Lost Secrets of Molate and the San Pablo Peninsula
Highlights

• Point Molate (Winehaven) is the physical embodiment of both the zenith and the finale of the California Wine Industry prior to Prohibition

• Winehaven was a part of a highly industrialized development of the San Pablo Peninsula in the early 20th Century that included connections to intercontinental rail service, worldwide shipping, fishing, whaling, petroleum processing, quarries and manufacturing.

• Winehaven is a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places
The name *Moleta* was applied in Mexican times to the island known as Red Rock, probably because its conical shape resembles the conical stone (called *moleta* in Spanish) used by painters to grind colors. Beechy in 1826 misspelled it “molate,” and this version was adopted in 1851 by the Coast Survey when it used the island as a secondary triangulation station. Point Molate was named by the survey in 1854.

*Gudde, California Place Names, 1969*
Red Rock Island

Moleta
Ohlone - Huchiun Period 4,000 BCE – ca 1776
Mission San Rafael Arcángel - 1817

Mission Dolores Ranch

Priests from Mission Dolores established a ranch at Wildcat Creek 1817. Here they employed Native American converts known as neophytes in agricultural labor in order to ensure food supplies for the mission in San Francisco. In a similar manner, women’s skills were turned to wool production, spinning, and the production of cloth, rather than basketry.
1846 – Boat sets out from Castro Point for San Rafael with Jose de Los Reyes Berreyesa, father of the imprisoned Sonoma Alcalde, and the 19-year-old de Haro twins, Francisco and Ramon, on their way to Sonoma to visit Berreyesa’s son. The de Haro twins were the sons of Francisco de Haro, former Alcalde of the settlement that would become San Francisco. All were later executed by Kit Carson as ordered by Fremont.
On New Year’s Day of 1903, the *Richmond Record Herald* touted the impending construction of a belt line railway along Richmond’s western waterfront and around Point San Pablo, tying together “…the dozens of factories and great system of docks which are projected to entirely encircle the vast waterfront.”
Plat of Rancho San Pablo, Granted 1823, Platted 1863
Chinese Shrimp Camp ca. 1870 - 1912
Chinese Shrimp Camp ca. 1870 - 1912
East Brother Light Station - 1874
East Brother Island 1978
East Brother Island Today

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Industrialization of the San Pablo Peninsula

San Pablo Peninsula 1910
Industries of the Point San Pablo Peninsula
Richmond – “The Pittsburg of the West”
Central Brick Company

North of Point Orient
Whale Oil Plant

At location of present Chevron “Long Wharf”
Healy-Tibbets Quarry – Point Molate

The Healy-Tibbetts Quarry (now Point Molate) around 1910. Bob and Sadie Pickett, Bob Forrest, Rex and Vivian Gordon all lived at the quarry. They took the Belt Line train (which brought the Can Factory workers out) back to the Refinery and the street cars from the Asphalt Plant to the school.
Can Plant at Point Orient
Fish Processing at Point San Pablo
Point San Pablo and Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor

The last whaling station in the US closed in 1968.
Belt Railroad Wharf

Cargo waiting shipment for Europe at Belt Road wharf, Richmond.
Isias Hellman, a Jewish immigrant, arrived in California in 1859 with very little money in his pocket and his brother Herman by his side. By the time he died, he had effectively transformed Los Angeles into the modern metropolis we see today.
Isias Hellman and the California Wine Industry

- His influence, however, was not limited to Los Angeles. He controlled the California wine industry for almost twenty years and, after San Francisco's devastating 1906 earthquake and fire, calmed the financial markets there in order to help that great city rise from the ashes. With all of these accomplishments, Isaias Hellman almost single-handedly brought California into modernity.
The economic panic of 1893 created a glut of grapes, severely depressing the price of fruit and wine alike.

The timing was right for someone to dominate the market in order to stabilize it.

Founded in San Francisco in 1894, the C.W.A. was owned by the biggest and most successful wine merchants in the city, who had their hands in everything from the ownership of vineyards across the state to wineries and distributorships.

1902 map touts C.W.A awards and geographic reach
California Wine Association

C.W.A Wineries and Warehouses in 1900
1906 San Francisco Earthquake

25 of 28 Commercial Wine Warehouses Destroyed by Fire, including five owned by C.W.A.
Winehaven

- 1906 – Earthquake destroys five wine depots owned by California Wine Association in San Francisco
- 1906 – California Wine Association rebuilds at Winehaven in Richmond
- C.W.A battled insurance companies to the Supreme Court, which ruled in its favor in 1910

“Winehaven was the largest and most up to date winery plant in existence” (Ernest P. Peninou and Gail G. Unzelman, The California Wine Association and Its Member Wineries 1894-1920 (Santa Rosa: Nomis Press, 2000))
Building 1 Completed 1908

Note sign “Home of Calwa” on ridge beyond
Building 1
Building 1 Shed and Loading Dock
Winehaven Production and Shipping

- 10 million gallon capacity
- 400 workers
- Shipped 500,000 gallons a month
- 40 ships annually to New York alone
- 25,000 tons of grapes crushed in 1907-1908
Excursions and Baseball
American poet and frontiersman. The "Poet of the Sierras" after the Sierra Nevada, about which he wrote in his Songs of the Sierras (1871).
The Winemaster’s House
The winery was shut down by Prohibition in 1919; and the company sold off its assets to avoid bankruptcy. Winehaven went mostly unused from about 1920 until the late 1930s.

The Navy bought the site in 1941 and converted it into a Naval Fuel Depot. Thousands of drums of fuel were stored in huge buildings. The old Winehaven Hotel was pressed into service as barracks and mess hall. The workers' houses were renovated for the use of naval personnel. The Commanding Officer was assigned the largest house on the bluff overlooking the others, which previously had been the home of the winery superintendent.
1941 Sold to Navy for a Fueling Depot

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Winehaven Hotel Burned 1967
35 buildings, constructed between 1907 and 1919, contribute to the historic district. Among these are:

- the Winehaven Building with crenellated parapet and corner turrets
- the Winemaster's House (Building 60), which became the Commanding Officer's residence
- a row of turn-of-the-century cottages used to house Winehaven and military families
1997 Reuse Plan

POINT MOLATE REUSE PLAN
City of Richmond

Figure 7: Conceptual Land Use Plan

1. Alternative use assumes demolition of building A.
2. Special use light industry is recommended over single family residential of building B after demolished and light industry is not accommodated around the building.
Questions? Comments?