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Sketch Map of the Proposed Development Mission Bay Recreational Area San Diego - - - California

Stock#: 50221
Map Maker: Frye & Smith
Date: 1945 circa
Place: San Diego
Color: Color
Condition: VG+
Size: 21 x 16.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

The Earliest Illustration of the Planned Development of the Mission Bay Recreational Area

Finely executed view of Mission Bay and environs, prepared in connection with the San Diego Chamber of Commerce's original plan to dredge Mission Bay for recreational purposes.

Lithographed by Frye & Smith of San Diego, one of the leading printers in San Diego in the mid 20th Century, this was almost certainly the first official printed rendering of the proposed dredging and recreational development of Mission Bay, as there is no advertising or other printing on the verso, suggesting that it was not intended for commercial use or wide distribution, but instead was most likely created as an early planning tool in connection with the Chamber of Commerce's work on the development of Mission Bay.

Mission Bay had been discovered by Juan Cabrillo's expedition in 1542 and named "Puerto Falso." The name remained and was included on Juan Pantoja's map of 1782 and James Pascoe's 1870 Map of the Pueblo Lands of San Diego. Mission Beach was not developed during the San Diego land boom of the 1880's, as were La Jolla, Pacific Beach, Ocean Beach and Coronado. At the time, it was a narrow strip separating the Pacific from the Bay and considered unuseable.

It was not until John D. Spreckels acquired the land that a plan for its development was set into motion. Spreckels had taken over Coronado's development from Babcock & Story and developed a prospering hotel and Tent City. Spreckels bought parts of the future Mission Bay, Pueblo Lot 1803, and began



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reselling the land. The name "Mission Bay" had been proposed as early as 1888 by Rose Hartwick Thorpe, a famous American Poet and wife of carriage maker E.C. Tharpe, early resident of Pacific Beach. The name became the official name for the Bay on June 2, 1915, by a decision of the U.S. Geographic Board.

Following the successful expansion and development of Mission Beach, various proposals were put forth over the years for the dredging and development of the Bay. At the end of World War II, the City Chamber of Commerce began to actively investigate and plan for the project which would create the modern version of Mission Bay.

In 1944, a Chamber of Commerce committee recommended development of Mission Bay into a tourist and recreational center to help diversify the City's economy, which was largely military. In the late 1940s, dredging and filling operations began converting the marsh into the modern Mission Bay Park. Twenty-five millions cubic yards of sand and silt were dredged to create the land forms of the park, which now is almost entirely man-made. Today, the San Diego River is constrained on both the north and the south by levees (San Diego River Flood Control Channel), and it no longer drains to the ocean through Mission Bay other than a weir located at the entrance to Mission Bay.

The plan set forth in the present image is very close to the final shape of the Bay. Fiesta Island in the northeast corner of the Bay would be substantially enlarged and the proposed inlets in the southeast did not materialize in the final plans, but the rest of the illustrated plan would largely come to fruition.

The map includes an Air Field (the Hydroplane channel was never constructed). The Baseball Park would become Robb Field. and Recreational facilities shown as #24 would become the Barnes Tennis Facility.

Rarity

The plan is very rare. We locate no other recorded examples, although we do not a map with the same title, but noting printing on the verso, which is known in a single example.

Detailed Condition: