



Whalers Cabin Development History

In 1986, State Parks restored the Whalers Cabin and placed a new roof on the building. State Archeologists discovered that the cabin was built using six whale vertebrae as a foundation. During the restoration, artifacts ranging from abalone shell pendants to porcelain pottery were found, providing evidence that the small house was probably built by Chinese fishermen in the 1850s.

During the archeological work, docent Kurt Loesch helped with the sifting for artifacts. This started his interest in the history of the cabin and he began collecting objects for a museum. Many of the artifacts came from the descendants of people connected to Point Lobos such as the A.M. Allan, Kodani, and d'Amaral families. District Superintendent Mary Wright assigned Sharon Mallory, Exhibit Specialist, to work with Kurt and they developed a theme for the museum and the displays. The original theme, "Point Lobos has been used by many different ethnic groups for the purpose of making a living," is still relevant today.

The building was used by Chinese fishermen and by the Japanese as an abalone processing shed, and then used by the army during World War II. So, why do we call it Whalers Cabin? Prior to the restoration, it was believed that the cabin was built by Portuguese whalers; thus, State Parks called it Whalers Cabin or Whalers Cottage. Rather than change the name to Chinese Cabin, we kept the name Whalers Cabin because the name had its own history and story. Kurt spearheaded the nomination of Whalers Cabin for the National Register of Historic Places to recognize the role of this building in the history of the Monterey area.

When State Parks restored the building, the original purpose was as a social gathering place with a wood stove for warming. Because of Kurt, park staff, the Point Lobos Foundation, and docents, Whalers Cabin museum is now a place to learn the unique cultural history of this amazing place.



Left: Museum docent Kurt Loesch, Superintendent Roger Samuels, and Sharon Mallory.
Right: Whalers Cabin Museum docent Kurt Loesch.

