

## Hike #86

OTP Hike - 7/31/91 - 9:30 a.m.

Bill Sharpe

Palisades Park and Santa Monica Pier

Distance - 3 1/2 miles round trip

Elevation loss - about 150 ft

(it's eventually a gain!)

Although this is an urban hike, there's only one street crossing involved.

The hike starts at the north end of Palisades Park at the end of Ocean Avenue. Get off the Santa Monica Freeway at 4th Street and head north. Turn left on Colorado or Broadway and go three blocks, then go north on Ocean Avenue to San Vicente Blvd. Park along the curb on Ocean Avenue just north of San Vicente next to the big Ocean Towers apartment building or, if there isn't enough room, make a sharp right turn at the next street, Adelaide, and park there.

The hike starts at the Alaskan Totem Pole at the far north end of Palisades Park. We ended my previous Santa Monica hike at this location. The totem pole is crowned with a raven and also features a fish, a bear, and a wolf. J. Walter Todd donated it to the city in 1926.

We'll get our first look at the Pacific Ocean from Inspiration Point, originally known as Sunset Point. Much of the view to the north has been obstructed by a large apartment building, which is located in Los Angeles, not Santa Monica.

We walk south through the park. At Alta Avenue you'll see examples across the street of the new and old apartment buildings on Ocean -- the Shorecliff Towers and El Tovar. We pass through a small rose garden at Palisades Avenue, where there's a bust of Arcadia Bandini de Baker. The sculpture was placed there in 1987 in recognition of her generous donations of land, including her share of this park, to the people of Santa Monica. We also see Gestation III, a laminated wood sculpture, placed in the park in 1990.

At Montana Avenue we see the Montana Hole, an area of the bluff that was washed away in the late 1800's. We pass the historic Oceana Hotel, where the Sharpes spent their first week in California in 1959. There's the Redwood Pergola, a prime example of turn-of-the-century garden architecture. At Wilshire Blvd, there's the Jones Memorial Seat, built in tribute to Nevada Senator John P. Jones, one of the founders of Santa Monica. He often chose this spot to watch the sun set. The statue of Saint Monica also stands at the foot of Wilshire Blvd. Across the street is the General Telephone Building, Santa Monica's tallest structure at 22 stories.

A plaque at Santa Monica Blvd, at one time the end of Route 66, honors Will Rodgers. There's a tree of Friendship and Sister Cities Monument. The New Zealand Christmas tree was planted in 1965 to celebrate the second annual US and Mexico Sister City Convention.

There are two coastal cannons located in the park. Both are 1861 model, 10" Rodman Smoothbore seacoast guns converted to 8-inch rifles. We also pass the Senior Recreation Building and Camera Obscura.

The park ends at Colorado Avenue. We'll walk out on the Santa Monica Pier then and notice Loeff's Pleasure Park Carousel Building, which has been designated a national historic monument. We can pause here and take a 50-cent ride on the still-operating carousel. As we walk out on the pier we pass a display of old photographs of Santa Monica on the to-be-refurbished Sinbad's restaurant. There's a restaurant and new harbor office under construction, but you can still walk out to the end of the pier.

We'll start back by way of the beach, stopping to see the little-used Santa Monica Art Tool. We get a good look at the Palisades from Pacific Coast Highway as we proceed north. We see the Sorrento Ruins, the remains of an uncompleted high-rise hotel, just before we cross the highway and climb the steps to the park at Montana Avenue. We then retrace our steps to the Totem Pole.

Lunch and refreshments will be at the Sharpe's house