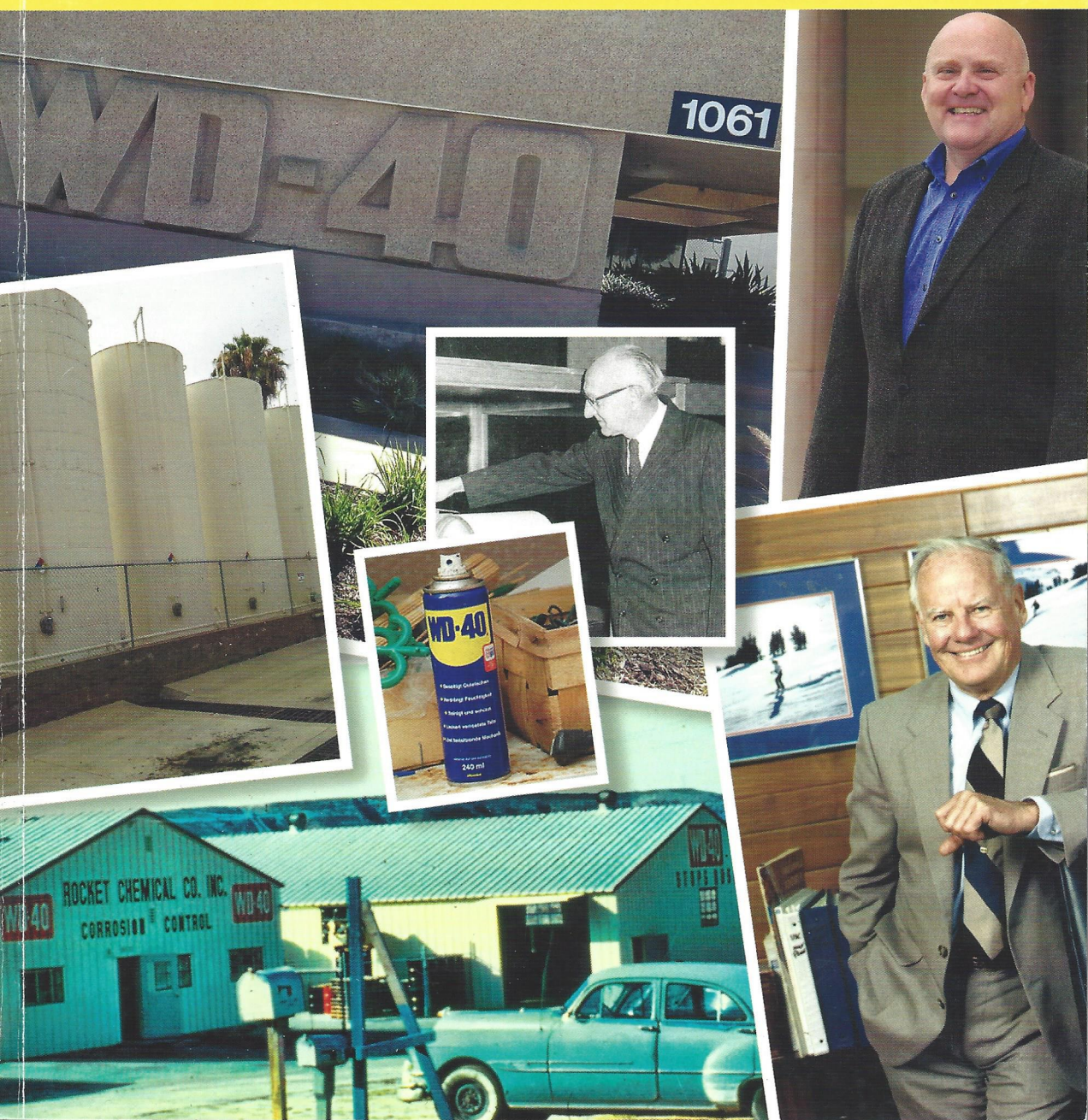


THE JOURNAL OF
SAN DIEGO
HISTORY



CONTENTS

VOLUME 60

FALL 2014

NUMBER 4

ARTICLES

WD-40: San Diego's Marketing Miracle

Iris H. W. Engstrand

253

A Tale of the Cabrillo Statues

John Martin

269

Lest We Forget: The San Diego Veterans War Memorial

Alexander D. Bevil

291

International Balboa Park: The House of Pacific Relations

James Vaughn

311

BOOK REVIEWS

333

The Davies Award

346

A Tale of the Cabrillo Statues

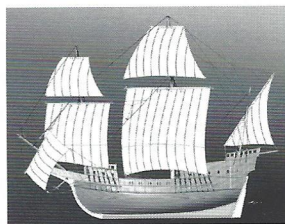
John Martin



Monument to Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo at the Cabrillo National Monument, Point Loma. Editors' collection.

With the building of the replica of *San Salvador* by the San Diego Maritime Museum, the sixteenth-century flagship of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo has created a flurry of renewed interest in its captain. Sailing under the flag of Spain on June 17, 1542, Cabrillo navigated his tiny fleet out of the bay at Navidad on the west coast of Mexico and sailed north on a voyage of discovery. His mission was to explore the coast of New Spain, map the Pacific Coast of California with its supposed amazons and riches, navigate the uncharted waters far to the north, and, it was hoped, locate the Strait of Anián, a northwest passage to the Atlantic Ocean. In September, Cabrillo made a landing in present-day Ensenada before pressing up the coast and into history as the first European to enter the bay of San Diego and anchor off today's Ballast Point.¹

A statue of the navigator now stands at the Visitor Center in the Cabrillo National Monument on the Point Loma peninsula celebrating Cabrillo's landfall in San Diego. The fourteen-foot tall

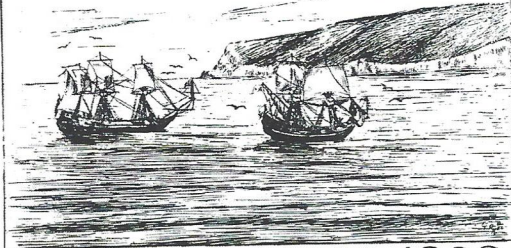


Sketch used to build the replica of San Salvador. Courtesy of the San Diego Maritime Museum.

John Martin, an independent scholar, received his BA and MA degrees in history from San Diego State University. Martin is the author of "The San Diego Chamber of Commerce establishes the U.S. Naval Coal Station, 1900-1912," *The Journal of San Diego History*, 56 (Fall 2010). He thanks the staff of the Cabrillo National Monument for their assistance in preparing this article.

CABRILLO ENTERING SAN DIEGO BAY.

On Sept. 28 A.D. 1542, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in command of two Spanish ships, discovered & entered the Bay of San Diego, which he described as "a land-locked and very good harbor."



1542 SAN DIEGO 1892

Poster commemorating the 1892 Cabrillo 350th Anniversary Celebration. SDHC Research Archives.

statues have served the Monument since 1949. The tale of these statues—real and imagined—contains almost as many twists and turns as Cabrillo's voyage of exploration.²

Pursuing A Cabrillo Memorial

The idea to commemorate Cabrillo's San Diego landing first came to light in 1892. Walter G. Smith, editor of the *San Diego Sun*, suggested that a festival celebrating the event might boost the city's slumping economy. The city embraced the concept and Mayor Matthew Sherman opened three days of festivities that included parades, banquets, dances, horse races, and a reenactment of Cabrillo's arrival. Aside from the flimsy wharf at the end of D Street (today's Broadway) collapsing and dumping some celebrants into the bay, Discovery Day was a great success. The *Sun* suggested that it become an annual event, while *The San Diego Union* went a step further and proposed that the city create a monument to honor Cabrillo.³ The lack of money and organization unfortunately overcame civic enthusiasm. The city staged only one other festival and the support for a Cabrillo memorial likewise faded away.



The Order of Panama, a civic

Cabrillo Festival Parade, 1892. SDHC #82:13822-7.



*Cabrillo statue sculpted
by Allen Hutchinson.
©SDHC #OP 15866.*

group probably best known for marching in parades in their colorful, cockled feathered hats, revived the idea of a memorial in 1913. The Order's ideas ranged from a colossal statue costing \$1,500,000, which would exceed the Statue of Liberty in height, to a simple pile of rocks and a descriptive plaque.⁴ The organization settled on the grandiose scheme that would replace the abandoned Point Loma lighthouse with a 150-foot tall bronze statue of Cabrillo. Carl Heilbron, president of the organization, believed the colossal figure would attract tourists to San Diego for the coming Panama-California Exposition in 1915 and serve as fitting memorial to the explorer. The Order commissioned British sculptor Allen Hutchinson, then living in San Diego, to create a model of the statue and authorized journalist Charles F. Lummis to write a story describing Cabrillo's historic arrival.

Over the next two years the Order of Panama's Cabrillo Monument Committee sought funding for the memorial and worked to gain access to a site near the old lighthouse. The fundraising proved fruitless but the Order did successfully negotiate with the US Army and the War Department to create the Cabrillo National Monument through an Executive Order President Woodrow Wilson issued in 1913. The Order of Panama quietly disbanded at the end of the 1915 Exposition and again visions for a Cabrillo memorial disappeared.

The Native Sons of the Golden West revived the memorial concept in 1926. Like the Order of Panama, the organization petitioned the standing US president, then Calvin Coolidge, for approval to place a monument on the Point Loma Military Reservation. Coolidge, like Wilson, used his presidential power to create historic sites on government property and on May 12, 1926, approved the plan through another executive proclamation. The proclamation noted that because the Order of Panama had never exercised the right to construct a Cabrillo statue, and was now a "defunct organization," the government could authorize the Native Sons to "erect a suitable monument."⁵ Success seemed assured after the group acquired a \$10,000 prize for constructing a 176-foot tall heroic effigy, which would "be to the Pacific coast what the Statue of Liberty is to the Atlantic."⁶ But like the Order of Panama, the best hopes of Native Sons also faltered.

Despite the best intentions of the city, it was twenty-two years before a Cabrillo memorial appeared at the park. In 1933 President Franklin Roosevelt transferred

the Cabrillo National Monument to the War Department and into the care of the National Park Service. The Park Service renovated the old lighthouse and opened it to public viewing in 1936. In the meantime the government designed, funded, and placed an eight-foot bronze engraved plaque memorializing Cabrillo near the old lighthouse. Cabrillo had finally arrived.

Ed Fletcher Steals A Statue

In 1939 it appeared that a significant Cabrillo monument was finally coming to San Diego. The Portuguese Secretariat of National Propaganda commissioned sculptor Alvaro de Bree to create a statue of Cabrillo to be displayed at the New York City World's Fair and then sent to San Diego. But the simple gesture turned into a major episode. Fortunately Ed Fletcher, then a California State Senator, and San Diego/Portuguese resident Lawrence Oliver, President of San Diego's Portuguese-American Club, left detailed accounts of their roles in bringing the statue to San Diego.⁷

San Diego's first claim to the statue came before it had arrived in the United States. In a



Alvaro de Bree from *Memoirs of Ed Fletcher* (San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1952).



Lawrence Oliver from *Memoirs of Ed Fletcher*, (San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1952).

chapter entitled "The Case of the Kidnapped Statue" in his autobiography, Oliver related that in March 1939 he received a letter from Mr. J. C. Valim, Secretary of the House Committee of Portugal, asking Oliver to raise funds to defray expenses for the House of Portugal at the coming international fairs. Oliver complied and along with funds sent a request that the statue eventually reside in San Diego. Valim and the Committee agreed and it appeared that San Diego had its memorial.

In 1940 the fourteen-foot tall, seven-ton statue made the trans-Atlantic voyage to New York City, but arrived too late to be



*Joe Dryer from Memoirs of Ed Fletcher
(San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1952).*

displayed. As it would happen, San Diego businessman Joe E. Dryer and US Navy Admirals William H. Standley and Thomas J. Senn attended the New York fair and met with the Portuguese Commissioner Antonio Ferro. Ferro graciously showed the San Diego contingent a replica of the de Bree figure and indicated that the Portuguese government intended the statue to eventually reside in San Diego. Ferro also explained that the tardy statue had already been sent on to the Golden Gate International Exposition opening at Treasure Island in San Francisco.

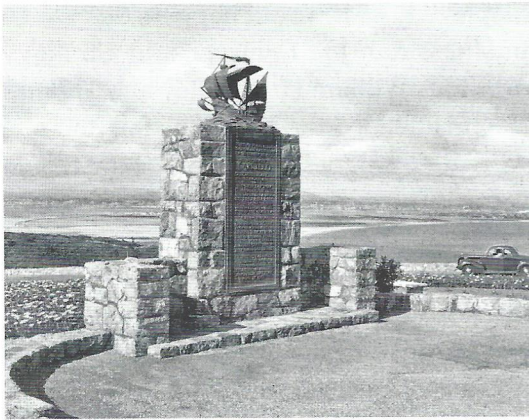
In the meantime, Dryer and Oliver immediately contacted Fletcher in Sacramento and asked him to see that the statue continued on to San Diego after the fair. Fletcher readily agreed, but had no idea where the statue was located. The statue had made the transcontinental trip but again was a late arrival and not displayed. Fletcher met with Oliver and started the hunt.

The first break came when Fletcher saw an article in a San Francisco newspaper noting that federal customs officials were demanding a \$3,800 duty for the release of a statue of Cabrillo. The article also said the Portuguese Vice Consul in San Francisco had approved locating the work of art in a public park in an Oakland community where a large number of people of Portuguese descent resided. When Fletcher learned that Governor Culbert Olson was ready to fulfill that promise, he and Dryer agreed that the statue's monetary and historic value made it a "prize worth fighting for," and immediately set out to rescue the statue for San Diego.⁸

Fletcher's first move was to mitigate California Governor Culbert Olson's hold on the statue. When the governor deferred the customs payment, the statue tacitly became the property of the State of California and Fletcher had an opening. Working with the legislative counsel, Fletcher secured a legal opinion arguing that while the governor had the right to accept the statue for the state, only the legislative body had the power to dispose of it. As to the statue,



Sen. Ed Fletcher, 1940, ©SDHC #UT 3570.



Monument to the San Salvador and Cabrillo's landing, ca. 1938. ©SDHC #80:5732.

San Francisco Fair officials had passed the crated statue along to a private individual, apparently a Portuguese national, who stored it across the bay in a garage in Oakland. The second break came thirty days later. In the midst of the search, Oliver and his wife paid a visit to a family friend Mrs. Anna Gomez Lewis. In the course of conversation Oliver mentioned the statue, and Mrs. Lewis asked if he would like to see it. It was in her garage. When Oliver told

Fletcher the news, Fletcher said, "leave it to me. We'll get it."⁹

Fletcher immediately set out to reclaim San Diego's statue. Fletcher, his wife Mary, and Senator and Mrs. George Biggar arrived unannounced at the home on a Sunday afternoon. They talked with Mrs. Lewis, a widow, who was more than willing to remove the statue from her garage. More importantly, they convinced her that the statue belonged in San Diego. Mrs. Lewis agreed, but requested additional proof that the disposition was valid.

Fletcher returned to Sacramento and introduced a bill in the State Senate that would send the statue to San Diego. With the support of fellow senators, the bill sailed through the Senate unopposed. But once in the House, Oakland assemblyman George P. Miller shunted the bill into committee where it died. It was a legislative deadlock and a win for the governor. Stymied in the state House, Fletcher convinced his friend Matthew Gleason, President of the State Park Commission, and a San Diego resident, to compose a letter—suitably embossed with the gold state seal—asking the Oakland woman to release the statue to Fletcher.

Armed with the letter and a copy of the Senate *Journal* showing the Senate's earlier approval of the move to San Diego, Fletcher returned to Oakland. Sensing the immediacy of the situation and perhaps worried about his tactics, Fletcher had arranged to have transportation standing by to remove the figure at a "moment's notice."¹⁰ Mrs. Lewis perused the new documentation and agreed to relinquish the statue.



Anna Gomez Lewis (Miller) from *Never Backward: The Autobiography of Lawrence Oliver (San Diego, 1972)*, p.152.



Consul-General of Portugal, Honorable E. G. da Costa.

Eculides Goulart da Costa, Consul General of Portugal, from Memoirs of Ed Fletcher (San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1952).

But as the workers struggled with the heavy crates, she summoned Fletcher into the house to take several telephone calls. Word of Fletcher's scheme had leaked out.

Phone calls came from the Vice Consul of Portugal and an Oakland attorney, both demanding that Fletcher desist or face legal action. Fletcher reassured the weeping Mrs. Lewis, supervised the loading, and watched the statue transported to the Oakland Santa Fe Railway Station. Hiding crates containing seven-tons of stone was no easy task. But Fletcher had a plan and friends in high places. Fletcher arranged with Mr. E. J. Engle, the President of the Santa Fe Railroad, to have the statue, hidden under a pile of scrap lumber, shipped to San Diego free of charge. San Diego City Manager Fred Rhodes met

the train and removed the statue to an undisclosed warehouse for safekeeping. Oliver said it was kept in a shop downtown at 18th and A Streets. While in storage, the statue underwent repairs to correct the damage it had suffered through its thousands of miles of travel.¹¹ When the northern California coterie accused Fletcher of "kidnapping" the statue he replied, "I didn't steal it... but took quick action, and possession is nine points of the law."¹² San Diego finally had its statue. Or did it?

Fletcher's deception did not go uncontested. Governor Olson, Oakland Mayor John F. Slavich, Oakland Assemblyman Miller, and the Oakland Portuguese Society launched public campaigns to reclaim their stolen statue. In May 1940, at the behest of the governor, the State Park Commission prepared a document to ask the State Attorney General to demand that the statue be returned to San Francisco.¹³ Fletcher deflected this attempt by reminding the commissioners that the State Senate had already passed a bill awarding the figure to San Diego. Fletcher also garnered the support of the Cabrillo Civic Clubs of California and San Diego



Mayor Percy Benbough of San Diego. Internet photo.

Mayor Percy Benbough. The San Diego contingent mostly just ignored the uproar. The controversy continued for years, but with the statue sequestered in San Diego on government property, the point was moot.¹⁴

Where to Put Cabrillo



The Cabrillo statue in Point Loma, ©SDHC McCrary 040.

The statue arrived in San Diego in 1940 and underwent a series of relocations. To consolidate the city's claim, Fletcher encouraged the city to decide on a "final resting place" and lay a cornerstone to prevent the effigy from being "torn down and shipped away."¹⁵ In the weeks after its arrival, the statue was superficially repaired and installed at the foot of Canyon Street and Harbor Drive at the Naval Training Center facing Ballast Point. As a pretense to ensure its safety from Governor Olson and his advocates, the navy posted guards around the figure. The navy moved the figure to the foot of Lowell Street near the Sonar School in 1942 and conducted a small invitation-only dedication ceremony on the 400th anniversary of Cabrillo's landfall. The figure remained there nine years essentially hidden from public view.

The Portuguese Social and Civic Club revived the Cabrillo celebration in 1946 and immediately complained about the lack of public access to the statue. The Club and San Diego historian Winifred Davidson pressed the city and the government to relocate the statue. They repeatedly chided the city for allowing the sculpture to be "inappropriately" concealed on inaccessible government property away from the populace.¹⁶

Public pressure ensured the statue would eventually leave navy property, but where it might be relocated remained

The Portuguese Social and Civic Club

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2525

INTRODUCED BY MESSRS. SHERIDAN AND DICKEY

January 25, 1941

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES

An act transferring the possession of the statue of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo to the City of Oakland

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The care, custody and control of the statue
- 2 of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo presented by the government of
- 3 Portugal and accepted by the Governor on behalf of the State
- 4 of California is hereby transferred to the City of Oakland in
- 5 trust for the citizens of this State.

Assembly Bill No. 2525 transferring the Cabrillo Statue to Oakland, January 25, 1941. It was not successful.



Governor Culbert Olson objects to removal of statue from Oakland. ©SDHC #UT 3691.

uncertain. Several groups wanted it placed at the Cabrillo National Monument while the city's Portuguese community lobbied to locate it at the downtown civic center near the waterfront; one faction preferred the San Diego Yacht Club. A quick decision was needed because the city and the navy were also in the midst of a land exchange undertaking that included the plot where the statue sat. The navy wanted the statue gone and City Manager Rhodes wanted compliance to accommodate the navy. But a new location remained undetermined.¹⁷

The National Park Service had long favored moving the statue to the National Monument but thought the city should initiate any action. The army, which dominated the Park area, was the stumbling block. Army officials were reticent to cede any land with future military applications. After months of negotiations



Dedication of Cabrillo statue at Old Spanish Lighthouse. ©SDHC #6653.

in 1948, the city finally appeased the army and formally requested the Park Service for permission to move the figure onto the Cabrillo National Monument grounds.¹⁸

On September 29, 1949, *The San Diego Union* announced that the “wandering” Cabrillo statue was finally at rest. The rededication ceremony took place before 700 attendees near the old lighthouse. With the statue again safely under government control on federal property, the ownership issues finally dissipated. In 1957 the city dedicated another Cabrillo plaque and, in 1966, paid to move the statue to a prominent position in front of the new Visitor Center.



Cabrillo statue dedication with Portuguese ladies in attendance. (L-R) Mary Lovella Duggin, Ilda Goularte da Costa, Doris M. Oliver, Julia Brum, 1940, from Never Backward: The Autobiography of Lawrence Oliver (San Diego, 1972), p.157.

The San Diego Colossus

The same year the de Bree statue was relocated to the Visitor Center, San Diego Mayor Frank Curran resurrected the idea of a colossal Cabrillo. The mayor proposed to replicate the de Bree statue as a monolithic concrete figure standing 168' tall. The lighted figure would be positioned 1,200 feet north of the lighthouse and be visible from thirty miles at sea.¹⁹

The project found immediate traction with the local Portuguese community but less so with the National Park Service until the Portuguese Consul in Los Angeles, Joseph Sigal, offered to assist in securing financing for the huge statue. But the size of the figure and the fact that it was lighted stunned Park Service officials. Internally Cabrillo National Monument Superintendent John Tucker hoped the cost of the project and the complications of dealing with the government would stymie the mayor's proposal. Publicly the Park Service offered mild resistance through the parameters it placed on the plan. Specifically the project could not overwhelm the original lighthouse, considered the Cabrillo National Monument's principal attraction, could only be located near the Visitor Center, and both the US government and the government of Portugal had to approve the design.²⁰



August Felando, president of the American Tuna Boat Association. Internet photo.

Mayor Curran and the committee proceeded under the assumption that the Park Service was in agreement, but unbeknownst to them, the addition of an elevator and observation platform caused the Park Service to intensify its internal campaign to derail the project.²¹

The mayor appointed a citizen's committee to pursue the scheme and named August Felando, president of the American Tuna Association, chairman. The committee was tasked to secure the support of Congress, appropriate government agencies, specifically the Federal Aviation Agency because of the height of the structure, and the government of Portugal.²² The committee based the

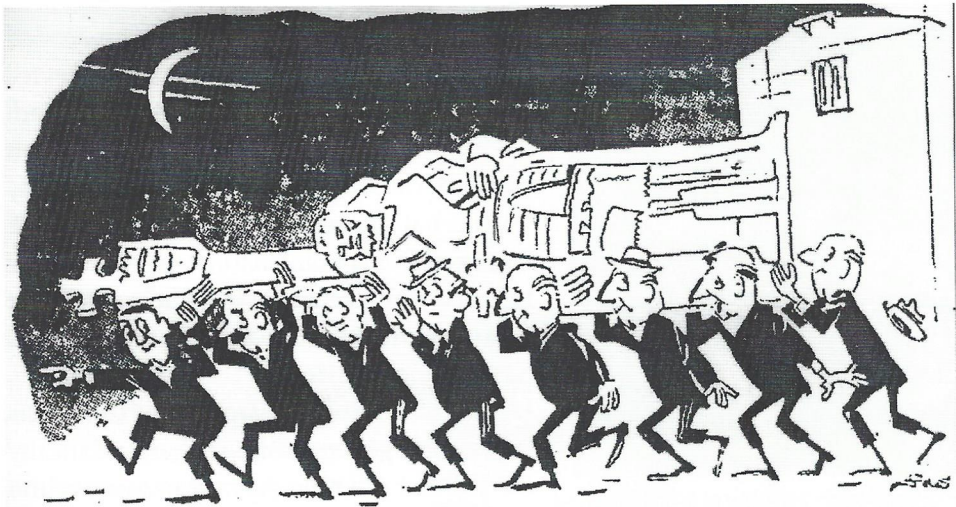
legitimacy of the project on the precedent of the presidential proclamations of 1913 and 1926. To reaffirm the legality of the project, Felando's group resurrected the proposal of the Native Sons, maintaining that it was still active because the organization had never acted on project.

Mayor Curran used his "State of the City" speech in January 1968 as a platform to promote the heroic statue. Curran saw the statue as a unique way to promote the city. During the speech Curran presented an architectural rendering of a figure he believed was comparable to the Statue of Liberty and would "set San Diego apart from most other port cities in the world."²³ Curran planned the unveiling to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the city in 1969. The mayor announced that selected members of the citizen's committee would meet with Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall to solidify the plans and then travel to Portugal to promote the project.

Locally the committee forged ahead. The architectural firm of Hatch, Heimerdinger & Associates gathered the data and San Diego contractor L. J. Ninteman submitted a construction estimate of \$1,144,279, for the 2175-ton reinforced concrete project. Curran believed the statue could be financed through private donations and the assistance of the Portuguese government. Tangentially, statue proponents proposed that the park impose a ten-cent fee to take the elevator to



San Diego Mayor Frank Curran. Internet photo.



STATUE arrived in San Diego in the dead of night.

The San Diego Union, November 6, 1966, ran a cartoon depicting San Diego citizens sneaking the statue into the city.

the uppermost observation platform to offset the \$15,000 annual maintenance expenses.

Despite the ground swell of publicity and the backing of the mayor, dissent arose. In the government sector, the Park Service maintained its low profile resistance. Internally Regional Director George Hartzog wrote Secretary of Interior Udall in an attempt to disrupt the project. Hartzog said he was dismayed at the size of the statue, felt it was not in accordance with the intent or scale of the earlier presidential proclamations, and noted that the Cabrillo Monument would require an increased operating budget and the number of personnel. Publicly, Park Service representatives tactfully reminded statue advocates that no government funding would be available for the project and the park had already memorialized Cabrillo.

Locals also began to register disapproval. Letters to newspapers criticized the project. The San Diego Sierra Club expressed its opposition saying the huge effigy would overwhelm the old lighthouse, the park's principal attraction. Hamilton Marston, of the prominent local family, penned Curran a private note saying that the Cabrillo National Monument, as it stood, possessed a certain 1903 spirit that should be retained and personally did not want to see the larger statue erected.²⁴ Curran and his committee largely ignored the dissent and remained committed to the project.

From this point the project started a slow spiral into implosion. The most pressing issue was funding. The campaign for local private funding lagged and

the Portuguese sources showed signs of hesitation. Then in April, the Portuguese Foundation Calouste Gulbenkian, which had earlier indicated support, suddenly rejected the committee's application for financing. When the Portuguese government withdrew support, the Park Service and Department of Interior felt no obligation to continue their charade and likewise rejected the project.²⁵ The mayor and his coterie had simply pursued the statue with more passion than pragmatism. By May the project was terminally stalled.

With the colossus in jeopardy, Curran frantically suggested a redesign. The Park Service agreed and the mayoral committee authorized a revised design. In December 1968 Director Hartzog requested that the Interior Department's Advisory Board on National Parks appoint a subcommittee to study and make recommendations on Curran's new proposal. The revised plans proposed to surround the existing statue with a reflecting pool and enclose it inside a thirty-five to forty-foot masonry shell faced with Portuguese native stone. Accent lights on top of the shell and at the base would project a beam of light upward into the night sky.

In February 1969 the National Park subcommittee arrived in San Diego, reviewed the plans, conducted a site investigation and offered its opinion. On the 17th the committee—Dr. Joe B. Franz, Mr. Nathaniel A. Owings, and Dr. Melvin Payne—met privately in Tucker's office with Curran, Felando, and Carl Reupsch. Later that evening they attended a public gathering sponsored by the Cabrillo Historical Association. On both occasions the advisory group expressed some reservations, but agreed with the design in principle. But it was a temporary reprieve. The sluggish funding campaign, which had a \$339,000 price tag, could not answer the lingering questions about the statue's size and location. A generally lackadaisical reception doomed the new proposal.²⁶

Throughout the process Mayor Curran remained unaware of the Park Service's internal strategy of suppression and was thoroughly shocked when the federal government withdrew support. Years later, Curran voiced his belief that the Park Service had sabotaged his colossal statue.

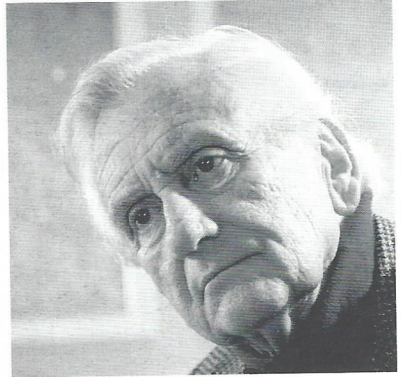
The Duplicate Cabrillo

The city moved the de Bree statue from the Naval Training Center to its "permanent resting place" at the Cabrillo National Monument in 1949.²⁷ But after standing unprotected on the Point Loma peninsula for thirty years, vandalism and exposure had taken a toll by the mid-1980s. "A piece of his tunic is clipped off, his nose is cracked along the bridge and a torso crack is acting up," explained a visiting *Los Angeles Times* reporter. The porous stratified limestone image was slowly deteriorating.²⁸ The Park Service considered moving the statue inside the

Visitor Center or enclosing it in a transparent case. But the figure was too heavy for the former and the latter might diminish the visitor's visual experience. After a forty-year vigil the Park Service, San Diego citizen groups, and representatives of the Portuguese government, met and agreed to replace the de Bree with a duplicate Cabrillo. The Portuguese government authorized sculptor João Charters de Almeida e Silva to replicate the crumbling de Bree image from sturdier stone.²⁹

With the approval of the Park Service, art specialist Scott Atthowe, ironically from Oakland, supervised the removal of the de Bree statue from the Visitor Center in November 1987. Ensnared within a protective metal framework a crane hoisted the decaying Cabrillo off the pedestal and away. According to current Park Superintendent Tom Workman, rather than storing it in a weatherproof shelter as planned, laborers hauled the de Bree to a spot under the eave of a maintenance building and sealed the metal frame with plywood. The Park was without Cabrillo for the next three months.

In late 1987 Almeida completed the replica in Portugal. Scott Atthowe accompanied the statue on the three-week 7,000-mile voyage aboard the Portuguese



Portuguese sculptor João Charters de Almeida e Silva. Internet photo.

Navy Corvette *NRP Joao Coutinho* to the Broadway Pier. Workman recalled that the small corvette, with the crated statue strapped to the deck, encountered some rough seas along the way. The crate took on water, which sloshed out at each traffic stop en route to Point Loma. Park Superintendent Gary Cummins formally welcomed the figure at a dedication ceremony that included Almeida, National Park Director William Mott, Portuguese Ambassador João Pereira Bastos, and a host of local celebrities. Cabrillo was back.

Once the Almeida statue was



A crane from the Hazard Company moved the de Bree statue to the new Visitor Center in 1966. Author's collection.



Park Superintendent Tom Workman with the Cabrillo Statue in place. Courtesy of the Cabrillo National Monument.

in place, the National Park Service considered the next step for the original icon. Via a bidding process, the Park Service commissioned art conservator Jason Jones to generate a report on the condition of the statue and a cost for repairs. Jones declared the statue in a “high state of neglect and degradation” and estimated \$82,500 for restoration.³⁰ With no budget for restoration or weatherproof shelter for a refurbished de Bree statue, it remained in the plywood case next to the maintenance building. Workman and Park Historian Robert Munson hoped to see the statue restored and returned to the public eye. They spent the next several years attempting to loan the figure to any public entity that would restore it and display it in a protected environment. They contacted the City of San Diego, the Port District, and the San Diego Portuguese community but found no takers. The de Bree appeared doomed to decay in storage. Then the people of Ensenada offered an alternative.

Cabrillo Returns to Ensenada

The city of Ensenada had a legitimate claim to honor Cabrillo. A week before entering San Diego Bay, the explorer anchored there and named the surrounding area San Mateo. Ensenada’s first true Cabrillo memorial came after Nicholas Saad, then the State Director of Tourism, accompanied a U.S. Department of the



The Park Service stored the crated original statue under the eave of a maintenance building. Photo courtesy of Claudia Turrent.

Interior delegation to Portugal in 1981. Saad met and presented Portuguese President General Antonio Ramalho Eanes with a plaque. Eanes in return sent the city a bronze bust of the explorer. The city displayed the bust at the Sullivan *glorieta* where it stood as the sole memorial for over forty years. But at Saad's insistence, the quest for a monumental memorial continued.

Xavier Rivas, a former Director of Tourism in Ensenada, explained it was the determined efforts of Saad—President Emeritus of the Ensenada Festival—that brought the de Bree statue to Ensenada. Ensenada's pursuit of a Cabrillo commemorative began in the early 1970s when Mary Giglito of the San Diego Portuguese community invited

Saad to attend the San Diego festivities. But forty years passed before Ensenada's opportunity appeared. Saad's persistence led Rivas, representing the mayor of Ensenada, to contact the San Diego Portuguese community to discuss the possibility of obtaining a Cabrillo memorial. Aware that the de Bree statue was in storage, in 2010 the Ensenada group met with Giglito and Zé Duarte Garcia of the San Diego Cabrillo Festival. The ensuing letters, meetings, and negotiations culminated with a formal request from the mayor of Ensenada to the National Park Service to obtain the effigy. The Park Service responded with a proposal.

From the first meetings in 2011, Workman emphasized that the statue was the property of the U.S. Government, hence it could be loaned but not donated or sold. In accordance with the agreement, the Mexicans would pack, transport, and restore the statue, then display it in an appropriate setting. Qualified Mexican restorers were to evaluate the condition of the figure and send a preventative maintenance plan to the Park Service historical staff for review. The Park Service would also inspect the statue annually. The Americans could retrieve the statue at any time and the Mexicans could return it at any time. The parties reached



Loading Cabrillo for his trip to Ensenada. Photo courtesy of Claudia Turrent.

a twenty-year loan agreement. Unless an American organization steps forward to reclaim the figure, Workman believes that at the end of the current term, the Park Service will undoubtedly reconfirm the loan.

With the arrangement concluded, Workman traveled to Ensenada to reconnoiter potential display venues. The parties agreed to a site Mayor Enrique Pelayo Torres recommended fronting Ensenada bay. In the

meantime, the Mexican contingent had contacted Claudia Turrent, an associate of the Cuatro Cuartos Enterprise, a private development firm, who agreed to underwrite the removal and restoration of the statue.³¹

In late December 2012, a team of workers from Ensenada arrived on the Cabrillo National Monument grounds to prepare the seventy-year old de Bree Cabrillo for its next venture. After twenty years, the Park Service unsealed the confined statue. According to Munson, the bottom third of the wooden crate was so filled with rat and bird droppings that Atthowe had to wear a hazmat suit to clean it. Turrent recalled the tense moments when the workers detached the statue from the old metal frame, slid a wooden platform beneath the frame, then carefully lifted the statue away. From its degraded appearance, Mexican and American bystanders worried that any sudden movement might fracture and destroy the effigy.

Once disengaged from the frame, the team spent the next eight days preparing the statue for travel. They enclosed the stone work in layers of plastic wrap supported with spray foam, then applied multiple outer layers of heavier, protective material. They packaged the upper piece of the statue, the Pedraú, separately but could not locate the small cross that topped it. With the figure and the piece encased



Hut built to store Cabrillo during restoration in Ensenada. Photo courtesy Claudia Turrent.



Erma Duran led the Mexican restoration team. Photo courtesy of Claudia Turrent.

and stabilized, they constructed wooden crates and filled the space around the pieces with styrofoam popcorn packing. The Jones Report emphatically stated that the statue should only be moved by “expert haulers.” To the chagrin of the park people, on the morning of December 28, 2012, the Mexican workers strapped the crated statue vertically onto a pick-up truck drawn flatbed trailer and departed. The mini convoy maneuvered down the Point Loma Peninsula to Interstate 5 South, crossed the

international border, and headed south on Highway 1 to Ensenada. Workman and Munson admitted they never thought it would survive the trip.³²

Following a nervous ride along the Baja California coast, workers off-loaded the crates that evening in the back lot of the Riviera Cultural Center. The statue remained enclosed until March while local artisans created an igloo shaped thatch pavilion where the restorers would work. When the statue was finally uncrated, Turrent recalled the anxiety that Cabrillo might have incurred further damage on the ninety-mile road trip. But amidst fanfare and celebration, the de Bree was revealed ready for repairs.

The restoration process began in mid-March under the direction of noted Arizona conservationist Erma Duran. The three-month restoration took place in the hut behind the Riviera Cultural Center. As a work of public art, Duran encouraged people to come, sit inside the hut, and watch the renovation. Working with the natural light leeching through the wood woven structure, the restoration team assembled a scaffold around the figure, cleaned and removed stains, and collected residue from the stone to recreate a perfect color match for the emulsion used to repair cracks. Duran also identified a natural product to coat the statue to protect it from the elements. As the dedication date approached, workers re-crated the renewed statue and moved it to a circular display area in front of the Riviera building.

There were unexpected issues. Even before the statue arrived in Ensenada, a dispute arose over the site that Mayor Pelayo had recommended and Workman approved. Officials in the Ensenada Port Commission unexpectedly questioned

the selected waterfront site. The Ensenada group suggested a site near a ship repair facility, which Workman rejected. Rather than debate and delay the installation, with the support of Saad and Turrent, Mayor Pelayo recommended a temporary location at the city-owned Riviera Cultural Center, a designated National Historical Monument site.

Workman, unaware of the site change until he arrived at the dedication, positively acknowledged the new location to Saad at the ceremony. The statue had also arrived without its cross. Turrent said it was not attached when they packed and removed the statue and they had no idea of its whereabouts. Saad and Turrent noted that another hitch came when the president of the Cabrillo Festival, Idalmiro da Rosa, bristled at the tacit acceptance of Cabrillo as a Spaniard. By agreement they attached a plaque on the statue pedestal indicating Cabrillo's Portuguese heritage. Nevertheless, there is a body of evidence pointing to Cabrillo's Spanish origins.

With only minor restoration details remaining, the city dedicated the statue on September 17, 2013, the 471st anniversary of Cabrillo's landing. Speaking for the San Diego Portuguese community, Zé Garcia expressed pleasure that the statue, which he believes represents the soul of Cabrillo, now resides in Ensenada and is available to the public.³³

After twenty-four years in storage, the original de Bree Cabrillo is in its first year of display in Ensenada. The cities of San Diego and Ensenada, which enjoy a shared legacy of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's historic journey, now share a memorial.



The restoration took place in Ensenada, Mexico, inside a thatched hut. Photo courtesy of Claudia Turrent.

Replica or original, in each city the statues celebrate Cabrillo's heroic adventure and reflect the civic pride in his historic discovery.

The Quest To Celebrate Cabrillo



The Cabrillo statue in Ensenada, Mexico. Photo courtesy of Claudia Turrent.

The efforts of the citizens of San Diego to memorialize Cabrillo have spanned over 120 years. The quest was a wild ride that involved the city, private citizens, civic organizations, state government, the federal government, the government and citizens of Portugal, and later the city government and private citizens of Ensenada, Mexico. The pursuit of a Cabrillo cenotaph has extended from the first public celebrations of the 1890s to the establishment of the Cabrillo National Monument, and the efforts to construct a heroic statue in 1913 and 1923. It continued through Ed Fletcher's pursuit and apprehension of the de Bree statue in 1940, the

dedication of the statue on Monument grounds in 1949, the effigy's move to the new Visitor Center and Mayor Curran's unsuccessful giant revised display in the late 1960s, to installing a replica Cabrillo in 1987, and finally moving the de Bree to Mexico. These episodes taken together reflect the civic passion to celebrate Cabrillo, whether Portuguese or Spaniard, and the transnational appeal to commemorate his memory.

NOTES

1. See, for example, "Into the Unknown: The Historic Voyage of the San Salvador," in the Winter/Spring 2009 issue of *Mains'l Haul: A Journal of Maritime History*. See also Harry Kelsey, *Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1986), 7-31, Cabrillo's Spanish provenance; 99, 107, the makeup of his fleet; 123-124, the mission of his voyage. Also see, W. Michael Mathes, "The Discoverer of Alta California: João Rodrigues Cabrilho or Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Summer 1973): 1-7. The legacy of Cabrillo permeates San Diego. A likeness of the statue adorns the logo of the San Diego Port District, the name Cabrillo appears on a bridge, streets, schools, apartments, and a plethora of small businesses ranging from credit unions, motels, a pet hospital, and yacht sales, to a dental lab, landscaper, electrician, orchestra, architect, and marina.
2. For general treatments of the creation of the Cabrillo National Monument, see Susan Collins Lehmann, *An Embarrassment of Riches: The Administrative History of Cabrillo National Monument* (San Diego, Cabrillo Association, 1987); F. Ross Holland's booklet, *The Origins and Development of the Cabrillo National Monument* (San Diego, Cabrillo Association, 1981); and the *National Register of Historic Places, Registration Form*, November 26, 1997, Cabrillo National Monument, section seven, 7-9.
3. See, Sally Bullard Thornton, "San Diego's First Cabrillo Celebration, 1892," *The Journal of San Diego History*, Vol. 30. No. 3 (Summer 1984): 167-179.
4. "Giant Statue of Cabrillo," *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 1914, L18. The Order of Panama had already dedicated a large cross made from San Diego Presidio tiles with a plaque in 1913 honoring Father Junípero Serra and the founding of San Diego in 1769.
5. *Proclamations and Orders Relating to the National Park Service*, Vol. I up to January 1, 1945. National Park Service Legislative and Congressional Affairs, Proclamation No. 1773 - May 12, 1926, Statute 2612, 130-131.
6. "San Diego Wins Native Son Honor," *The San Diego Union*, May 17, 1925, 14; "Heroic Statue on Point Loma to Honor Cabrillo," *The San Diego Union*, June 1, 1926, 11.
7. Ed Fletcher, *Memoirs* (San Diego: Pioneer Printers, 1952). Hereinafter cited as *Memoirs*. Lawrence Oliver, *Never Backward: The Autobiography of Lawrence Oliver A Portuguese-American* (San Diego: Neyenesch Printers, 1972). Hereinafter cited as Oliver. "Cabrillo's Statue Journey to San Diego Marked by Legal Twists," *The San Diego Union*, August 3, 2008.
8. *Memoirs*, 422.
9. *Memoirs*, 418; Oliver, 153.
10. *Memoirs*, 423; Oliver, 154..
11. SDCC Executive Board Minutes, January 25, 1940, Journal, November 1939-November 1940. *Memoirs*, 423-424; Oliver, 154. "Cabrillo Statue Arrives Here as Quatricentennial Mark," *The San Diego Union*, February 24, 1940, Part II, 2.
12. "Cabrillo Statue 'Kidnapping' Denied by Senator," *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1940, 15.
13. "Cabrillo Statue Arrives Here as Quadracentennial Mark," *The San Diego Union*, February 24, 1940, Part II, 2. *Memoirs*, 426-427. [14], "Fletcher Moves to Thwart Cabrillo Statue Blitzkreig," *The San Diego Union*, May 14, 1940, 12. "San Diego Receives Setback in Fight for Cabrillo Statue," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1940, A13. The statue was valued at \$50,000.
14. *Memoirs*, 424, 427. Interestingly, the San Diego City Council adopted a neutral stance in the affair.
15. "Cabrillo Statue Here to Stay," *The San Diego Union*, September 25, 1940, 13; "Location Sought For Fought-Over Cabrillo Statue," *The San Diego Union*, November 7, 1940, 14. "Rhodes Studies Locations for Cabrillo Statue," *The San Diego Union*, July 3, 1940, section B, 1.

THE JOURNAL OF SAN DIEGO HISTORY

16. "Celebration To Mark Anniversary of Cabrillo's Discovery of State," *The San Diego Union*, September 2, 1946, 23.
17. "Opinion Splits on New Cabrillo Statue Site," *The San Diego Union*, November 24, 1946, 15; "Statue of Cabrillo But No Site Poses Problem For City Manager," *The San Diego Union*, March 16, 1947, 11.
18. SDCCMM, May 18, 1949, Journal 1949. "Service Urges Moving Statue," *The San Diego Union*, May 17, 1940, A10. See Lehmann, 124-125.
19. "Giant Statue of Cabrillo at San Diego Proposed," *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 1966, 25. "Mayor Releases Details of Cabrillo Statue Plan," *San Diego Evening Tribune*, January 16, 1968, B1 -B3.
20. Cabrillo National Monument Archive, Cabrillo Ascension, Howard Overton Collection, Files 5-5 F85B and F85C. Memo, Tucker to Hartzog, May 1, 1967; memo, Rutter to Tucker, May 18, 1967; memo, Tucker to Rutter, June 4, 1968. Hereinafter cited as CNM Files.
21. CNM Files, Progress Report #1, June 30, 1967, Mayor's Committee.
22. CNM Files, memo, Howard Baker, Acting Director of Park Service to Under Secretary of Interior, February 8, 1968.
23. "San Diego Mayor Calls for Statue of Cabrillo," *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1968, A2. "Mayor Releases Details of Cabrillo Statue Plan," *San Diego Evening Tribune*, January 16, 1968, B1 -B3.
24. CNM Files, letter, Hamilton Marston to Curran, January 9, 1968.
25. CNM Files, memo, Hartoz to Udall, May 2, 1968; memo, Raymond Mulvaney, Acting Regional Director to Tucker, May 15, 1968.
26. CNM Files, memo, July 18, 1969, Tucker to Regional Director. See the diagram and description for the redesigned display, in Cabinet D-4-1. Munson noted other abandoned projects. One called for the construction of an observatory with a rotating restaurant and another to place a full sized replica of the *San Salvador* on the grounds.
27. "Wandering Cabrillo Statue Rededicated," *The San Diego Union*, September 29, 1949, 26.
28. "U.S. Park's Men Try to Put Juan Together Again," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1968.
29. "U.S. Park's Men Try to Put Juan Together Again," *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 1968. "40-Year Vigil Ends for Cabrillo," *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 1987, SD section, A1. "Healthy Move For Famous Statue at Cabrillo Monument," *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 1986. Conversation with Workman, September 2013. "Cabrillo Again Stands Watch at Point Loma," *Los Angeles Times*, February 28 1988, SD, A1. In 1985 San Diegan Marian Reupsch set the project in motion with a \$100,000 donation in the name of her husband, a former Planning Director for the San Diego Unified Port District.
30. The Jones Report, October 27, 2010, "Restoration of Cabrillo National Monument." Jason Jones, Director of the Jones Sculpture Studio, Portland, Oregon.
31. Television interview by *El Vigia Ensenada* with Nicholas Saad, Ensenada, Mexico, January 2013, translated from You Tube. *El Vigia Ensenada*, April 2013, "Llega a Ensenada Estatua de Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo." Interview with Claudia Turrent, October 2013. You Tube Interview with Saad April 2013. Email interviews with Rivas and Workman, August and September 2013.
32. Interview with Turrent, October 2013; interview with Workman, September 2013.
33. Interview with Turrent, October 2013. Translated from *Entrevistas*, Claudia Turrent, *Ayuntamiento Ensenada*, March 13, 2013 and April 1, 2013. When viewing the statue with Turrent in Ensenada, she pointed out a peculiarity on the section of statue rising above the body, noting that it was a different color and perhaps of a different material from the main body.