The Sir Francis Drake Commission was established by an act of the California legislature in 1973 and signed into law by Governor Reagan in that year. In 1975 Prof. N.J.W. Thrower was appointed president by Governor Brown. The main purpose of the Commission, whose 24 members represent principal academic institutions, libraries, museums, legal and business interests in the state, was to make a suitable celebration of the quadricentennial of Sir Francis Drake's voyage of circumnavigation (1577-80) and especially of his landing and sojourn in California, June 17 to July 23, 1579.

The Commission was required to have at least one celebration every year from 1974 to 1980. In the summer of 1975, for example, the Goldene Hinde II, owned by a syndicate including two Commission members was welcomed into San Francisco harbor by more people than had ever before witnessed an event in that city. In 1977, the four hundredth anniversary of Drake's departure on his "famous voyage," the Commission was entertained at receptions in London at the British Museum.

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(Museum) Library, the Royal Geographical Society and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. The Commissioners then went to Plymouth, Drake's home port, where the group was presented to the Queen and Prince Philip who had come to Plymouth for the occasion. The Commission was feted at Buckland Abbey, Drake's house near Plymouth and a plaque was presented to the city. They also visited Appledore where both the Goldene Hinde and Goldene Hinde II were made from oak trees from the same forest, owned by the same family after 400 years.

The year of celebration in California began in 1979 with the publication of the recently discovered 1586 Drake-Mellon map by Rand McNally. The University of California Charter Day at Berkeley on April 5 was dedicated to Drake with Kingman Brewster, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Britain and his counterpart Peter Jay as featured speakers. UCLA's Clark Library sponsored a day long seminar on May 12 on the perceptions and reality of the California found by explorers which included a paper by Henry Bruman and a costumed revel on the grounds. This was the prelude to the centerpiece of the celebration, and International Conference, "Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage 1577-1580."

The culminating celebrations began in Westwood with a reception Sunday, June 10, given by the UCLA Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, the co-sponsor of the Conference. All-day
sessions were held on June 11 at the Huntington Library where an exhibit, "The World that Discovered Drake" had been opened previously. Scholarly sessions continued on the UCLA campus on June 12 where the exhibit "From Drake to Cook: Two Centuries of British Maritime Discovery in the Pacific" was on view. Opened in April, it moved to the co-sponsor's headquarters, the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco (later to go to the Museum of Man, San Diego). The final southern California Conference event was a reception at the Getty Museum in Malibu, hosted by Consul General in Los Angeles, T. W. Aston.

On June 14 sessions continued at UC Berkeley, and at the Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco. The next two days were spent in the field in Marin County. June 15 began with the unveiling of a Drake plaque at Vista Point. The main speaker was Councillor G. Jinks, the Lord Mayor of Plymouth. After moving to Tiburon with sessions on the controversial "Plate of Brass" and "Drake Landing Sites," the evening receptions were held in San Francisco, at the California Academy of Sciences. Celebrations on June 16 began at Drake's landing and a visit to the Miwok Indian Villiage. An evening reception was given by Consul General I.A.C. Kinnear in San Francisco, followed by the Queen's Ball at the Palace Hotel.

The 400th anniversary of Drake's Landing, on June 17, 1979 began with the opening of the British Library Exhibit, "The Famous Voyage of
Sir Francis Drake 1577-1580" at Oakland Museum. The grand finale of this week-long celebration was a banquet at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. The featured speaker was Helen Wallis, who gave an address on "Mapping Drake's Famous Voyage in Silver and Gold." The banquet chairman was Assemblyman John Knox, Speaker pro tem, California Assembly, and a member of the Commission.

In October 1979 representatives of the Commission (L. M. Armour, R. H. Power, and N. J. W. Thrower) and their spouses went again to England for the unveiling and dedication of the Circumnavigator's Memorial in Westminster Abbey. Lord Mountbatten was to have performed the ceremony. On October 4 the memorial, which honors Sir Francis Drake, Captain James Cook and Sir Francis Chichester, was unveiled by Former Prime Minister Edward Heath.

A third tour of the Sir Francis Drake Commission to England was undertaken from September 20-28, 1980. On this latest and final tour, nine Commissioners, ten family members, two youthful California Drake essay contest winners and seventeen friends of the Commission participated. On September 22 the group was invited to Number 10 Downing Street to present a set of Drake medallions. Prime Minister Thatcher's Private Secretary showed the delegation Numbers 10, 11, and 12 Downing Street after which they went to the Houses of Parliament and British Library.
On September 23 the Californians went to Exeter and on the 24th on to Plymouth. In the evening, the Commission entertained their Devon friends and those from other parts of England at a buffet supper at Drake's home, Buckland Abbey. After supper a playlet on the return of Drake was performed by eight members of the Renaissance Pleasure Faire and Living History Center of Agoura and Novato, California. On the morning of the 25th, a Drake exhibit was viewed at Plymouth Art Gallery and Museum. The group then toured Elizabethan Plymouth. A special dinner was held that evening by the Lord Major and Lady Mayoress of Plymouth. The Californians presented a folio of stamps issued in Tristan da Cunha commemorating Drake's circumnavigation; a copy of Commissioner Warren L. Hanna's book, *Lost Harbor: The Controversy Over Drake's California Anchorage* (University of California Press, 1979); and a set of medallions. Scrolls were presented from the State of California, the County of Marin, and the City of San Francisco.

A further high point in the celebrations occurred the next morning at Plymouth Hoe. Ambassador Kingman Brewster, Jr., unveiled a plaque set on a granite plinth, at the base of the Drake statue (honoring Drake's circumnavigation). The plaque, which the Commission presented to the City of Plymouth in 1977, is mounted in the setting, where, according to tradition, Drake was playing bowls.
when informed of the coming of the Spanish Armada in 1588. During the course of the day the California party visited the Goldene Hinde II which had come from Southampton. She had left Devon in 1975 for San Francisco, was used recently in the television series "Shogun" in Japan and, on her return to England, had completed a global circumnavigation. On Sunday September 28th there was a special Church Service at St. Andrew’s, Drake’s parish church when in Plymouth, a re-enactment of the return of the Goldene Hinde, and a fireworks display.

Through the enabling legislation by which the Commission was established it "has the power to plan and execute books, maps, and other documents, plays, parades, pageants, programs, and other public events, displays, voyages and works of art. The Commission may work with other groups in Great Britain and elsewhere [and] establish honors for scholars, writers, artists and others whose accomplishments have brought honor to the memory of Sir Francis Drake." By the activities described above, the Commission has discharged its duties to the State of California. Millions were reached by television, radio and newspaper coverage. Thousands also saw the special Drake exhibits sent to libraries in all counties of California under the jurisdiction by the State Librarian, and Vice-President of the Commission, Ethel S. Crockett.
Over a three year period some thirty California and British high school students were exchanged for month long visits. A graduate seminar emphasizing English discoveries overseas was offered by Dr. Wallis, Commander Waters and Professor Thrower at U. C. L. A. in Spring 1979. Drs. Thrower and Wallis also conducted a six-week, post doctoral summer program on the effects of the Elizabethan Voyages in the 17th and 18th centuries under the title "Between Drake and Cook." This brought six young academics to the Clark Library in Los Angeles; several scholarly articles have arisen from this program. A book, Sir Francis Drake and the Famous Voyage, 1577-1580, with papers presented at the International Conference and edited by N. J. W. Thrower, is in press.

The life of the Commission terminates on December 31, 1980 when its records will be deposited in the State Archives in Sacramento. As a result of the work of the Sir Francis Drake Commission of the State of California over a five year period, it is hoped that scholarship will be permanently enriched as well as Drake's first voyage, the second after Magellan's and the first in which the commander returned home, will have been celebrated in a fitting manner.