

Naming Balboa Park: Correcting the Record

By

Nancy Carol Carter

A contest was held to give City Park a name worthy of the elaborate fair being built there. Apparently, a Mrs. Harriet Phillips of the San Diego Club and Pioneer Society suggested the name, “Balboa Park.”¹ – *The Journal of San Diego History*, 1979

The name of “City Park” was changed to “Balboa Park” in 1910, the result of a citywide naming contest. The winner, Mrs. Harriet Phillips, chose the name because the Park offered a wide view of the Pacific Ocean and explorer Vasco Nuñez de Balboa was the first European to sight the Pacific Ocean (from the coast of Panama).² – Balboa Park Website, 2010

The most frequently told story about the naming of Balboa Park is false. In the popular narrative, a citywide contest was held in 1910 to find a more distinctive name for San Diego’s City Park. Mrs. Harriet Phillips won the contest by suggesting “Balboa Park.”³ This version of the renaming of City Park appeared in an unsigned *San Diego Union* newspaper article in 1918.⁴ Despite its inaccuracy, the story was included in a popular book on the history of Balboa Park published in 1969 and incorporated into a 1979 article on the park.⁵ It is not the real story, but with few exceptions is repeated in every subsequent account of park history and all tourist guidebooks.⁶ It is even found on the official San Diego city website and the Balboa Park website.

Reliance on faulty newspaper reporting done in 1918 has denied generations of San Diegans a true history of how their treasured urban park came to be named after Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. The facts are these: park officials did not hold a contest to select a new name for City Park. There was an unofficial contest sponsored by a newspaper. Harriet Phillips did not win that contest. The winner of the newspaper contest did not propose the name Balboa Park. There is simply no truth to the story that Balboa Park got its name as the result of a contest. Neither is there any contemporaneous information singling out Harriet Phillips from the scores of other San Diegans who suggested names for the park.⁷ She may have put forth

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Vasco Nuñez de Balboa takes possession of the Mar del Sur (South Sea) now known as the Pacific Ocean for Spain.

the name “Balboa,” but others also recommended that same name.⁸

The decision to rename the park and the responsibility for selecting a name fell to the three-member Park Commission.⁹ Not one account from 1910 mentions the use of a contest to select the new name. The commissioners, however, did ask for public suggestions and soon found themselves at the center of a lively citywide debate. Local newspapers staked out opposing positions and whipped up a fury of letters to the editor. Landscape architect Samuel Parsons—an outsider—was denounced for daring to suggest a name. Each new suggestion was countered with someone’s fierce objection. Xenophobic sentiments emerged. Fractious letters to the editor jeered at the names suggested by highbrow “literati” on one hand and tasteless bumpkins on the other.

Finding no guidance in the stormy sea of public opinion, the besieged Park Commissioners

delayed their decision for months. When the new name was finally announced, newspaper headlines shouted in capital letters: “WE DO NOT WANT BALBOA! WHY SHOULDN’T THE PEOPLE OF SAN DIEGO NAME THEIR OWN PARK?” *The Sun* also ridiculed the name by printing disparaging biographical accounts of Vasco Núñez de Balboa that emphasized his history as a stowaway and manner of death: “He was executed by the Spanish for treason. And now one of the great parks of America has been named in his honor.”¹⁰ In fact, Balboa’s “treason” was actually a politically motivated charge trumped up by a rival. Those who disliked the new name questioned the authority of the Park Commission to make the decision, demanding intervention by the City Council and a special election.

The version of history in which City Park received a new name in a smoothly orchestrated civic exercise is just not true. The real story is untidy. It is political, press driven, and populated with a cast of concerned, humorous, cranky, and engaged citizens of San Diego.

No Better Time

The idea of adopting a more distinctive name for City Park was not new in 1910, though San Diego had maintained the status quo for more than forty years. Impetus to make the name change arrived with the decision to stage the Panama-California Exposition. City Park needed a more alluring and suitable name. Samuel

Parsons, the New York landscape architect who had been hired in 1902 to professionally design City Park grounds and to create a master plan for its development, put the matter squarely on the table.¹¹ As an early step in exposition planning, Parsons was brought back to San Diego in 1910 to assess progress on the master plan he had submitted five years earlier and to report to the Park Commissioners. At the end of his report, Parsons wrote:

The importance of adopting a name for the park has impressed me with renewed force...To call it the "city park" means nothing...Some name that is distinctive, euphonious and that suits Southern California is what is wanted. There has been much discussion and many names have been suggested... Why not meet the question fairly now and settle it? There can be no better time. I would suggest the name of "Cabrillo Park."¹²

Parsons was reporting to the Park Commissioners, Thomas O'Hallaran, Senator Leroy A. Wright and Judge Moses A. Luce, who, according to newspaper accounts, planned to give the name suggestion their "early consideration."¹³ While Parsons obviously favored a change from "City Park," we do not know if he felt strongly about his Cabrillo suggestion, or just offered a specific proposal to stimulate discussion.

The *San Diego Sun* editorialized that Parsons was right: it was time for the park to be given a name that could convey "a sort of personality." While there were other names that could be chosen, "we all will have to concede that Cabrillo park would be a good name, carrying a proper significance. The park commissioners would not be going wrong if they resolved to name it Cabrillo Park."¹⁴

The Commissioners discussed renaming the park at their next meeting. O'Hallaran was ready to accept the name Cabrillo, but neither Wright nor Luce liked it. Wright favored naming the park after its ardent advocate and benefactor, George W. Marston. He also thought Horton Park (after city father Alonzo Horton) or Sierra Park would be good names. Judge Luce favored a descriptive name like Ocean View or Bay View or a Spanish name suggestive of the same, but conceded that the "view" names were already "used much." Wright suggested that they all think of names and resume the discussion at their next meeting. O'Hallaran convinced Wright and Luce that the public should be consulted. With these actions, the Commissioners presaged four long months of irresolute discussion. From all accounts, the Commissioners approached this decision with care and detachment, avoiding the



Moses A. Luce, pictured here ca. 1911-15, served as one of the park commissioners responsible for renaming City Park. After serving with distinction in the Civil War, he moved to San Diego in 1873. He served as judge of the County Court of San Diego and founded the law firm Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps. ©SDHC #91:18564-1728.



Commissioner Leroy A. Wright, a founding member of the San Diego Historical Society, was an attorney in San Diego. He served as State Senator from the 27th and 40th Districts between 1907 and 1913. Photo ca. 1916. ©SDHC, Union-Tribune Collection, UT #3667.

acrimony that burst through the public discourse on a new park name.¹⁵

Meet the Press

Whether out of genuine civic interest or as a gambit to improve newspaper sales, the *San Diego Sun* campaigned for public involvement in naming the park. Motivations may be inferred from commentary in "Under the Peppers in the Park." This light-handed editorial page column reported the imagined conversations of two typical San Diego tourists, the observant Ohio and Nebraska. Ohio thought it might be a good thing "if people got het up" over the selection of a name for the park because it would beneficially increase public interest in the park. Ohio spoke

against a geographical name like Silver Gate, and proposed Junípero Park, leaving off "Serra" in the interest of brevity.¹⁶



San Diego Sun, December 5, 1910, San Diego Public Library.

The *Sun* sparked public interest by announcing a contest for the best letter suggesting a new park name. The prize was \$5. Readers were urged to rush their entries so that the Park Commissioners could profit from public suggestions at their next meeting. Letters poured in, according to the paper, with half of them suggesting the name Silver Gate. This term was unofficially attached to the San Diego Bay entrance in the nineteenth century.¹⁷ Proponents asserted that Silver Gate Park would be easy to remember as it established a southern twin of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park.

Next in popularity were the names Horton or Pacific Park. One person wanted to memorialize the 60 sailors killed when their navy gunship exploded in San Diego Bay in 1905 by naming the park after the USS *Bennington*. "Spanish names are pretty," wrote the contestant, but only have local value.¹⁸ Another correspondent warned to avoid Spanish names entirely because no one could pronounce them. His examples included La Jolla and El Cajon. Why not name the park St. James, the English translation of San Diego? Letters soon showed more variety, with Ramona, Hermosa, Buena Vista, Exposition, and Fremont being suggested. One letter stated that President Theodore Roosevelt should get the honor because he was building the Panama Canal.¹⁹

Days later the *Sun* reported that Silver Gate and Horton were still leading in a flood of suggestions that now included more presidential names: Washington, Grant, and Lincoln had joined the list, along with Panama, Paradise, Sun, and Sunset. Two popular favorites were melded into Horton's Sunset Park. "View" names abounded: Bay View, Ocean View (so easy to remember), Grand View (or should it





Back detail from the dress worn by Harriet Phillips at the 1915 opening of the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park. Photo by Chris Travers ©SDHC.

be Grandview? Or simply Grand Park?). San Diego could signal its ideal weather with the name Climatic Park, wrote one booster. Another suggestion favoring “Peoples’ Gardens” was decades ahead of trends.²⁰ Mrs. C.A. Mallette won the newspaper contest. Her letter pointed out that the popular favorite, Silver Gate, sounded secondary to Golden Gate Park. She collected the \$5 prize by proposing that City Park become San Diego Park.

The *Sun’s* readers must have been disappointed when the Park Commissioners met and again delayed a decision. New ideas kept popping up. At that very meeting “Miramar” was proposed and received a favorable reception.²¹ In fact, this was the first time that all three commissioners agreed on a name. But they were “loath to take quick action” because names were still being suggested by the public.²² A likely explanation is that the commissioners were

overwhelmed by the plethora of names proposed and flummoxed when it came to processing the public input they had sought.

The characters Ohio and Nebraska from “Under the Peppers” were holding out for a personal name, but conceded that Miramar was a tolerable choice.²³ A *Sun* reader disagreed, complaining that no one could spell or pronounce Miramar, or know its meaning. Grand View was better—very easy to spell, say, and comprehend. Another writer rejected Miramar as lacking a national character, “when what was wanted was a name familiar to everyone from Maine to Alaska.”²⁴

Occasionally this dialog exposed a social fault line. Some proposed names were castigated as highfaluting and of appeal only to a snobbish minority. An acerbic reply to this line of complaint mocked: “The most striking feature of the suggested park names is the good taste and originality exhibited. In making a choice of this sort, the first and greatest virtue is absolute mediocrity and a careful avoidance of anything characteristic—a danger particularly in this country of Spanish traditions.” Easy pronunciation seems to be a prime requisite. “Horton Park” is probably within the educational reaches of most and “has the added virtue of being as musical as the gurgle of a croup-stricken pullet.” Joking aside, the letter concludes, “Cabrillo Park is a good choice.” It was recommended by the park expert, it has a pleasant sound and it celebrates the history and character of San Diego.²⁵ With this searing piece of satire and the realization that Park Commissioners were not going to be stampeded, the *Sun* downgraded its coverage on renaming the park.

While the *Sun* was busy inflaming interest in the park name, the rival *San Diego Union* newspaper distanced itself from the commotion, perhaps out of deference to park commissioner Wright, a former city editor with the paper. The *Union* reported actions of the Park Commission with respectful patience, although stories and

editorials about the choice of a new name for the park also appeared. One long piece explained that Alonzo Horton had not given City Park to San Diego. This was in response to calls and letters to the *Union* suggesting that the park be named after the person who “donated” it to the city.²⁶ The *Union’s* editorial alter ego “Yorick” commented on the many names offered to challenge Parson’s suggestion of Cabrillo Park (“it is wonderful what a torrent of ideas can be made to flow from an original thought”). He poked fun at those suggesting Ocean View and Bay View. Such generic names could be used in thousands of locations around the globe and had no particular San Diego significance. Yorick weighed the pros and cons of naming the park after a living person (George Marston had been mentioned) but eventually endorsed Parson’s suggestion of Cabrillo Park.²⁷

Balboa Park is Born

Four months after agreeing to do so, the park commissioners finally adopted a new name for City Park. They were nudged into action by the building and grounds committee of the exposition at a joint meeting on October 27, 1910. The *Sun* wrote: “While members of the building and grounds committee of the Panama California exposition were conferring with the members of the city park commission Thursday afternoon, the importance of naming the park without more ado was realized again...there was a marked tendency among all present to get together and agree upon something no matter what.” The “dove of peace came down and the sobriquet ‘Balboa’ was chosen from the hundreds that had been offered.” Horton, Silver Gate and Cabrillo were considered, but “someone suggested” that the memory of Balboa, “who beat the real estate men to the Pacific Ocean,” should be forever perpetuated.²⁸ One of the park commissioners later wrote that the names Darien, Pacific, and Del Mar were among those discussed at this decisive October meeting.²⁹

These newspaper stories were published the day after Balboa Park was named. The *Sun* makes no mention of Harriet Phillips or of a park-naming contest. The same is true for the *Union*. The choice, it said, was “made after a dozen illustrious or poeti-



Balboa Park in 1915. Photo courtesy San Diego Gas & Electric Co.

cal names had been advanced, all of which had yielded, one by one, to the points of fitness embodied in the name of that daring explorer," Balboa. The name was not chosen until every phase of the question had been exhaustively discussed and the decision was unanimous.³⁰ Several more paragraphs are devoted to the importance of giving the park a new name and the appropriateness of this choice. While the *San Diego Union* was all contentment, the *Sun* was about to turn on the park commissioners.

Initially, the *Sun*, through commentary by its imaginary tourists Ohio and Nebraska, gave its qualified approval to the Commission's action. They liked the choice of a personal name, rather than the descriptive Silver Gate or Sunset Park, and hoped that San Diegans would feel a friendly connection and take a more personal interest in the park. "Balboa is a bilious sort of name," they concluded, but "he deserves some credit for discovering the Pacific Ocean."³¹ The *Sun* changed its tune when the Park Commission began to rename specific areas of the park. Abandoning restraint, the newspaper launched a strident attack, positioning itself as the voice of the people raised against an out-of-control Park Commission. The choice of names was criticized and the authority of the commissioners to change names in the park was questioned. When the Park Commission gave Pound Canyon the "pretentious" new name Cabrillo Canyon, the *Sun* ripped into the "christenings" being done without consulting the public who would have to live with "these pet names" forever.³² The *Sun* now loathed City Park's new name:

Not satisfied with forcing the poor old city park to be until the end of the world may set her free, the most unmusical, unattractive appellation "Balboa," the city park commissioners...are again at it. Who said Balboa was the best name for city park? Many declare it is about as poor a name as could have been selected. Perhaps seven out of ten say they will never call the park by that name. Many names were suggested by *Sun* readers. Many of these were good and were agreed upon by numerous citizens. Few suggested Balboa.³³

Close on the heels of this barrage, the "Sunbeams" column in the newspaper printed the WE DO NOT WANT BALBOA headline and resurrected the name Silver Gate. "Many will agree that Silver Gate beats Balboa. In fact the great majority has complained that there are few names *not* preferable to Balboa."³⁴ This generated more letters from the public. "I want to register my protest against saddling the city park with such an ugly name as Balboa, it is a hard, harsh sounding name. Why not Junipero Serra [or] some good United States name? Central Park is good enough for New York City." Another letter demanded that the name City Park be reinstated. "Let those who want Balboa move to Mexico...the name would be very appropriate in that country."³⁵ Criticism devolved to silliness at times: if the people had named the city park instead of three appointed park commissioners, a *Sun* columnist wrote, it would not have been cursed with a name that sounds like "Bell Boy."³⁶

Discontent also took a practical turn. The City Council was asked to intercede on behalf of citizens unhappy with the work of the Park Commission. A champion for the cause was found in Councilman John L. Sehon who concurred that, "Balboa is not a popular name for the park."³⁷ He thought that the council should have seen to naming the park before delegating its oversight to an appointed commission. "We should name our babies before we lend them out," he said.³⁸

The council was asked to select ten of the most suitable names for the park and place them on a special election ballot. "This would give all the voters a chance to help christen the big play grounds." The name selected would be used by the people in speaking of "their park," instead of Balboa as decided by the three commissioners.³⁹

However vociferous, these were last gasps in the active campaign against the Park Commissioners' selection of the name Balboa Park. Efforts at political maneuvering through the City Council or the ballot box came to naught. In advance of some of the harshest criticism, the Park Commission had formally confirmed the "Balboa Park" name on November 1, 1910, and settled in to endure the slings and arrows of those who would have preferred a different name.⁴⁰ Most city leaders stayed clear of the fray, refusing to shelter under the *San Diego Sun's* populist mantle or perhaps ignoring the press all together. Some may have drawn comfort from the *Union's* stolid and rarely wavering approval. In time, the critics toned down because they were ignored. San Diego city leaders had their eyes fixed firmly on the future. The controversy over naming City Park was but a minnow amid the large fish they had to fry. They were bringing the Panama-California Exposition to life. It would open in 1915 and it would open in a place called Balboa Park.

Setting the Record Straight

It is time to correct the record by eradicating the unsubstantiated tale that has long described the naming of Balboa Park. All mentions of a naming contest won by Mrs. Harriet Phillips should be relegated to the genre of "colorful myth." There is no reason to perpetuate it. The real story is easily encapsulated:

City Park became "Balboa Park" in 1910 to provide a more distinctive and memorable name for the home of the Panama-California Exposition, opening in 1915. Many San Diegans proposed new names for City Park and engaged in the lively discussion preceding the Park Commission's decision to honor Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the Spanish explorer who in Panama scaled a Darien peak and became the first European to sight the Pacific Ocean.

Names Proposed for City Park in 1910:

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Balboa | Fremont | Junípero Serra | Roosevelt |
| Bay View | Grand | La Vista | San Diego |
| Bennington | Grandview | Lincoln | Sierra |
| Buena Vista | Grand View | Linda Vista | Silver Gate |
| Cabrillo | Grant | Marston | St. James |
| Climatic | Greene (sic) | Miramar | Sun |
| Central | Hermosa | Ocean View | Sunset |
| Darien | Horton | Pacific | Washington |
| Del Mar | Horton's Sunset | Paradise | |
| El Dorado | Imperial | Panama | |
| Exposition | Junípero | Ramona | |

NOTES

1. Gregory Montes, "From Parsons to Balboa," *The Journal of San Diego History* 25, no. 1 (Winter 1979), 16. The first sentence of this statement inaccurately cites to Leroy A. Wright, "Writer Traces Pueblo Titles Back to 1789 in History of Local Park," *San Diego Union*, March 17, 1935: II2, 1. There is no mention of a contest in this authoritative newspaper account, authored by one of the three Park Commissioners who changed the name of City Park. Rather, it explains that there was "ever increasing interest in the controversy as to what name should be selected" and that "Balboa" was selected after "a dozen illustrious or poetical names had been advanced." The second sentence from Montes is cited without author, title, or page number to an article in the *San Diego Union*, May 27, 1916. The author attributes the article to an entry in the Thomas O'Hallaran Scrapbook (p. 36) in the collection of the California Room, San Diego Central Public Library. The citation cannot be verified in that source as Montes saw it because page 36 has been cut from the scrapbook, along with several nearby pages. The May 27, 1916, issue of the *San Diego Union* has no articles on the naming of Balboa Park and no mention of Harriet Phillips. There is a high likelihood that the citation is incorrect and that Montes actually read "History of Balboa Park Interwoven With That of City," *San Diego Union*, May 27, 1918, 4:4-6 (Note the date 1918, not 1916). This unsigned article states, "The name 'Balboa' was given the park about the year 1910 after a contest had been conducted for the purpose. It is said that Mrs. Harriett (sic) Phillips, a member of the San Diego Club and Pioneer Society, suggested the name 'Balboa.'" This one paragraph hedged with its slippery "it is said" language appears to be the font from which all subsequent misinformation about the naming of Balboa Park flows.
2. "History" tab under Park Information, www.balboapark.org (accessed March 1, 2010).
3. Harriet Wallace Phillips was a charter member of the San Diego Club and a member of the Pioneer Society, having arrived in San Diego in the 1870s. She was elected to the San Diego Library Board in 1895 and resided on Fourth Avenue at the time of her death in 1918. Her husband George K. Phillips predeceased her, having become wealthy in the mining business, then falling on hard times. "Phillips," Biographical Files, San Diego Historical Society Archives; *San Diego Union*, April 3, 1895, 5:1.
4. "History of Balboa Park Interwoven With That of City," *San Diego Union*, May 27, 1918, 4:4-6. This information has been incorrectly cited to Wright, "Writer Traces Pueblo Titles." However this article does not discuss a contest or mention Harriet Phillips.
5. "In order to find a suitable name, a contest was held...the winner was Mrs. Harriet Phillips, member of the Pioneer Society and the San Diego Club, with her suggestion of Balboa." Florence Christman. *The Romance of Balboa Park* (San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1969), 37. Christman apparently had not used 1910 original sources because she incorrectly lists the names of two of the three park commissioners. In the fourth and most recent edition of the book, published in 1985, the naming contest is discussed on page 33; Montes, "From Parsons to Balboa," 1.
6. Works relying on the 1910 original sources avoid the error: Richard W. Amero, "The Making of the Panama-California Exposition, 1909-1915," *The Journal of San Diego History* 36, no. 1 (Winter 1990), 10-11; Robert L. Horn, "Part IV of A History of Balboa Park," *California Garden*, 51, no. 3 (Autumn 1960), 24-25. Roger Showley states that *later accounts* credit Harriet Phillips. Roger Showley, *Balboa Park A Millennium History* (Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media Corp., 1999), 42.
7. Harriet Phillips is not mentioned in any of the general newspaper articles on naming the park, nor in the accounts written by two people present at the meeting when the name "Balboa Park." was selected. Park Commissioner Leroy A. Wright discussed the naming of the park in his 1935 article "Writer Traces Pueblo Titles." George Marston was at the meeting as a member of the Exposition Building and Grounds Committee, but he does not speak to the naming of Balboa Park in his "History of San Diego City Parks," in Carl H. Heilbron, *History of San Diego County* (San Diego: San Diego Press Club, 1936), 153-174.
8. In criticizing the Park Commission selection of a name, the *Sun* commented that among the public ideas for renaming City Park, "few suggested Balboa." This does indicate that the name was in play and suggested by multiple sources rather than being a unique contribution of Harriet Phillips. "Christening Bee Indulged in by Park Commissioners," *San Diego Sun*, November 30, 1910, 1:2-3. It is possible that Phillips directly suggested "Balboa" to one of the Park Commissioners or those meeting with the Commission and was informally credited by herself or another with providing the new name of City Park, but no record of her direct involvement could be documented in the current research.

Naming Balboa Park: Correcting the Record

9. A Board of San Diego Park Commissioners was first appointed on April 17, 1905, marking the transition of City Park improvement activities from the private efforts of the Park Improvement Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to a governmental responsibility of the city. "First Park Board Named Last Night," *San Diego Union*, April 18, 1905, 3:1-2.
10. "When Balboa Came West," *San Diego Sun*, December 5, 1910, 4:2-3. This unfavorable account was assembled "from research at the San Diego free library." Samuel Eliot Morison wrote, "So, one day in 1517, Vasco Núñez de Balboa, as kindly, loyal, and competent a conquistador as ever brought the cross and banner of Castle overseas, was seized by order of Pedrarias, tried, and condemned to death on the charge of treason and murder. Next day he and four companions were beheaded in the public square and their bodies thrown to the vultures. Balboa was only forty-two years old." Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages, 1492-1616* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). See also, Octavio Mendez Pereira, *Balboa*, ed. Everett W. Hesse (New York: American Book Co., 1944).
11. Samuel Parsons, Jr. (1844-1923) was one of the most well known landscape architects in the early twentieth century. He was a protégé of Calvert Vaux who worked as superintendent of planting in Central Park and landscape architect of New York City Parks Department (1895-1911). He was a founding member of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and served as its president from 1905-07. See: Samuel Parsons, Jr., *The Art of Landscape Architecture* (1915; Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009); Richard Amero, "Samuel Parsons Finds Xanadu in San Diego," *The Journal of San Diego History* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 3-23.
12. "Name It Cabrillo Park, Says Parsons," *San Diego Sun*, July 4, 1910, 1:4-5.
13. O'Hallaran was originally from Missouri and had moved around the country before settling in San Diego in 1901. He worked in the real estate business and as a state inheritance tax appraiser in San Diego County. Wright came to San Diego in 1887 and worked as city editor of the *San Diego Union* and later purchased an interest in the *San Diego Sun*. He practiced law, was elected a state senator in 1905 and served as president of the San Diego Historical Society from 1930 to 1944. Luce was a Civil War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient who became a prominent lawyer and judge and a founder of the leading San Diego law firm Luce, Forward, Hamilton & Scripps; "Name It Cabrillo Park, Says Parsons," *San Diego Sun*, July 4, 1910, 1:4-5.
14. "Parsons says name it Cabrillo Park [Editorial]" *San Diego Sun*, July 5, 1910, 4:1.
15. "Cabrillo? No! Says Wright and Luce," *San Diego Sun*, July 6, 1910, 6:2; "Wanted—Name for City Park: Board Does not Like 'Cabrillo,'" *San Diego Union*, July 6, 1910, 5:1.
16. "Under the Peppers in the Park: Name for Park," *San Diego Sun*, July 7, 1910, 4:1-2.
17. The term is attributed to Joaquin Miller who was said to have written a poem entitled "Silver Gate" during a visit to San Diego. In the 1880s the town of Calico near Barstow in the Mojave Desert had 500 operating silver mines. A Coronado ferry named *The Silver Gate* was launched on November 15, 1887. When taken out of service it was moored in Glorietta Bay and became a popular nightspot. The *San Diego Union* referred to the harbor entrance as the Silver Gate for the first time in 1889. In the same year, the Silver Gate Masonic Lodge opened and *Silver Gate* magazine hit the local newsstands. Edward J.P. Davis, *Historical San Diego The Birthplace of California* (San Diego: private printing, 1953), 116-17; Leland Fetzer, *San Diego County Place Names A-Z* (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2005), 134-35. By 1908 William E. Smythe used the term familiarly when describing the traffic of Spanish ships into San Diego Bay. William E. Smythe, *History of San Diego, 1542-1908* (San Diego: The History Company, 1908), 1:27, 40. A book of poems and photographs of San Diego historical places was published shortly after the naming controversy: John Vance Cheney, *At the Silver Gate* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1911).
18. "Park Name," *San Diego Sun*, July 8, 1910, 2:1-3.
19. "Help Give the City Park a Good Name," *San Diego Sun*, July 9, 1910, 3:1-4.
20. "'Horton' and 'Silver Gate' Close in Park Name Race," *San Diego Sun*, July 11, 1910, 1:1-2, 2:3-4.
21. "Naming Park Is Up to People, May be Miramar," *San Diego Sun*, July 13, 1910, 2:1.
22. "Miramar' Favored by Commission as Name for City Park," *San Diego Union*, July 13, 1910, 9:3; "Naming of Park is Up to People," *San Diego Sun*, July 12, 1910, 2:1.
23. "Under the Peppers in the Park," *San Diego Sun*, July 14, 1910, 4:1.

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24. "Citizens Much Interested in Naming the City Park," *San Diego Sun*, July 15, 1910, 11:2-3.
25. "Names for City Park from the Sun's Readers," *San Diego Sun*, July 18, 1910, 2:1-2.
26. "Board Unable to Name 1400-Acre Park After Donor," *San Diego Union*, July 15, 1910, 8:1. The park is a portion of the original pueblo lands and was owned by the city prior to coming of 'Father' Horton in 1861. History shows that park property was not given by an individual, but that the municipality has a state grant. A first official action toward reserving park land was February 15, 1868, when E.W. Morse presented a resolution to reserve two 160-acre tracts for a park. From this step the movement grew to a solid block of nine quarter sections of 1,440 acres.
27. "On the Margin by Yorick," *San Diego Union*, July 10, III 17:6.
28. "Balboa Is Name For Big Park," *San Diego Sun*, October 28, 1910, 12:1.
29. Wright, "Writer Traces Pueblo Titles."
30. "Balboa Park Chosen as Name of City's Pleasure Ground," *San Diego Union*, October 28, 1910, 9:1.
31. "Under the Peppers in the Park," *San Diego Sun*, October 29, 1910, 4:1-3.
32. "Christening Bee Indulged in by Park Commissioners," *San Diego Sun*, November 30, 1910, 1:2-3.
33. *Ibid.*
34. "Sunbeams," *San Diego Sun*, December 7, 1910, 8:3 (emphasis added).
35. "No Balboa Park for These Citizens" *San Diego Sun*, December 30, 1910, 4:4-5.
36. "Sunbeams," *San Diego Sun*, December 2, 1910, 3:2-3.
37. John L. Sehon had previously served as mayor of San Diego.
38. "Seek New Name For Park," *San Diego Sun*, December 27, 1910, 1:4.
39. "New Plan to Christen Park," *San Diego Sun*, December 3, 1910, 3:2.
40. "Handsome Gold Watch for I.J. Gill from L.J. Wilde," *San Diego Tribune*, November 1, 1910, 5:2.



80-A⁴⁷. Opening of the Panama Canal, S.S. Ancon passing Cucaracha slide. Looking north. Aug. 15, 1914.

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