

## **SAM MORSE, AN INVESTOR IN NATURE'S WONDERLAND** - Story and photos by Jeffrey B. Froke, Ph.D.

"I think the very incarnation of the values of this community were lodged in him."

— Remsen Bird, President of Occidental College (1969)

100 years ago, Sam Morse wrested Pebble Beach from a fate like any other beach-front development in the State. For that and following through on his better ideas, Sam was remembered 50 years later by Senator Alan Cranston as "one of the most remarkable Californians of our time."

Sam was a pragmatic conservationist whose mission — to develop and protect Pebble Beach — was underway decades before the word

'environment' and its movement were popularized. A responsible developer, Sam recognized that the aesthetic and commercial values of natural beauty and wildness were inextricable assets belonging to Pebble Beach.

Sam's heyday at Yale happened in the midst of a formative national debate over park and forest management policy in America. Gifford Pinchot, a fellow Bonesman ('99), first chief of the US Forest Service, and co-founder of Yale's School of Forestry, stumped the conservative definition of 'conservation' which supported productive use of forest reserves for the sustainable economic and recreational benefit of all Americans.

*(Continued on page 4)*



"All of Pebble Beach had been cut up into lots ... I took all the maps of the subdivision of what is now the golf course, destroyed them, all but one..." Sam Morse, 1916



## A Shore Thing - by Gina Gianfala, Pebble Beach resident and Bay Net volunteer

Every so often something will surprise us. At Cypress Point a few weeks back I was admiring the harbor seals peacefully resting on the rocks near the shore. Suddenly a very big head appeared out of the water! Looked like a seal but must have been four times larger, dark color, black whiskers... an elephant seal! Wow! The momentary apparition sure was exciting.

At times we are fortunate to see elephant seals in our area. They occasionally visit the beach at Hopkins Marine Station where it's fun to watch them rest next to the harbor seals and appreciate their difference in size and color.



Photos: Marge Brigadier and Kim Akeman

What about elephant seals makes them so amazing among marine mammals? For one their size as adult males can weigh up to 5000 lbs! They also sport a proboscis (that's where their name comes from). Females range between 900 and 1700 lbs; pups are born at 60-80 lbs - that's a lot of baby! At birth they are pitch black, cute... cute... cute. Pup gets big fast and in just one month quadruples its weight on mom's rich milk.

What is more amazing to me is how these seals will stay at sea for months at a time. While at sea they repeatedly dive up to 2000 feet for 20-30 minutes at a time. Before diving, they exhale oxygen from their lungs. While diving the source of oxygen comes from their oxygen-rich blood and oxygen-storing myoglobin in their muscles.

Adult elephant seals come ashore only twice during the year, to breed and to molt. In late November the alpha males start arriving to stake out their beach territory. Pregnant females, ready to give birth, start arriving in December. They assess the beach and decide where to join a harem. Within a few days of arrival the pup is born. Pup and mom stay together for about one month until the pup is weaned. Mating then occurs and mom departs. Pups are left to fend for themselves as they learn how to swim and catch food in the ocean.

The alpha male will defend his harem of up to 40 females against all other males. It's

an incredible sight to watch two males fight for supremacy - the bellowing sound they make is quite terrifying. The alpha male stays on shore until all the females leave. This can be up to 3 months during which time the male has fasted.

December to February are great times to view elephant seals north and south of Monterey. Two locations along the central coast are at Año Nuevo State Park, just north of Santa Cruz and at Piedras Blancas, a few miles north of Cambria.

A word of advice, use caution when viewing elephant seals: do not disturb the seals and stay a safe distance away. Males are BIG and move very fast; never cross between them and the water; keep dogs on leash and away and NO drones please!!

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January 2019

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The Board of Directors wishes each and every property owner a healthy and happy New Year. The New Year offers many opportunities, one of which is to join the Del Monte Forest Property Owners ("DMFPO"). You are encouraged to take full advantage of the benefits offered by this organization at a very reasonable cost of \$50 annually.

The annual dues fund the quarterly Forest News publication updating you on current issues. Our members receive invitations to Sunday afternoon seminars featuring interesting speakers, and semiannual meetings in May and November held at Spanish Bay. These meetings offer not only a chance to learn about current events impacting Pebble Beach, but also to enjoy wine and appetizers while socializing with other property owners.

As a member in this community of property owners, you can receive assistance with neighborhood issues such as noisy parties, unsightly debris, road conditions, or public safety to name a few. The DMFPO is the only entity providing this type of comprehensive service in Del Monte Forest.

Directors on the DMFPO board are property owners from all walks of life. They take pride in volunteering to accomplish DMFPO goals by serving on committees and boards of numerous other Peninsula/County organizations and are aware of what most impacts those living in the Forest. I think you will agree there are many benefits to becoming a supporting member! Additionally, if you are interested in serving on a DMFPO committee or on the board please telephone our office at 831.373.1618 for further information.

We look forward to a productive year serving you and wish you a prosperous New Year,

Ned Van Roekel, President

On behalf of the Del Monte Forest Property Owners Board of Directors

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*Del Monte Forest Property Owners January – December 2019 Membership Dues..... \$50.00*

*As you send in your \$50 annual dues, please be sure to provide the information requested on the flap of the enclosed remittance envelope. If you prefer to pay by credit card, go to the DMFPO website "Membership" menu for on-line renewal at <http://www.dmfpo.org>.*



The Pinchovian view of people-in-nature and incoming reports from real-world communities built within private nature preserves were timely and would not have been lost on Sam Morse.

Before 1919, the most talked about “resort garden suburbs” were Pinehurst NC (1895), Palos Verdes Estates, near Los Angeles (1914), and Jupiter Island Club FL (1916). Golf was universally promoted to lure affluent folks away from winter’s grip on their home cities and to places “where millionaires could flee from life’s complications” (S.E. Morrison). In sync, Sam Morse, who dreamed of PB becoming “one of the greatest private parks in existence,” skillfully used golf courses to preserve open space and scenic vistas, thusly defining the character of Pebble Beach and the Del Monte Forest.


PB Golf Links and MPCC’s Dunes Course were in play and Cypress Point Club under construction when Henry Hubbard wrote in *Landscape Architecture* (1927), “If you are planning a particularly select land subdivision or residential area .... the use of which is now by all odds the most attractive, the least necessarily destructive of natural beauty, the most adaptable to topography, the easiest to adjust to the adjacent roads and house-lots, is the golf course.” Nevertheless, in 1927, Sam and company made it clear that as important would be the success of Cypress Point Club, so too was protection of the adjoining cypress forest and 17-Mile Drive. If the golf club did not work out, or would veer from its purpose, the attached 50-ac cypress forest would revert to Del Monte Properties as a perpetual parkland.

After a decade on the job, Sam replied to a fellow DMPC director’s suggestion to form a landowner’s association and arm it with protective covenants and design restrictions for new construction in Pebble Beach, along the lines of Montecito, Hope Ranch and Rancho Santa Fe in southern California:

“In our case, controlling the hotel and lodge, it is very necessary that we keep control of roads, park areas, and all matters of development.”

Borrowing from Charley Osborn’s endearing biography of his grandfather (“Boss”), Sam Morse was a dreamer who knew how to get things done. With his 17-mile long lariat confidently in-hand, the 34-year old erstwhile cowboy “roped, tied, and [re] branded” Pebble Beach. In 1927, Sam wrote to Jack Beaumont (DMPC) declaring, “As long as we are in the saddle, we can protect this locality as effectively as anyone.” Well said and done.



*Credits: Stanford University’s Green Library / Special Collections for access to Sam Morse’ archives, and Charles Osborne for writing “Boss” (2018).* 



## Restoration Work at Fanshell Dunes

By Nancy Dwan, Member  
DMFC Board of Directors



Eagle Scout project crew

Fanshell Dunes is a 2.37 acre parcel on 17-Mile Drive that affords spectacular views of Fanshell Beach and Cypress Point. The property contains a mix of native dune and wetland habitat. Using donations from Pebble Beach property owners, the property was acquired by Del Monte Forest Conservancy (DMFC) in 2012. DMFC maintains the property as permanent open space for habitat protection and prevent disturbance of native ground cover.



"Tarp Canoe"

School senior and Eagle Scout Zach Hosmer, a group of 10 boy scouts and their parents began the painstaking process of removing ice plant from the property. Over a two day period, volunteers cleared ice plant and other invasive species from a 3,000 square foot section. Zach and crew created access areas to facilitate removal without residual damage to the dune habitat. Because ice plant is very fibrous, it cannot be composted at the local landfill. Instead, the ice plant was stacked in a 200 foot-long berm and left on-site to dry.

In December, Biologist Canepa worked with DMFC Forester Bill Vaughan along with friends and family of DMFC Board members to remove the desiccated ice plant. "Tarp canoes" were built to drag mounds of dried ice plant to the roadside where it was then hauled to the Pebble Beach Company corporation yard.

During fieldwork in July, small seedlings of native plant species were discovered growing under the ice plant. The volunteers placed colored flags next to each seedling, taking great care not to disturb the sensitive area. Biologist Canepa collected plant samples for propagation and replanting in the spring. Forester Vaughn will be working with Ms. Canepa cataloging existing plants (native and non-native by "vegetation type") and selecting additional native species for the restoration phase. The removal/restoration process will be repeated several times over the next few years to fully restore the dune area.



DMFC Board Member Karla Crist (in white visor) and her husband Roberto help with the restoration effort  
DMFC staff photos

This past summer, DMFC began a multi-year project to remove invasive plants and restore the native dune habitat. Under the supervision of Dune Biologist Joey Canepa and Carmel High

of open space conservation and preservation entirely with donations. For more information or to make a donation, please visit our website at [www.delmonteforestconservancy.org](http://www.delmonteforestconservancy.org).





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## **BE A 2019 DMFPO MEMBER!!**

See Page 3 for information on  
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Use the enclosed remit envelope  
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membership today!

**You have the option to renew your DMFPO membership on-line at <https://www.dmfpo.org>**

## **HEIGHTENED FOREST MAINTENANCE SOON UNDERWAY**

- by Mike Niccum, Pebble Beach Community Services District & Dawn Mathes, Pebble Beach Company

There is growing community interest in fallen trees and dead vegetation in the Del Monte Forest open spaces, road right of ways, greenbelt areas, and trails. The recent drought weakened our already aging forest, resulting in a lot more dead standing and fallen trees. Although fallen trees have historically been left on the forest floor as habitat, biologists are concerned that the quantity of fallen trees may be preventing new seedling establishment, and fire personnel are concerned about fuel overloading. The Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) comprised of foresters, naturalists, biologists, and fire personnel reviewed this issue and recommended that dead trees and vegetation be removed selectively throughout the Forest.

Pebble Beach Community Services District, Pebble Beach Company, and the Del Monte Forest Conservancy are putting this advice into action with an uptick in activity this spring. The OSAC and other professionals will identify and prioritize areas for tree and brush removal noting sensitive flora and fauna to avoid. Contractors will collect and remove excess woody materials to be disposed of by very low-emission “curtain burner” incineration, or distributed on site with a masticator, chipper, or by hand crews.

