

THIS POINT

NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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ADAPTED FROM A
PRELIMINARY DESIGN BY ROD GARRETT *

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in time

HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION . . .

The Seventieth Birthday celebration of Washington School, which the History Association co-sponsored with Washington PTA, was an unprecedented success, in terms of the number of people who came to join the celebration — as many as 500 estimated!

By the time the reception for honored guests had begun, there were more people present than the foyer would accommodate, and the reception became an open house. Well-meaning History Association board members, hoping to host and recognize the honored guests, were kept busy with ticket sales and signing people in.

Most of the well-laid plans were changed to fit the situation, but a wonderful, festive atmosphere kept the festival from becoming a fiasco. However, we feel that so many alumni and former PTA members could have provided interesting bits of historic information that it has been proposed that we have an annual reunion, with a luncheon for former Washington students and PTA members.

Photos copied from the Don Church collection were on display in the foyer, and fresh greenery and flowers were provided by Eleanor Hurley. Bill Stribley brought a taboret made in a woodworking class at the school, and Marion Downey brought two items made by her son Allan in 1942. A midi blouse made in a Washington School sewing class was displayed by Clarice Stribley. Janie Lewton brought an old desk, and class pictures (a large one brought by Mary Highfill) and small memorabilia were on display. Catherine Head added to our archives with a 1923 class picture and yearbook belonging to her brother, the late Raymond Head.

Reception arrangements, including hors-d'oeuvres, were planned by Michelle Brown, with help from History Association Board members, and the School Secretary, Phyllis, as well as great cooperation from the School Principal, Nino Petroni.

Of the many special guests present, a few that we noticed included Julia Bill, the first person at Washington to receive an Honorary Life Membership award; Pina Barbieri, a graduate who served as Principal at Portola; Ina Briggs, past principal at Washington; Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Lovette, and City Councilmen Richard Griffin and George Livingston.

ANNUAL MEETING . . .

The History Association's Second Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 8, at 1:00 p.m.. Beginning with an informal Pot - Luck Luncheon, in honor of Mothers' Day, there will be time for reminiscing, displaying memorabilia and good eating. Everyone and their mother is invited — and, if you're not a member yet, this will be a good time to join the Point Richmond History Association! Plan to attend!

—Donna Roselius

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT . . .

Well, we've actually started our project of copying the photos collected by the late Don Church. On the 22nd I delivered 20 photos, mostly panoramas of the Point and surrounding areas, to Chevron USA, for reproduction. These photographic reproductions will form the core of our archives.

Judy Spediacci and I trimmed and mounted half of the photo copies provided by Donna Powers. These copies were on display at the Washington School Celebration February 22. They certainly generated a lot of discussion and memories.

—Teresa Albro

WEST SIDE IMPROVEMENT CLUB — THE BEGINNING

The following article appeared in a special edition of the Richmond Independent, in July, 1910, and is reprinted here, courtesy of the Richmond Museum.

"The West Side Woman's Improvement Club [should be the Women's West Side Improvement Club] was organized July 7th, 1908, for the purpose of improving and beautifying the west side of our city.

"It is purely a business club and has a membership of one hundred and seventeen energetic and progressive women, who by their unceasing efforts have accomplished a great many things for the benefit of Richmond, among which are:

"The erection of a public drinking fountain at a cost of \$1074.00.

"The establishment and maintainance of a reading room and library until January 1910, when it was turned over to the trustees of the Carnegie Library to be used as a branch of the Carnegie Library.

"The planting of trees on all of the improved streets of the west side of town.

"The planting, beautifying and naming of Janice Park at the corner of Washington and Nicholl avenues, besides numerous other small improvements such as garbage cans on public streets, etc.

"In January the club joined the California Federation of Women's Clubs.

"The meetings are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. Mrs. R.L.Adams was the first President succeeded by Mrs. S.R.Curry. Mrs. I.M.Marston has been elected president for the ensuing year.

"The Club has a great deal of work mapped out for the coming year and are looking forward to the accomplishment of much good for the City of Richmond."

LETTERS AND LOCATIONS

Accompanying a new membership came a letter from Mary Franco who now lives in Santa Clara, mentioning that when she lived here she worked at Garfinkle's Ladies' Store on Macdonald Avenue, and used to close the store with Mrs. Marcus.

The attempt to send invitations to the Washington School celebration brought up names for which we have no address. If anyone has current addresses for the following people, please let us know:

Elizabeth Bailey	Mrs. Louis McCown
Dorothy Harten	Mrs. Lloyd Dorris
Nancy Spencer	Sylvia Stewart
Mrs. Leon Hillyer	Vera Wright
Mrs. Elmer Gagnon	Kathryn Plummer
Mrs. Michael Lazaro	Mrs. J.C. Williams
Rose (Dingle) Lundvall	Mrs. John Emrick
Mrs. J.C. Kennedy	Mr. John Emrick
Julia Bill	Mrs. B.W. Brothers
	Mrs. Harry Hawthorne

(Julia Bill attended the celebration, but we don't have her current address.)

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Ad from the Richmond
Independent, July 1910



Points in the Past

Articles from old Richmond newspapers and books, courtesy of the Richmond Museum.

70 YEARS AGO . . .

Last night Chief of Police Arnold announced that since the streets have been paved, "the children of the West Side... have made the business streets their rendezvous for skating and bicycle riding ... As long as the children persist in using the street for a public playground there will be danger of some child being killed ... Not only are the children themselves in danger but pedestrians crossing the streets have been run into by children and bothered greatly ... It is a condition that must be remedied at once. It can be either by the cooperation of parents or by the passage of an ordinance."

—March 1, 1913

Joseph Gallo, a resident of Winhaven, was arrested Sunday afternoon for "shooting over the heads of anyone passing along the road leading to Winhaven and then as he shot shouting for them to look out ... When arrested the man had a revolver and Winchester rifle both of which were taken away from him. Gallo, after remaining in the City Jail several hours decided that his sport was not as funny as he imagined it would be." He was released on \$25 bail after promising never to shoot at anyone again.

—March 4, 1913

"Does a horse ever commit suicide? . . . A valuable animal belonging to the John Nicholl Company yesterday afternoon, while grazing on the hillside owned by the corporation and overlooking the Bay over the old brickyard near the Santa Fe tunnel, deliberately jumped over the embankment of 50 feet that had been evacuated about the rear of the brick plant and instantly met death, sustaining a broken neck." Witnesses observed nothing nearby that would frighten the animal and an inspection of the area proved that the ground had not given way. The mystery remains."

—March 5, 1913

Walnut Creek capitalist, Eugene Anderson, has purchased the McWhorter lots on Richmond Avenue just east of Washington Avenue. "Anderson will immediately immediately improve the property he has purchased by the construction of a reinforced modern three-story concrete building. The two upper stories will be devoted to a rooming house and the first floor to a large modern and up to date store room which will be leased by McWhorter and occupied by his large grocery store."

—March 8, 1913

The most modern "haby incubator" has been installed in the Abbott Hospital. While most incubators use gas or hot water heat, this incubator, constructed under the direc-

tion of house surgeon Dr. L.A. Marten, uses air, warmed over two electrically heated steel plates, which provides an even distribution of heat. "It is the latest thing in baby incubators and hereafter when a new born child shows signs of a disinclination to prolong its struggle to gain a foothold on old mother earth the baby incubator will be called into play to bring it to health and robustness involuntarily."

—March 16, 1913

60 YEARS AGO . . .

"West Side residents will learn with interest that a gents' furnishing store is to be opened at 130 Washington Avenue, in the store formerly occupied by the Golden Rule dry goods store." The new proprietor, F.B. Schow of Alameda, was at one time a clerk in the Stiefvater store and lived at the Point 18 years ago.

—March 7, 1923

"Trinity Church will officially dedicate her new memorial window at the Easter morning service. In addition there will be a communion service and special music by the vested choir of more than twenty voices. Miss Miriam Garrard will be the soloist . . . The new window, which is 11 by 8½ feet, rests over the altar at the eastern end of the Church... The memorial is to be consecrated to the memory of Rev. and Mrs. Carlos Sheldon Linsley, for several years untiring workers for Trinity Church. Although Mrs. Linsley did not live to help carry on the work long in Richmond; through her efforts the church building debt was cleared."

—March 20, 1923

Speaking of suicide ... A front page article describes the ordeal of Fred A. Gautadine, a Standard Oil employee who lives at 132 Washington Avenue in his attempt to commit suicide. Distraught because of ill health, Gautadine slit his throat from ear to

ear shortly after 10 a.m. Saturday and "laid all day hidden by some material in the scrap department. Although he lost considerable blood he had sufficient strength to get up at 8 o'clock in the evening and throw a rock against the door of the machine shops" to attract the attention of his fellow employees. Apparently he spent all day, lying there, writing notes concerning his reasons for killing himself. "Dr. Lucas said the wound was too high to sever the main artery of the throat." Failed again.

—March 12, 1923

Easter services will be held on Nicholl Knob and representatives from every church in the city will take part. Beginning at 7 a.m., the event will include various hymns, a trombone duet, scripture reading, an Easter message and prayers. "The ladies of the churches have made preparations for the serving of breakfast immediately after the services."

—March 16 & 31, 1923

50 YEARS AGO . . .

Peter Soldavini, 50, died at his home (525 Standard Ave.) a few hours after suffering a stroke. "Born at Lonate Pozzolo, province of Milano, Italy, Soldavini came to Richmond direct from Italy 32 years ago and established one of the first hotels here. He and the late Ben Brignone were among the first to open hostleries on the West Side, where he continued in business during his entire residence here."

March 10, 1933

C.A. Bullwinkle, Northern California district manager, announced that production at the Ford Plant in Richmond is being stepped up. Presently 1200 men are employed and 200 more will be added in the coming week. "The Richmond Plant is now supplying (Northern) California, Oregon and Washington, as well as Nevada ... The production of cars had reached 125 a day at

the close of this week and it is expected to be stepped up to 190 cars a day by the end of the week. The increase in production has been gradual during the past several weeks. The Ford Company is optimistic over the prospect of business pick up and hopes to maintain production on an upward scale."

"West Side houses are in demand, just now, due to the number of Ford employees who have been transferred here."

March 17 & 18, 1933

-Teresa Albro

chemistry of World War II,' said Collier in discussing the new company, 'is largely based on the by-products of coal. The list of products that can be made from petroleum is almost unbelievable. It includes plastics, synthetic silks, alcohol, ammonia, formaldehyde and many other things of value to modern industry and modern living.'

"Through laboratory and manufacturing facilities of Standard of California we expect to produce for the government and for the chemical trade on the Pacific Coast

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*Ad from the Richmond
Independent, July 1910*

40 YEARS AGO . . .

MANY PRODUCTS TO BE MADE AT LOCAL REFINERY

"Formation of a new company as a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California, whose products will be manufactured at the Richmond refinery, was announced today.

"The new concern, the Oronite Chemical Company, opened its doors today with research, manufacturing and marketing departments on the West coast and with sales representation throughout the nation.

"Oronite will produce and market a wide variety of industrial chemicals, just now particularly useful for war purposes but the prospect of equal importance in the post-war world.

"H.D. Collier, president of Standard of California, is chairman of the board. "The

many chemicals which we trust may have great value alike to the overall war effort and to domestic industry.' "

-Richmond Independent, March 1, 1943

104,500 RATION BOOKS ISSUED BY TWO LOCAL BOARDS

"After a week-long freeze, housewives today were buying rationed quantities of canned goods in Richmond stores as the American public tightened its belt and went on "victory rations."

"Consumers found shelves here well stocked with processed foodstuffs but they were severely restricted in their purchases under OPA's point rationing system designed to distribute equitably the 13,000,000 cases of canned goods which will be available monthly for civilians in the next year and a half.

"More than 104,500 persons registered in Richmond, El Cerrito and San Pablo for War Ration Book 2 which will be used to purchase over 200 types and sizes of rationed canned goods, and also meat about April 1.

"The 'A', 'B' and 'C' Blue stamps totaling 48 points will be valid for purchases of processed foods this month, cutting consumers about 50 per cent in their normal use of canned goods.

"Housewives are urged to prepare their shopping lists in points before going to the store. Ration points will be surrendered for these items: canned and bottled fruits and vegetables and juices, frozen fruits and vegetables, dried and dehydrated fruits, all canned and bottled soups, all dried peas, beans and lentils, dried and dehydrated soups, canned and bottled baby foods, except milk and cereal."

Meantime, the government appealed to consumers to substitute fresh vegetables, eggs, cheese and other unrationed commodities for rationed products wherever possible, pointing out that price ceilings had been established on major fresh vegetables in order to make these items more readily available to the housewife.

The following suggestions were offered to consumers:

"1. Budget your ration points for the entire month of March.

2. Prepare your shopping list before going to the store.

3. Spend your high points first.

4. Shop early in the day.

5. Don't be impatient during the first few days of operation under the new program while clerks and patrons are being accustomed to the use of point values.

"Grocers must display at least one copy of the point table in a prominent place in the store and also must post point values on the individual rationed food items, or near the shelves where they are kept."

Richmond Independent, March 1, 1943

30 YEARS AGO . . .

MONTHS OF DELAY END FOR BRIDGE

"Ground-breaking this week launched actual work on the Richmond-San Rafael bridge with offices going up and sub-structure construction on its way.

"The announcement of the work came from Norman C. Raab of the San Francisco Bay Toll Crossing division after months of legal entanglement and opposition had held up the projected span."

Richmond Independent, March 5, 1953

"Richmond's new sewage disposal plant will be erected on the Macco Quarry site at Point Richmond. Richmond voters will be asked to approve the project plant at the forthcoming municipal election. The deed for the property was recently delivered to the city. It provides that George Peres, the former owner of the property, be permitted to continue to quarry material from the site for a period of ten years."

Richmond Independent, March 5, 1953

Pam Wilson

E. B. SMALLWOOD

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POINT RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

AMBULANCE SERVICE
— FUNERAL DIRECTOR —

Ad from the Richmond Independent, July 1960

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Trannie Dornan

"A fantastic person" ... "She's unbelievable" ... "Isn't she something" ... are responses given when the name of Trannie Dornan is mentioned. Trannie has the distinction of living in the Point longer than anyone else, she still runs the family business on West Richmond Avenue, the Richmond Supply Company, the Point's oldest continuing business, and she has an uncanny, accurate memory for names — places — people and dates!

Born in Butte City, Glenn County on July 17, 1895, Trannie Grover Freeman, a second generation Californian, was the oldest of seven children. The family (there were only four children at the time) arrived in the Point via Union Pacific Railroad in March, 1905, from Sacramento when she was ten years old. Her father had a job with the Standard Oil which brought them to the Point. They rented a house on Pacific Avenue. It was a small house with the outdoor plumbing common at that time. Soon another child was born, so they moved to a house on Summit and Golden Gate, from which they soon made a trail down to the sandy beach on the Bay. She lived here when the big Earthquake shook on April 18, 1906:

"It was about 5:30 a.m. and I was still asleep, but was awakened by the terrible noise. I couldn't understand what was happening — it was as if the house was spinning. We used oil lamps and as Mama was already up and in the kitchen, she rushed around putting out the lamps to avoid a fire." Everyone went to the top of Water Street later where they watched the fires in San Francisco while cinders and ashes drifted all the way across the Bay.

"The Point had dirt streets with boardwalks and everyone wore boots and waded in the mud when it rained." Coal and wood was used for cooking and the doctor had a horse and buggy.

Trannie attended the Standard Avenue Grammar School from third through eighth grade. Everyone went home for lunch, and school hours were from 9:00 to 3:30. She thinks her class was the first to graduate in the Opera House. After grammar school, she went on to Richmond Union High for a two year commercial course. When the cornerstone was laid for Richmond Union High School (at Twenty-third off Macdonald) she remembers standing in a field of two feet high grass.

A silent movie on West Richmond Avenue, now an empty lot next to her store, provided entertainment and an eighth grade boy ran the projector. Talkies were unheard of then. "For 25 cents you could go to the 15-cent movie and then have a ten-cent dish of ice cream at the Kozy Candy Store."

Even in those days the Point had a reputation for good food, and it was filled with boarding houses. Two of the better known inns were the Roma, run by the Matteucci family and the Columbo Hotel at 100 Standard Avenue, run by Ben Brignoni, but Santini was the cook. Standard Avenue had a lot of saloons but "girls never walked down where all the saloons were!" There was an active Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), and they all wore white bows.

Her recollections include the Chinese Laundry on Cottage Avenue, Moyle's Shoe Repair Shop ... Elsie's Dry Goods Store on Washington (where the Library now stands) ... the open air dance floor at Kozy Kove ... band concerts ... the B & B (McWhorter's) Grocery Store ... Charles' Butcher Shop...

and she also remembers taking a streetcar to see the opening of Macdonald Avenue.

Fraternal organizations were the social centers. When Trannie was 18, she was initiated into Zephyr Rebekah Lodge and this September will culminate an unbelievable 70 years' membership. Next year she will receive 50-year recognition as a member of the Point Eastern Star Masonic organization. Elizabeth Gnaga was president when Trannie joined the West Side Improvement Club.

When she was in seventh and eighth grades, Trannie was always looking for a job of some kind, and worked as a clerk in the candy store and the stationery place. During one summer she worked in a furniture factory in North Richmond, taking the streetcar from the "Spot" on Standard Avenue.

Early in 1900 there were four active churches in the Point: Baptist, Episcopal, Catholic and Methodist. D.W. Calfee was the minister of the Methodist Church and Sunday was an all day church affair. First there was a classroom-filled Sunday School, followed by a packed church. Junior League met in the afternoon, Epworth League for those older than junior, followed by an evening church service which also was filled. Trannie remembers the dedication of the church, which was a big affair. Trannie is also the oldest member of this church and she uses one of her store windows, termed 'Trannie's Window' by the church ladies, as an outlet for crafts and church bazaar items.

Trannie's aunt, Hattie Casselman, was the Point's first librarian. When the main library was opened (now the Richmond Museum) the Point Library became the West-side Branch Library. As Hattie was leaving she had wished to have her niece Trannie take over as Librarian, but a Mrs. Whitbeck was hired because she was a college graduate.

As a child Trannie and friends often walked to Point San Pablo, clear around the Bay past the present Rod and Gun Club, then through the Standard Oil Refinery and back. "They let us go through the refinery then, but it wasn't as big as it is now. It was fun and we'd get home in time to eat."



In the early days, a local bakery made early morning home deliveries of French bread. Pre-purchased tickets left in a box outside the door told the deliveryman how many loaves of bread to leave. Milk deliveries in those days before bottled milk, were made to a central location. Trannie tells of standing on Washington Avenue where the Library is now, waiting with a pail, for the milk delivery from San Pablo. Often it was dark (there were no street lights) before the delivery wagon arrived. But dark, rainy or cold, it was the only way to get milk for a large family.

Trannie met her late husband, Bob at the Methodist Church. Tillie Blount, Mr. Dornan's bookkeeper, invited her to help decorate the Christmas tree, and it was then that she met Bob. When Tillie left her position as bookkeeper, Trannie got the job. In 1917, she and Bob Dornan were married. Because he was still a citizen of Northern Ireland, she temporarily lost her citizenship. After the marriage, Trannie's sister, Lyra, became the company bookkeeper, but during the Depression, Trannie resumed the position, and has kept it ever since.

The Dornans had three children — a daughter, Dorothy, died in 1940 at the age of 16, and she lost her son Bob, in 1981. Her daughter, Betty, lives in San Francisco. She has three granddaughters: Patricia, a teacher; Kathleen, a teacher, and Roberta, a dentist.

After the death of her husband in 1966, Trannie continued to operate the business and she goes down each day to open the store, which now is limited to paint and garden supplies — a much smaller scale than the Richmond Supply Company that provided coal, wood, hay and grain to the Point.

"I know I'm getting old," she says, "but I don't feel that ancient!" Perhaps this is the secret to one so tall, stately and soon to be 88 — the secret of one Great Lady in the Point.

—Mid Dornan



SCIENTIFIC ROOTS

Based on information found in Don Church's Memorabilia Collection.

We are in the infancy of a scientific explosion which will revolutionize our lives and our thinking. So great will be its impact that old labels such as rich/poor will become as anachronistic as nobility/commoner. Even that old standby male/female with its cumbersome sexual revolution will pale into insignificance in the splendor of the combined sciences. Scientist/layman will be the title of those who inherit the world and those who only bump around bewildered in it. Or so I am told.

Assuming that there is a grain of truth in all this, how will Point Richmonders fare in the coming age? In our narcissistic love of the eccentric and our last-ditch non-conformity I see the seeds of inquiring minds; hence, scientific minds. Not surprising then, was the fact that I discovered an inventor on the first page of the first book of collected news items that I looked through. The 1910 entry described a man after our own hearts.

J.R. Froberg came to Richmond from Goldfield, Nevada in 1910. He had worked on the Tonopah and Nevada Railroads and arrived here with \$25,000 and a plan. He bought property on Twenty-first Street between Barrett and Roosevelt Avenues on the West side of the street, where he constructed a shed in which to build his proposed seaplane. It was to weigh 950 pounds. The motor cost him \$2500 (a Sturdevant with six individual cylinders). There were two Zenith carburetors and a Bosch magneto. Unfortunately the finished plane weighed 1450 pounds, and couldn't get off the water.

Mr. Froberg was not deterred. He began construction of a second seaplane and finished it in 1912. The community had taken quite an interest in Mr. Froberg and his in-

vention. Various headlines in the local newspaper testified to their hopes. On October 26, 1911, "Aeroplane Company is Incorporated"; on November 5, 1911, "It will Bring Fame to the City" (An aeroplane company with a school for aviators may rival the \$30 million Standard Oil Company, the article stated); "Hundreds flock to the new Aero-hydroplane Factory", and on October 29, 1912, "Success for Inventor and Creator Froberg of the Froberg Aeroplane Company."

Mr. Froberg made two successful trial flights of his hydroplane from the hangar on the Owens Tract near the Southern Bayshore of the city. "It rose easily and gracefully, obeying every wish of its creator," the article read. From here Mr. Froberg hauled his seaplane to Shrimp Camp near Winehaven where he planned to work out any defects and then put it on the market.

On December 9, 1913, Froberg was making test flights over the Bay when he developed magneto trouble which forced him to make an unscheduled landing near Keller's Beach. He planned to repair his magneto

and make a flight over the San Francisco Exposition Grounds. Just two weeks later the seaplane was completely demolished when a storm brought huge waves that tossed pilings and other debris on top of the plane.

Mr. Froberg tried again in 1914 to rebuild, but evidently ran out of money and faded into obscurity. Is this an unhappy ending? At the time, perhaps, when rich/poor were meaningful divisions. For our new age, of course, Mr. Froberg was an unqualified success, the elite of the scientific world — an inventor.

Very likely Mr. Froberg is only one of many inventors in our community's past. We will probably find that our community showed glimmerings of the New Scientific Age from its conception, if we choose to. In any event, we do have Mr. Froberg and he did fly above the Bay in a plane that he designed and built with his own ingenuity. Quite an achievement for any person. And he chose to do it in Richmond.

—Doris Janene Maske



drawing from photo by Bob Maske

HISTORY IN THE MAKING . . .

INDIAN STATUE UPDATE

In last month's issue of "This Point in Time", the story of the Indian Statue, gleaned from the 1908-09 minutes of the West Side Improvement Club minutes, was unraveled. After the statue blew over in a storm in 1943, only its fountain base remained. That too is now gone, having been removed when the Triangle was remodeled in the '60's. An article from the Richmond Independent in March, 1956, however, shows that interest in the late landmark had not waned, at least on the part of the West Side Improvement Club. Elizabeth Gnaga headed a committee to renovate the fountain and possibly find a new Indian to place on it. The article states, "The Club is urging the City to restore the fountain. Mrs. Gnaga has offered her help and that of the club in the project. . . Albert C. White, assistant public works director, proposed that two of the three drinking fountains at the base of the landmark could be transformed into planters. A new Indian might be obtained and the lights at the top could be repaired. He's doubtful, though, about the horse trough at the front. Doesn't think there's too much demand for that service nowadays."

The City, however, eventually removed the fountain, when the Community Center, Library and Fire Station were built in the Triangle, putting an end to what remained of the Indian statue. It seems, though, that in Point Richmond what goes down must come up; and the Indian will soon be re-created through an organization called Inter-Arts, with the help of many interested individuals and groups.

After two years of planning and fundraising, Inter-Arts, a non-profit organization that coordinates the design and execution of public art projects, now has come within



a few thousand dollars of the money needed for the statue's completion. They have selected Kirk St. Maur, an internationally acclaimed sculptor, to execute the statue; and the City of Richmond is providing the granite base (with fountains) on which it will stand.

The largest sum of money was granted by the San Francisco Foundation. Scrap bronze was donated by Chevron, U.S.A., and engineering was provided by Interactive Resources. Time and support over the past two years has come from Mayor Tom Corcoran, Supervisor Tom Powers, Councilman Lonnie Washington, Recreation and Parks Director Karl Henning, who found the pedestal base), Pacific Telephone, who relocated the telephone booth, and members of the Point Richmond Business Association. Recent donors include the Point Richmond History Association, West Side Improvement Club, The Richmond Museum Association, Richmond Sanitary Service and Van Pac.

More donors are still needed, and any who donate \$200 or more will have their name inscribed on the bronze plaque on the pedestal. Donations (tax exempt) may be sent to Inter Arts, P.O. Box 463, Point Richmond 94807. Pledges of monthly payments are also acceptable — pledge forms may be obtained from Rod Garrett (456-7117) or Donna Roselius (235-4222).

ABOUT THE COVER . . .

The preliminary design for the Point Triangle mini-park was done by Rod Garrett, chairman of the Statue and Park Committee. An essential accompaniment to the statue, the park will need volunteer workers and additional funds to create a suitable setting. Ideas and help in creating the park will be gratefully received. Informal meetings are being held every other Thursday evening. The next meeting is March 3. For information, refer to the telephone numbers above.

DEADLINES : . .

The following schedule outlines the deadlines, and shows the kind of assistance needed to complete the beautification of the Triangle.

1. Engineering Completed	February 15 *
2. Approval of engineering by City	March 1 *
3. Pedestal Installation	March 15 *
4. Pedestal Modification/Restoration	April 1 *
5. Demolition & grading completed	April 1 **
6. Electrical work completed	April 15 **
7. Brick Work completed	June 1 **
8. Planting & Lamp installation	July 15 **
9. Bench & Waste receptacle instillation	October 15 **
10. Installation of Statue	October 15 **
11. Dedication	October 16 **

* (funds needed)

** (funds and volunteers needed)

Call 456-7117 or 235-4222 for information and offers of assistance.

—Donna Roselius

BEES in the BAPTIST BELFRY

THE POINT BAPTIST CHURCH . . .

"Bees in Belfry no Joke to Point Richmond Baptist Church - Eviction Notice Ignored"

The headline quoted above is from the Richmond Independent of April 20, 1943 (forty years ago). The article continued:

"Bees in the belfry is no longer a joke in the Point Richmond Baptist Church but rather an impediment to the expansion of church activities, according to a report from the Richmond Health Department.

"Although several eviction orders have been served on members of the apiary, which has been stationed in the rafters of the church for many years, they have all been pointedly overlooked, the housing shortage being what it is with the war and all.

"So the Richmond Health Department is sending out an SOS call for some bee-less individual to call for the hive. According to the wife of the pastor, these bees are of the harmless variety and the women obtained an accumulation of three gallons of honey last year. This particular apiary has been located in its present belfry for many years and evidently claims squatters' rights despite all efforts to dislodge them."

The above quote is not the only record we have of these bees — the earliest mention was back in 1933. Finally, about 1977, after we had reaped many gallons of honey from this hive, we literally tore down the walls of the belfry, and the bees seem at last to have moved. And we rather miss them. However, they were destroying the upstairs and belfry, and although I have heard of no cases of bee stinging, their buzzing around the congregation was at times disconcerting. But they were nice Baptist bees!

In previous articles for the Newsletter we have reprinted official papers pertaining to the very earliest times of our church. Generally, we had covered organizational records and church activities up to around 1912, around which time began a mass exodus of Point people (and businesses) to the flourishing Macdonald Avenue area. Our church, up to then known as the First Baptist Church of Point Richmond, found property on Tenth Street (and later on Barrett Avenue) and moved downtown, but a small group remained loyal to this church and this locality and elected to hold on right here. Stay they did and have church they did — this period of depression in the Point was to endure for approximately fifty years. But not one Sunday was our little church without church services. More about those days next Newsletter.

—Roy Jones



—□—

FOUNDERS DAY 1983

... And a good time was had by all, although "all" turned out to be quite a few more than expected.

Imagine staging a barbecue dinner for an unknown number of people and then having

more guests than you ever, in your most optimistic hopes, anticipated. This is just what happened February 22 at the Washington School PTA Founders Day Barbecue. Somehow, however, Wendy Thompson and the Committee rose to the occasion and all were served with a choice of ribs, chicken, hamburger or hot link, plus baked beans, coleslaw, bread and a choice of beverage. It is true, though, that for those at the end of the line the choice of meat was a bit limited.

Following dinner, PTA President Tom Butt, resplendent in a George Washington Colonial costume complete with powdered wig, introduced the Founders Day Program. Mid Dornan, past PTA president and History Association Board member, introduced the honored guests, past presidents and Honorary Service Award recipients. The limelight then went to Kate Lord, our own School Board member, who presented this year's Honorary Service Award to Rosemary Corbin for her heroic contributions to the School as the guiding force behind the yearly Washington School quilt, and her untold hours as a volunteer in the library, classroom, and as PTA Treasurer and President; as well as for her duties on the Richmond Library Commission and as a member of the History Association Board.

Lest any think that all this was "drv stuff", the presentations were interspersed with excellent skits, music and dance by Mrs. Berg's class, Miss Johnson's and Mrs. Politeau's classes, individual students, and an upper grade group tribute to local history, called "Did You Know".

Two former students, Diana Corbin and Hilary Lord, provided musical accompaniment to the incoming guests as they observed the displays in the foyer.

All in all, despite a long line for food, everyone had a terrific time.

—Judy Spediacci

TURNING POINTS

There are events in Richmond's past that mark distinct turning points from the expected course of development. These turning points have changed the natural flow of history and resulted in altering Richmond's destiny. It is interesting to note these turning points and the people who brought them about — and to speculate what Richmond might be had the turning points not occurred.

The first obvious event that can be classified as a turning point in Richmond's history was brought about by Augustin S. Macdonald. When he first set eyes on the Richmond area in November, 1895, it consisted of undeveloped farm and ranch land. Pioneer families lived a quiet life supplying San Francisco with grains and produce. These items were shipped from Ellis Landing to San Francisco and furniture, cloth and other manufactured goods were shipped back.

The great land suit over ownership of the original Rancho San Pablo had recently been settled. This cleared the way for more settlers to become area residents. Left alone the Richmond area might have enjoyed a few more years as an agricultural center before being discovered by well-to-do San Franciscans, who might have viewed the area as a quiet, beautiful retreat from city life, following the pattern of Orinda and some Marin County towns.

Richmond's destiny was changed by Macdonald who recognized not only the beauty of the area, but its commercial possibilities. After carefully researching the government maps and surveys Macdonald found the twelve miles could be cut off the Southern Pacific Railroad route through Oakland to San Francisco by ferrying the freight from Point Richmond to San Francisco. He presented this information to

Santa Fe Railroad Company who agreed with Macdonald's proposal of developing the area into an industrial center. Richmond's destiny as an industrial town was begun.

Another major turning point in Richmond's history was the development of the city into a war production center during World War II. The prime motivating force behind this event was Fred D. Parr. Parr operated a steamship line and was a major port terminal operator and industrial land holder of the Pacific coast. After many months of perseverance Parr convinced Henry J. Kaiser and S.D. Bechtel of the soundness of his idea to establish a major shipyard for war production at Richmond. The venture was very successful; 727 ships were produced here between January 1941 and August 1945.

Until the war production shipyards were created, Richmond had been experiencing an orderly, rather quiet development as a small industrial town. But suddenly the town exploded! Before the war the town's population was 23,462. By 1942 it had swelled to 50,000; and by 1944, the population had risen to almost 100,000.

The war years provided many Richmonders with economic gains, but they also brought new problems to the city. Workers were brought in from all over the country. Many were poor, uneducated and unskilled people in need of employment. Many were black. When these workers arrived in Richmond they found no housing and inadequate city facilities to serve their needs. Temporary and permanent housing developments were erected quickly. Children were sent to school in shifts. Richmond coped the best it could. The war effort brought out the best in people.

POINT TO PROGRESS

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION NEWS

When the war ended in 1945, the shipyards shut down immediately, leaving Richmond with a complex set of problems — inadequate housing and schools, unemployment and prejudice. Richmond's swift population explosion did not give residents the necessary time to adjust to the changes brought about by bringing people from different racial, cultural and economic backgrounds together. Without the united war effort these problems became even more apparent. The city was called the "Purple Heart City" by the media and government for being the American city most adversely affected by the war.

Certainly, many of the problems Richmond has today would not exist if it had been allowed to develop at a more peaceful and orderly pace. Conversely, Richmond would not enjoy the variety of peoples and cultures it now has had the turning point not taken place as it did. World War II and the establishment of the Kaiser Shipyards marked a dramatic turning point for Richmond.

What does the future hold for Richmond? Will the Richmond marina project prove to be another major turning point for our city? Only time will tell.

— [] —

What other turning points, major and minor, do you think have marked changes in Richmond's historical direction? The battle over the location of our second City Hall in 1915 and the failure of Richmond to permit development of the shopping mall that was to become El Cerrito Plaza are two events that may have changed the course of the city's history. We invite you to share your thoughts with us about these events and others.

— Michelle Brown

THE MILLER-KNOX SHORELINE PARK
article will be continued in the next issue.

On February 28, 1983, the Richmond City Council unanimously adopted a resolution establishing the Point Richmond Parking District. The occasion was the third in a series of public hearings that began on January 24. Although there was scattered opposition from a dozen or so of the sixty-four property owners included in the district, it appears that the wishes of the overwhelming majority carried the day.

The dream of improving Railroad Avenue for public parking was first proposed in the mid 1960's, and the latest push was initiated way back in 1978. The big breakthrough finally came in 1981 when the Santa Fe agreed to sell the required property for \$1.50 per square foot — about ten per cent or less of market value. A survey by a traffic planner the same year found a net deficit of parking spaces of about 350 for the Point Richmond Business District, using nationally recognized standards.

Contracts have been let, and construction will begin as soon as the tax-exempt bonds are sold. The parking improvements will include fencing, landscaping, paving, street lighting and irrigating the east side of Railroad Avenue, and will accommodate eighty-four vehicles.

The improvements will be paid for by assessments levied on property owners in the Point Business District in proportion to the area of office buildings, the number of units in apartment houses, and the number of seats in bars and restaurants. Single family homes are exempt. Properties that are developed in the future will be required to pay into the district or provide sufficient parking on site.

A new slate of directors and officers were elected on February 15 for the Business Association: David Vincent, President, Richard Alexander, Vice President, Betty Cadwalader, Secretary, and Claudia Beale, Treasurer.

Tom Butt 15

POINTS

??IN QUESTION??

Questions . . . Answers . . . Corrections.

QUESTIONS:

Does anyone know the wording of the inscription on the original Indian fountain?

So far we have no answer about Eddy Street's origin, and no picture of the original 'Central Pool Hall' building.

ANSWERS:

"A Trip Around the World in Automobiles" was an event in which people were taken by auto (a rare treat) to homes, each of which was decorated and provided food and entertainment of a different country, thus creating the illusion of 'a trip around the world'. — this answer came from Tom Ryan, from Marion Downey, and from Curtis Patterson!

"Tag Day" was a fund raiser in which people put a tag on anyone they could, and the tagged person had to provide a small donation in return. — answers came from Virginia Bryant, Tom Ryan, and Curtis Patterson (who lives in Diamond Springs).

Please send your questions or answers to us at 212 Bishop Alley, Point Richmond, CA 94801., or call 235-4222.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (CHECK ONE)

<input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR CITIZEN (65 +)	5.00
<input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY	20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> ORGANIZATION	25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORY-PRESERVER	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORY-MAKER	100.00

POINTS IN THE FUTURE . . .

March 3: Park & Statue Committee meeting - call 456-7117 or 235-4222 for info.

March 4: Guitarist David Russell at Contra Costa College - call 236-3323 for reservations.

May 8: Annual Meeting of the Point Richmond History Association- 1:00, Linsley Hall.

MARCH

Born in March, you have a gift of far-sightedness, are thoughtful, rather philosophical and have definite opinions. Let your intuition guide you. Don't marry hastily.

March birthdays . . .

Noraleen Dowell	Jean Knox
Carol Seawell	Dolly Frosini
Carol Darling	Allan Smith, jr.
Helen Manyik	Reba Downs
Karolyn Macdiarmid	Rick Schuldt
Dale Hawkins	Carl Paasch
Heidi Hartman	Barnaby Edwards
Martin Busby	Jim Morrison
Bill Williamson	Campfire Girls

Old Adage : If March comes in like a lamb, it will go out like a lion - reverse may also (we hope) be true.

—Mid Dornan

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Articles for next month's issue are due on the 20th day of this month.

Mail articles to the Association at the above address, or bring them to the Richmond Supply Company— 145 West Richmond Avenue. For information or small news items, call 235-4222.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION INCLUDES A SUBSCRIPTION TO THIS NEWSLETTER. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS MAY BE SENT TO MICHELLE BROWN, 25 IDAHO STREET, POINT RICHMOND, CA 94801.