

OTD HIKERS
21 SEPT 94, 9:30
Arne Foss

OTP Hike #246

HIKE 30

PEAK 2049
from Tapia Park

- Maps: Malibu Beach, topo
- Distance: 6 miles
- Elevation: 1500' gain and loss
- Terrain: Steep fireroad
- Time: 2 hours 45 minutes
- Trailhead: Tapia Park

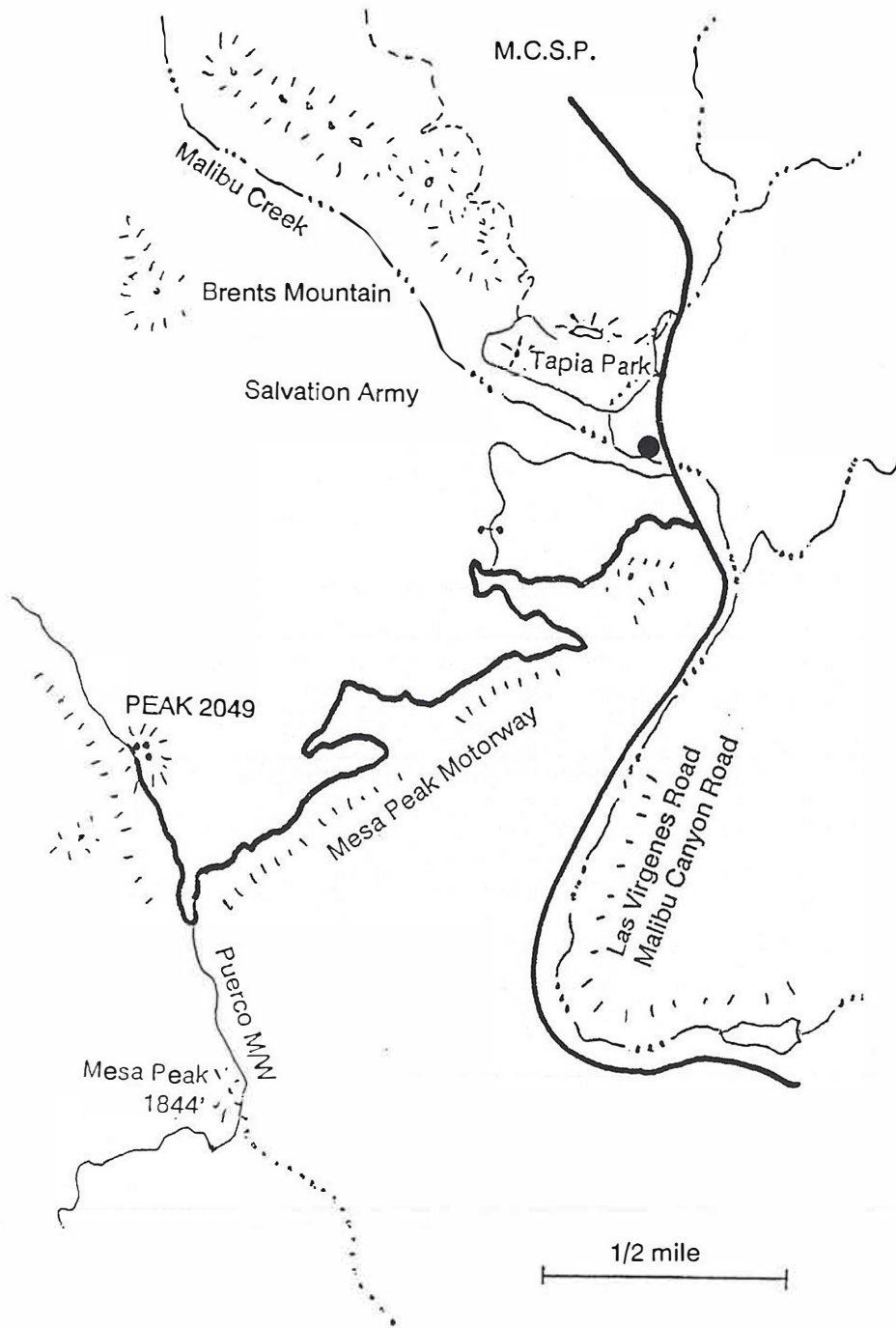
Peak 2049 is so named because it is 2049 feet high. Most of the comments that I have heard indicate that an emphasis on the altitude is not misplaced as some uphill stretches are a challenge to one's endurance.

The trailhead is south of Tapia Park on the west side of Las Virgenes-Malibu Canyon Road. The parking lot is south of the bridge. Restrooms are located under pine trees along the trail. Beyond the restrooms look for the trail as it makes a sharp left turn and heads south paralleling the canyon road. In 200 yards make a right turn onto Mesa Peak Motorway. The map (next page) does not show this short trail segment. You could walk south along the highway and turn right at the motorway. I would prefer to get away from traffic as soon as possible so use the trail.

About a half mile farther along the trail, a road branches right and dead-ends at a gate. (On the return trip we may find ourselves wanting to follow that road because it is downhill.) The north slope of the mountain is very steep, and the trail makes a few switchbacks to gain altitude. At one switchback we cross over the ridge and look down into the Malibu Creek gorge, the only stream to cut completely through the Santa Monica Mountains.

Malibu Canyon has been a transportation corridor since the Indians first lived there. The steep canyon is filled with boulders and is difficult to travel through, but as we are about to find out, travel between the ocean and inland over the mountains is also difficult. The highway through the narrow gorge was built during the early 1950's.

The view of Malibu Canyon continues to expand as we gain altitude. The creekbed below is at an elevation of about 300', and



long before we reach our destination at 2049' it becomes apparent that Malibu Creek has cut the steepest and deepest gorge in the mountains. Climb here on a clear night for a spectacular view of the shore line and the lights of the city below. A group of us did this at night on New Year's Day, 1981, and aside from being chilly after the warmth of exertion, were convinced that being atop Peak 2049 was the place to be.

Before reaching the peak, however, we come to a fork in the road. The left fork drops downhill past Mesa Peak and down through Puerco Canyon ("Pig Canyon") to the Pacific Coast Hwy. The road we have been hiking is Mesa Peak Motorway, and after a right turn at the fork, continues past Peak 2049, and ultimately connects with Castro Motorway and Corral Canyon Road about 2½ miles farther west. One-third mile beyond the road fork, we turn right at a saddle and walk to the top of the peak. We return the way we came.

A persistent notion exists within the hiking community that Mesa Peak M/W should lead to Mesa Peak. This application of logic has caused some confusion when a hiking group doesn't stay together. On at least one occasion a lone hiker ended up at Puerco Beach instead of back at the Tapia Park trailhead. (That hike should be a good car shuttle – if planned.)