

Dana Point / by Doris I. Walker

Description

For two centuries before it was sculpted into a modern marina, the curve of the Pacific coast that is now Dana Point Harbor was a natural anchorage within Capistrano Bay for winddependent trading ships. Boston sailor Richard Henry Dana arrived on one and later described the site as "the only romantic spot in California" in his 1840 classic, *Two Years Before the Mast*. Situated halfway between San Diego and Los Angeles, Dana Point's rugged coves attracted mainly fishermen and surfers. Then in the 1920s, the marine terraces above the surf were carved into streets, but the community's development was stilled by the national financial crash of 1929. Now Dana Point has matured into a popular recreation and resort port, as well as a thriving residential city, while much of the natural beauty that inspired namesake Dana has been preserved.