



Pt. Reyes Station Train - 1906 Earthquake

On the morning of April 18, 1906 Northern California experienced the most devastating earthquake in its recorded history. The San Andreas Fault, not yet named or even understood, ruptured and slipped along nearly 300 miles of its length. The epicenter was off the coast of San Francisco and that city suffered some of the severest damage and loss of life due to its dense population and the many fires that broke out immediately following the quake. Other Northern California communities such as Santa Rosa and San Jose also experienced devastation and great loss of life. Because of its position directly over the San Andreas Fault, Pt. Reyes was especially hard hit and visitors can still see some vestiges of the shifted earth by taking a walk along Bear Valley's Earthquake Trail. Many barns, granaries, homes and buildings in West Marin were destroyed or damaged and some farms had structures or fences that moved in opposite directions depending on what side of the fault line they were on. The curious onlookers above survey the overturned #14 steam locomotive of the North Shore Railroad, formerly the North Pacific Coast Railroad. The earthquake packed enough punch to topple this nearly 10-ton engine and its cars without much trouble. It has been estimated that the 1906 earthquake would have registered 7.9-8.0 on the modern-day Richter Scale and that the Pacific Plate moved over 20 feet northwest in relation to the North American Plate. Geologists have since determined that the underlying geologic formation of the Pt. Reyes Peninsula matches up with the Tehachapi Mountains northeast of LA and has gradually moved 400 miles northward over the last few million years!