

THIS POINT.... in time

NEWSLETTER

The Point Richmond History Association

Vol. XV No. 6

April/May, 1997

\$1.50



The Skunk Holler Hillbillies

ON
May 18, 1997 (at 2 pm)
at the Catholic Church in the Point

PRHA Annual
Membership Meeting
and
the third annual
Point Richmond Kid's
Reunion and Show
will
Happen

BE THERE!

Refreshments will be served

From The President

Mid Dornan

How long has it been since you've been out to Ferry Point in the Miller-Knox Regional Park in the Point? About the only reminder of days-gone-by is a warehouse and an old pump house, now target of graffiti and broken glass and doors.

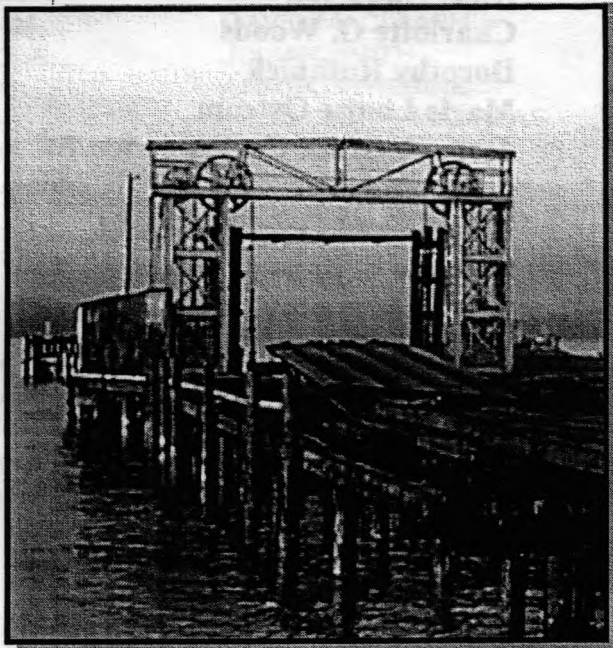
Some visionaries are exploring possibilities of potential use to save these buildings. Ferry boats, tugs and barges, schooners and trains came here and became the transportation lifeblood of Richmond and the surrounding areas of the East Bay. Is it not of historical value to take a deeper view of these potential uses?

Go there via the new Regional Park trail from Dornan Drive and see, without question, that this area offers one of the most spectacular panoramic views of the Bay and bridges.. Sit on a waiting comfortable bench and take time to enjoy the breathtaking scenery before you.

Will the just finished, community funded, Ferry Point Tunnel Mural signal a beginning restoration of historic Ferry Point?

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This Point....In time

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

Betty J. Marshall
J.A. and Barbara Vincent
Sarah Eeles
Alexandra Gautraud
Augustine MacDonald
Jan and Bob Burdick
Linda Andrew-Marshall
Muriel C. Clausen
David and Carol MacDiarmid
Marie Wilson Dietz
Pat Milano
Allan P. Smith, Sr.
Edward Garrard
Reva Ward
Elsine Beck Ten Broeck
Terry and Phyllis Downey
Albert J. Kollar
Anne Anderson
Charlotte G. Woods
Dorothy Ruthnick
Marie Louise Ostrom
Jerry & Grace Cerkowicz, Sr.
Anne Hanzlik
Martha and Gene Bielawski
Thomas L. Kenny
Bertha May McCloskey
Emile & Edwyna Pleau
Lyle and Connee Fisher
Jack Elle
Luella C. Wilcox
Ethel Schumacher
Arthur McLaughen
C.F. Hochgesang

And a warm welcome to new members:

Linda S. Milbourn
Betty Jo Nickola
Teri Meister
Robert Dalby

*Museum Staff Coordinator Betty Dornan
thanks volunteers who staffed the History
Building in February and March*

Dody Perry
Lyle Fisher
Bernard Christiansen
Bruce Bartram
Jerry Cerkowicz
Mid Dornan
Lucretia Edwards
Dee Rosier
Betty Dornan
Mary Highfill
Liz McDonald

&

Our usual

Thank You!

to

Santa Fe Market
and

Point Richmond Market

*for their donated distribution of
"THIS POINT....in time"*

If you can help staff our History Building
(2½ hours per month) call museum Staff
Coordinator Betty Dornan at 232-4317.

Museum Hours:

Thursday	11:30am - 2:00pm
Saturday	11:30 - 2:00pm

Gary's Page

Gary Shows

Happy Springtime! My favorite time of the year...doesn't last long enough though. Spring flowers and blooming trees are the best! The beautiful Tunnel Avenue trees always signify to me that the good times have arrived!

And so here is the springtime issue of "TPIT". Main thanks from me in this issue are to Augustine MacDonald who writes our feature article, and it is sure to bring a few tears to all, young and old. Mr. MacDonald even promises to write more if this installment is "suitable"...what do ya think, is it suitable?

Sorry to hear that Sandi Genser-Maack is leaving her post with the Richmond Museum of History. I hope that the relationship that Sandi has developed with the PRHA continues. I love Point Richmond and its colorful history but was glad to join hands with the Richmond Museum as it is the "big picture" of our local history. Pride in ones community is very important but we know that we are a neighborhood in the city of Richmond.

Thanks to our wonderful staff, especially Mid and Allan for material submitted for this issue. I would like to give a warm welcome to our newest staffmember, Mrs. Dolores (Dee) Rosier who will be doing the church news for Our Lady of Mercy.

This was a very full issue and some good things submitted were not included, I will save

them for future issues.

My idea for a email address book didn't create a lot of excitement. I will try that again at a later time, if you indulge in the internet, do check out our website from time to time, you'll find information and more pictures. It has moved to at <http://www.alkos.com/prha>.

The deadline for the June/July/August (aka "Summer") issue of TPIT is May 23, 1997.

Thanks to the February/March issue assembly crew:

Mary Highfill
Liz McDonald
Pam Wilson
Mid Dornan
Jerry Cerkowicz
Gary Shows
Betty Dornan
Allan Smith
Mary Rudolph

The Cover:

1930's photo of "The Skunk Holler Hillbillies" supplied by Allan Smith.

Top row left to right:

JOHN PALMER, JACK DANA, DAVID EICHER, HAROLD SILVAS, HUGH CLARK, GLEN BUTLER, CHARLIE DUTROW

Bottom row left to right:

RICHEL WILLIAMS, ALLEN DAVIS, HARRY ORTHMAN, BOB JARDINE, JIM FORBES, JACK DEFER

To learn more about this group see page 17.

A-Mid TRIVIA

-Mid Dornan (510-234-5334)

Question: When was the first POINT COUNTERPOINT, A Journal for Civic Communication, published? This was a forerunner to the Point Richmond History Association. How much did it cost? How was it distributed? Who was the editor?

Answer at end of Trivia.

Citizens Against Government Waste suggest they move tax day from April 15th to the day before Election Day in November, to make politicians accountable.

In case you wonder, Congress writes the U.S. tax laws and the IRS administers them.

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married -and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked it.

Proud Grandpa Jack Wile's first grandson, seven pounds, 20 inch Brian Jr, was born February 19, 1997 to KariLu and Brain Crain, Sr. of Vallejo. Brian is Aries first child.

Jan Burdick was in familiar haunts, the Point library, proving she is getting around after her December surgery

First time grandparents, Linda and Jay Betts, welcomed baby girl Katherine, born to Cyndy and Eric Sowers on February 10th at the Community Memorial Hospital in Ventura and was 7 pounds, 19 inches.

Busy editor Gary Shows took time out to entertain his sister and brother-in-law, Mitzi and Clay Kruse, visiting from San Antonio, Texas.

Which of these vehicles -a fire engine, a police car or an ambulance has the legal right-of-way in an emergency? Just asking. I'm told the U.S. Mail truck has the legal right-ofway ahead of all of them regardless of emergencies???

No longer 'Grandparents-in-waiting', Teresa and Jerry Daniel received a real live Valentine on February 14th when Grant Taylor arrived weighing 7 pounds, 14 ounces, and 19 inches. Parents are Kristin and Eric Daniel. His other Grandmother is Karen Taylor.

Bouquets to the City of Richmond Graffiti Department' Graffiti on our new Ferry Point mural was removed so quickly, few saw it. One benefit of having the local artist.

FACT: Richmond has less graffiti than any surrounding area.

Richmond Police are asking local school children to name their new Police Patrol Boat. All children are eligible to enter the contest.

Point Richmond had more than one contender for Academy Award Oscars. "Cosmic Voyage" is a film made for the Smithsonian Institute by local film maker, Nick Armington, for Alchemedia. (P.S. The public is invited to an Open House at Alchemedia on April 2nd from 5 -8 p.m.)

The letter "k" takes the most time to write in longhand.

The Annual JUNKTIQUE sale at the Point Methodist Church is Saturday, May 3rd, 8:30 to 4:00. This should be the perfect motivation for housecleaning as they need all your old appliances, tools, furniture, extra TV, dishes, lamps, etc. Call 232 -4317 (Betty D.) after 5 o'clock for when and where you can drop off items,

Melba and Lloyd Farley have returned after their twice (or more?) yearly trips to Hawaii.

Martin McNair is the governor's newest appointee to the water pollution board regulating Bay Area industries and sewer plants. Point businessman McNair is owner and operator of MBM construction and real estate development company.

It comes as no surprise to learn the male fashion trend is nail polish. Coming mostly in dark metallic shades with names as "Cowboy" and "Testosterone".

Next time you visit the Richmond Art Center, enjoy the new Rosemary's Cafe there.

Are you aware the Point Methodist Church will celebrate its Centennial year in 2000? And they are looking for historical items and stories regarding the church. (510 234-5334)

Edna Hathaway has returned to her home in Hanford after spending several months in Hawaii.

Want a hands-on learning of the internet? Introduction to the Web is being offered at Washington school by Dave Moore, Gill Stanfield and William Plutte for eight students. Call (Gill) 233-0524 for more information. The \$25 fee benefits the Many Hands Project.

The American Automobile Association says the average American making \$30,000 a year spends 22 percent of his/her working hours paying for car expenses.

Washington School students are to be congratulated! At a recent fire drill, the 300 students marched out single file to the designated areas, the 300 students stood in class lines without talking and the 300 students were attentive until the bell buzzed for a return to their classrooms. Impressive!

Jim and Florence Wilson have returned from Tucson, Arizona where they visited former Point resident, Tref Ross.

Bruce and Ann Bartram will plan a visit to Branson and the Truman Library in Missouri.

Gretchen Schwab left from San Diego State in March to study in Paris. Majoring in Foreign Languages, Gretchen plans to be a language teacher. Thirty years ago her Mom, under the same college program!

Bob Peckham sure knows how to get out of work...the hard way! Bob severely cut the palm of his right hand, severing the main artery. Hopefully, Bob will recover complete use of his hand.

If you aren't walking around the beautiful Knox-Miller Park you are missing not only exercise, but some magnificent scenic views.

There is no man so poor that he is not rich if he has a friend; there is no man so rich that he is not poor without a friend. (from my Grandmothers blue spiral notebook Ho. 48)

Trivia answer: It first appeared on April 9, 1966, sold for five cents and the Editors were Donna Roselius and Sylvia Hutchison. The two-page letter size mimeographed journal was distributed through the Point markets. They hoped to inform local residents and create interest in what was happening in this area regarding proposed rezoning and new ordinances. Classified advertising at 25 cents per issue was invited to help pay expenses and they planned to publish weekly.

Picture Gallery



WOMEN'S WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT CLUB

A play entitled "Lemonade", performed by Marie Wedell and Bert Miller, members of the Masquers, was entertainment for the March meeting of the Westside Improvement Club, oldest women's service club in Richmond. Marian Voight chaired the meeting in the absence of President Virginia Cherniak who was ill.

Twenty-one were present and welcomed new member Vanna Prince. The club voted \$100 toward the restoration of the Point Richmond map sign in the triangle.

Hostesses were Josephine Palenchar, Mary Forbes and Gilda Markarian.

Their next meeting is April 1st (no foolin') with Lynn Whitson, librarian, as the guest speaker. Meeting at 11:30 a.m. at the Point Methodist Church, they invite all interested women. For more information call 236-8036.

KID'S COMMITTEE PREPARES FOR MAY REUNION

Theresa Meneghelli accepted chairmanship of the 3rd Kid's Reunion on Sunday, May 18th, 2:00 p.m. and will be assisted by June Solosabal, Bruce and Ann Bartram, Al Frosini, Chano Forner, Melba Logan, Julio Carrero and by board members Al Smith, Mary Highfill and Mid Dornan. Can you imagine how difficult it is to formulate plans with the laughter and adlibs coming from memories of this committee!

Interest keeps escalating so let Gary Shows know of any person you know that is interested in receiving an invitation. The committee is working on improving the sound with microphones this year. If you can provide cookies or fancy sandwiches, contact Theresa, (510) 223-9371. You won't want to miss this years reunion as we hear more from out-of-state are coming!

Mother's Day - May 11th

Remember Mom on Her Day! Her role is diverse. Remember when all of a sudden the streamers and carnations and pictures of Whistler's Mother you'd been seeing for years...suddenly, meant you!

Mom is the Big Boss on Mother's Day. In this respect, does it differ from all the other days in the year?

A Mother is to wash and iron your baseball uniform when you tell her at the last minute that it has to be turned in.

A Mother is to be there when you call home.

A Mother is to read to you when you are small and want to learn.

A Mother is to know the foods you like and don't like.

A Mother is to lend you money when you don't have any and all your friends are going to the movie.

An Artist can change the expression on a face with a single stroke of the brush. But then, so can Mothers!

A Mother is to be remembered more than one Sunday a year.

A MOTHER IS TO LOVE!

Church News

Our Lady of Mercy

Allan Smith

234-5139

The 1996 Annual Financial Report was prepared by our pastor, Rev. James C. Clift and mailed to all parishioners. It shows a substantial increase in all areas in comparison to the previous year.

Lenten services have continued and will end on Easter Sunday, March 30th. Special programs will take place during Holy Week. A visiting priest will assist pastor Clift during this time.

The popular Rev. Paul Devine, former Port of Oakland Chaplain, will be with us once again.

The McKinley Foundation's Tenth Anniversary was held recently. It was formed in 1986 to honor and celebrate the life of Judge Patricia Ann McKinley, who died an untimely death that year. As a tribute, the Judge Patricia Ann McKinley Memorial Foundation was established as a non-profit, tax exempt corporation for the purpose of awarding college scholarships to needy high school and college students. It is supported by proceeds from the Annual Crab Feed and community contributions. Pat McKinley's mother, Brenda, is a member and an active supporter of Our Lady of Mercy church. She reported that the

Crab Feed contribution was a success and in my opinion, one of the better of the feasts as it was amply supplemented with local shrimp.

Ellie Strauss, Parish Council member, is presently in charge of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program with over 400 seniors enrolled. Her husband, Robert Strauss, is on the City Planning Commission and is on the staff of the Early Childhood Mental Educational Program.

Mrs. Dolores (Dee) Rosier, member of our parish, has agreed to write the future Our Lady of Mercy articles for "This Point....in time" newsletter. She is a native of Crockett, retired from Chevron and resides with her husband Charlie on Idaho Street in the Point. Dee's father-in-law was an important fellow employee of Chevron. Levi Rosier was in charge of the Credit Union and ended his career with 50 years of company service.

Point Richmond Methodist

Jean Reynolds

235-2988

On Palm Sunday, March 23, Friendship Hall was the site of a wonderful meal provided by the Pt. Richmond business community and friends and members of the church for any who wanted to attend. All in all, 125 to 150 meals were served. The food was delicious and the partakers jovial. Pastor Dan provided background music for the meal, and several people who stopped in to eat stayed after to help clean-up. Every time I participate in this kind of an event, I feel blessed to live in this special community.

The Monday night study group read and discussed the book *Living Buddha, Living Christ* by Thich Nhat Hanh. Next they plan to read *The Acts of the Apostles* from the New Testament. To satisfy an interest that grew from what we learned about Buddhism, Shanon McGowen agreed to teach a meditation class on Tuesdays.

The annual Junktique Sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 3, from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. It promises to be another super event, thanks to organizer Gill Stanfield, and his crew of enthusiastic movers and shakers. Luncheon items will be sold, and there will be a jazz ensemble providing "music to shop by", so if the bargain merchandise does not tempt you, perhaps the frills will. We are accepting donations of good used household items, furniture, books, toys, office equipment, children's clothing, etc. Call the Junktique Hotline at 233-0624 to arrange for items to be picked up or for other information about the sale.

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for July 21 to July 25. It will be from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. Children from age 3 to grade 5 will have a chance to play games, hear stories, see puppet shows, do crafts, sing and snack together. Call Jean Reynolds at 235-2988 to sign up. This is our fourth year of Vacation Bible School: it is such a jolly time, both the adults and children who participate look forward to it all year.

Point Methodist's Joyful Noise Choir, under the direction of Virginia Cherniak, will perform in the GRIP (Greater Richmond Interfaith Program) Choir Festival on April 27. The choir will sing with the combined choirs of other GRIP congregations, and will also perform two numbers as an individual choir.

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 25th installment.

May 5, 1925

The Social League met in Church Parlors and was opened in prayer by our President Mrs. Owens.

There were 27 members present.

Mrs. Owens gave a short account of the tea.

The money from the cakes sold at that time was turned in. Bills for flowers presented and ordered paid.

A calling committee was asked for but as no one volunteered, each one was asked to be a committee of one to call on the newcomers.

Rev. Grant made a short talk and presented the matter of trying to enlist the interest of the men in the community and asked the members of the league to take charge of the next dinner to be held in the church parlors, May 27th, as a means of permanency of the new movement. Mrs. Beckley was made Chairman of the Committee and Mrs. Glineberg, Allison, Martin and Hendricks volunteered to help all day. Mrs. Jones, Seymore, Redman and Brothers volunteered to help serve in the evening.

An account was also given from the last men's dinner. After all bills were paid there was a balance of \$1.60 which was to be used for articles for the kitchen.

Volunteers for the next food sale were called for. Mrs. Redman, chairman, and Mrs. Currier, Alexander and Danner as helpers.

A motion was made by Mrs. Parker and carried that \$20 be taken out of the treasury to buy dishes for the Church. Mrs. Owens appointed Mrs. Jones and Brothers to do the purchasing. As there was no further business the meeting adjourned.

On Hand \$64.70

Mrs. Adams dues .60

Mrs. Alexander " .60

Elizabeth Jenkins .60

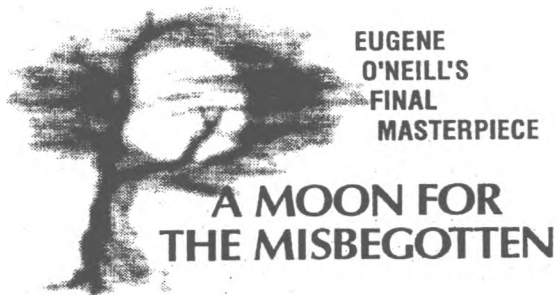
Silver Rental .50

Sale, cake left over 1.60

Dinner 1.60

Silver offering 2.85

Anne Hanzlik Reviews The Masquers Production



By Eugene O'Neill

Scenic Design by Theo Collins
Costume Design by Nancy Wilson
Lighting Design by Maureen Scheuenstuhl
Production Manager and Stage Manager
Joyce Hughes

Directed by Theo R. Collins

January 24 through March 1, 1997

Of the more than a dozen plays of Eugene O'Neill there is a recurring theme of the dark side of life, although sometimes relived by some touches of humor. Several times they are based on characters of O'Neill's own family in which he found fertile fields of character to explore. This is true of one of the characters in this present play at the Masquers. Tyrone, one of the four main participants in 'Moon' is the

sardonic owner of the Connecticut farm on which Josie and her father are tenants. Tyrone is believed to be the fictionalized version of O'Neill's elder brother.

The locus of the action of the play all takes place in front of the Hogan's ramshackle shack on Tyrone's property. Although the cast lists five actors the three Josie, Phil, her father and Tyrone carry the message of the play. Their interdependence delineates the problems that are crippling all three. Phil the father tries to mask his inadequacies with a resort to many and frequent trips to his bottle of bourbon or even less savory brew, either at home or at the nearby pub. Meanwhile his daughter Josie, although sober, struggles with her lack of self worth which she tries to cover with bravado toward her father and her legendary lovers.

Tyrone, their landlord is the more sophisticated and worldly of the three, who tries to solve his problems and low self worth by frequenting New York's Broadway and the members of the theater crowd, most particularly the chorus line.

However you find out that he really wants solace in his relationship with Josie, as she does with him. They finally achieve that, on moonlight night they spend together. It is a tender and revealing episode but inevitable their basic problems find no solution. Tyrone goes back to Broadway and Josie takes up her roles as her fathers caretaker-housekeeper.

Josie is played by Tamarra Plankers who is charming in that demanding role - Phil, her father is convincing in the role of a sometimes engaging Irish but ineffective drunk.

Tyrone, George Adams, is no stranger to the Masquers stage, portrays a weak but somehow sympathetic admirer of Josie. The production staff achieved a convincing vehicle for the play by the efforts of Vauma Prince and her assistants for the set and the lighting and the carpentry by Aubrey Mc Clellan.



*George Adams and Tamara Plankers exchange secrets.
Photo by Jerry Telfer.*

**HAPPY
MOTHERS DAY**

The MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE
presents



**EUGENE
O'NEILL'S
FINAL
MASTERPIECE**

A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN

One of America's Greatest Classics! Strapping Josie Hogan, the tenant farmer's daughter who can do the work of three men, has a "reputation," but we learn the truth as she spends a moonlit night with the tormented Broadway playboy who is trying to forget his horrible memories, a night that changes them both forever.

"Compelling theater."—N.Y. Daily News

Directed by Theo Collins.

T H E C A S T

**George Adams Christopher Collins
Daniel Morgan John Anthony Nolan
Tammara Plankers**

FRIDAY & SATURDAY EVENINGS

MARCH 28—MAY 10, 1997

Sun. Matinees: APRIL 13, 27, MAY 4

24-Hr. Reservations: 510 232-4031

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE PREPAID.

NOW ACCEPTING VISA and MasterCard!

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Curtain 8:30PM. Matinees 2:30PM.

Admission \$9 cash, check or credit card.

Group Rates available.

MASQUERS DINNER & THEATER BENEFIT

THURS., MAY 1

DINNER at Hotel Mac

And "A Moon For The Misbegotten"

\$25. Call (510) 236-4988

Remembrance

Augustine G. MacDonald



This is a story of a young boy. A boy who reveled in the joy of running through the hayfields until it seemed as if his feet barely touched the ground, who felt as if he could run forever, who felt as if he was close to flying. This is the story of a boy whose playground was the hills of Point Richmond, California and whose swimming hole was San Francisco Bay. This is the story of a boy growing up during the Great Depression who never knew or believed that he was poor for wasn't he the luckiest boy in the universe? He could run and fish and chase jackrabbits and hunt for Indian artifacts. He could pick poppies and Indian paint brushes on Nichol Nob for his mother. He could sled down the dry grass covered hills on his homemade sled, speed down the hills on his homemade coaster. He could play baseball with his tape covered ball, his cracked bat, and his father's work glove. He could play kick the can down Washington Avenue while the Indian watched from his pedestal in front of the library. This is the story of a boy who could lose himself in the adventures of Natty Bumppo and the Leatherstocking Tales, for Natty Bumppo could also run like the wind. The boy is now old, he watches his grandchildren run and play and he remembers.....

The memories are jumbled and defying order, they swirl around in the misty vapors of time gone by. The boy grabs out and seized one. Washington School...red bricks...a chain link fence...playground...laughter....a young lad swinging on a bar by his knees, he swings, releases, does a summersault and lands on his feet...a maypole...girls playing jacks...the wetlands behind the school with the tidal channels filling and emptying with the tide...the plank bridge over the largest channel with an old man with a peg leg crossing with a full pail of clams...teachers who deserve to be remembered and honored but whose names are forgotten...playing hookey for the first time with Owen Keenan and both catching poison oak...report cards and comparing grades...boys in knickers wearing beanie made from their father's old felt hats...book reports and tests...the screams of joy as we went out the door on the last day of school before summer vacation...free again, free to run like the wind.



Spin the wheel of time and memories. The wheel slows, slows, and stops...THE BAY, sometimes calm without a ripple, sometimes violent and unforgiving but always beautiful...the annual herring run when the fish would come in by the thousands to spawn...men with nets of every description on all the wharves and beaches...barrels of pickled herring...Kellers Wharf and Kozy Cove...days of swimming, bonfires, roasting potatoes in the coals until they looked like lumps of charcoal...marshmallows and hot dogs...fishing for shiners with our hand lines off Kellers Wharf...clams squirting at low tide...rock climbing at high tide along the cliffs on that point of land separating Kellers and the Cove...the smell of eucalyptus trees at Kozy Cove. Gathering driftwood for our wood stove...family picnics at the Cove...my brother Pat and the "big kids" swimming out to the barge anchored for a time off Kozy Cove...and I, nearly drowned trying to emulate them...POINT WASHINGTON where men fished and caught monster striped bass, where we, at low tide, would search for the tackle they lost to rock snags...the hillsides were we pulled up the survey stakes for our sword fights...so much has been lost but the Bay remains the children still run and play in the hills...run kids run, run like the wind.



Round and round she goes, and where she stops...lets try DOWNTOWN. Sno Cones, was there ever anything so delicious on a hot summer day? The grocery stores with stalks of bananas hanging from the ceiling and penny mints, if the mint had a colored inside you

won a candy bar...the Police Station and the Officer whom we named "Half Past Eight" since this was the curfew time he set for us...the band concerts at the bandstand where all the families gathered and where we children were introduced to classical music...the Firemen polishing their equipment until it shone like gold and who let us sit in the drivers seat while they worked...the movie theater and the serials which always left us in suspense...gather downtown to listen to the heavy-weight championship of the world over a store radio, was it Dempsey and Tunney or Dempsey and Firpo? The NATATORIUM, the first jump into the deep water from the side of the diving board, was it Thursday which was free day for the boys? diving for pennies thrown from the balcony...the challenges, how long can you hold your breath? how far can you swim underwater? how many laps can you swim? the Library our refuge on rainy days, our storehouse of adventure...the two churches on the hill...Sunday church clothes...Midnight Mass and Sunrise Services...Baptisms...Weddings...Funerals...shared joy and grief.



So much has changed but the School has been replaced. Downtown remains only its facade and the faces have changed. The Tunnel has a face lift but it still echoes the children's shouts. The Churches have been lovingly maintained. The old challenges remain with new ones added. Memories are in the process of formation, grab the old ones before they disappear in the swirling mist of time!

The Bataan Death March

John Playter

After fifty years, World War II stories keep surfacing. Stories and memories so heart-wrenching they haven't surfaced because the pain is still real, still felt.

The following story was two and a half years in the making but it took 50 years before he could bring himself to tell it. So intense and emotionally disturbing was the experience of the Bataan Death March that it stayed within, and even his closest friends had heard only a few scant details of his painful experiences.

As John Playter related his story as a prisoner of war to his local Rotary Club, his voice broke up on repeated occasions and he fought back tears in the telling. John Playter lives in Bolivar, Missouri but visits his relatives in El Cerrito and Bodega Bay. It is through his niece, Joann Bray, that this amazing, touching and historic story is available. What to many was another incident of a horrible war becomes a tearful sharing of pain and patriotism.

Second Installment

In late October 1942, word was put out that 1,000 men would be taken to Mindanao, the most Southern island of the Philippines. As anyone who ever served in the military knows, there is an old piece of advice which said: "Never volunteer for anything!".

But Cabanatuan had been a living hell for me. Jaundice, malaria, and beriberi had taken their toll on me and I fought several times to keep from being taken to the "Zero" ward. So I volunteered and on November 7, 1942, our big detail lined up and marched out of the

compound.

We marched the 13 kilometers to the town of Cabanatuan and to the railroad station. In our mess kits we did have cold rice and camotes, which are Philippine sweet potatoes. And we did have new guards, mainly very young men who were conscripts from Formosa. And further, we also learned that a Lt. Yuki, who spoke English and was a Christian, was to be in charge of the detail. We loaded into box cars and believe it or not, we got to leave the doors open. As I jumped to load, my arms collapsed, reminding me just how weak I was. But I was leaving Cabanatuan.

We traveled to Manila and then marched to Bilibid prison, a giant gray building surrounded by a high wall. As we entered we met friends we hadn't seen for months. Occupants of the prison were mainly American battle casualties. The morale was excellent. We slept on the hard, cold floor, but it was clean.

At daylight, we were marched through the Central section of Manila. As we came to the Manila Hotel, we were stopped for a few minutes while Japanese officers with their polished boots and Samurai swords looked down on us. They appeared as casual victors. One could only ask himself: "Have they brought us here in front of their high command to humiliate us?"

The incident seemed small and

insensitive, but there we were, Americans defeated and broken by a much stronger military force. As a nation, we had obviously been naive about the Far East and dismally prepared to meet its challenge. We were not feeling very proud as Americans. Our freedom was gone and our pride and trust crushed.

We arrived at Davao on Nov. 14, 1942. What luggage we had was loaded on trucks and we began the march to the Davao Penal Colony (Dapecol), a large penal farm for hardened Filipino prisoners, isolated deep in the Southern jungles of Mindanao. The farm was well developed with extensive rice fields located several kilometers east of the main compound, vegetable gardens nearby the barbed wire enclosure, and a short distance away, a fruit orchard. It even had a herd of Brahma cattle and a large poultry operation. In short, it was a self-supporting penal institution for the Phillipine government.

We arrived late at night so on the following morning, our Bataan/Corregidor forces met for the first time with the Visayan/Mindanao forces. Those of us from Luzon could hardly believe our eyes. The Southern forces had been interned very briefly in a Phillipine army camp and had been permitted to bring into camp truckloads of food. The Southern forces suffered none of the dietary diseases that the Northern forces had. Men who had been in the same quarters with me at Fort Stotsenberg did not recognize me.

Work details began immediately, for officers as well as enlisted men. They were all farm related so we were able to scavenge some food. Morale picked up and our health

improved. I gained from my 100 pounds that I weighed when I arrived and finally got back to about 135, where I remained for the rest of my internment.

But as is so often the case, some of our very own created a real problem. A coffee detail, that had been working without accompanying guards, left one Sunday morning and did not return. Remembering what the escape punishment had been at Cabanatuan, we had cause for concern.

Two of the ten men who escaped were from my barracks. Uncertainty and fear remained for two days and then the decision was made to take all members of the barracks from which men had escaped to another compound, remove us from all work details and cut our chow down to one light meal a day. Those escapees did make it back to the States relatively soon, where they were considered heroes. Such was not the opinion of those of us left behind.

Remaining in Dapecol from November 1942 until February 1944, I could relate many things, some funny and more not so funny. But one that I will take to my grave with me occurred in November 1943.

One of the largest details that went to work every morning was the rice detail. It included groups that might be plowing, planting, weeding, etc. The ricefields were located in an area named Mactan, which was located about five miles east of the main compound. We rode to the area on flat railroad cars pulled by an American-made diesel locomotive.

Typically consisting of 300-500 men, we usually left camp about 6:30 a.m. We were divided into groups of 20, each under the control of a guard with a rifle and bayonet. Each time we changed location, we were counted, which usually meant many many times a day. Rice was brought out to us at noon. And we usually started back to camp about 5 p.m.

On this particular day, problems developed with the locomotive during the day and it was very late when it arrived. It was raining lightly and the guards were not only nervous but extra mean. The trip to camp was a gradual grade uphill and due to the rain the locomotive wheels were slipping. Our progress was slow to nil.

Very soon, the guards kicked us off the cars and started yelling for us to push. Well, walking barefoot on wooden ties or in brush along the side was miserable. Further, our hearts were just not in it. And no more than we were pushing, it wasn't helping very much.

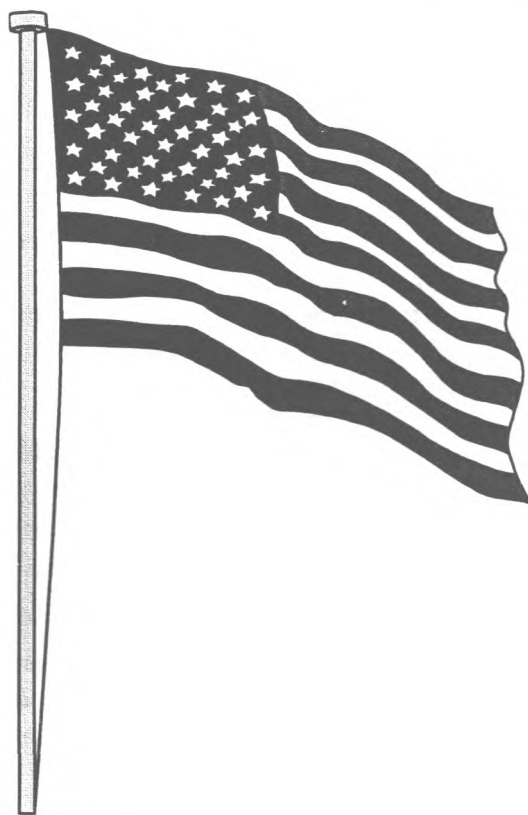
Well, over an hour passed and we were still at least two miles from camp. I don't know who it was but someone suggested that we sing "God Bless America". It soon caught on and grew louder and louder as more joined in.

Probably a mile from the camp, our singing was heard there. Bear in mind that life around a prison camp is not boisterous. No radios, record players, etc., so the sound of our choir was easily heard. As we finally approached the entrance gate, all able-bodied men in the camp were standing as close to the entrance gate as they could get and were cheering wildly when we entered. The guards were horrified as we filed into the cheering group.

Word spread quickly to gather near the open assembly area. And completely hidden by men, a prisoner who had slipped an American flag into camp was holding our flag. I can't to this good day tell you the thrill that gave us. And this scene comes back to me every time I hear our National Anthem played as we honor our flag.

Oh, how it hurts to see people continue to talk, look around, even fail to remove their hats. How easy it is to lose appreciation of something until you lose it. Yes, we stole a little freedom to honor our flag. Having been through so much intensified our love of America, our country of freedom and justice to all!

....to be continued



Sports Memories

by Allan Smith

Do some of the 60 year old Point Richmond natives remember a successful baseball team named the "Point Richmond Demons"? Some of the members were Sonny Campbell, Jim Scoggins, Jerry McCuan, Andy Brown and Richard Smith. The Demons played teams from all over Richmond, San Pablo and El Cerrito.

I've been trying to recall some of the Point athletes who would qualify to be named on the "Point Richmond Hall of Fame". How about:

Baseball:

Russ and Loyd Christopher, Leonard Smith.

Basketball:

Rudy Stark and Eddie Paasch

Tennis:

Jim Hurley (former State Champion), Johnny Stark and Ted Beck.

Track:

J.D. Vincent (once named as a "one man track team" at Marin Junior College.

Coach:

Herbie Bill and Mr. Weston.

Bowling:

Frank Schock

Golf:

Frank Schock

Boxing:

Al Frosini, Chano Forner

Street Fighting:

Fred Beesley, Chip Checci, Jim Wilson, Al Frosini and Frank Schock

AP Smith

Allan Smith's Point

234-5139

The Skunk Holler Hillbillies

In the middle 1930's there appeared in the comic pages of the daily newspapers a comic strip called "Lil' Abner". It reflected on the people, traditions, and towns of the people who lived in the backwoods or a mountain region, especially in the south. The comic strip called the town "Skunk Hollow".

John Palmer, popular local Richmond Educator at that time, formed a musical group called the "Skunk Holler Hillbillies". It was composed of local Richmond and Point Richmond students and was very popular and entertaining. They performed locally in the Bay Area at schools and social gatherings and were very much in demand. There were two Point people, Jim Forbes and Charlie Dutrow in the group which originated in Point Richmond. Incidentally, John Palmer started his educational career at Washington School as a playground director while attending college. He later was principal of Pinole Valley High School.

Phil Hempler

Several Point people were present at the funeral of Phil Hempler who was the Head Athletic Coach at Richmond Union High School for many years. Phil died at the age of 92 during February of this year. Recognized were Jim Eakle, Nellie (Bisio) Pasquini and Romeo Pasquini, Gene Corr and his sister Marie, Herb Hunn, Ed Johannson.

"Allan's Point" continued on next page:

"Allan's Point" continued:

The "Mud Flats"

That parcel of land that Pixar is developing (affectionately known by many as "Frog Town") has always been known by most older Point people as "The Mud Flats". This was the area during the summer season where you first learned how to drive a car, play tackle football, practice baseball, chase jack rabbits with your car, it even was a "lovers lane". During the rainy season go rafting from East Richmond Avenue to Cutting Boulevard. I remember Joe Bailo coming to play football wearing baseball spikes and he cut us all. Donald Busby was a great runner and tackler. This was where Gene Corr would practice his baseball, sliding into base that I guarded as his sister Marie threw the ball to me. The surface was smooth and soft and our mother said that it was dirty!

Victor Ciabattari

Vic Passed away recently at the age of 74. He was related to the pioneer Point Richmond Ciabattari family. We would beat Victor occasionally in the early days at his cousin Ardell's restaurant that is now named "The Great American Hamburger Joint". During the last 15 years, Victor had many friends in the Point, especially from the Catholic Church. Ciabattari served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War Two, participating in over 40 missions in a B-24 Bomber in the European theater. After the war, he worked at Point Molate Naval Depot and later retired from the Oakland Naval Supply Base. Victor was buried at the Golden Gate Cemetery in San Bruno. Records show that Victor Ciabattari had one of the highest scholastic records among Richmond Union High School students.

June 3, 1942

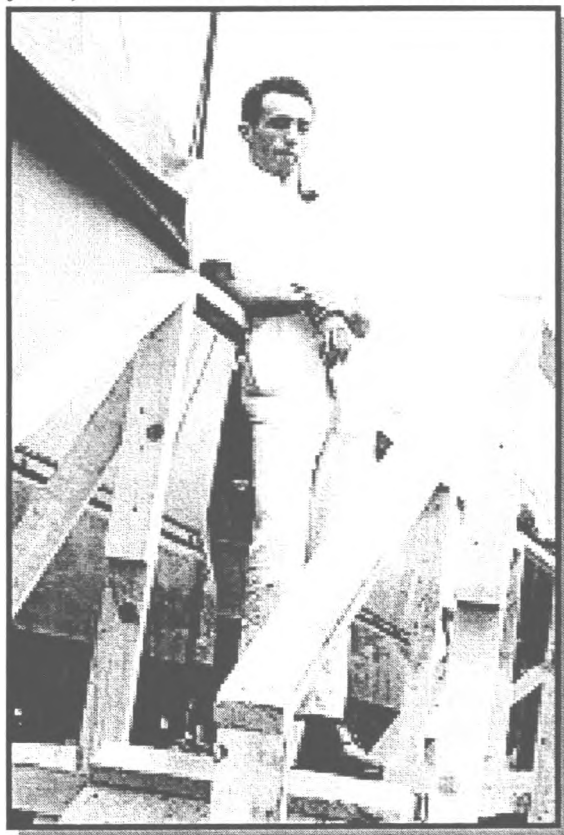
On this date I met Paul Novarini at Pearl Harbor who was on the USS Oklahoma. I recognized the Point native by his extreme blond hair.

Pipe Smoker Contest

I've written previously about pipe tobacco smokers that I knew. Guess who this pipe tobacco smoker is and the first one to identify him will receive a prize.

Clues:

1. Picture was taken aboard a Merchant Marine vessel in Saigon, Viet Nam in 1965.
2. He is relatively new in the Point (10 years) and owns a business here with his wife.





400 NEVIN AVENUE
P.O. BOX 1267
RICHMOND
CALIFORNIA 94802

Join Us at the SS RED OAK VICTORY Kick-off Party

April 27, 1997 at 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: PORT OF RICHMOND, former location of Shipyard 3

PURPOSE: RAISE FUNDS for the restoration of the SS RED OAK VICTORY

EVENTS: **JITTERBUG CONTEST** -- music of the '40s by the Richmond Municipal Band under the direction of Peter Hathaway.

BOND SALES -- replicas of bonds sold to employees at Kaiser Shipyards, now \$10 each.

"BE A NUT, BUY A BOLT!" Bolt sales from two other Victory ships ready to be scrapped at the Maritime Fleet.

"DRIVE A RIVET, ROSIE DID IT!" Riveting excitement.

COSTUME CONTEST

HAT TOSS AND OTHER GAMES

FOOD BOOTHS

MOCK LAUNCHING CEREMONY

HISTORICAL PHOTO BOOTH

OLDEST SHIPYARD WORKER

BAR

HISTORICAL EXHIBITS

ADMISSION: \$5 DONATION, RMA MEMBERS, IN ADVANCE
\$7 DONATION, NON-MEMBERS, IN ADVANCE

\$10 DONATION AT THE GATE

I'M COMING TO THE KICK-OFF!

Please send _____ tickets. I enclose \$_____ for RMA members and/or
\$_____ for non-members AND a self-addressed stamped envelope.

NAME _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____

Mail by April 18, 1997 to: Victory Kick-off Party
710 - 35th Street
Richmond, CA 94805



CARDS & LETTERS



Dear Pam:

Thank you so very much for all you and the others do to make our memories and Point Richmond history so great.

Again many thanks,
Emill & Edwyna Pleau
Richmond



Dear Pam:

It's a pleasure to renew my subscription to The Point Richmond History Association. I appreciate the reminder because time escapes me. Tell Gary Shows what a great camera he has in his possession! Digital cameras make sharper reproductions.

Mid Dornan looks outstanding as does Gary and all the people of the John Wehrle meeting in the Feb./Mar newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing you on Kid's Day Reunion and PRHA Show. I'm also excited about the new "Ferry Point" of Miller-Knox Park.

Happy Day
Betty Glass Marshall
Grants Pass, OR



Dear Pam:

It's that time again and I'm only too glad to renew my membership to PRHA. I'm really looking forward to the "Kid's from Point Richmond Day"! You all do such a great job.

Sincerely,
Luella Bain Wilcox
Oroville, CA

Dear Sirs:

As a former resident of Point Richmond, I would like to make contact with persons, from the time that I knew them at Washington Elementary School.

In a copy of your newsletter from Summer of 1995 I noticed the name "Rosemary Giacomelli" possibly a relation to Leo Giacomelli I knew as a boy. My name is William (Bill) Middleton and address at that time was 74 Terrace Ave., I lived with my grandmother, Annie Ellsworth. I know the people who now reside there, and in 1995 we were able to visit them and view my old home. This means very much to me.

Thank you,
William Middleton
19212-B Avenue of the Oaks
Newhall, CA 91321



Dear Gary,

Do you remember Elsie Spinola...

She lived at the Point on Washington Avenue, her home was a two-story red brick building.

I was told that she was lonesome...misses Point Richmond. Her present address is 14505 Trinidad Road, San Leandro, CA 94577.

Perhaps a note from a long lost friend will be welcome.

Thank You
Marie Wilson Dietz
Richmond

Deaths....

RUTH MARIE DINGLE ABBOTT died February 24, 1997 in a Concord care center at age 75. A native of Butte, Montana, she grew up in Point Richmond at 46 Idaho Street, attended Washington School, graduated from Richmond High in 1939 and received her B.A. degree from UC Berkeley in 1943. Ruth was a teacher in the Moraga School District for 20 years. Her affiliations included the Point Richmond History Association, American Association of University Women and the Laubach Literacy Action Program. She is survived by her sons, David of Sacramento and Paul of Concord and five grandchildren.

◆

DEBRA LYNN FERGUSON, born in Richmond, died March 4, 1997 in a Vallejo hospital. She was 38. She was a special education teacher's assistant at Kennedy High and Peres Elementary Schools and was a member of the Atchison Village Homeowners Association. She is survived by her husband Ralph Ferguson, daughter Carrie and Son, Jared, all of former teacher at Washington School Richmond.

◆

DARLENE MOULTRIE, died March 6, 1997, age 52. The Arkansas native worked for the West Contra Costa Unified School District for 31 years and was a former teacher at Washington School. She is survived by her husband, Richard and daughter Dawn of Richmond; brothers Manley Campbell of Missouri and Danny Campbell of Albany; sisters Eunice Livingston and Bettye Griffin of Richmond, and Francis Brown of Arkansas and one grandchild.

◆

NORALEEN HELEN DOWELL died March 14, 1997. She was 77. Noraleen retired after 47 years as a secretary with the West Contra Costa Unified School District serving at Roosevelt Jr Hi, Mira Vista and Dover Elementary Schools but would have been happier to always be a secretary and not retire. In WW II she was a U.S. Marine in the first group of women sent to Santa Barbara. Last year she was rescued from a fire in the apartment below. Born in San Francisco, she lived in the Point for 67 years. Noraleen's love for cats was reflected in her clothing, her house and in her office. She is survived by her husband of fifty-three years, Richard Dowell.

◆

ROY D. NICKOLA, JR., 69, of Stockton died February 5 at home. Mr. Nickola was born in Oakland and lived his last 24 years in Stockton. Mr. Nickola was a locomotive engineer for 39 years with Santa Fe. He served in the Navy during World War II and was a member of Sons in Retirement. He is survived by his wife Dorothy Nickola of Stockton: sons, Roy Nickola III of Richmond Karl Nickola of Stockton, Kurt Nickola of Elk Grove: stepchildren, John Gibson of Minnesota, Mark Turner of Concord and Leanne Turner of San Jose: and half-brothers, Tref Ross

of Tucson and Ted Ross of Hilo, Hawaii; 10 grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.



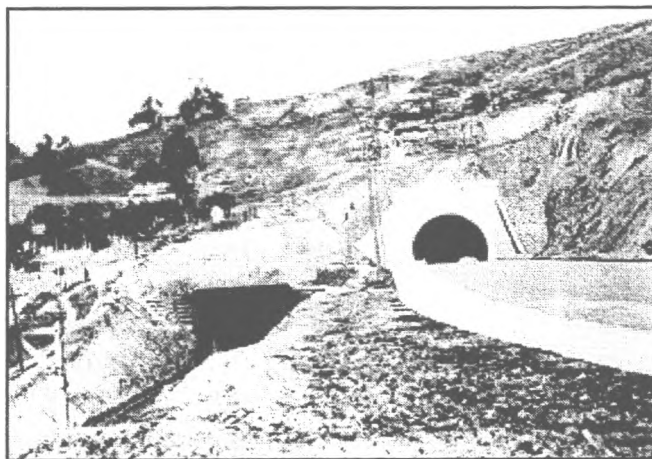
VICTOR JOHN CIABATTARI, retired after 38 years as a senior warehouseman at the Oakland Naval Supply Depot, died February 22, 1997 in a Pinole hospital. He was 74. The Richmond native was a lifelong resident of West County. He was a member of Men of the Sacred Heart in Oakland, Padre Pio Prayer Group in San Francisco, Toastmasters of Richmond and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church Cenacle in Point Richmond. He was an Army Air Forces veteran of World War II, and a food and wine connoisseur. He is survived by a sister, Norma P. Haney of Idaho



RUTH HARRIET MILLER, a retired executive secretary, died Dec. 29 in an Oakland hospital. She was 83. The Nevada City native was a resident of Point Richmond. She loved to travel and was a strong supporter of the California SPCA. She was fond of cats. Her husband, William McKinlay Miller, died Jan. 30. She is survived by cousins, Carl and Jackie Wolff of Nevada City.



WILLIAM MCKINLAY MILLER, retired after 31 years as an oil production and refinery engineer for Standard Oil Company, Richmond, died Jan. 30 in an Oakland hospital. He was 85. The Oregon native was a 53-year resident of West County. He was a member of the Richmond Lawn Bowling Association; Sons in Retirement; and Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity. His wife, Ruth Harriet Miller, died Dec. 19, 1996. He is survived by his daughters, Barbara A. Miller of Grass Valley and Sydney M. Munn of Placerville; sons, William "Mac" Miller of Oregon and Stephen P. Koke of Ruff and Ready; a brother, John E. Miller of Texas; and five grandchildren.



The completed municipal tunnel as it appeared in 1915.

April Birthdays

LOOF LIRPA
ROBERTA PALFINI
KARILU CRAIN
TARA KAUFMAN
JUDY WALZ
PAM WILSON
JOEL PETERSON
CHARLOTTE KNOX
ANNA SCHWARTZ
MONICA DOHERTY
WILIAM KRETZMER

ALISON LORD
SHARON MERTLE
CAROL MACDIARMID
ROSEMARY CORBIN
ROBERT JAMES PALFINI
CHESTER THOMPSON
ROBERTA JENKINS SMITH
KATHY BARNES
BRUCE BARTRAM
DORI FREITAS
RUTH WILSON

PAULA FERGUSON
DON AMANTITE
MICHAEL HORN
BONITA NEASHAM
ERIC HOILAND
MELISSA DRISCOLL
JOHN MAXWELL
GORDON MILLER
DARIAN PECKHAM
TERRY DOWNEY

May Birthdays

PATRICIA DORNAN
DOUGLAS CORBIN
DIANA CORBIN
RICHARD MATTUECCI
JON DOELLSTEDT
LUCRETIA EDWARDS
VERN DOELLSTEDT
CINDY QUIST
MAURICE DOHERTY
RUTH BEARDSLEY
VARSIE LOMETTI
MARG MILLER

SHIRLEY MOORE
WINIFRED BOZIKI
JACKSON BRADSHAW
DORA BEESLEY
FEUERHELM
BRUNO REVEDA
BOB PECKHAM
DIANA SPINOLA
BECKY HORN
SARA EELES
BETTY WIRTH
RENA GONSALVES

LYLE FISHER
MURIEL CLAUSEN
NELL BROOKER
WINI JONES
ANNE HANZLIK
SHONEY GUSTAFSON
DAVID MACDIARMID
JULIAN SMITH
ANNE-CATHERINE
HADREAS

THIRTY-ONE YEARS AGO:

REZONING POINT RICHMOND SOUTH

THE HILL AREA SOUTH OF GARRARD TUNNEL AND NICHOLL KNOB, AND ENCOMPASSING BRICKYARD COVE, HAS BEEN PARTIALLY REZONED INDUSTRIAL, BUT CITY PLANNERS CONSIDER THE LAND MORE ADAPTABLE FOR HOMES AND HAD THE AREA DESIGNATED RESIDENTIAL ON THE RICHMOND GENERAL PLAN. THE REZONING IS INCOMPLETE, HOWEVER, AREAS OF CONTROVERSY—WHICH INCLUDE TOPS CHEMICAL COMPANY, RICHMOND BRICK COMPANY AND THE SANTA FE FLATLAND—WERE EXCLUDED PENDING A 60 DAY DELAY ON HEARING.

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 (six issues) and a special publication. 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.

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Jerry Cerkowicz	Proof/Article
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Jean Reynolds	Article
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Augustine G. Mac Donald	Article
Sandi Genser-Maack	Article

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

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

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

139 1/2 Washington Avenue
Point Richmond, CA 94801

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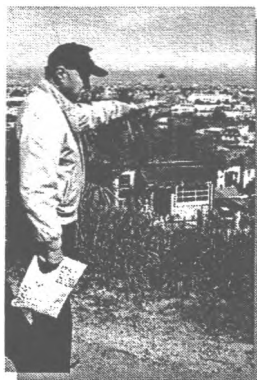
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<http://www.alkos.com/prha>



***Allan Smith
points out
the Point***

Calendar

April/May, 1997

April 1
Tuesday

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

All Fools Day

April 4
Friday

West Contra Costa County School District Holiday
Students and all employees

April 6
Sunday

Daylight Savings Time Begins
Set your clocks one hour ahead at bedtime Saturday

April 9
Wednesday

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting
Noon, Hotel Mac

April 15
Tuesday

Federal Income Tax Returns are Due

April 21
Monday

Bank of Richmond (Mechanics Bank) opened in 1902

April 29
Tuesday

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

May 6
Tuesday

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

May 14
Wednesday

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting
Noon, Hotel Mac

The Point Richmond Stroll, "An Evening in Point Richmond"
Downtown 5pm-7pm

May 18
Sunday

PRHA Membership meeting and "Kid's Reunion"
Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church (see inside front cover)

May 23
Friday

DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER ISSUE OF TPIT

May 26
Monday

Memorial Day Holiday

May 27
Tuesday

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