

# THIS POINT ....in time

## NEWSLETTER

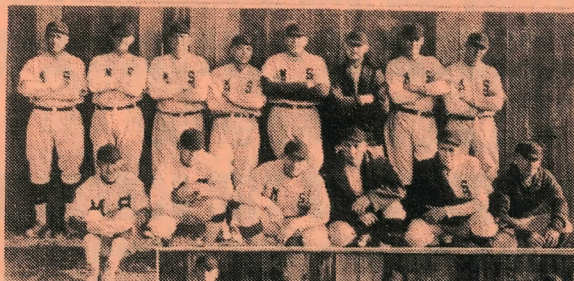
The Point Richmond History Association

Vol. XIII No. 3

September, 1994

\$1.50

### *Richmond Refinery's All-Star Ball-Tossers*



*Mechanical Shops*



*Barrel House*



*Refinery*



*All Standards*

# **WANTED! WANTED! WANTED!**

## **HISTORY BUFFS**

Round up the usual suspects and join the rest of the History  
Gang....**SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 2, 1994**

You are wanted at the  
**NORTHERN SYMPOSIUM OF THE CONFERENCE OF  
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES**

**Marriott Hotel**

**Walnut Creek, CA**

**Hosted by the CONTRA COSTA COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

### **DON'T MISS....**

**The History of Shopping Mall  
Raffles! Raffles! Raffles!  
Food & Fun  
Cocktail Party  
Banquets  
Field Trips**

### **SPEAKERS....WORKSHOPS....**

**The Pony Express  
How to Put History into a Computer  
I See By the Papers (Publicity)  
How to Mark a LANDMARK  
How To Pick the Winners  
(Accessions)**

**FOR MORE INFO CALL - 510/939-9180 or 510/254-2295**



# From the President

MID DORNAN

For those who like to keep in touch with local History, you won't want to miss the Northern Symposium of the Conference of California Historical Societies being held September 30 - October 2, 1994 in Walnut Creek at the Marriott Hotel. Hosted by the Contra Costa County Historical Society (of which we are a Charter Member) it will have workshops on Publicity, how to mark a landmark, how to put history into a computer, a pony express and there will be speakers and much more. Even a history shopping mall.

After a brief "time off" for summer, this is a refreshing way to get back into the swing of history and get a perspective of who we are.

For more details see the display ad in this issue.



(Continued on page 2)

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*Prominent Point Richmond men. Picture was taken about 1913 or later, includes Dr. C.L. Abbott, Dr. P.C. Campbell, Dr. Martin, Dr. Vestall, Dr. Carpenter, Dr. Cunningham, Dr. A.S. Abbott Dr. H.N. Barney and more. Photo is courtesy of Allen Smith*

Thank you to the following members  
who have renewed their memberships:

**Lloyd N. Bogue**  
**Sarah Eeles**  
**Norm & Jean Reynolds**  
**Al & Gerry Higuera**  
**Luella Wilcox**  
**Kay Pinkerton**  
**Jeff Corbin**  
**Muriel Clausen**  
**Sandra & Bruce Beyaert**  
**Martin & Janis McNair**  
**June A. Blackburn**  
**Marge & Art Stone**  
**Marian E. Sauer**  
**Doris Perry**  
**Marilyn Darling**  
**Tref & Nellie Ross**  
**Josephine Palenchar**  
**Mary L. Cornelius**  
**Mr. & Mrs. Williard Spiersch**  
**Norma & Jack Gerken**  
**Betty Glass Marshall**  
**Phyllis Feyder**  
**Phillip Carrera**  
**Rosemary Nightingale**  
**Allan P. Smith**  
**Myrna Wishart**  
**Pamela K. Wilson**  
**Phyllis Glass Ackerman**

And a warm welcome to new  
members:

**Stephen & Dorette Francis**  
**Russell W. Read**  
**Sparta Chiozza**  
**Augustine G. MacDonald**

*Museum Staff Coordinator Betty Dornan  
thanks volunteers who staffed the History  
Building during the summer:*

**Bruce Bartram**  
**Jerry Cerknowicz**  
**Betty Dornan**  
&

*Get well wishes for a quick recovery  
from all of us to staffer*

**Russell Read**  
*folks are stopping by the museum and  
asking about you!*

&  
*The Usual Thank You To*  
**Santa Fe Market**

*for distributing  
"THIS POINT...in time"  
at no profit for themselves*



## Acquisitions:

Invaluable photo negatives of old Point  
Richmond (mostly Don Church's and  
some are originals of our existing  
collection)

donated by  
**Allan Smith**

*thank you!*

If you can help staff our museum (2 1/2 hours  
per month) call museum staff coordinator  
Betty Dornan at 232-4317.

### Museum hours:

<b>Thursday</b>	<b>11:30am - 2:00pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>11:30am - 2:00pm</b>



# Editor's Notes

Gary Shows

Summer has gone by much too fast!

Once again Allan Smith has added to our photographic archives. Allan is responsible for the Don Church photo collection being under our stewardship. He now has begun presenting the PRHA with packets of negatives of old Point photos (many, perhaps most, are again from Don Church), the cover of this issue is one of those images. As I go through and catalog them, I think there will be many interesting visual treasures that I will share in the newsletter. Also I hope we can reproduce many of them for our museum albums.

In addition to our usual great stuff this issue contains, as promised, the first of a new series compiled by our Fire Captain Boyd McDowel. It is, of course about historical fires and fire fighting in Point Richmond. It is interesting and I look forward to more.

No baseball! Maybe the strike will last a couple of years and they will all go broke and we can start with a new bunch. Or how about the owners holding tryouts for a whole new team. Wouldn't it be neat to see real East Bay players playing baseball with real New Yorkers....I'd go!

Lastly, community pride is precious stay proud of **Point** Richmond

The deadline for the October issue is September 16, 1994.

*The cover:  
Standard Oil Refinery ball players.  
Call me if you want names of players.*

The Summer Issue Assembly Crew:

**Liz McDonald**

**Muriel Clausen**

**Mid Dornan**

**Mary Highfill**

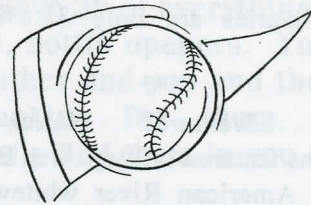
**Pam Wilson**

**Sarah Eeles**

**Sonja Darling**

**Jerry Cerkowicz**

**Gary Shows**



Thanks very much to  
**Bruce Beyaert** for giving a donation  
to our Point Richmond History  
Association, and thank you to:



For matching it!

**Watch your city council on channel  
25, stay informed about what your  
government is doing!**

# A-Mid TRIVIA

- MidDornan (510-234-5334)

Question: In 1909 the City of Richmond had five schools and W.T. Helms was Superintendent. Name the schools.

(Answer at end of Trivia)

\*\*\*

The average pencil can draw a line 35 miles long and will write approximately 45,000 words. In the hands of the very young, a pencil doubles its capabilities, or so it seems.

\*\*\*

The West Contra Costa Unified School District spent an average of \$4,217.00 per student for educational services last year. Teacher salaries are only 38.8% of the budget.

\*\*\*

Like adventure? Mariah River Expeditions featured on Bay Area Backroads make the American River whitewaters so exciting that you feel left out if you aren't one of the rafters.

\*\*\*

Kids return from camp with such interesting wardrobes.

\*\*\*

A World Champion Water Skier at age 77!! That would be Point Richmond's own Al Frosini who water skis every day and his physical fitness shows. Congratulations.

\*\*\*

Remember when grocery markets sold 'green string beans' and you had to remove the tough strings along the seam of each pod? Now they are referred to as green beans or snap beans with Kentucky Wonder and Blue

Lake the most popular varieties.

\*\*\*

A Richmond High class reunion brought Delbino Franco back to the area where she took time to visit around the Point. Hopefully she will write her observations for the newsletter.

\*\*\*

Your pet isn't insured? A growing number of companies are now offering health policies for your pets. An insurance company in Anaheim, California claims half a million "clients" in 39 states with average premiums \$75 a year.

\*\*\*

Twins Aaron & Michael Marshall celebrated their 5th birthday on Sunday, June 5th at the Miller-Knox Park with around 35 of their friends from Numura Preschool and playmates from Pt. Richmond. Their grandmother, Della Anthony, came from Pennsylvania to join the celebration. Aaron and Michael are looking forward to starting kindergarten at Washington School. Their parents are Hal Marshall and Linda Andrew-Marshall.

dc

\*\*\*

If you have a GI Joe, a favorite toy among boys age 5 to 10 the past 30 years, it could be valuable. Check to see if the right thumbnail of your doll is on the wrong side of the thumb.

\*\*\*

I take pains with my gardening  
But I found alas, alack:  
That all those pains that I take  
Are in my neck and back.

\*\*\*

Tobacco Companies spend \$1 Million a day on advertising.



\*\*\*

Washington School's Many Hands need  
you for whatever time you have to give.  
Remember:

One hundred years from now

It won't matter what car you drove

What kind of house you lived in,

How much you had in your bank account,  
Nor what your clothes looked like:

But, the world may be a little better  
Because you were important in the life of a  
child.

Let your legacy be one of service to all  
generations.

\*\*\*

Answer: Schools were:

1. Point Richmond School (building on  
Standard Avenue) and there were six teachers.

2. Peres (building at Fifth and  
Pennsylvania) with three teachers.

3. Nystrom (building in Nystrom Addition)  
with two teachers.

4. Richmond School (building 10th St and  
Bissell Avenue) with eight teachers.

5. Union High School (Bldg 23d and  
Macdonald) with five teachers.

*(Auditors Report of the City of Richmond for Fiscal year  
ending June 30, 1909. Courtesy Dr. Wm L. Thompson)*



## HINTS IF YOU FEEL OLDER

by Peg Bracken

Since there isn't a cure for aging,  
here are a few tips from author Peg  
Bracken.

1. Don't look at your reflection in  
the side of a chromium toaster or  
anywhere first thing in the morning.

2. On a day you feel fat, take a  
full-length mirror and move it out  
four inches at the bottom. "It takes  
off 8 pounds immediately.

3. Have 39 of everything - - keys,  
glasses, bottle openers. You'll drop  
them hither and yon and there is no  
use looking for them. You'll  
eventually find them in you bathrobe  
pocket.

4. When you hear yourself  
talking about the good old days when  
a Hershey bar was 5 cents, shut up.

5. Don't grope for a name.  
Nobody cares. Go on with the story.

6. Have follow-through.  
Complete your mission. If you're  
going upstairs to get a hanky, don't  
be waylaid by a book on the landing.  
Finish the job and then read the  
book.

Aging happens. They don't make  
mirrors the way they used to. The  
food is more fattening but being  
young is so time-consuming.

# Mr. & Mrs. Tcherassy The Point Theater

by Bernard Bernes

*I enjoy the articles on the "Olden Days" in the Point. My best regards to all of my friends.*



I would like to remind all of two persons who had a big part in Point Richmond's history: Mr. and Mrs. Tcherassy, the owners and operators of the Point Theater.

Mr. Tcherassy was born in Tunisia, Africa, a colony of France. Tunisia being a great farming colony, Mr. Tcherassy studied Agronomy. In fact he had a degree in Agronomy.

Mr. and Mrs. Tcherassy operated the Point Theater, Mrs. Tcherassy operated the player piano during the movies, playing the tunes to the tempo of the movie.....loud, soft, exciting, etc. Mr. Tcherassy worked the inside of the house, controlling the obnoxious boys, ejecting them if they were too noisy. He really did not fool around. They had a young girl selling tickets, and a movie operator to operate the projectors.

After the Point Theater was closed Mr. Tcherassy went to work for the City of Richmond as Superintendent of Parks. He was back in his profession of choice. He was very involved in the development of Nichol Park as well as other projects.

I hope someone can expand on this information.

## History Association Dinner & Play Benefit Soon

Mark your calendars now for  
November 3, 1994

Have dinner at

Hotel Mac

and see

"Me and My Girl"

at the

Masquer's

after dinner.

\$27.50/person



*Do you know this young man?  
clue: he's mentioned in this newsletter.*



# Sports Memories

by Allan Smith

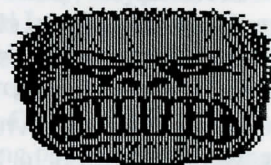
I can't recall when any Point Richmond native athlete made the headlines of the local newspaper. Recently, Al Frosini, popular Point athlete, had his picture on the front page of the *West County Times*. The action picture showed him in his favorite water-ski sport where he once again won the Senior Water Ski Championship of the world in his category.

Al's other sport in which he is active is boxing. He teaches the art of fisticuffs to any interested person, man, woman or child. This is a sport in which he has great knowledge and ability. Frosini must be at least 75 years old. And speaking of boxing: Rev. James Conlan Clift, present pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Church in Point Richmond, is a direct descendant of the legendary prize fighter, James John Corbett. "Gentleman Jim" Corbett as he was called, became the World Heavyweight Boxing Champion in 1892 when he won the title from the great John L. Sullivan. Father Jim Clift's maternal grandmother's uncle was that former world champion.

and

## Mr. Smith Says

Sorry our editor, Gary Shows, can't be watching his favorite sport, baseball. The player's strike must be ruining his summer. Personally, I doubt if I ever will pay to watch multi-millionaire players stand out in the field chewing gum and blowing bubbles!



The Conference of California Historical Societies are presenting (see inside front cover) a Northern Symposium on September 30 - October 2, 1994 at the Marriott Hotel in Walnut Creek. On Friday, September 30th master storyteller Wayne Korsinen will bring to life "THE PORT CHICAGO EXPLOSION" of World War Two.

This talk will take place at the banquet to be held and will be of extreme interest to all who remember that catastrophe. Merchant seamen that were on ships that loaded ammunition prior to the explosion at Port Chicago can relate personal experiences that occurred there.

## Mary Highfill

A Personal Profile by Mid Dornan

Good grief! Mid was foiled again by Mary!  
How does she escape *THE DREADED MICROPHONE!*  
Maybe next issue?!?!

## Our Lady of Mercy

Allan Smith

The annual church BBQ which was held on August 28, 1994 is our only church fund raiser for the year. It was a success as more than four hundred people attended.

Exactly 91 years ago on Saturday, August 23, 1903, Our lady of Mercy Church was officially dedicated by the Most Reverend George Montgomery, Co-adjutor Archbishop of San Francisco. While Our Lady of Mercy church was being built, all church services were held in Richard's Hall, which was located on Park Place and Washington Avenues. The first Mass was celebrated in the hall on September 21, 1902.

From the Church's Baptism Record Book:

*"On October 10, 1902, I baptized CLARA JANE HARNETT, born October 9, 1902 - daughter of John and Clara Caesar Harnett. The godparents were James and Eugene Hartnett."*

Clara Jane Hartnett was the first person to be baptized in Our Lady of Mercy. Many of us remember Jane when she worked at Martin's Bakery in the Point. She was always generous to the children when they shopped with their parents at the bakery.

Martin's Bakery was located on Park Place Avenue where Rosemary's Bakery and Tom McGowan's businesses are.



## Point Richmond Methodist

Jean Reynolds

Sunday School will resume on September 11th. A breakfast will be served at 9:30 am to welcome back teachers, students and their families. Classes will be on Sunday mornings at 10:00 for ages three to adult.

Vacation Bible School was held the week of July 18th to 22nd. Eighteen students went "down on the farm". A farm scene was painted and hung in Friendship Hall to join our quietest staff member — a scarecrow — in setting the mood for "San Country Farm". With stories, games, songs, crafts and snacks, students studied about Jesus and the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. A visit to the Butt family farm on Wednesday let students see real fruit grow (vegetables and goats, too!) On Friday, closing included lunch for students and their families. Corn was served that the kids shucked in a relay race earlier in the morning. It was a great week of sharing and learning together. I was sad to hang up my overalls and plaid shirts when the week was over.

Vacation Bible School staff included Jan Ekoniak, Carla Beckerley, Pastor Bill Gates, Paul David Edokiak, Cami Gates, Ryan Gates, Oretta Eaton, Christy Johnson, Debra Kurpad, and Jean Reynolds.

In August, Pastor Gates was absent two Sundays while he was a camp director in Idaho. On August 7th, our guest preacher was the Reverend Gary



Clore, a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. The Rev. Clore recently moved to Richmond with his wife Tamara and he is assigned to the ship Mt. Hood. They joined us for worship on July 31st and when it was announced that our speaker for the next Sunday had just cancelled, Gary introduced himself and volunteered to preach. Ask me about answered prayers....Grace and Bob Yank attended on August 7th with the idea of relaxing in the pew as guest from Sonoma. But in the absence of an organist Grace graciously accompanied our singing on the piano.

On August 14th, Bill Coolige was our preacher. Bill is a member of Church of the Good Shepherd UMC in Richmond, a graduate of Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley and has been involved in youth ministry and is a counselor at Shalom Camp. You may have seen him in a Masquer's production or at the Richmond Public Library where he works. We were fortunate to have the pulpit filled by two such capable speakers.

Alice Thompson, our organist for first and second Sundays, will be taking a leave through October as she and husband Bill and son Liam are trained by newest family member Sarah Delphine, born August 12th. Congratulations to them!

For fall: look for an adult education class based on a series of video tapes by Dr. Stephen Glenn, "Developing Capable People", this provides some insights helpful to parents but also useful in other personal interactions.

## POINT METHODIST CHURCH HISTORY

-Mid Dornan

*Church history is rich with contributions of women. One church group in the 1920's was the SOCIAL LEAGUE of the First Methodist Episcopal Church whose history is reflected in their minutes printed below and taken from the canvas covered, red leather cornered notebook which cost \$1.15. The minutes are printed as written. This is the 8th installment*

Tuesday, May 20th, 1924

The Social League met in parlors of church with Mrs. Martin as hostess. Sixteen members were present among them a new member Mrs. Glineburg.

The meeting opened by repeating Lord's prayer. Minutes of previous meeting read and approved as read.

Luncheon price for 26th was reported as changed from 65 to 75 a plate.

Committees as follows appointed for serving luncheon:

Decorating - Mrs. Beckely, Erickson  
& Glineburg

Tables- Oehne, Jones, Vloeberg

Salads - Burdick, Owens, Martin

Desert - Jenkins, Brothers &

Holleysowrth

Coffee - Alexander, Redman, Harris

Serving - Parker, Scofield, Brothers,

Oehne, Beckely, Jones, Erickson & Griffn

Moved, seconded & carried we purchase 2 dozen sugar sacks and hem same at meetings. Motion carried we postpone men's night til later date.

Adjourned,

Enna L. Parker, Secy

Cash on hand	16.34
Dues 5 mon Mrs. Glineburg	.50
Silver Offermg	1.80
	18.64

# This Old House

by  
*Muriel C. Clausen*

## Chapter VI

### The Italianate House;

#### Point Richmond

#### Part One

In Point Richmond in the period from 1900 to the 1930's approximately fifteen percent (15%) of the houses built were in the Italianate style. There were other types of houses built as well: fifteen Percent (15%), approximately, the Princess Anne style about twenty five percent bungalows and the balance a mixture of "styles" and vernacular types.

There is a marked difference between the vernacular houses and houses in "styles". In short, vernacular houses are those that fill basic needs using only available materials and, as such, houses which have a distinctly local design flavor. Houses in "Styles" do the same yet also add design features of some remembered time or place. The chapters previous to this have been descriptions of various vernacular types of houses. The vernaculars were born of necessity and

were the simplest, most functional houses; houses built of local materials by the do-it-yourself builder. They innately reflect their local needs and materials. The earliest were of single wall construction ranging from the simple hip roof cottage, to the rustic Mother lode house and then to the more finished bungalows which later were no longer single wall but stud wall construction. Bungalows were built for warmth and comfort and reflect the permanent home. (The bungalow was also enhanced further by architects to meet the requests of more affluent people. Such architects included Frank Lloyd Wright and his 'prairie' house designs and the Greene brothers of Pasadena with more spectacular bungalows; some with Japanese details.)

At this point we depart from the vernacular and look at "styles" of houses. In the early 1900's there were many styles of houses in Point Richmond. An important style that was popular was the Italianate. This occurred rather naturally as the majority of the early settlers in Point Richmond were Italians who came to this area bringing their Italian heritage. Being a very well bonded group of people they worked together to instill many of the old country's traditions in their new community; and, by so doing, they overlaid a certain sense of security and unity on this rough new environment. The Italian style that they carried here in their minds was actually quite different from the very early true Italian domestic architecture for reasons that will be described. Here too on the West Coast there were different materials than those which were used in European homes; a different climate, a different terrain and even different needs.

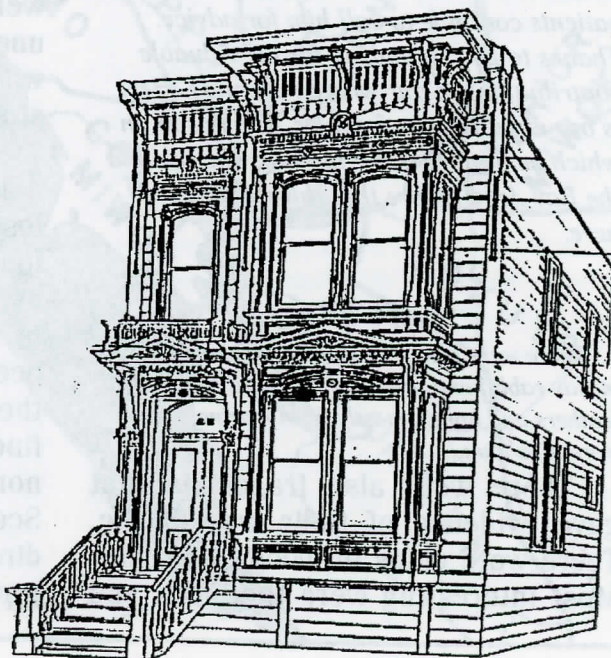


They combined their remembered heritage with their most urgent need for shelter, and built their houses in the simplest and quickest manner possible, coming up with a characteristic form of Italianate house design.

The Italianate, as it was resolved in Point Richmond, evolved after many transfusions from a more complex background than appears at first. In Europe during the first part of the nineteenth century a movement took place in architecture which sought to copy the styles of the classic forms of architecture such as the Italian, Greek and French, to name a few. In Italy the style that was copied was that of the formal Italian home which was the home for a wealthy family. It was formidable, square and constructed of heavy stone. It had symmetrical Roman arched porticos and windows with balustraded balconies. While this was the style that early architects sought to copy they wished to use their own more available materials instead of stone. Because of this the English interpretation of the Italian especially was somewhat different from the Original. The English interpretation gradually became the norm for most of Northern Europe during the nineteenth century.

In the early 1800's the English interpreted Italian architecture with three different results. The first was the Italian villa which in the English interpretation was translated as the English country home. The second was the Classical Italian style or the city house for the wealthy. This latter in its 'copy' looked more like the original stone Italian residences but

was built in local wood or brick materials with textured stone-like finishes and stone colors. The third was a fairly complete departure and was called 'Italianate': "having the characteristics of the Italian style". The Italianate was direct and did not try to copy stone. It was built of wood with fewer Italian design features. This gave it a lighter, more flamboyant character. It fairly sprang from the earth as opposed to its more heavily settled relative. More important the Italianate was also much cheaper to build. Because of this the Italianate became the favored domestic architectural style in England and Europe. It spread with some modification to the Eastern United States, then later across the country and finally to the West Coast. By the time Point Richmond started as a community a very filtered Italian style had evolved giving us the Italianate that we see today in our community.





# Aboriginal Indians of the Point Richmond Area

Wm. L. Thompson

*William L. Thompson, often called Louis by his friends, was born in Point Richmond on February 17th, 1909, lived on Scenic Avenue, graduated from Richmond Union High School and was the first native Richmondite to go through medical school. Dr. Thompson began his practice in 1940 at 9th & Macdonald later moving to 32nd & Macdonald until that building was sold, at which time he moved to an office on Broadway. In 1979, at age 70 and after 39 years, he retired officially from medical practice. However his many loyal, local patients continue to call him for advice. Thanks to Dr. Thompson for his valuable contributions to our written archives. Here is our eighth series from Dr. Thompson, in which he describes the Indians who lived in the Bay Area before the white man settled here.*

## Part Three

*There were also fragments of animal bones, mostly rabbit and probably deer and seals. Bird feathers and bones, mostly from marine birds, were also found.*

There were also fragments that gave evidence of their way of life. There were chips of wood and rocks. Most interesting were the chips and

fragments of black obsidian, a form of volcanic glass used in the making of projectile points and other edged instruments. This stone is not found in this region but must be traded, probably from the Clear Lake area where there was volcanic activity in the past. The chips were flaked off in the production of arrow points, knives, and scrapers. Complete arrowheads were rarely found, but broken points, probably fractured in manufacturing, were not uncommon. I once unearthed a crude fireplace together with its ashes. It was only a circle of stone, probably a place for cooking.

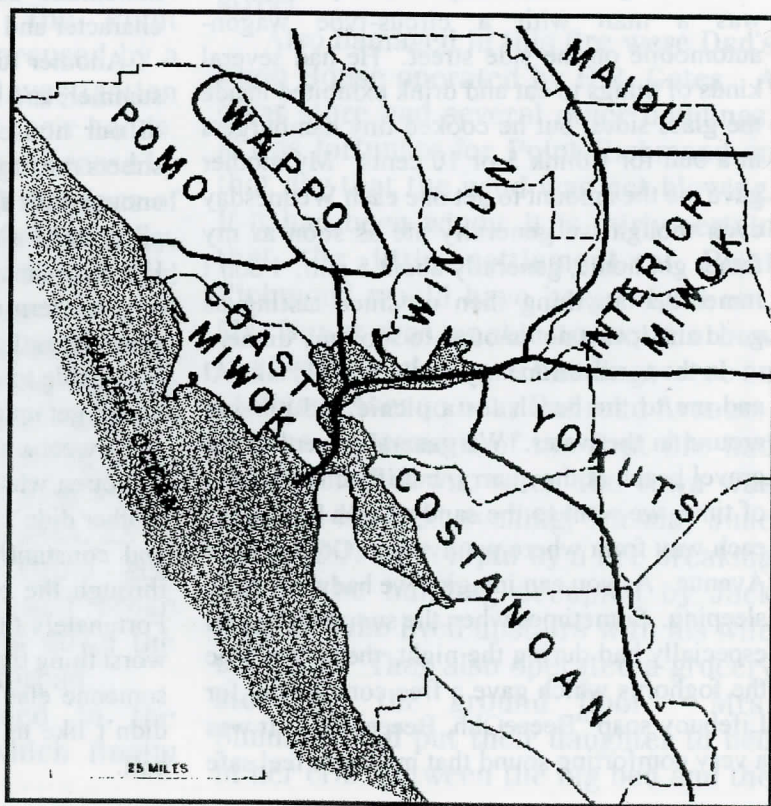
I do not ordinarily collect artifacts unless they are something that may be lost or destroyed. However I once found a good arrowhead on the slopes of Nicholl Nob above our house. It was of black obsidian and had probably been lost on a hunting trip. I also had the extraordinary experience of finding a piece of fossil ivory on the north side of Nicholl Nob between Scenic and Buena Vista Avenues directly below our old home. This was probably from the tusk of a Columbian



mammoth and perhaps had been dropped there by Indians or others, since I doubt whether a mammoth had ever been on Nicholl Nob. There was, however, a mammoth skeleton exhumed from the marshes north of the old Standard Oil Company during dredging for a water channel. This occurred during the 1920's as my father told me of it.

The Indian cultures of central California are usually considered in three horizons. The late horizon started about 3000 years ago. The middle horizon existed for about 2000 years before that, and the early horizon started possibly as early as 10,000 years ago and continued to about 5000 years ago. Most of the local Indians were of the late horizon and were short, rather heavily built, and broad headed. These people had the bow and arrow, made baskets and brush shelters and were of a higher degree of culture than their predecessors. The middle horizon people were taller, more slender, and were narrow headed. They lacked the bow and arrow but probably had spears and throwing sticks (atlatls). Less is

known about the early horizon people because they lived during the terminal part of the last Ice Age when water in the San Francisco Bay was much lower due to accumulation of ice on the land. Most of their camp sites were along the shore and the rise of the water would have obliterated them. However, they were probably similar to the middle group, but culturally inferior. Remains of the early horizon people in the Delta region were most likely buried under silt accumulated during the Gold Rush due to hydraulic mining.





*Delphina Franco moved to Point Richmond as a child of three. This is the third installment in a series of articles about her experiences in Point Richmond beginning in the early 20's.*

## Point Richmond in the 1920's

by Dephina Franco

### ***Recreation***

#### *Part Three*

I remember being absolutely famished when we had to get out of the pool at 5 p.m. There was a man with a circus-type wagon-automobile on the side street. He had several kinds of things to eat and drink exhibited inside the glass sides, but he cooked tiny hamburgers in a bun for I think 5 or 10 cents. My mother gave me the amount to get one each Wednesday even though we generally ate as soon as my father got home, generally about 5 p.m. I don't remember anything then or since tasting as good and it was not enough to spoil my dinner.

In the summertime my mother would take Al and me to the beach for a picnic and playing around in the water. We generally went to the gravel beach at the quarry, but if we had plenty of time, we went to the sandy beach five miles each way from where we lived on Golden Gate Avenue. As you can imagine we had no trouble sleeping. Sometimes when the summer fog was especially bad during the night, there would be the foghorns which gave a free commercial for Lifebuoy soap "BeeeeOhh, BeeeeOhh." It was a very comforting sound that made me feel safe

and secure.

By the time I was six years old my mother had taught me to crochet and I was given the assignment to make a heading for a nightgown. It was a flower petal design and though I struggled gamely the thread would tangle and the stitches would ball up together and were difficult to rip out. I did manage to finish the heading and my mother gathered the cotton onto it for the gown. The success of the accomplishment was diminished by the difficulty of completing the job. I didn't know it then, but years later I realized the truth of my mother's admonishment of "If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well". Now that crocheted and embroidered items are not in style, I think it is too bad. Some of the most beautiful things around my house are the handmade scarves and afghans which give character and a family feeling to the rooms.

Another fun thing we kids did in the spring, summer, and fall was to play one-a cat. In front of our house the street widened where four streets ran together. It was ideal and there were enough kids spanning eight or nine years for us all to have a turn and to have a chance at bat. I'm sure that it was better therapy for us than any modern-day psychologist. I know that sometimes I would be disgruntled about not being able to do what I wanted to and someone would get up a game. By the time I came in hot and sweaty after playing, I had completely forgotten what I had been so angry about. My mother didn't view the game so philosophically and constantly worried about the ball going through the bay window in the dining room. Fortunately the window sat at an angle and the worst thing that happened was the ball went into someone else's yard and maybe that neighbor didn't like us going into the garden to get the ball.

end



*Delphina Franco moved to Point Richmond as a child of three. This is the third installment in a series of articles about her experiences in Point Richmond beginning in the early 20's.*

## Point Richmond in the 1920's

by Delphina Franco

### ***Recreation***

#### *Part Three*

I remember being absolutely famished when we had to get out of the pool at 5 p.m. There was a man with a circus-type wagon-automobile on the side street. He had several kinds of things to eat and drink exhibited inside the glass sides, but he cooked tiny hamburgers in a bun for I think 5 or 10 cents. My mother gave me the amount to get one each Wednesday even though we generally ate as soon as my father got home, generally about 5 p.m. I don't remember anything then or since tasting as good and it was not enough to spoil my dinner.

In the summertime my mother would take Al and me to the beach for a picnic and playing around in the water. We generally went to the gravel beach at the quarry, but if we had plenty of time, we went to the sandy beach five miles each way from where we lived on Golden Gate Avenue. As you can imagine we had no trouble sleeping. Sometimes when the summer fog was especially bad during the night, there would be the foghorns which gave a free commercial for Lifebuoy soap "BeeeeOhh, BeeeeOhh." It was a very comforting sound that made me feel safe

and secure.

By the time I was six years old my mother had taught me to crochet and I was given the assignment to make a heading for a nightgown. It was a flower petal design and though I struggled gamely the thread would tangle and the stitches would ball up together and were difficult to rip out. I did manage to finish the heading and my mother gathered the cotton onto it for the gown. The success of the accomplishment was diminished by the difficulty of completing the job. I didn't know it then, but years later I realized the truth of my mother's admonishment of "If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well". Now that crocheted and embroidered items are not in style, I think it is too bad. Some of the most beautiful things around my house are the handmade scarves and afghans which give character and a family feeling to the rooms.

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end



# Historical Memories of Point Richmond's Fire Department

*This information has been compiled from the extensive notes of J.J. Berry, Ast. Chief, who was appointed in 1915, retired in 1954 and died in 1974.*

*The article was prepared by  
Capt. Boyd McDowel, Eng. 61b, RFD*

## **The First Fire**

The city of Richmond's first fire occurred on the morning of June 9th, 1901, at about 9am. The Point Richmond community was aroused by a series of shots, and on investigation found they had a big fire on their hands. This fire started in a saloon operated by Joe Nunes, who had just left his place of business to go to his hay field nearby. The fire was discovered by Moller and Soto, whose places of business were just across the street. They dashed across and broke in the door to find the fire burning briskly but as there was no water on hand, there was nothing to do but let it burn. A crowd of men led by Pat Dean, armed with clubs, axes, 2X4's and anything else they could get, battered down the doors and broke windows, also trying to pull down the walls so the fire would not spread.

This activity only added to the intensity of the flames, which finally

jumped across a 50 foot lot and set the next building on fire, a switch engine from Santa Fe arrived to help but did not have enough hose to reach the fire. They went back for more hose but on their return there was no hope, when the fire had finally burned out it had destroyed Nune's saloon, the Berkeley cafe operated by Pat Dean and another new two story building driving the families of John Holt and J. DeBarrows out in the street.

Also damaged in this fire were Dad's Chop House operated by E.R. Gates. A cigar store and several other buildings, it was fortunate for Point Richmond on that day that the wind was not blowing. If it had been windy, it is fairly certain that the little settlement of Point Richmond would have been wiped out. Mr. Nunes was unable to explain how the fire started. These buildings were on Standard Avenue near Railroad Avenue.

The excitement of the first fire had hardly died down, when the town was aroused the next evening, Tuesday June 10th, 1901 at 8:40pm by a fire breaking out in the building occupied by Jack Simmon who lived upstairs with his wife and child. They also operated a grocery store on the ground floor. Mrs. Simmons had put their daughter to bed in her crib, between the big bed and the

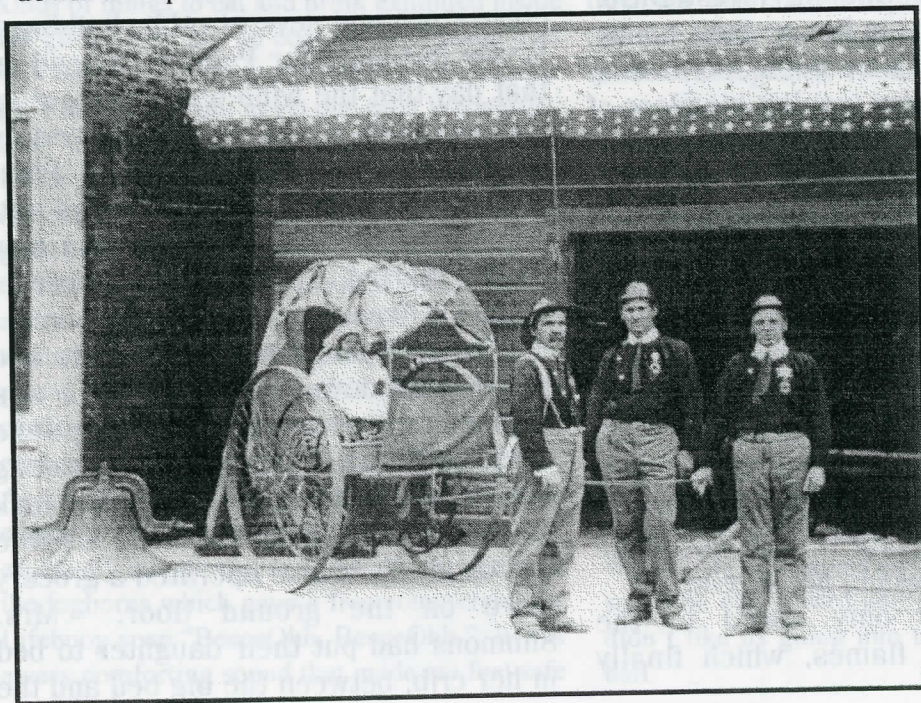


wall. She left the kerosene lamp on the table in the kitchen, with the back door open and went down stairs the front way to help her husband in the store. When she opened the front door it created a draft, slamming the back door. The concussion must have upset the lamp, causing the fire. While the Simmons were busy in the store, some people rushed in shouting "FIRE!" many brave and desperate attempts were made to rescue the baby but they were driven back by the intense heat. One man did get to the bedroom, found the big bed but did not know the crib was between that and the wall, he was finally driven out without. The child perished in the flames.

Two engines from Santa Fe came down and poured water on the fire but

their water capacity was too small to do any good. All they could do was water until the group of buildings burned to the ground. The fire finally burned out at 11pm, it destroyed the Simmons building, Lang's Drug Store, McKenzies Real Estate office, Bill Ellis's saloon and hotel. These buildings were located opposite to where the Hotel Mac now stands.

These two fires showed the people of Point Richmond they must do something for fire protection, and through the efforts of Frank Critchett and Lyman Naugel, editor of the Richmond Record a meeting was finally called on the evening of June 13, 1901 at the Critchett Hotel and a volunteer fire organization was started.



*The original horse cart.*

*Taken July 4, 1907.*

*Bill Ellis, Lee Adams and John Murray (1st Fire Chief.*

*Taken in front of the old firehouse which had been moved from Railroad Avenue to Park Place.*



# The Poppy

Washington School  
June, 1922

*(This 6" X 9" faded green construction covered booklet has an orange crayon poppy on the cover and is tied together on the left side with a faded half-inch wide orange satin ribbon. The purple mimeograph lettering is also faded with age. The original writing inside is by hand. This is the fourth installment.)*

## Class Mirror

<i>Name</i>	<i>Nick Name</i>	<i>Expression</i>	<i>Ambition</i>
Alfred Perriconi	"Lefty"	"Yeh"	To be a milkman
Joseph Brazil	"Bazot"	"Keep Away"	To be champion boxer of world
Alice Pucci	"Puch"	"Funny"	To be a music teacher
Theodore Ciabattari	"Chibbi"	"Watchout"	To be a boat builder
Cornelius Gannon	"Babe"	"Huh"	To be a snake trainer
Silven Lacher	"Jew"	"Look Out"	To be a school teacher
Lena Ceridono	"Slim"	"Oh Boy!"	To be a congresswoman
Lewis Thompson	"Luke"	"By hick"	To get out of school
Mary Prola	"Spud"	"Oh gee!"	To be a mind reader
Fred Childs	"Gumdrop"	"You're not funny it's in your face"	To be an architect
George Solich	"Shorty"	"Hicky, the teacher"	To be a sailor
Henry Fulkerson	"Hena"	"I don't know"	To be an electrician
Joseph Condon	"Convict"	"Oh boy"	To be a great civil engineer
Glenn Wilson	"Happy"	"You tell'em"	To be a flirt
Denzell McCracken	"Gunzell"	"Gosh, all hemlock"	To reduce
Joseph Palenchar	"Cutie"	"Naturally"	To become a good husband
William Kollar	"Will"	"Oh, what a guy"	To be a cartoonist
Howard Arnold	"Mr. Chaiman"	"Aw, cut it out"	To own a ranch
Edith Hunt	"Curly"	"For the love of mud"	To own a beauty parlor
Miss Lucas	"Rufie"	"Is that you talking again, Mary"	To have a quiet class





## Your Westside Library

*By Lynn Whitson*  
*Branch Librarian*

West Side Branch of the Richmond Public Library has a Young Adult Collection that consists of approximately two hundred titles. We have collected materials that will appeal to anyone aged 11 to 21 covering subjects that spark the imagination, help with college plans, assist with school work or help explain the changes taking place in their lives. We have the Encyclopedia of Monsters, Now is the Time: African American Struggle for Freedom, Changing Bodies: Changing Lives, How to

Prepare for the SAT, as well as books about science projects and sexual harassment, teen parenting and pregnancy, a rhyming dictionary for poets and songwriters, fiction, science fiction and romance novels. We have videos, Boyz n the Hood, White Men Can't Jump, Robin Hood, and magazines.

This summer we have a reading game for young adults called "Jog Your Mind", teenagers can win prizes like A's baseball tickets, T-shirts, and popular novels.

Richmond Public Library compiled and the city published a hip pocket guide to services and activities for youth in West Contra Costa County. The project was funded by Zellerbach and copies of this guide are available free at the West Side Branch. Check it out!

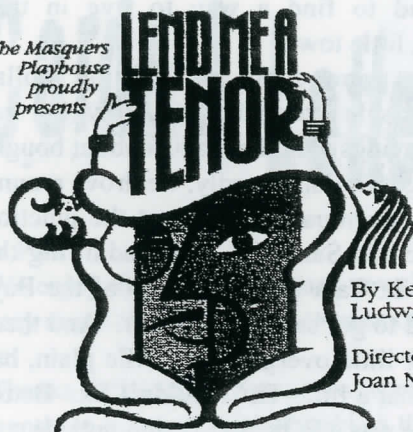
Come in and see our collection, if you don't find what you are looking for we will try to get it for you from another location.



City Hall Crew, 1911



The Masquers  
Playhouse  
proudly  
presents



By Ken  
Ludwig

Directed by  
Joan Nelsor.

### *a review by Anne Hanzlik*

The walls of the Masquers Playhouse reverberated with almost continuous laughter on the opening night of Lend Me a Tenor, as one far fetched situation followed another. The tried and true plot scenarios were used, much to the audience's delight, mistaken identities, hiding in closets and behind doors, (six in all!) and frantic running between the set's two rooms.

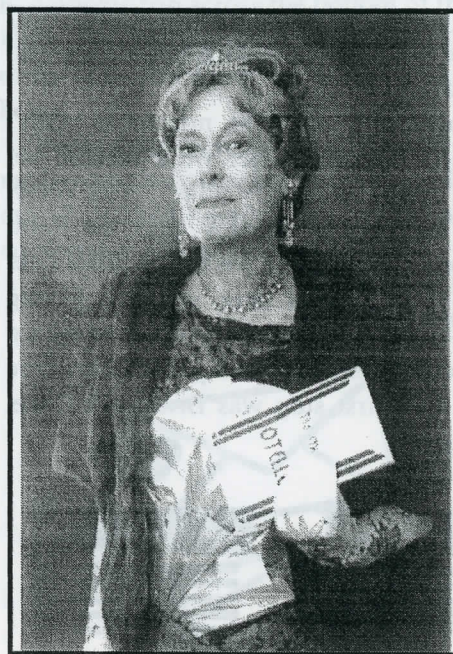
The cast of eight characters surely enjoyed the play as much as the audience, as judged by their enthusiastic antics. Perhaps there was no real star of the show, for they were all part of the fun, but Robert Wood as the irate father handled his large and important role well as did Scott Cambell as the substitute tenor and love interest and Virginia Cherniak as Julia, in a great evening gown.

The Masquer's cast membership is a large one and it is always a pleasure to see familiar faces reappear in each production. Most all of them are members of other little theater groups

here in the Bay Area as well as farther afield. It is also gratifying to see how the members enjoy each new production as part of the audience as well, with their enthusiastic support each time.

The costumes were great fun particularly the colorful outfits of the "tenors". The sets were a delight for everyone appreciative of "art deco" decor. The six doors, that all had a good workout, were particularly attractive, as well as the furnishings and the wall treatments. It was a very imaginative background for this lively farce which provided a truly cathartic evening of hilarity. The loggy was full of laughter and smiling faces both in the intermission and after the play was over.

It was definitely a good and relaxing evening!



*Virginia Cherniak as "Julia"*



# Love at First Sight

Rosemary Nightingale

I like to think fate brought me to Point Richmond one warm summer afternoon about two years ago. I had first read about the town back in the '70's when house prices started to skyrocket and some real estate savant mentioned that bargains could still be found in the Point. Later the Hotel Mac started receiving rave reviews in the press, but I still had only the vaguest notion as to the town's actual location.

My rental apartment in a foggy San Francisco neighborhood was no way to acquire the garden of my dreams, nor was it an ideal setting for the old grandfather clock that had followed me across the Atlantic all those years ago. So that afternoon I had persuaded a somewhat reluctant friend to go look at houses for sale in what was rumored to be the last affordable neighborhood in San Francisco.

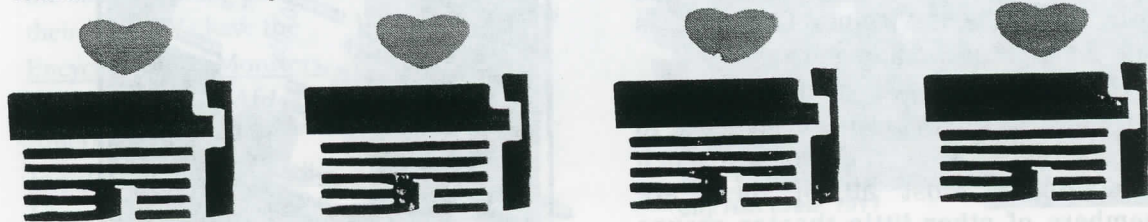
"Rosemary, you'd be miserable here!" my friend declared, after we'd viewed yet another over-priced, ugly villa. "You know, I saw these great condos over in Point Richmond. Why don't we take a drive over there?" Half an hour later, we were driving up tree-lined Washington Avenue, admiring the historical buildings and picturesque store fronts. Our first stop was Brickyard Cove,

but the die was cast as far as I was concerned. I just had to find a way to live in that charming little town.

There were some half-million dollar homes for sale overlooking the Bay, but my meager savings would have just about bought the garage. Haphazardly, we drove around the Point, eventually parking at the junction of Pacific and Santa Fe. After admiring the view of Mt. Tam and the sweep of the Bay, we turned to get back into the car. And there it was. A little overgrown, a trifle plain, but nothing that a little TLC couldn't fix. Better still, there was a FOR SALE sign outside.

Rather guiltily, we peeked in the windows noting the high ceilings and polished wood floors. I was already mentally arranging my furniture inside — though I had no idea of the asking price, let alone whether anyone would give me a mortgage. The little grey-painted house had my name on it. I was not to be put off by such minor considerations.

That was the end of July and for the next three months I thought of little else. They say if you want something badly enough, you find a way to make it happen. By early November, the house was mine. After years of neglect, it will be some time before the garden comes close to resembling my horticultural dream, but I'm in no hurry. The grandfather clock fit perfectly in place and I plan on calling Point Richmond home for many years to come.



# Cards & Letters

Dear Pam:

We enjoy the "Point in Time" newsletter so very much and don't want to miss one issue.

Thanks to the whole crew who work so diligently to put together and publish this gem.

Sincerely,  
Marge Stone  
Kensington, CA

Hi-

Sorry to be late but I've been out of town. Also, thank you so very much for the stationary last year, and thanks for a great paper!

Sincerely,  
Luella Wilcox  
Oroville, CA

Dear Pam:

I cannot begin to tell you how much I appreciate my monthly letter from home called "This Point....in time", all of the articles are excellent. I have learned more about the Point than I would have retained had I been aware of all the happenings back then. It always seemed that the interesting happenings going on were with my older sisters while they were looking for ways to ditch me. Of course each ditch was five cents and that was 1/2 a swim at the Natatorium.

Two ditches and I was off and running!

My monthly allowance for washing dishes and being light monitor, which was a responsible job of always turning off the lights when not in use paid 25 cents which equalled 2 1/2 swims at the Natatorium, HA!

As you can see when it came to money my mathematics converted to number of possible swims. We were happy to see Georgia (gal who handed out towels at the Nat) and she always told us to slow down but we never did after we got past the oval swinging doors!

Please renew my subscription also my sister's.

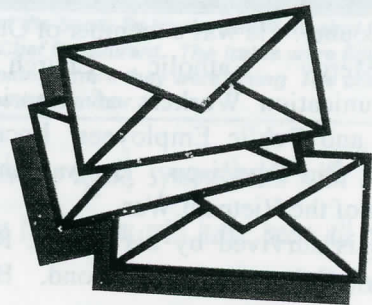
Sincerely  
Betty Glass Marshall  
Grants Pass, OR

Dear Pam:

Sorry to be late, but we were on vacation and we just completed a 3 1/2 month motorhome trip across the bottom of the USA, Eastern Canada and back across the top of the USA and down the North Coast to home.

Some states were very hot but with the motorhome's air conditioning Al and I and our 12 year old Russian Blue cat had a very comfortable and enjoyable trip.

Al & Gerry Higuera  
Point Richmond





# Deaths

**Gladys (Dreyspring) Pizzotti** died May 2, 1994. Gladys was born in Bisbee, Arizona Territory, and moved to Oakland in 1906. Her father, George Dreyspring became a motorman for the local traction company on the Oakland to Richmond line. The family moved to Richmond around 1910 and Gladys went through the Richmond school system. Gladys married Dewey Wm. Pizzotti, another Richmondite in 1927. For the past 34 years Gladys has been very active in the Nevada City area.

She is survived by her sister Reitha Macdonald; nephew, Stan Macdonald; and numerous grand nieces. She was preceded in death by her husband, Duke, in 1980.

**Eugene J. Jamsay** died July 21, 1994 in San Francisco of heart disease, he was aged 55 years. Eugene was a custodian for the San Francisco Unified School District for 21 years and owner of Jamsay Janitorial Service in Contra Costa County.

A Denver native and 31 year resident of West County. He was a member of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church and Communication Workers of America No. 11503 and Public Employees' Local 790, both of San Francisco. He was an Army veteran of the Vietnam War.

He is survived by his sisters, Ramona Jamsay Calvin of Richmond, Beatrice

Jamsay Muga of San Bernardino, Ruth Hernandez of Ventura and Florentina Jonson of Colorado; and brothers, Alfred, Ray, and James Jamsay, all of Colorado.

**Lloyd Stauffer Dicely** died in Richmond July 18, 1994. Lloyd was a native of Point Richmond and aged 83 years. Husband of the late Mary M. Dicely and father of Robert M. Dicely of Occidental.

A member of El Portal Lodge #347, F. & A.M., Richmond; The Richmond Yacht Club and Sunshine Boys Club both of Richmond.

**Mark Alan Malroy** died in Concord, August 3, 1994, aged 36 years. Mark was the son of Louis and Vicie Malroy of Vallejo. Nephew of Fern Malray of San Pablo, Mace & Virginia Malroy of Pinole, June Davies of Richmond, and Mary Jo and Joseph Matascio of Crockett.



## September Birthdays

Doris Maske  
Ivar Elle  
Sara Warren Smith  
Emily Anne Barnes  
Hattie Belle Potts  
Roberta Wilson  
Bernard Dietz  
Stephen Berman  
Gayle Kaufman

Roxanne Trudeau  
David Reynolds  
Phyllis Glass Ackerman  
June Kunkle Blackburn  
Theresa Daniel  
Susan Armstrong  
Daniel Butt  
Joann Busby  
John Knox

Al Frosini  
Shane Eastman  
Mary Forbes  
Igvor Elle  
Will Spiersch  
Kennith Dolan  
Donna Roselius  
(our founder)



*This train wreck occurred about 2pm on August 6, 1910 at the Santa Fe tracks between what is now the West Richmond Avenue crossing and the Hunan Chef Restaurant. The trains were filling the Cutting tract marsh and the the crews just were not looking where they were going The crash could be heard city-wide. Injuries were minor.*

*"Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving & tolerant of the weak & the wrong. Sometime in life you will have been all of these"*

*-Lloyd Shearer*



I would like to join the P.R.H.A.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership (check one):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single	\$18.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior (65+)	12.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family	25.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	History Preserver	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Sponsor	75.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	History Maker	100.00

Membership in the Point Richmond History Association includes a one year subscription to "THIS POINT...in time" newsletter (nine issues). Please make your check payable to the Point Richmond History Association and mail it to:

**Pam Wilson**  
**521 Western Drive**  
**Point Richmond, CA 94801**

If you would like to have birthdays noted in the newsletter, please include names and months.

Articles for each issue are due on or before the deadline printed in the calendar section.

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

**Gary Shows**  
**229 Golden Gate Avenue**  
**Point Richmond, CA 94801**

or

**fax 510-233-0762**

"This Point...in time" is a publication of the Point Richmond History Association, a non-profit organization at:

139 1/2 Wasington Avenue  
 Point Richmond, CA 94801

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### Contributors to this issue:

Gary Shows	Editor
Dennis Schaefer	Asst. Editor
Mid Dornan	Articles
Muriel Clausen	Article
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Don Church/Allan Smith	Historic Photos
Jerry Cerkanowicz	Various
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Lynn Whitson	Article
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Anne Hanzlik	Article
Marilyn Levine/John Allen	Mac Work
Linda Webster	Illustrations
Stanley R. MacDonald	Information
Deirdre Cerkanowicz	Information
Bernard Bernes	Article
Rosemary Nightingale	Article

### Phone Numbers

Mid Dornan	510-234-5334
Gary Shows	510-235-1336
Phyllis Scaglund	510-232-2280
Fax	510-233-0762



# Calendar

*September, 1994*

**September 4**  
*Sunday*

First Indian Statue dedicated, 1904

**September 5**  
*Monday*

Labor Day Holiday

**September 6**  
*Tuesday*

Rosh Hashonah

Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting,  
7:30pm, Point Community Center

Women's Westside Improvement Club Meeting,  
11:30am Point Methodist Church

**September 14**  
*Wednesday*

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting  
Noon, The Hotel Mac

**September 15**  
*Thursday*

Yom Kippur

**September 16**  
*Friday*

DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR TPIT

**September 23**  
*Friday*

First Day of Autumn

**October 4**  
*Tuesday*

Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting,  
7:30pm, Point Community Center

Women's Westside Improvement Club Meeting,  
11:30am Point Methodist Church

**October 12**  
*Wednesday*

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting  
Noon, The Hotel Mac