

Anza Expedition of 1776



Lt. Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza, Father Pedro Font, and a small group of settlers and soldiers journeyed by horseback through what is now Alameda and Contra Costa Counties from March 31 through April 5, 1776. Traveling north, they most likely used established Indian trails along the base of the hills, where views were expansive above the marshy lowlands. After traveling along San Pablo and Suisun Bays, the impenetrable marshlands of the Delta prevented further eastward exploration, forcing an early return back to Monterey.

Mission San Jose, just three miles away at 43300 Mission Blvd., was founded in 1797 as an indirect result of exploration done twenty-one years earlier by the Anza Expedition. The Spanish Missions “were founded to secure Spain’s claim to this land and to teach the native people Christianity and the Spanish way of life.”

From the Mission San Jose website

Welcome to the homeland of the Alson, an Ohlone-speaking tribe.

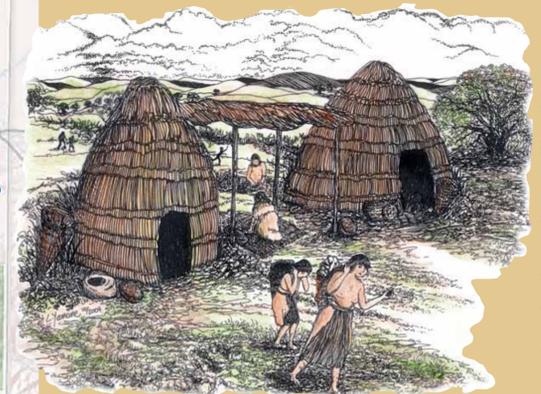
Dates and stories taken from the diaries of Anza and Font, courtesy of the Center for Advanced Technology in Education, University of Oregon, www.anza.uoregon.edu.

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The Anza party overlooking the Golden Gate from what is now San Francisco.



When Anza and his followers traveled through the Bay Area, numerous groups of native peoples were living comfortably in small villages that dotted the landscape. This is what one of those villages may have looked like.

Painting by David Rickman, courtesy of the National Park Service

Drawing by Linda Yamane (Humboldt, an Ohlone tribe)

