933, then it became the four-lane Montgomery Freeway in 1955, and an eight-lane Interstate 5 in 1973. The last section of I-805 to the border was opened Sept. 4, 1975. The number of automobile lanes entering Mexico increased from four in 1933, to ten in 1956, to 16 in 1973, and to 24 in 1977. Allen Parkinson planned an International Skyride to cross the border at San Ysidro in 1959, but failed to get approval from the state Division of Highways. In 1976, a monorail connecting San Ysidro, Tijuana and Agua Caliente was proposed but never built.

34. Herman and Alice Smart lived in Goat Canyon just south of the Border State Park gate. Their home for 10 years from 1977 to 1987 was the most southwestern home in America.

35. The Tijuana River was rechanneled by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1978 to construct a dissipator system and sedimentation basin for flood control. A new Dairy Mart Road bridge was built and the road was realigned to bend west and join Monument Road about a half mile from where it previously had joined Monument Road at Gate No. 2.

36. The Plaza Mayor shopping center opened in 1978

near the border west of San Ysidro.

37. Heavy rains drenched the county in late January of 1980, washing away the home of the Martinez family near the Hollister Street Bridge. The floodgates of the Rodriguez Dam were opened Jan. 30, sending torrents of water through the valley and residents' homes causing millions of dollars of damage to farmland, houses and livestock. In early February it was discovered that millions of gallons of raw sewage were contaminating the river and valley. The sewage came from a broken sewer interceptor line, which carried sewage from Tijuana to San Diego's Point Loma treatment facility. The Tijuana River Valley was declared a disaster area by the county Board of Supervisors. Another rain storm Feb. 13-22 caused more flooding.

38. The Helix Development Corporation gave up plans for the Imperial Beach marina and in Dec. 1980 sold 505 acres of the Oneonta Slough to the Fish and Wildlife Service for a National Wildlife Refuge. The estuary gained National Estuarine Status on September 30, 1981.

39. A federally financed emergency project in 1984 built a 13-acre sewage holding pond in an area along the border near Stewart's Drain that became known as Shelton's pond, located just south of the property of Tom and Donna Shelton who took over the operation of the dairy from Tom's father, Louis Shelton. The pond became a nesting site for an endangered bird, the least Bell's vireo, but the pond was destroyed in the 1993 flood.

40. In 1988 voters passed Proposition 70 to allocate ten million dollars for the acquisition of 1,390 acres of the 5,200-acre Tijuana River Valley for a county park. The Bird and Butterfly Garden next to the river on Hollister was added to the park in 2010.

41. Vice President Al Gore was the featured speaker at the IBWC groundbreaking ceremony for the federal sewage-treatment plant July 15, 1994, the biggest public works effort in the history of the International Boundary and Water Commission. In

Nov. 1996, a giant drill known as "Molita" was lowered into a dropshaft to begin drilling the 12-foot-diameter outfall tunnel to the ocean. The International Wastewater Treatment Plant construction was completed in April, 1997, and the ocean outfall was completed in January, 1999.

42. The new concrete-reinforced Dairy Mart Bridge was dedicated Dec. 17, 1999, with a plaque dedicated to Danny R. Marschall, a local rancher who helped residents in the floods of 1980 and 1993.

43. San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy cut a giant blue ribbon to dedicate the South Bay Water Reclamation Plant on Dairy Mart Road Dec. 8, 2001. The plant, which cost \$110 million and took nearly four years to build, is a milestone representing the last major facility completed under a \$1.5 billion 10-year capital improvement program to upgrade the region's sewage treatment system. Though the new plant doesn't employ any new technology, it is the first Metro Wastewater facility to use ultraviolet lights rather than chlorine to disinfect treated waste water.

44. Homeland Security seized ownership of 150 feet of land running immediately along the boundary and began heavy construction of the "triple border fence" in 2008. To create the flat road and fence bed desired by border agents, 2.1 million cubic yards of dirt were needed to fill Smuggler's Gulch, a half-mile-long canyon. The landfill came from scraping the mesas of Border Field State Park.



The real boundary is a yellow line on the Mexican side of the San Ysidro port of entry.

NEWS

The South Bay Historical Society will soon be sponsoring an exhibit on the history of the South Bay at the Heritage Museum in Chula Vista. Currently this museum is located in a small building at the corner of Third Avenue and Park Way. The Chula Vista Police History exhibit has been shown there for the past two years. Now, the city would like to close this building and perhaps move or demolish it to add space for Memorial Park. The Heritage Museum will move to the Civic Library and at this new location there will be many opportunities for historical exhibits. Details are still being worked out, but we are very excited about this development.

RECENT ARTICLE

Barbara Zaragoza, a member of the SBHS Board of Directors, has written an article "What Happened to the International Skyride?" that has been published in the Winter 2015 issue of the Journal of San Diego History. It tells the story of Allen Parkinson who tried to build an International Skyride across the border in 1959. Walt Disney had just opened his Skyway gondola ride in Disneyland, and Parkinson, who was from Anaheim, thought it would be a good investment for the Mexican border at San Ysidro. Barbara found the interesting story of the Skyride in the papers of Congressman Bob Wilson at SDSU. Wilson launched his political career in the South Bay. His family moved from Calexico to

Chula Vista in the 1920s because Bob's mother was a relative of Mrs. Fred Stafford. Bob became student



Bob Wilson, his wife Jean,
and their son in 1952

body president at Chula Vista JHS and Sweetwater HS in the 1930s. In 1936 he married the daughter of Herb Bryant who was a city councilman and store owner. He and Jean raised their family at 888 First Avenue. He was a founder of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1950 and led the effort to build the memorial wing honoring John Montgomery's 1883 glider flight. In 1952 he became the first congressman elected from Chula Vista, sponsored the expansion of the border gate at San Ysidro in 1956, and brought Eisenhower to Chula Vista in 1960. He served 28 years in Congress as a conservative Republican, supporting expansion of the Border Patrol, and was a leader on the House Armed Services Committee.

EVENTS

Our next meeting will be Thursday, Apr. 16, at 6pm in the Chula Vista Public Library auditorium at 365 F Street. Our speaker will be Michael Pallamary, a Professional

Land Surveyor licensed in the state of California. He has been a surveyor since 1971 and has forty-two years experience in the land surveying and land planning. He is a nationally recognized authority on land surveying and local land development regulations. He is a founding member of the Land Surveyors Advisory Council on Technical Standards (LSACTS). He writes a regular column for The American Surveyor magazine. He is author of Lay of the Land: The History of Land Surveying in San Diego County and "The Unforgiving Boundary."



Michael Pallamary

South Bay Historical Society

Bulletin No. 8, Apr. 2015

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