

Linus Pauling Returns to the Presidio
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Linus Pauling trained to be an officer at the San Francisco Presidio, the exhibition site of “Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century,” more than 80 years ago in the summer of 1917.

Established in 1776 by Spanish colonists, the Presidio, the Spanish term for *walled fortress*, was built on a spacious plain situated at the mouth of San Francisco Bay. Today, the bay is spanned by the Golden Gate Bridge.

In 1846, when the Mexican–American War broke out, U.S. military forces occupied San Francisco, and the Presidio was expanded to add more barracks and officer housing.

Eucalyptus, cypress and pine trees were planted in 1883 to provide a barrier between the city and the military base, and a band shell was built to make the picturesque post unlike anything else in the nation.

World War I ended before Pauling actually had to serve. Over the remainder of the century, he transformed our understanding of the world and became an activist for peace.

Likewise, the Presidio underwent a transformation: In 1994, it was designated a national historic landmark and is now part of the national park system. It’s thus a fitting location for an exhibition about a man of peace.

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