The Peralta Family Legacy

Luís María Peralta was just 17 when he and his family set off for the Bay Area in September 1775, from the town of Tubac, Mexico (then in New Spain, now in Arizona near the Mexican border). His family joined other military families on an expedition sent north to strengthen Spain's claim to Upper California, under the command of Juan Bautista de Anza. The group included people of American Indian, Spanish, African, and mestizo origin. A scouting party passed just east of this park location on March 31, 1776.

In 1820, shortly before Mexican Independence from Spain, Luís received a grant of 44,800 acres of East Bay land. To establish the claim, Peralta family members and Native American laborers constructed an adobe house where the park is today. Peralta's house was the first non-Indian dwelling in the Oakland area.

Here on the land where seven modern cities now stand, they built up a cattle ranch with a workforce of local Indians and Mexicans like themselves, but who did not own land. Many people lived here and felt a bond to the land, both intimate and profound.

Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

This image, entitled "Landowner and Foreman" (Hacendero y mayordomo), illustrates the dress and postures of distinct social classes in California during the rancho era. Californio landowners and a foreman (far right) painted by Carl Nebel, published in *Voyage pittoresque et archéologique dans la partie la plus intéressante du Méxique*, 1836.

Historians believe this photo shows the site's now vanished 1821 adobe. You can see where this small house of clay bricks once stood in the park's Historic Core. Photo from *The Story of Rancho San Antonio*, Daisy Williamson de Veer

The background shows the original hand-drawn map of the Peraltas' Rancho San Antonio. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library

Antonio Peralta descendant Ken Talken with photos of his great-great-grandfather Antonio Peralta Jr. and Peralta Jr.'s sons, who once lived in the later 1840 adobe, and Ken's great-grandmother Toñita Peralta.

Visit the Peralta House Museum of History and Community to learn the stories of the Peraltas, and many others in this history, and to see historic objects and touchable replicas. Tour hours posted at the door.

Welcome to the homeland of the Jalquin/Yrgin, an Ohlone/Bay Miwok-speaking tribe.

Photo by Beverly Ortiz

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