## Alcatraz: General Information | Fort Alcatraz



The Red & White Fleet ferry service carries visitors to Alcatraz from San Francisco's Pier 41. Ferry tickets can be purchased in advance at Pier 41, Fisherman's Wharf. Though you may be able to purchase tickets at Pier 41 at departure time, tickets are limited and often sell out quickly. We strongly recommend that you buy your tickets in advance. For more information, call the Red & White Fleet's information office at (800) 229-2784, ext. 2700, or (415) 546-2700. To reserve transportation for a group of 15 or more, call Group Reservations at (415) 546-2653.

The ferry departs from Pier 41 for the 10-minute trip to Alcatraz. Arrival and departure times vary with the season. You may stay on Alcatraz for the entire day if you wish, taking any of the regularly scheduled ferries to the mainland; however, be sure to note what time the last ferry leaves the island. There are no overnight accomodations.

The National Park Service offers many programs to help you enjoy your visit to Alcatraz. First-time visitors are encouraged to view the introductory slide show offered in the theater near the dock. Ranger walks and programs are offered highlighting military history, famous inmates, escapes, natural history and the Native American Indian Occupation. Program titles and locations change each day and are posted on the island.

To answer your questions about Alcatraz and help you remember your of books, cards, and posters.

## Alcatraz Cellhouse Tour

cassette tour features narration by former correctional officers and inmates who lived and worked on Alcatraz. The tour, available in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Japanese, can be obtained at the cellhouse entrance for a nominal fee.

## For a Comfortable Visit

and drinking are permitted only in the dock area where the ferry berths. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the island.

There are no drinking fountains, but water may be obtained at the National Park Service Information Office on the dock.

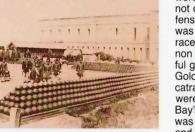
It costs a lot to maintain the historic buildings and grounds of Alcatraz. Because there is no admission fee to this park, voluntary donations from visitors play a much appreciated part in the upkeep of the park. If you wish to contribute to Alcatraz's future, you can find donation boxes at the dock and in the cellhouse near the dining hall.



North Beach and Alcatraz from Russian Hill, 1863

From 1775, when Spanish explorers first sighted the island, until the middle of the nineteenth century. Alcatraz was uninhabited. It wasn't until California became part of the United States in 1848 that military engineers decided Alcatraz was the perfect location for a fort to defend San Francisco's harbor. In 1850 the island was designated a military reservation, and by 1853 a fort was under construction there to become the first permanent military outpost on the Pacific coast. Workers reshaped the island.

blasting away one shore to make it steeper and cutting deep into solid rock. Then, huge iron cannon were dragged up the slopes and mounted so that they defended the island from all directions. Even-



Soldiers at attention in front of the old Army

catraz granted to

Mexican governor the island.

1775: Spanish ex-1847: John Charles 1859: On the last day of the year. Fremont, military

el de Avala sails Bay. Barren island purchases Alcatraz ter named "isla island for the federal 1861–1865: The de los alcatraces." government. 1846: Title to Al- 1853: The U.S.

Army begins build- the Civil War.

to garrison the fort. first civilian prisoners arrive on

380 soldiers arrive

1876: During U.S. brations Alcatraz's ouns fail to sink a ship in a show intended to demonstrate military

preparedness.

during the Spanish American War and Philippines. 1906: The great earthquake levels an Francisco's iails, and 176 pris-

of prisoners on renamed "the

United States rarily housed on Barracks."

eral Franz Bopp is held on the island while being tried

1933: The Army ransfers the island o the Department of Justice to estabish Alcatraz as a

1929

tiary, with 32 mili

to and from school on the main-

or an evening on the town. Years

ball games, high-school dances,

clubs, weddings, Thanksgiving dir

ners, and cake and coffee with

neighbors. It was a place both

An average of 264 men were im-

roughout its 29 years, a low

number by prison standards.

There was one guard for every

five inmates: the prisoners were

new inmate arrived, he was in-

formed of the regulations and

nade aware that the rules were

strictly enforced. A violation of the

rules would result in a warning, a

loss of privileges, a loss of earned

time off for good behavior, or a

sentence in solitary confinement.

On a typical day, inmates were

ing, dressing, and tidying their

cells, they were counted and

awakened at 6:30 a.m. After wash-

narched to a 20-minute breakfast.

Next, they were mustered in the

recreation vard for work assign-

ments. Morning work lasted until

noon they were marched back to

their cells, counted, and then re-

assembled in the yard to return to

work. At 4:15 the workday ended

before their 20-minute supper. At

4:45, they were locked in their

cells for the rest of the evening,

and they were counted once more

lunch was served at 11:40. At

closely supervised. As soon as a

prisoned in the federal penitentiary

ordinary and special.

were imprisoned, they continued to afterward. Alcatraz families fondly

cause trouble wherever they were. recall life on "the Rock": base-

irst groups of in orrigibles and

Convicted gangster Al Capone was transferred to

Edwin Swope Warden, 1948many enlightened changes to prison routine and increased inmate

April 27, 1936

The first escape

attempt was made

by Joseph Bowers,

killed while trying to

view of the guards.

December 16, 1937

never seen again.

counts were made in each 24-hour go but the sea, and its icy tem-

On this foggy day, Ralph Roe and

Theodore Cole vanished from the

perature, combined with a strong

seaward tide, make it unlikely that

they survived, although they were

In an especially brutal escape at-

tempt, inmates Thomas Limerick,

Bufus Franklin, and James Lucas

with a claw hammer. A hail of bul-

lets from a guard tower halted

them as they climbed out onto

beat officer Royal C. Cline to death

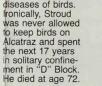
mat shop. There was nowhere to

who was shot and

scale the fence in







and author on the

Before dawn, Arthur

'Doc" Barker, Dale

Stamphill, Rufus Mc-

While working

in the mat

Joseph P.

Shockley.

and Lloyd

salt water.

April 14, 1943

Harold Brest, Fred

Hunter, and James

Boarman jumped two

officers in the indus-

trial area. One guard

worked free of his

bonds and gave the

alarm. Discovered in

the water, Boarman

was fatally shot. Brest

and Hunter were cap-

Armed with homemade

knives, Floyd Hamilton,

Arnold Kyle,

Barkdoll first

overnowered

shop, inmates

Cretzer, Sam

Cain, William Martin.

and Henri Young sawed

hrough the soft iron bars of "D"

Block Guards fired on them at the

Cretzer

Kyle

Bank robber John Bay

less slipped out of

the garbage detail

and made it into the

Bay before he was

spotted and hauled to

shore, nauseated from swallowing

one guard and then others. After

trying for an hour to saw through

the steel window bars, the four

men were finally persuaded to

September 15, 1941

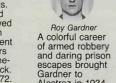
Shockley

water's edge, fatally wounding

Barker and recapturing the rest.

Alcatraz in 1934. By 1937 he was released for good









Hamilton was found in

Huron "Ted" Walters

clambered down the

was captured there

nearly an hour later

still trying to steel himself to take

the plunge into the cold bay.

John Giles man-

aged to assemble

a complete army

prison laundry. In

this disguise, he boarded

the army launch that collected the

laundry not knowing that a head

count was always made after an

launch relayed that it had one sol-

mate too few. When Giles stepped

Alcatraz stop. The departing

dier too many, and the warden

soon determined he had one in-

off the launch, an escort was

A bloody escape attempt that

Alcatraz was planned by six

inmates-Bernard Paul Cov.

bard, Miran Thompson, Sam

became known as the Battle of

Joseph Cretzer, Marvin F. Hub

Shockley, and Clarence Carnes

capturing weapons, the inmates

days. By the end of the siege, two

took over the cellhouse for two

verpowering several guards and

waiting to return him to Alcatraz.

uniform as he

worked in the

rocks at the shore and

hiding several days





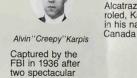
kidnappings, the

#1 began a

27-year nine



























adopted a Thom son submachine

gun in the 1920s and took up bank

Native Americans proclaim Alcatraz

"Indian land." 1969.



spent the next 17

## American Indians occupy Alcatraz, 1969-1971.

Indian Occupation

With the prison shut down, what

The mayor's office in San Fran-

cisco was flooded with sugges-

tions: turn it into a memorial-a

park—a gambling casino—a wild-

doned pets. While the debate con-

life refuge—or a home for aban-

tinued, the government labeled

Alcatraz "surplus property." On

November 20, 1969, a boatload

of 89 native Americans landed on

Alcatraz and claimed it as Indian

land in an attempt to focus na-

tional attention on their situation.

establish a native-American edu-

island. Without sufficient financial

and political support, the dream

dling resources caused many of

ne native Americans to give up

few adults relinquished the island

to U.S. marshals.

HI THE RESTRICTED AND A CREATER A

the plan, and in June 1971 the last

died. Personal tragedies and dwin-

In the next two years, they tried to

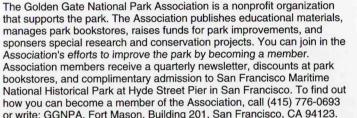
ational and spiritual center on the

was to be done with the island?

# **Creating a National Park**

By 1971, fire, vandalism, and weather had taken their toll on the buildings on Alcatraz. The General Services Administration, in charge of maintaining public buildings, sent wrecking crews to demolish some structures. Once again, public attention was turned to the island, and citizen groups went to work to save the remaining buildings from complete destruction. On October 12, 1972, Alcatraz was designated part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, a vast city-linked national park. and in 1973 the island was opened for tours. Today, the National Park Service manages the island, working constantly to repair the historic structures on Alcatraz and to preserve the island's natural beauties.

# Park Association





National Park Service ranger recounts Alcatraz history.

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National Park Service, GGNRA

San Francisco Archives National Maritime Museum, San Francisco San Francisco Chronicle

1973: For the first time, the public

sponsers special research and conservation projects. You can join in the how you can become a member of the Association, call (415) 776-0693 or write: GGNPA, Fort Mason, Building 201, San Francisco, CA 94123.



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guided walks.

San Francisco Examiner

Published in Golden Gate National Park Association

Map and Guide to

Its History as

a Fort.

a Prison.

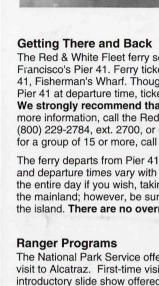
and a Park

Walking Tour

Park Service

Information

Cellhouse



visit, the bookstores at the cellhouse and dock level carry a wide range

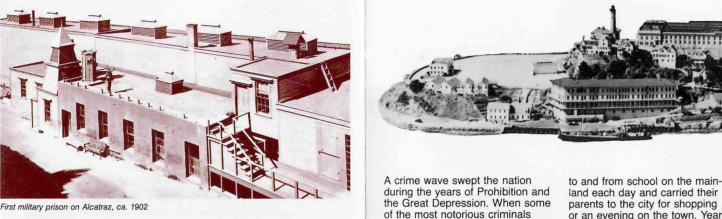
Visitors can tour the cellhouse with an award-winning audio tour. This

Take along a jacket or sweater. Alcatraz's position in the middle of the Bay offers breathtaking views but little protection from strong Bay winds. The island is often foggy and cold, even in the summer, and a warm day can unpredictably change into a chilly one.

Wear comfortable walking shoes. Many of the pathways are uneven, and the way to the cellhouse requires climbing a steep incline and many steps. Do not plan to eat on the island. Food and drink are not sold, and eating

Even though there are over 550 toilets on Alcatraz, only the restrooms on the dock and at the front entrance to the cellhouse are functional.

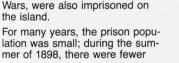




Confederate sympathizers, along with soldiers being disciplined by the army, were the earliest inhabitants of the military prison on Alcatraz. By the 1870s, American Indians, captured in the Indian

**Military Prison** 

For many years, the prison population was small: during the sum-



This photo, taken just before a meal, gives no mer of 1898, there were fewer

ally was during the 1890s.

Gun crew loading a 15-inch Rodman cannon,

tually over a hundred cannon were placed on the island—and not one ever fired a shot in defense of the Bay. Before the fort was completed, technology had raced ahead and made the cannon obsolete. Newer, more power ful guns were emplaced near the Golden Gate and beyond; and Alcatraz's cannon—and fortress were no longer important to the Bay's defense. In 1861 the fortress

In the Second Prison, 1904, military convicts lined up for the morning count under the watchful than 25 prisoners. Then the Army began shipping military prisoners was converted to a military prison and in 1901 the last cannon were

from the Philippines during the until at last it became expensive Spanish-American War, and the to run, overcrowded, and often count in April of 1900 soared to the object of complaints from San 441. The old prison survived the Franciscans. In 1933 the Army great 1906 earthquake, but by transferred the prison facility to 1909 the Army had decided to the newly created Federal Bureau build an enlarged reinforcedof Prisons.

range guns put it

fortifications are modernized, and place near the the fort also forprison.

obsolete. The fort is designated a permanent militar

the island soars

1915: Alcatraz is

the first time.

cellhouse is built along with a powe house that prowith electricity for

concrete cellhouse. Over the next

two decades, the prison served

ecorded escapees

om the military rison, strips.

1933: In October. swims to Alcatraz

caping prisoner

**Federal Penitentiary** 

A maximum-security, minimum-

privilege federal penitentiary was

needed to hold the most incorri-

makers; Alcatraz became that

prison in 1934. These hardcore

there to learn how to live within

discipline. If they reformed, they

For the wives and children of the

correctional officers, life on "the

Rock" was not too different from

everyday life in the city. A small

built apartments and residences

on the parade ground. The fami-

bought stamps at the post office,

and relaxed at the bowling alley.

Alcatraz girls' club, "Just Us Girls", 1941

The prison launch carried children

ies shopped in the grocery store.

community flourished in the newly

might be returned to another, less

the regulations calling for rigid

Family Life on "the Rock"

restrictive prison.

gible public enemies and trouble-

r rehabilitation—they were sent

to demonstrate how easily an es-

tary prisoners lef inmates from the federal penitentiary

James A. Johnston Penitentiary's firs warden Johnston had previously peen warden at

Folsom and Sar

Prisoners marching to the industrial shops,

and the lights went out at 9:30.

Just as sailors measure time by

bells, the prisoners could measure

"I was a fool to try it. I'm shot all

to hell." Arthur "Doc" Barker said

as he lay dying after his failed

escape attempt in 1939; he had

concluded what most prisoners

had—that Alcatraz was nearly

security facilities, and the island's

isolation in the cold bay made es-

cape almost impossible. Yet, be-

tween 1936 and 1962, 34 men

risked their lives in 14 different

In 1934, the first federal inmates were col-

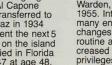
lected from other U.S. prisons and shipped to Alcatraz in specially built railroad cars.

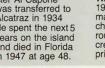
escapeproof. The guards' un-

wavering vigilance, the high-

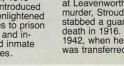
time by counts; an average of 13

and died in Florida in 1947 at age 48









stabbed a guard to death in 1916. By

came a guard . . . had no idea I

clinging to some rocks near the Golden Gate Bridge,

The 1962 escape attempts called attention once again to Alcatraz's deterioration. It would cost too much to repair the now dilapidated buildings, and it was already costing oo much to run the prison. Besides. San Franciscans were disturbed at having this less than secure prison on their doorsten. In 1961, U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy announced the prison would close, and in 1963 the last inmates left the island. Inmate Frank C. Weatherman re-

Dummy heads made of soap, cement, and

again, the high tides and low tem-

perature that night make it unlikely

scraps of hair from the barbershop floor

that they ever reached safety.

December 14, 1962

The last escape at

tempt was made b

Darl Parker, who

sawed through the

bars in a basement

room and decided

to swim for it. After

Bay, Parker gave

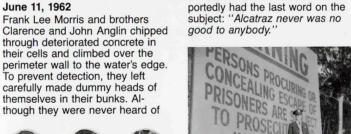
a short time in the

up and turned back.

Scott was later found

too weak to haul himself out of the

John Paul Scott and





A Miller and

and three of th

been killed:

Shockley and

later executed

at San Quentin

for the guards'

Guard Harold Stites, killed in 1946 escape attempt

alone, Floyd P. Wilson

disappeared from the

dock crew and eluded

Wilson the guards for 12 hours

before his hiding place was

September 29, 1958

guard and broke Johnson

gave up Burgett's body.

away from the garbage de-

tail. Johnson was captured imme

diately as he clung to a sea wall,

but it was 13 days before the Bay

Clyde John-

Aaron Bur-

gett subdued a

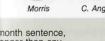
son and

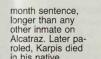
Launch Warden

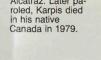
Associate Warden, Edward J. Miller, wounded 1946

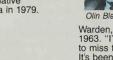
Coy, and Hubbard. deaths.

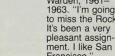
Thompson were

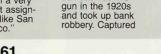












closes its doors as

U.S. penitentiary

and the last in-

mates leave on

claim to Alcatra:

and are then cor

vinced to leave.

calls for proposals

o develop the is-

land as a tourist

90 native Ameri-

cans land on Al-

as Indian land.

catraz and claim

1969: The City of 1970: Fires de-

stroy three histor

buildings on the

1971: On June 11.

remove the last

remaining native

1972: Alcatraz is

the new Golden

Gate National

ALGATRAZ

Alcatraz sits alone in the middle of San Francisco Bay, a small, rocky island sometimes barely visible through the fog. It is only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles from Fisherman's Wharf—yet for years it seemed as inaccessible as if it were a thousand miles out to sea. Because the island appeared so uninviting, it played a vivid role in California history. It was the site of a powerful fortress, a military prison, and a federal prison whose inmates were isolated by a ring of water and a barricade of mystery created by the island's tight security.



Today Alcatraz is no longer a forbid ding and forbidden place but a national park, open to anyone who wants to retrace its many interesting years. You car join a ranger-guided walk or explore the island on your own, following the sequence in this Map and Guide.

The National Park Service welcomes you to



"The first glimpse of Alcatraz fills a convict with grim forebodings." noted Bryan Conway one of the island's first inmates From the wharf, the island's only safe boat landing, the men got the first glimpse of their new home. The original wharf was a military fort: it has been repaired and enlarged over the

The ground floor of the fortified barracks, built between 1865 and 1867, originally served to bastion built in 1854, when Alcatraz was the wharf. When Alcatraz was a military fortress, the building was intended to house both soldiers and cannon. The guns, however,

Dock Tower "Your constant vigilance insures safetv.'' The wharf was guarded by the dock tower during the federal-prison era Three towers vere strategically located on the island, where tower quards kept a lonely watch Today, the dock tower is the last of the guard towers still

Temporary barracks atop fortified brick case-mates, ca. 1902

were technically obsolete before they were ever mounted. In 1905, a three-story apartment building for soldiers was constructed aton the brick fortifications. Today, the armored enclosures, or "casemates," meant for cannons are oc- could be pulled cupied by an exhibit area, theater, up to block and bookstore.

Guardhouse/Sally Port Alcatraz was the most highly fort fied military site on the West Coast during the 1860s. This guardhouse with its "sally port," or armed gate, was built in 1857 and is the oldest standing build-

ing on the the road and

A dry moat once stretched across had a drawbridge that Sally port, ca. 1900

the entry way. During the Civil War, wooden walls transformed the gun rooms into cells for Confederate agents and other enemies of the Union. After the Civil War, other structures were built to enlarge the Army prison

Attackers who got beyond these

of bullets fired through the rifle-slit

would have been met by a barrage

windows in the thick brick walls of

In the 1920s the Army built a twostory addition atop the guardhouse, in the graceful missionfirst floor became employee living

school and occasional chapel for military families. In 1934.

when the Bureau of Prisons took over the is-

the upper floo served as a

land, the entire building was converted into staff apartments.

Post Exchange (Ruins) Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century and until 1933 the post was occupied not only by soldiers and military prisoners but

Exchange, built in 1910, sold food and domestic articles, and contained a gymnasium and a bowling alley. Later, the Exchange was turned into a recreation hall and club for correctional officers and their families. The Post Exchange was destroyed by fire in 1970.



the new federal penitentiary, and by all subsequent wardens.

tages surrounded by flower gardens. Though the cottages themalso by soldiers' families. The Post selves were demolished in 1940. the brick basements and stairways Warden's house, 1934 of three homes are still visible in Warden's House (Ruins) the dense foliage. Once an imposing residence with spacious rooms and high windows opening onto spectacular views of the Bay, the warden's house was reduced to a charred ruin after a



Alcatraz. The lightkeepers lived in

Officers' Quarters (Ruins)

On the harsh, rockbound fortress,

life had its pleasanter side. Military

officers and their families lived in

nandsome 1880s Victorian cot-

In 1854, the first U.S. lighthouse

lens of the light and keep the oil lamp full. In 1909 the old lighthouse was replaced by an 84-foot tower high enough to be seen above the recently completed cellblock. The oil lamp gave way to an electric light, but the lightkeepers remained on Alcatraz after the on the Pacific coast was built on prison closed in 1963. The light is

First U.S. lighthouse on the Pacific coast, built 1854

Second lighthouse, built in 1909 to tower above the new prison a cottage at the base and climbed into the high tower to clean the

Being allowed visitors was a privilege, earned by good behavior. The inmates and their visitors saw one through thick spoke over a

plate glass; they Visitors are allowed They were allowed 45 minutes.

Command center in prison armory, 1934

The soft iron bars were replaced They gazed at each other through by hardened-steel ones, and the the plate glass . . . it seemed like key locks by automatic locking de-

Guards' \_\_\_ Waiting Room

talking to a being from another world." Their conversations were not even private, for prison officials might listen in to be sure such taboo subjects as prison regulations, criminal activities, and life on the inside were not discussed.

"Look, I know I've been involved in crime all my life.

I've hardened to it. Maybe it's because I ain't had

any education, any chance for a decent way of live

Miran "Buddy" Thompson, executed for killing a guard

thing, I wouldn't have been so bad.'

during the 1946 escape attempt

"I have no quarrel with society. It ought not have none with me. I only want what's coming to me. I've been

In 1907 Alcatraz became a full-time military prison. The military convicts

sent there were sentenced to imprisonment and hard labor, which must

have been hard indeed because, ironically, they mixed concrete and

When it was completed in 1911, this cellhouse was one of the world's

free-standing cellblocks stood within the massive cellhouse so that no

through. The cellhouse also contained a dining room, kitchen, shower

cell adjoined an outside wall or ceiling that a prisoner might tunnel

largest reinforced concrete structures. Like prisons within a prison, four

fight the atmosphere, the silence, the bodies. No

Joseph Cretzer, caught trying to escape in May

1941; later killed during the 1946 escape attempt

one feels the hard misery inside me.

hauled girders to build their own prison.

room, library, and full-service hospital.

A series of electronically controlled

most secure entrance to Alcatraz.

gates and doors made this the

The door could be opened only

Here, behind three-inch-thick

bulletproof windows, a guard

controlled the entrance and the

prison's arsenal of tear gas, pis-

tols, rifles, and submachine guns.

Near the entrance are the weapon

vaults, along with offices for the

warden, associate warden, and

captain of the guard.

from the bunkerlike control room.

Cellhouse Entrance

Alcatraz became a federal prison in 1934.

ng. Maybe if I had been trained to work at some-

"A" Block is the only part of the "B" and "C" Blocks cellblock that still looks as it did just after the military prison was completed in 1912. Before Alcatraz became a federal prison in 1934, all cellblocks had strap-iron doors. key locks, and spiral staircases.



A" Block, 1911

vices. Since "A" Block was not

refitted, it was used only occa-

sionally to isolate troublemakers

him to and from his cell carried no weapons that could be wrested from them, but at either end of the hallway, in the high, caged gun galleries, armed officers were on alert for the slightest sign of trou-

Kevs were a way of life

The busiest hallway in the cellhouse, between "B" and "C" Blocks, was nicknamed "Broadway." Following a strip search, a first-time inmate on Alcatraz was led along this hall to the cell that would be his home for many years. He would leave the cell



"D" Block "Solitary"

Typical five-by-nine-foot cell

nedical treat-

ment, and such

leges as work

(correctional of-

The guards

With little available entertain ment, the inmates were careful not to lose the privibooks from the library. Their selections were

Prison library delivered to their cells, and some men read as many as 100 books per year

Anything else you get is a privilege." For any infraction of the rules, an inmate could lose his privileges. For a major infraction he was sent to solitary confinement in "D" Block. His sole human contact came when his two daily meals were served through a slot in the door and when he was led to the end of the block for a weekly shower. Most inmates

shelter, and medical attention.

to purchase books that contained

spent no more than five days in 'D" Block, but some were confined here for months or years.



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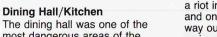
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inmates who

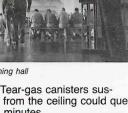
had heard of d

themselves the



most dangerous areas of the prison. The guards were unarmed, the inmates were gathered together, and the eating utensils could in a moment become lethal weapons. To keep the situation under control, the officials ran the dining hall strictly and made sure forks, spoons, the meals were varied and well

and knives were laid out on the Of course, precautions weren't lim- table and careited to keeping the diners in good fully counted.

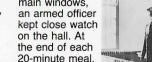




the inmates'

humor. Tear-gas canisters suspended from the ceiling could quell a riot in minutes and on a walkway outside the might have been slipped past the main windows. metal detector.

Prisoners could select their food from the



who earned that privilege might work anywhere on the island: in

the kitchen, hospital, library, or gardens or on the dock. Many,



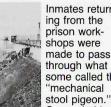
several hours in the recreation vard on weekends and holidays nmates could join in a game of baseball, shuffleboard, basketball or horseshoes, or they could play chess or chat in a quiet corner. Or the fenced walkways that ran along the wall, the ever-present armed guards kept watch.

Another earned privilege was

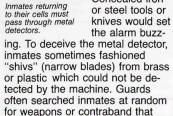


Weekend recreation in the exercise vard

On weekdays, the inmates lined up in the recreation vard for their work assignments. As they mount ed the steps above the yard, they could get a glimpse—beyond the concrete walls and barbed wireof the outside world: the gray blue waters of the Bay, the City skyline, and the graceful span of the Golden Gate Bridge. After the head count, inmates descended the steep stairway to the prison shop and industry buildings.



some called the 'mechanical tool pigeon.' or steel tools of



Shop and Industry Buildings

was carved out of rock by prisoners in the 1870s, and officers' quarters were later built along its Work was a privilege, and inmates perimeter. By 1940 guards and their families were living in nev apartments there, and children rode bicycles and played basebal where once soldiers had snapped however, worked inside the shop to attention. In 1971 government and industry buildings, where they bulldozers leveled all the building



prison clothe

ing gloves, ture, or working in the metal or carpentry shops. During World War II, the pris-

oners turned to factory defense work, making cargo nets for the U.S. Navv. manufacturing fatigues and khakis for the Army, and repairing the buoys that held the antisubmarine net across the mouth of the Bay. Today, these buildings, which were once a hub of prison activity, are considered unsafe and are closed to the



Gardens in front of the old Army Citadel, ca.

Windswept and forlorn, Alcatraz presented a harsh view to the first soldiers. For many years topsoil was imported from nearby Angel Island, but "the Rock" remained barren except for small garden:

ended by officers and their families. In 1924 a gardening associ ation was formed and, with the help of military prisoners, planted the trees, shrubs, and flowers seen in abundance on the island

The military post's parade ground

Parade ground, 1940s