

# THIS POINT.... in time

## NEWSLETTER

The Point Richmond History Association

Since 1979

[www.PointRichmondHistory.org](http://www.PointRichmondHistory.org)

**Vol. XXXVI No. 5**

**April/May, 2018**

**\$3.00**



**Nicholl Knob Hillside**

Point Richmond History Association  
General Membership Meeting  
May 20 at 2:00 p.m.  
at  
Point Richmond Community Center  
139 Washington Avenue

A Business Meeting will be followed  
by an informal discussion of our  
Informational Kiosk  
Come make suggestions for future  
Kiosk displays

Refreshments will be served

# *From the President*

*by Mid Dornan*

May 20, at 2:00 p.m. our Annual Meeting of The Point Richmond History Association, will be at the Point Community Center, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. After the short meeting to conduct necessary business and elect Officers for 2018-2019, we will have a program followed by refreshments and fellowship. Learn the long process of getting the Kiosk. Meet the PRHA Officers and those making and recording our history. Become a part of the team. Everyone is invited; only members may vote.

Rumors often emerge about a tunnel somewhere under Washington Avenue, the imagination of many. To clarify rumors read the story of the OPERA HOUSE later in this issue.

I like to believe PRHA has made Point Richmond History fascinating.

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*PRHA Photo Archive #1087 is an early 1900's aerial shot of Point Richmond, note the water tank on Water Street.*

*Thank you to the Contra Costa History Museum for scanning this negative for us.*

Thank you members for your renewal:

**Dee Rosier**

**Richard & Roberta Palfini\*\***

**Frank & Kristine Lazaro Family**

**Patricia Dornan\*\***

**Doug & Rosemary Corbin\*\***

**Mary Lee Cole**

**Anne Brussok-Roth & David Roth\*\***

**Arduina Smith Family**

**Burl Willes\*\***

**Darlene Albright Wright**

**Jim & Olivia Jacobs\*\***

**Shelby Sampson**

**Brenda McKenley**

**Remigio Javellana**

**Charlene Smith**

**Joe Pritchard\*\***

**Marc Bisio**

**Jeanne Pritchard\*\***

**Shirley & Tom Butt\*\***

**Don S. Crowe**

**Mark J. Kornmann\*\***

**Larry Slagle**

**Simeon James Burtner**

Welcome to new members:

**Kim & Lynn Stoddard Family**

**Jan Palarczyk\*\***

\*Gift Membership

\*\*Special Supporter, *Thank You!*

Thanks to the Volunteers who open and close our museum two days each week

Mid Dornan

Pat Pearson

Heinz Lankford

Gary Shows

Lori Kauth

Virginia Mooney

Bonnie Jo Cullison

# *Thank You! To* **Santa Fe** **Market**

*For distributing*

***“THIS POINT.....in time”***

*Support our local retailers*

*Visit our little museum and view our  
1000 picture slide show of historic  
Point Richmond photos.*

*Open Thursdays and Saturdays*

*And the first and second Tuesday*

*of each month*

*11:30 am - 2:00 pm*



## ***The Cover:***

*I looked up out of my home office window at the  
Springtime green hillside and thought,  
“That would make a nice cover for TPIT”*

*Photo by Gary Shows*



# Editor's Notes

**Gary Shows**

***garyshows@gmail.com***

I've been busy scanning newsletters for the website, pointrichmondhistory.org. So far, I have scanned Volumes one through eleven, which represent May 1982 to April 1993. Volumes 23 to the present are also available. Also I have added a Google search function so that the entire website, including the TPIT newsletters can be searched.

Thanks to the Contra Costa County History Museum for their Scan-a-Thon event I was able to scan a couple of negatives that I have had for a long time. I met some really nice people there and was given an interesting tour of the museum.

I am grateful to James Cheshareck, Caitlin Hibma and Fran Cappelletti for feature articles. Also thanks to Dee Rosier, Jean Reynolds, Norma Wallace Altha Humphrey and Mid Dornan for your interesting and dependable articles and others for all of the little things that make our little newsletter interesting. Finally, thanks to Mark Kornmann for his thorough and meticulous proof reading job.

***The deadline for items to be published in the next, June/July/August summertime issue of TPIT is Friday, May 25, 2018.***

Thanks to those who helped fold, staple and address the last issue:

Mid Dornan  
Gary Shows  
Jerry Cerkowicz  
Bonnie Jo Cullison  
Heinz Lankford  
Pam Wilson  
Marcellina Smith  
Tom Piazza  
Caitlin Hibma  
Fran Smith

## ***Thank You! Our Special Supporters!***

### ***History Makers***

Donna Wilson  
Doug & Rosemary Corbin  
Kathe Kiehn  
John A. Thiella & Rosa T. Casazza  
Roberta & Richard Palfini  
Patricia Dornan  
Les Crim  
Norm and Jean Reynolds  
Fernando & Becky Garcia  
David B. Jones  
The Bartram-Owens Family  
Burl Willes  
Garry & Maryn Hurlbut  
Bob Armstrong  
Abigail Bok & David Gottlieb  
Diane Hirano  
Steve Birnbaum  
Jan Palarczyk

### ***History Preservers***

Royce Ong  
Kevin, Renée & Griffin Knee  
Sandi Genser-Maack & Lynn Maack  
Maurice & Margaret Doherty  
Linda Newton  
Tom & Shirley Butt  
The Dolberg Family  
Bernie McIntosh  
Don & Ingrid Lindemann  
Roberta & Tim Montgomery  
Mary Crosby & Tom Piazza  
Karen Buchanan  
Norma Wallace  
Don & Carole Woodrow  
Linda Andrew-Marshall  
Gloria & Mark Maltagliati  
Anne Brussok-Roth & David Roth  
Ken Blonski & Louise Fender  
Erica & Barry Goode  
James J. Cheshareck  
Tony Lizarraga  
Bobbie Swerdfeger Lizzarraga  
Linda Hudock  
Joanne Pike  
Mark J. Kornmann  
Jeanne Pritchard  
Joe Pritchard  
Jim & Olivia Jacobs



# A-Mid Trivia

**TPIT**  
**Exclusive**  
**since 1984**

**Mid Dornan (510-234-5334) (middornan@gmail.com)**

## QUESTION

How many rooms are there in the WhiteHouse? ANSWER AT END OF TRIVIA

\*\*\*

If you replace “W” with “T” in “What, Where and When” you get the answer to each of them.

\*\*\*

Early politicians required feedback from the public to determine what the people considered important. Since there were no telephones, TV's or radios, the politicians sent their assistants to local taverns, pubs, and bars. They were told to 'go sip' some Ale and listen to people's conversations and political concerns. Many assistants were dispatched at different times. 'You go sip here' and 'You go sip there.' The two words 'go sip' were eventually combined when referring to the local opinion and, thus we have the term 'gossip.'

\*\*\*

Yvonne and Chysandra Nair were honored by the Point Methodist Church at the San Pablo Yacht Club as Sweethearts of 2018 for creating Saffron Strand, a Point Richmond non-profit for Human Dignity, Respect and Trust in the community. Master of Ceremonies, Mayor Tom Butt, introduced speakers Fran Smith, Shamar Shankar, Margaret Jordan, Byron Baptiste, Kristie Johnson, Cathy O'Brien, and Rev. Dan Damon and lauded them for their work. Yvonne and Chi are moving to New Mexico, finding the need to enrich their lives.

\*\*\*

Have you been checking the events and information in the Kiosk? The colorful, Irish green shamrocks surrounding the Neighborhood Council's information in the kiosk informs you of what is happening locally and how you can be a part of this neighborhood and meet people living in the Point as well as receive such

information as Police reports. Unless notified, they meet the last Wednesday of the month at the Community Center. Now you check for the time and agenda.

\*\*\*

It is time to check if you need new batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors?

\*\*\*

Fran Smith, President of Masquers Board, Chair Methodist Juntique Sale, working in Sacramento with ADT, American Disability Act, is wished a speedy recovery after her upcoming cancer surgery in May..

\*\*\*

Pat Pearson is recovering from a bout of pneumonia as her son, Jim, arrived from So. Cal, and daughter Julie, Sacramento, to assist her now that she is at home.

\*\*\*

The Panama Canal average passage money to the country is 17 million a day. Multiply that by 365 days.

\*\*\*

Were you one of the 73% of U.S. adults that read at least one book last year? 65% read a print book, 28% read an e-book, and 14% listened to an audiobook.

\*\*\*

Twins Pam Wilson and Paula Israeli chose to celebrate their annual April birthday with a trip to Paris.

\*\*\*

Last year my son-in-law, Richard, retired. Shortly after a friend dropped by and asked, “How is retirement going?” “Well,” answered Richard resting in a comfortable chair, “I have a new TV and my wife still works.”

\*\*\*

Support our local restaurants, eat in the Point, safe from traveling, meet locals and visitors, enjoy the downtown, and still choose

your choice of food.

\*\*\*

The clock in the restaurant window had stopped. One day a friend asked the owner if he knew the clock was not running. "Yes", replied the restaurant man, but you would be surprised to know how many people look at the clock, think they are hungry, come in to eat".

\*\*\*

One thing you can say for kids, they don't bore you with cute things their parents said.

\*\*\*

Planning a trip to Muir Woods? Be advised parking has become a major problem. Limited space; now you need a reservation to park.

\*\*\*

IT IS THAT TIME OF YEAR THAT DONATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AT THE METHODIST CHURCH IN POINT RICHMOND FOR THEIR ANNUAL JUNKTQUE SALE, SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2018. Call 510.685-2338 for donation times

\*\*\*

Intentionally trying to lose a game of rock/paper/scissors is just as hard as to win.

\*\*\*

Mother and 3 year -old daughter are in the office waiting for immunization shots. 3-year-old cries after shot and given stamp for her arm. Mama has given shot and 3-year old asked, "Did you get a stamp?" Mama shakes her head, NO. Then cry Mama, and they will give you one.

\*\*\*

In 2015 Atherton, CA, in Silicon Valley was the richest town in the U.S., with an annual income of \$444,374. More than one-third of the nation's 100 richest households are located within 50 miles of New York City.

\*\*\*

With more crowded apartments, how soon will we see 'roll up' TVs and other appliances made smaller?

\*\*\*

Donna Roselius, now living in Port Orford, Oregon, has touched base with the PRHA asking for more copies of the TPIT newsletter which she founded. She wishes she was still here. So do we Donna.

\*\*\*

ANSWER: The White House has 132 rooms: 35 bathrooms, 6 levels in the residence, 412 doors, 147 windows, 28 fireplaces, 8 staircases, 3 elevators, a putting green, tennis court, jogging tract, bowling alley, White House Family Theater, and swimming pool.

\*\*\*

## *Past A-Mid Trivia*

*May, 1991*

\*\*\*  
Chicken Pox (*Pops as the kids call it*) has taken toll in two households on Scenic Avenue. Bethany Reynolds began with the outbreak followed by brothers Michael and David while across the street both Daniel and Andrew Butt sported the spots!

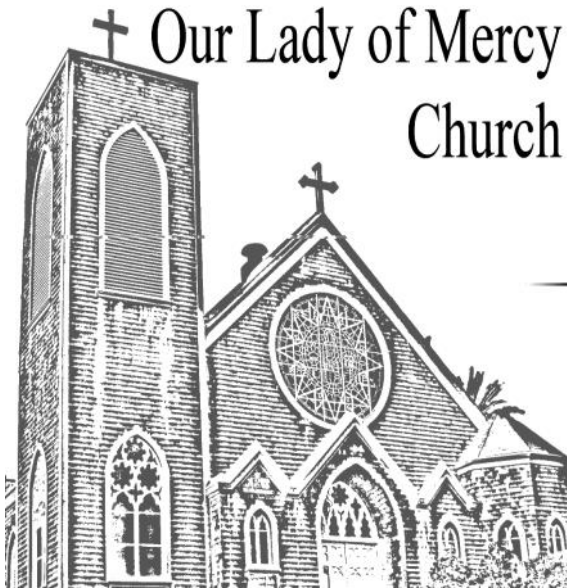
\*\*\*

Arriving to help Anna Schwartz celebrate her April 1st birthday were her niece and husband, Dr. Monica and Volker Link from East Germany. Good neighbor Doty Perry chauffeured the trio to view the sights and sounds of the Bay Area.

\*\*\*

*They told me I had type A blood, but it was a typo.*

# Church News



*By Dee Rosier*

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We are now in Daylight Savings Time, which means the days are lengthier with daylight. It is also Spring, but don't be disillusioned by the much-needed rain. Eventually all will play together.

The Parish Council switches hats and becomes the Finance Committee in order to put together the budget for next year. As everyone experiences, nothing goes down, but instead up, which means things have not changed. On paper we expected a bequest, which was delayed due to the death of the executor.

As a parish, other than the pancake breakfasts, we do not host money-making events. The pancake breakfasts are just taking hold and drawing much needed attendees. As a result, our St. Vincent de Paul Society has been able to continue helping people in need. We rely heavily on weekly donations. By the way, donation envelopes are available at the back of the church.

Eventually, Father plans to generate an overview of parish finances and an overview after the major projects have been completed. It is time to get a common picture of where we are and the direction we desire to proceed.

The roses were recently pruned and those that have been there for too long, retired and replaced in order to adorn the walkway into the church with their warm vibrant colors. The soil has been treated to give the best of life to them. Better care equals better blooms.

How quickly the time passes as we journey into the Lenten Season. The palms from last year were burned and the ashes used for anointing on Ash Wednesday. It is an old tradition that hands should be washed with sliced lemons to rid the grease.

As we ready for Holy Week, we will be enrolling children for the religious education classes. Those interested in enrollment for First Holy Communion will be disappointed to learn that classes for this year are complete.

Three couples have been looking into the sacrament of marriage. Marriages are family events and a wonderful opportunity for families to show pride in theirs. It is a planning endeavor and time of creative cultural traditions.

Father's email address was getting pried into, consequently he was advised to secure a new one and drop the old one, which was done.

There are a lot of secretarial duties that need to be fulfilled on a regular basis. We do not have an official secretary and rely on Anne Brussok to complete required tasks. On behalf of the parish, Anne our sincere thanks for caring and always being there for us.

We have supported the Souper Kitchen for many years and as a result, were awarded a beautifully printed and framed letter of gratitude from them.

A group of 15 plus parishioners attended the Mass of the Sick held at the Cathedral of Christ and hosted by the Knights of Malta. Note, that several of our parishioners are Knights of Malta. The ceremony was extremely well received by all



present. Some of us were fortunate enough to be anointed expressively by Bishop Barber.

Callista Gingrich (wife of Newt) is formally assuming her duties as U.S. ambassador to the Holy See.

It is not news that parking in the Point is sparse and frustrating. The church has a lot that is constantly used by other than parishioners. The lot is to always be available to parishioners during church services.

Specific individuals pay a monthly fee to park in the lot, but there are probably more illegals than legals. Father is looking into a professional legal remedy.

The trees on Tunnel are doing their annual display of color, adorning the street on some of these gloomy days.

Continue to remember in your prayers: Jim and Linda Chezerack, Betty Ann and Michael Lambert, Veronica Arkin, Fred Siegmund, and Dixie Mello.

Condolences to the Fay family. Diane (Atwood) and I worked for many years at Chevron and served on the Board of the Chevron Retirees Association. She was an extremely generous lady who gave much of her time to helping others. She was precise and knowledgeable. Living without her will be difficult for many.

Father continues to concern himself with weekly ushers and always expects the lack of. He has a sign-up sheet in the back of the church. On a Sunday past, the sign-up was complete and neither of the sign-ups did their duty, since two others in attendance stepped up and did the job????

During the time I hosted coffee/donuts, the youngsters called me, "The Donut Lady." While enjoying an afternoon walk on the Cutting side of the school, one of the youngsters, who is a regular Mass attendee, called me "Church Lady," and asked if I could throw their ball over the fence. It was my pleasure to do so and to be recognized.

The reward was his thanking me.

Travelling during the Winter – Anne Carroll played golf in Mexico for 10 days.

John and Wendy Hallett enjoyed a trip to New Orleans, Gabi Bay met up with her sister In Florida, and Judy and Dave Spencer, along with family members enjoyed a stay in Maui, Hawaii.

We recently welcomed Edwina Murray when her daughter brought her to Mass and enjoyed old friendships

Brenda McKinley celebrated her 93rd birthday. In honor of it, she attended Mass along with her granddaughter and great-granddaughter, as well as spending the remainder of the week celebrating. Happy one to you Brenda.

Speaking of birthdays, I failed to mention my grandson's recent 18th.

HAVING SOMEWHERE TO GO IS HOME.

HAVING SOMEONE TO LOVE IS FAMILY

HAVING BOTH, IS A BLESSING

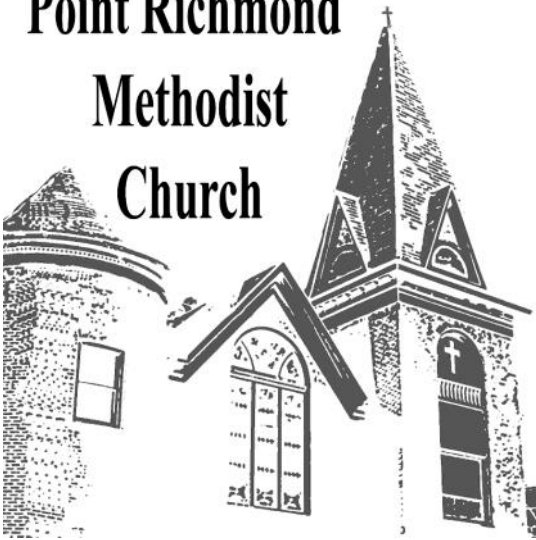
SEE YOU IN CHURCH!



Dee Rosier

***If life were fair, Elvis would still be alive today  
and all the impersonators would be dead.  
Johnny Carson***

# Point Richmond Methodist Church



**Jean Reynolds**

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On February 14, United Methodists from the local circuit joined for an Ash Wednesday Service at Open Door United Methodist Church on Arlington Blvd. in Richmond. The Rev. Brian Adkins preached.

February 15, United Methodist Women, Call to Prayer and Self-Denial meal and program at Open Door United Methodist Church (UMC.) Richmond First UMC women presented the program; Open Door UMC women hosted the soup supper; Easter Hill UMC women were guests. During the program, titled "Learning for a Lifetime," we shared ways to empower young people as leaders and acknowledged personal experiences that enhanced our own skills as effective leaders.

In February, we collected our coins, bills, and checks in the vintage ceramic pie plate to donate to Heifer International in memory of Helen Valentine. Why? Helen was a pie-baking magician for church events; her birthday and wedding anniversary were in February; her name was actually "Valentine;" she supported Heifer International. Heifer provides animals, training,

and support to women and families in communities who need increased food security and income for basic needs. Heifer may also give stoves or water purification devices. People who receive the gift of an animal give one of its offspring to a neighbor, so the gift affects whole communities.

Masquers Playhouse performed Joe DiPietro's comedy, "The Last Romance," at the church on Saturday, March 17. Linda Ellinwood, Bruce Kaplan, and Lorelee Windsor starred; Carl Smith directed. As the Masquers seek grants and other funding to renovate their theater to meet safety and accessibility codes, Pinole Community Players, Riggers Loft/R&B Cellars, and Castro Valley's Chanticleers all hosted one or more Masquers performances in March. The Masquers had a crab feed and silent auction fundraiser in February to keep their theater project in focus. Since 1955, performers at Masquers Playhouse have opened the minds and hearts of theatergoers in Point Richmond and the wider community. Our congregation supports their building project and performance endeavors, and will take part in the Point Richmond Masquers Memorial Day Yard Sale (We call it "Junktique II") on Monday, May 28, to financially help them.

After worship on March 18, we gathered for lunch in Friendship Hall. The Rev. Betsy Schwarzentraub from the Conference Endowment Board shared information about estate planning. She explained several ways to design a will to make sure your assets are distributed to your chosen beneficiaries. Richmond First United Methodist's endowment is a possible choice for people to include in their wills. Personnel at the Conference Endowment Board can help a member draw up their will in a way that minimizes legal fees and taxes.

We celebrated mother-daughter visionaries Yvonne and Chysandra "Chi" Nair of non-profit Saffron Strand as our "2018 Sweethearts of the Year," with dinner and "roast" at Point San Pablo Yacht Club on March 24. Yvonne and Chi have operated Saffron Strand in Richmond for ten years. They encourage their members to learn and practice behaviors that lead to more satisfying personal lives: through employment, housing, relationships, and physical and mental well being. Volunteer mentors advise and teach members

specific skills. At the Sweetheart Dinner celebration, only the vegetables were roasted, not the honorees. Fran Smith organized the party, Richmond Mayor Tom Butt emceed, and Pastor Dan provided gathering music, invocation, and shared about his work as a mentor. Other speakers included Shamar Shankar, Saffron Strand Board President; Margaret Jordan, mentor; Byron Baptiste, Executive Director; Lenora Brown, Office Manager; Cathy O'Brien, mentor; and Kristi Johnson, church member. Lara Choe, Hotel Mac restauratrice and last year's Sweetheart, passed the heart scepter to Yvonne and Chi, the newly reigning royalty. Many people testified to the powerful sense of family and loving support they experience at Saffron Strand, and volunteers emphasized they never feel like it is work. Kristi Johnson marveled at how Yvonne and Chi put their signature on our church's Thanksgiving feast in ways that forever affect how we approach it in the future. In April, Yvonne and Chi are moving Saffron Strand to Albuquerque, New Mexico. We know they will bless the people of Albuquerque through their open hearts and commitment to the principles of dignity, respect, and trust.

On March 25, the Rev. Cornel Barnett preached about "The Cross – What Does it Mean?" for our Palm Sunday worship. Although Rev. Barnett was recovering from laryngitis, the strength of his message transcended any waver in his voice. Jennifer Metz Foster brought her cello, Norman, and accompanied the worship music and the choir selection: "Blessed Is the One" composed by Pastor Dan Damon.

#### On the Calendar:

Point Richmond Acoustic Concerts: April 13, Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman with special guests, The Singer and The Songwriter; May 11, Claudia Russell and Bruce Kaplan, CD Release Concert. Door opens at 7:00, Show at 7:30. Get discount tickets in advance [www.pointacoustic.org](http://www.pointacoustic.org) or purchase at the door.

Vanessa Langer, soprano; Vera Breheda, pianist; Saturday, April 14, 4:00 p.m. Works by Debussy, Rachmaninoff, and Schoenberg. Suggested donation: \$10.

Dennis Johnson, Classical Musician: Saturday, April 28, 2:30 pm. Dennis Johnson's

piano recital features pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Granados. Suggested donation: \$15. No one will be turned away for lack of funds. All donations will be used by "Spirit In Action" to provide business grants to qualified individuals, families and communities in Malawi, Uganda, and Kenya. See more at [www.spiritinaction.org](http://www.spiritinaction.org)

Point Richmond Jazz: April 27, Dan Cantrell with Lila Sklar; May 25, PR Jazz Quartet with Vitamin Em! Door opens 7:00, Show at 7:30 p.m. Discounted tickets in advance at [prjazz.org](http://prjazz.org) or, if available, at the door.

Junktique Sale, Saturday, May 5, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Shop the expansive collection of books, household items, toys, furniture and more! Sustain yourself with soup, chili, hotdogs and pie by the slice. To help, contact Fran Smith, [junosmith@aol.com](mailto:junosmith@aol.com) Bring your donations to the basement door on West Richmond Avenue on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m., or Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 10 a.m. to noon. Check with Bill or Jonathan to arrange pick up of large items or to inquire: Bill Thompson, (510) 730-5274 or Jonathan Swett, [jnscons@comcast.net](mailto:jnscons@comcast.net) Please do not bring: mattresses, bedding, or pillows; broken furniture or particle board furniture; clothing or shoes; TV's (flat screens are OK); computers (flat screen are monitors OK); sofa-beds or sofas; coffee mugs; plastic storage containers; Christmas lighting or decorations; outdated electronics such as printers, VCR's, tape decks (working phonographs are OK); tire chains and wheel rims. Please do not leave donations outside the church building.

Junktique II: Monday, May 28, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; Real Buttermilk Pancake Breakfast from 8:00 AM until 11:00 AM. Shop our basement sale and Pancake Breakfast (Three buttermilk pancakes, two link sausages, juice, and coffee or tea: \$7) as you enjoy many yard sales at the Masquers' All Point Richmond Yard Sale. Let's all help revive the Masquers' with funds to retrofit their red-tagged theater. Ten percent of our merchandise sales goes directly to the Masquers.

For updates, see the church website: [pointrichmondmethodist.org](http://pointrichmondmethodist.org)

# WWIC Est. 1908

*News from the Women's Westside Improvement Club by Norma Wallace*

February

The Women's Westside Improvement Club met Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at the First United Methodist Church, Point Richmond. 17 members attended. Members entering Fellowship Hall were greeted by bursts of red as hostesses Carla Bowman, Diane Hirano and head hostess Diane Diani had decorated the dining, head and dessert tables using a red heart-Valentine's Day theme.

While attendees enjoyed their brown bag lunches, to stimulate conversational exchange, an "icebreaker" prompt was provided: "What sayings do you recall your mother telling you?" Beyond the usual, "if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything," apparently known and shared by mothers everywhere, one member described resisting participating in some activity. Mom responded, "Go once! Go for the experience." Wise words to this day.

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm. WWIC president Linda Newton thanked our hostesses Carla, Diane and Diane for setting up, arranging, setting and decorating the tables, and announced February birthdays to a round of applause: Anne Brussok-Roth (2), Peggy Thow (14) who recently moved to Novato, and Gail Eierweiss (18). Linda introduced guest speaker Dr. Amy Day. Norma Wallace introduced guest and longtime Atchison Village resident Deirdre Cerkanowicz, former editor and publisher of The Channel, and newly retired.

After an update from Kathleen Wimer on the Member Roster, Linda announced Jessie West had volunteered to proof the WWIC guidelines being developed. Linda introduced our return guest speaker, Dr. Amy Day, ND of The Women's Vitality Center in Berkeley. Her areas of specialization include fatigue, stress, brain fog, hot flashes, perimenopause, menopause and other hormonal issues. Dr. Amy talked us through her four-step Replenish Protocol, providing tips for healthy eating and restful sleeping. As with her first visit, members were eager to ask questions, grateful for Dr. Amy's taking time with us (her practice has a wait list).

Officer reports followed. Treasurer Marion Kent gave a detailed accounting of general and allocated funds, including those for Landscaping, the Sunshine Committee, the Map Garden signage and the Welcome

Project. Second Vice President Cathy O'Brien announced the March hostesses as lead hostess Carla Bowman and co-hostesses Doris Mitchell and Anne Brussok-Roth. Secretary Margaret Jordan explained to members the anticipated process for the March meeting's major point of business, deciding on how to distribute our community funds.

President Linda prepared members for the annual election by announcing which officers will continue on the board for the second year of their respective two-year terms: First Vice President Kathleen Wimer, Co-Secretaries Margaret Jordan and Gail Eierweiss, and Treasurer Marion Kent. Then Linda listed the open positions of President, Second Vice President, and This Point in Time Correspondent, explained her own position, and invited Cathy O'Brien and Norma Wallace to describe theirs. Cathy described the sometimes challenging task of obtaining hostess commitments, and then following up each month with the head hostess. Norma invited those with an interest in writing to consider the TPIT Correspondent. Diane Diani and Carla Bowman agreeably accepted appointments to the Nominating Committee.

Mid Dornan reported she is picking up lead responsibilities for the Sunshine Committee, responsible for sending get well cards to members. Mid reported she has already sent cards to Marion Kent, Peggy Thow, Barbara Robertson and Diane Marie. Having stepped forward to lead the Welcome Project, Lynn Clifford updated members on plans to obtain offers and discounts from local businesses, as well as the Point Richmond History Association.

Current fundraising leader Diane Diani delivered a lively update on our May 1 Bunco event, at the Point Richmond Community Center. WWIC has moved its May event the last couple years to accommodate preparations associated with FUMC's annual Junktique, held this year on May 5. Various Book Club members chimed in with the book name, date, time and hostess for the next meeting: on Tuesday, March 13, Lynn Clifford would host a discussion on, "Time in Between." Linda announced a weeding event at the Map Garden on Thursday, March 15, at which time and place participants will be shown the difference between weeds and native



plants, weed this garden and do some maintenance in the Rose Garden.

General announcements included a reminder of a Foodie-themed art exhibit at El Sol sponsored by the Arts of Point Richmond. Carla Bowman accepted congratulations from all corners on the birth of a grandson.

9 members attended the next meeting, Tuesday, March 6, 2018. Co-hostesses Doris Mitchell and Anne Brussok-Roth teamed with head hostess Carla Bowman to set up, arrange, set and decorate the various tables. Their efforts may even have encouraged later remarks on the enjoyable intimacy of the afternoon. President Linda Newton announced birthdays of Deborah Haley (3) and Kathe Kiehn (12), neither present to receive the applause offered. With no guests to welcome and no speaker to introduce, Linda turned over the floor to the Nominating Committee. Volunteers Carla and Diane D. reported that Carla and Fran Smith gladly accepted nominations for This Point in Time and First Vice President, respectively, and that we needed a nominee for President.

Secretary Gail Eierweiss and Treasurer Marion Kent presented their reports. In Cathy O'Brien's absence, Marion announced hostesses for April 3 of Altha Humphrey, Barbara Robertson and Lara Choe, and head hostess Lynn Clifford.

Instead of a speaker, members were asked to engage, table by table, in deep discussion about how make it easier to keep the Club organized and running. Linda presented concise, focused questions: how do we want to spend our time together, how do we make that happen, and what do we value about the Club? Almost thirty minutes was allocated to this discussion and the group feedback process which followed. Comments/ideas included: these less well attended meetings provide an intimacy lost at the bigger meetings; we value the opportunity to get to know our neighbors, and to give back to the community; try to shorten the setup time; shorten the meeting time when there is no speaker; as lunch at 11:30, meeting 12-1; invite more guests; have activities such as a cooking class at Lara's house by Lara; guided meditation; volunteering together (at GRIP); playing games. The icebreaker idea generally was well received and requested.

The last major order of business commenced with suggestions and decisions on our annual charitable giving. The board having decided that \$900 was a prudent budget to allocate for this major expense, a few

examples of past recipients were provided before Linda charted the suggestions. Ultimately, six local non-profits were suggested, several of which involve or have involved WWIC members as noted. Amiable consensus determined the total would be split evenly, with six groups receiving \$150 each: St. Vincent de Paul of Our Lady of Mercy (cofounder and WWIC member Anne Brussok-Roth), Mindful Yoga Project, Writer Coach Connection (cofounded in Richmond by WWIC member Mary Lee Cole), Richmond Swims (several WWIC member participants including Carla Bowman), First United Methodist Church towards new kitchen counters (WWIC member Mid Dorman), and the Masquers (WWIC member Kathe Kiehn). During the discussion, the need for a new coffee maker percolated up. On the spot, Lara offered to donate one to the Club, to a round of very appreciative applause.

Two partial solutions came about during the meeting: Diane Hirano offered that she and Norma resume Table Setup work from the next meeting through June 2019. Then the group seemed to agree that, using the new coffee maker (thanks Lara!) to make coffee more quickly, hostesses could arrive at 11 am instead of 10:30 am.

Project reports followed. Diane D. reminded everyone of the May 1 Bunco event, and to bring their \$15 donation to the April meeting. For the Welcome Project, Lynn Clifford and Diane D. had gone walking through the Point to meet merchants and solicit support. Many merchants have provided discounts. Linda Newton offered WWIC shopping bags. On behalf of the Sunshine Committee, Mid Dorman sent a card to Altha Humphrey.

Closing out the meeting were club announcements, including Diane D.'s update on Bunco May 1 at our Community Center, the Book Group's upcoming meeting March 13 on their latest selection, "The Time in Between," and, a reminder of our March 15 Map Garden activity. Norma reported on attending the latest CERT planning meeting, described a task of learning which neighbors might need assistance (children in the house, individuals on oxygen, etc), and asked interested members to contact her on setting this up for WWIC members.

Please see our web presence linked to [pointrichmond.com](http://pointrichmond.com) for meeting dates, membership information, and our brochure welcoming new neighbors to The Point.



## Early Minutes of the Women's Westside Improvement Club

*It's amazing what's in the WWIC minutes! They date back to July 1908 when the Club started. The ladies met weekly. In the first six months they set projects in motion that we enjoy to this day: a statue a Washington and Park Place, a large drinking fountain, a park next to the Baptist Church, and the establishment of a reading room where the city hall had been in Mr. Crichtett's place. Even the names are historical. These minutes are a priceless treasure of Point Richmond's history.*

*-Linda Newton, President*

Pt. Richmond, Dec. 8, 1908

The Women's West Side Improvement Club of Richmond met at Curry's Hall.

The meeting was called to order by the President Mrs. Adams.

The roll call of officers resulted in all being present except Treasurer Mrs. Lucas, Finance com. Mrs. Garrard, Mrs. Lang, Mrs. Jones Executive com Mrs. Windrew, Mrs. Arnold & Mrs. Niedecker.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

The following bills were read: Wells Fargo & Co. expenses .80¢, Richmond Daily Leader \$2.70, Mrs. Coleman prize doll \$6.50, Mrs. Curry freight .60 & expense .50, Mrs. Adams milx .15, Mrs. Topping ribbon beading & lawn .80, Mrs. Elsie material \$3.60. Total \$15.65.

The Finance Com. Reported favorably on the bills and it was moved & carried that a warrant be drawn of the treasury for the amount of the bills.

Mrs. Topping read an article from the Chronicle & it was moved & carried that we publish a letter of thanks to Rev. Mr. Sprague Davis for his free advertising of our fair.

Mrs. Topping reported that there had been \$260.65 turned in from the fair.

Mrs. Marston reported that a box of books had been given for our Reading Room also cash donations from Capwells & Hales & Taft & Proyers.

Mrs. Holt suggested a masquerade ball for the near future.

Moved & carried that the secretary write a piece for the Leader thanking the people of Richmond for their liberal patronage of our Doll Show.

Moved & carried that a letter of thanks be written to the Merchants of Oakland & S.F. for their

liberal donations to our fair.

There being no further business to come before the club, the meeting was adjourned to meet Dec. 14, 1908.

Receipts \$262.90	Receipts Dec.
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9,1908	\$145.00
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Disbursements	\$15.65
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Mrs. Geo. W. Topping, Sec.

Pt. Richmond, Dec. 15, 1908

The Women's West Side Improvement Club of Richmond Met at Curry's Hall.

The meeting was called to order by President Mrs. Adams.

Roll call of officers resulted in all being present except Vice President Mrs. Curry, Sec. Mrs. Topping, Tres. Mrs. Lucas, Finance com. Mrs. Garrard, Mrs. Lang, Mrs. Jones. Executive com. Mrs. Curry, Mrs. Windrew, Mrs. Arnold & Mrs. Neidecker.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Communications were read from District Attorney Alverado, Abrahamsons & the Southern Pacific Co. Moved and carried that communications be kept on file.

The following bills were presented: Mr. Moore \$1.50, J. Peard .35, total \$1.85. Finance Com. Reported favorably and it was moved and carried that a warrant be drawn on the treasury for the amount of the bills.

Mrs. Marston stated that she thought we should see some of the businessmen and have them sign all applications for books made to the free Reading Room before giving out books, and if these books be

(Continued from page 12)

destroyed these men should stand good for the books.

Mrs. Adams stated that there was some tea, coffee & sugar left from the fair.

Moved & carried that the Executive board take charge of preparing the Reading Room & opening of same.

There being no further business to come before the club the meeting adjourned to meet Dec. 29, 1908.

Disbursements \$1.85  
Mrs. Ella Dimick, Sec. Pro Tem.

Pt. Richmond, Jan 5, 1909

The Women's West Side Improvement Club of Richmond met in Peard's Hall.

The meeting was called to order by President Mrs. Adams.

Roll call of the officers resulted in all being present except Tres. Mrs. Lucas, Finance com. Mrs. Garrard, Mrs. Lang, Mrs. Jones, Executive com. Mrs. Windrew, Mrs. Arnold & Mrs. Nie-decker.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as corrected.

Bills from Richmond Daily Leader for publishing cards \$1.00, bill for cleaning hall for Dec.

for Mrs. Curry .50. Total \$1.50.

The Finance com. reported favorably on bills and it was moved and carried that a warrant be drawn on the treasury for the amount of bills.

Mrs. Curry reported that the room to be occupied as the Reading Room was not in the proper condition agreed upon for us to accept.

Communications were read from Mrs. Cora E. Jones, Mr. Critchett & District Attorney Frances J. Heney.

The Secretary was instructed to write to Mrs. Cora E. Jones and ask her to visit our club Jan. 19.

Moved and carried that the club meet 1st and 3rd Tuesdays if evert month.

The Secretary was directed to notify Mr. Critchett to have the Reading Room in readiness as soon as possible.

Moved and carried that we adopt the form for notifying delinquents as shown by Mrs. Trautvetter.

Moved and carried that Mr. Futter be sent a letter of thanks for the \$100.00 given to the club.

Receipts \$101.10  
Disbursements \$1.50

There being no further business to come before the club the meeting adjourned to meet Jan. 19, 1909.

Mrs. Geo. W. Topping (Sec.)



*We found this photo while sorting old archives. There was no hint of what it was all about. Who knows anything about this interesting bunch?*

# ***LANG DRUG COMPANY***

## ***A.C. LANG'S IMPACT ON EARLY RICHMOND PHARMACIES***

*by James J. Cheshareck*

Shortly after the turn of the century, one drug store on Washington Avenue would help shape the pharmacy business in the city of Richmond for several decades. Augustus Charles Lang was born in St. Joseph, Missouri on August 14, 1870. As a teenager he migrated to Southern California to attend school, and by 1892 was a licensed pharmacist in Pasadena. A few years later he ended up in Placerville and met Luella Niedecker, the daughter of Henry and Christine Niedecker, and younger sister of Charles Edward Niedecker. Of German descent, both Lang and the Niedeckers relocated to the San Francisco area. Lang married Luella Niedecker, and their son Bayard Bryan Lang was born in March of 1899. Charles Niedecker attended college of pharmacy, and soon after, both the Lang and Niedecker families would move to Point

Richmond. Henry and Christine Niedecker settled on Railroad Avenue. Henry, a blacksmith by trade, found work at the A.T.S.F. (Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe, later shortened to Santa Fe) Railroad, then at Standard Oil.

Augustus Lang formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, Charles E. Niedecker, known as the Lang Drug Company at 31 Washington Avenue. While the Lang's lived in back of the store for several years, Charles and his wife Olive lived at 10 Tunnel Avenue and their first son, Marshall Edward (1905-1991), was born a couple years later. By 1907 the Lang family and in laws moved to the house next door at 14 Tunnel Ave. The main competitor was The Schoen Pharmacy, owned by Fred Schoen. It was originally at 144 Washington Ave. and last at 101 W. Richmond Ave. when it closed by 1908. Once established, Lang and Niedecker evolved into prominent Point residents and both Luella Lang and Olive Niedecker joined the Women's Westside Improvement Club.

In 1911, Augustus Lang bought out his brother-in-law's share of the company and moved the business to 601 Macdonald Avenue in downtown Richmond. The Langs, with inlaws



*Lang Drug Store at 31  
Washington Avenue.*

*Circa 1907*

*PRHA Photo Archive  
#0159- DC from Don  
Church, enhanced by  
Thomas Mercer-Hursh*



in tow, moved from Point Richmond first to Bissell Avenue before settling on Chanslor Ave. Charles Niedecker opened his own store at 116 Washington Avenue and was known as “Niedecker the druggist”. The Niedeckers lived briefly at 127 Cottage Avenue before settling at 201 Cottage by the time their second son, Charles William (1913-1996), was born. In 1914, Niedecker hired a teenager named Elmer George Conn as his clerk. He lived in the family home at 210 Martina Street with his Canadian-born parents Thomas G. and Letitia, and older siblings Ivan, and Irene. Thomas G. Conn and his brother, William H. Conn, owned Conn Brothers on Macdonald Avenue which dealt in real estate and insurance. Charles Niedecker also employed his nephew Bayard Lang until he entered the Army in WW1. Christine Niedecker died March 4, 1915 at age 61, and Henry Niedecker remained with the Langs on Chanslor Ave. In 1918, the Niedecker’s moved to 449 W. Richmond Ave. After Bayard Lang returned home from war, he attended U.C. Berkeley College of Pharmacy and went worked at Lang’s.

On January, 10 1920 Niedecker and his two young children endured the death of Olive Niedecker at age 38. When Charles Niedecker and his children left Point Richmond in 1922, Harry Palmateer, an Illinois native raised on a Fresno ranch, took over the business, renaming it Palmateer’s Pharmacy. Niedecker moved to Oakland, remarried, and opened a new store on Park Blvd. Henry Niedecker soon left

Richmond to be with his son’s family. Palmateer and his wife Winifred initially moved into the Niedecker home at 449 W. Richmond Ave, but moved around the Point several times before settling at 206 Cottage Ave. about a decade later. Palmateer kept Elmer Conn, who by now had graduated from College of pharmacy, was married to wife Dorothy, and living in a flat at 42 Nicholl Ave. Augustus Lang occasionally relocated his business, but remained on lower Macdonald Ave and maintained a strong presence. Just as Charles Niedecker learned the trade from Lang, Elmer Conn learned the trade from Niedecker, and had aspirations of his own that would materialize in a few years.

In 1925, Elmer Conn opened Conn Drug Company at the corner of Macdonald Ave and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, and the Conn’s left Pt. Richmond for a house on 26<sup>th</sup> St. In 1926, Palmateer’s Pharmacy relocated up the street to 134 Washington Ave. Elizabeth Conn died in 1925, leaving two young daughters behind. Conn Drug Company briefly had a second branch at 492 San Pablo Ave. near Barrett before a larger opportunity the following year. In 1928, Elmer Conn took over Lang Drug Company, now at 938 Macdonald Ave, giving Conn two branches on Macdonald Avenue to serve both downtown and central Richmond. Strangely enough, 492 San Pablo Avenue (later renumbered 12294) was bought by Harry Palmateer and a partner, Claude O. Howard, and named Mira Vista Drug Company. The joint venture lasted a couple years before being sold.



*Old pharmaceutical bottles from my collection, James*

Palmateer always retained sole proprietorship of his Point Richmond store. Elmer Conn married his second wife Dorothy in 1929 and they had a son together in 1934. Many years later, Conn took over Mira Vista Drug Company again along with partner William B. White. Ultimately, the building was torn down for a car dealership lot.

With the family business gone, Bayard Lang moved to Los Angeles where he would marry and eventually divorce the former Lucile Nye and work as a pharmacist. Augustus Lang, now in his late fifties, tried his hand at an ill-timed new venture. He opened Sierra Gold Mining at 607 Macdonald Ave. in 1928, but shut the doors around the time of The Great Depression. By 1930, he was back behind the counter as manager of Sneed's Drug Store at 338 Macdonald Ave. Eugene Sneed's pharmacist, Reuben Savin took over the business in the early 1940's, and Lang finished his long career as a pharmacist at Savin's Drug Store. Augustus Lang also served as a chairman of the U.S. Selective Service (draft) Board during WW2, and died on September 16, 1946 at age 76. Luella Lang remained in Richmond a few years before joining her son in Los Angeles. Both Charles Niedecker and his father remained in Oakland for the rest of their lives. Henry Niedecker died on May 7, 1937 at age 82, and Charles less than two years later on February 11, 1939 at age 62.

Elmer Conn maintained his market share in downtown and central Richmond, and brought in a partner, Cornelius J. Healey, another Richmond native, in the late 40's. Elmer and Dorothy Conn would settle in El Cerrito hills before moving to Santa Rosa in the late 1960's. Harry Palmateer served Pt. Richmond over thirty years until the mid-fifties. He died on May 1, 1956 at age 61, and Winifred Palmateer left their home of nearly 25 years at Delfino and Cottage for an apartment on 12<sup>th</sup> Street. She died on August 13, 1967 at age 79. After more than six decades, many older Pt. Richmond residents still recall the Palmateer name. Luella Lang remained in Los Angeles but outlived her son. Bayard Lang died on November, 22 1966 at age 67, and Luella on April 6, 1972 at age 92. Conn Drug Company remained in business until the early 70's, but closed the original branch at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Macdonald around

1970. Ironically, both Conn Drug Company and Lang Drug Company ended at 938 Macdonald Avenue. Dorothy Conn died on August 23, 1972 at age 69, and Elmer Conn died November 11, 1974 at age 76.

Many of the aforementioned historic buildings still stand, including 31 Washington Ave, where A.C. Lang unfolded a chain of events that started many careers. 116-118 Washington Ave, where both Niedecker the Druggist and Palmateer's careers began, was torn down decades ago and remained a vacant lot until a new structure was built in the early 1990's. The former Palmateer's at 134 Washington Avenue has been a laundromat for many years. Around late 1939, Tunnel Avenue was renumbered in accordance with the other intersecting streets of Richmond Avenue. The 000 block became the 200 block. At 214, one will find that Lang's old house is well preserved. 210 Tunnel now is an apartment building. The old Conn house at 210 Martina Street, and the Cottage Avenue and W. Richmond Avenue houses where the Niedeckers and Palmateer's once resided also have survived.



31 Washington Avenue  
PRHA photo archive #0680 From Mid  
Dornan, enhanced by Thomas Mercer-Hursh



*Interview by Rita Gardner, AOPR  
Communications Director*

For the inaugural issue our Newsletter, it seemed fitting to feature our founder, Altha Humphrey, who conceived of Arts of Point Richmond ten years ago. I sat down with Altha recently to get her story.

**What motivated you to organize this group in the first place?**

I woke up on January 9, 2008 and said to myself “I have to do this!” I realized there were a lot of artists here in Point Richmond, but many of them didn’t know each other. So I publicized a meeting for artists at our local coffee store, and the place was packed! My intention was to encourage more connection among artists and the community. We soon were rolling. We got the Post Office space for displays, had annual dinners, and put on holiday exhibits with help from local businesses.

**What do you feel is AOPR’s biggest contribution to the community today?**

I’m thrilled we now have various venues to showcase member exhibitions, and new ways in which our community participates and contributes. I really enjoy the pot luck events. Another highlight is “Art Tag” – a popular feature that draws a lot of participants.

**Tell me about your educational and art background.**

I attended California College of Arts and Crafts on a scholarship. But, I had to work for a

living so couldn’t become a full-time artist. I’ve always enjoyed creating my own designs in fiber art – whether knitting or sewing. I’ve exhibited my wearable artworks for years at the annual Marin County Fair, winning awards, and for 25 years led the “Knit and Such” group in the Point.

**And what about today – how have your interests changed?**

I’m having so much fun now making art from found objects – a whole different experience. I even raid what I call the “bins of opportunity” – where folks have tossed out all kinds of things that make me think: “Hmm, what can I do with THIS?” The answers always surprise me.

**What are some examples? Well, a few examples:**

Turkey feathers and yarn became part of a wind charm in one of the Art Tag projects with the theme of Movement. A discarded chocolate candy container became something else entirely. Twigs and seeds, a beautiful hammered metal spoon – all manner of things become possibilities for art. I guess you could say I just look for the opportunity – and creativity happens. I’m quite enjoying it!

**Thanks, Altha! I think the slogan you created says it all: “Art is for everyone. The Artist. The Viewer. The Point is Art.”**

*Altha Humphrey*



# The Richmond Opera House

by Fran Cappelletti

As a frequent visitor to Point Richmond, I enjoy the sight of the many old buildings, imagining times long past. While reading the book, *“The Man Who Lit Lady Liberty, The Extraordinary Rise and Fall of Actor M. B. Curtis”*, by local author Richard Schwartz, I came across an interesting story from Point Richmond History, that of the Richmond Opera House. On page 265, the subject of the book, actor M.B. Curtis, finds a new opportunity in 1907 Point Richmond:

*In an effort to reestablish himself in the Bay Area, Curtis became the manager of the newly built Richmond Opera House, located in the booming oil-refinery town of Richmond, California, just north of Berkeley. The elaborate theatre hosted vaudeville shows as well as the latest novelty in entertainment- moving pictures.*

*Part of Curtis’s job at the opera house was to solicit advertisements from local businesses that would be placed on the theatre’s front curtain. In August 1907, Curtis was again in Police Court, this time as a defendant in search warrant proceedings instigated by his employer who believed that Curtis had made off with ten advertising contracts and an unknown number of letters that were the property of the opera company after a disagreement that resulted in Curtis’s tearing down the front curtain of the theatre.*

The case was later settled out of court and Curtis moved on, but he was an important part of the start of a long run for the Opera House. As Richard Schwartz notes from his extensive research, the place hosted vaudeville shows, with live acts of dancing, singing, jugglers, contortionists, singers, operatic performances, comedy and the “Latest and Best Moving Pictures.” An advertisement from the Oakland Tribune in June of 1907 displays the impressive

lineup.

But where was the opera house and what did it look like? Initial research found an entry in the April/May 2017 edition of *“This Point...in time”*, page 5, asking: Does anyone have a photo or information of the Opera House In Point Richmond? So there was the question, but no apparent answer.

A visit to the California Digital Newspaper Collection provided some answers. As is common with much early history, this story starts with a fire. The San Francisco Chronicle reported a 1905 Point Richmond fire resulting in the loss of two buildings, including the Schad opera house and the J.C. Mayer department store. One hundred fire fighters from Standard Oil helped to save the town from further damage.

By 1907, the new Opera House opened,



under Curtis' management. The *San Francisco Call*, *Oakland Tribune*, and other newspapers wrote about the Richmond Opera House. Events included graduations, political rallies and 'stereopticon' shows. One popular attraction was moving picture showings of the 1910 Nelson-Wolgast World's Lightweight Championship boxing match, just a few blocks away from where the match took place live. You can see footage of that fight on the PRHA site, [http://pointrichmondhistory.org/Audio\\_Visual.html](http://pointrichmondhistory.org/Audio_Visual.html).

Another interesting use appeared in the March, 1985 "*This Point...in time*", with a clipping from a 1915 Richmond newspaper article.

#### EVENINGS AT THE OPERA HOUSE... VAUDEVILLE & A LITTLE SURGERY

*Dr. Berry, the famous bloodless and painless surgeon and his assistants are now in Point Richmond to demonstrate the new and up-to-date methods of curing many so-called incurable diseases. The Point Richmond opera house is being used for that purpose each week day night. The doctor cures cancers, tumors, appendicitis, chronic female disorders, sciatic rheumatism, nervous troubles and many other chronic diseases without knife, pain or blood.*

*A high class vaudeville and moving picture show is given each evening free of charge, and during the evening from time to time bloodless surgery operations will be made in full view of the audience. Immense crowds attend each night. The doctor has offices in the Hotel Anderson where he can be consulted in private.*

Will Spiersch reminisced about the place in the summer 1990 edition of "*This Point...in time*", noting sales of 'magical elixirs' and passing the hat for dancer Carrie Ellsworth. Carrie once was billed as Mary Pickford's double.

But where was the Richmond Opera House? The answer was found in the recent 2017/2018 edition of "*This Point...in time*". In an insightful and most timely article, Caitlin Hibma writes about a block of buildings on Railroad Avenue, displaying a portion of the 1909 Sanborn Map. There, on the other side of the street is the label,

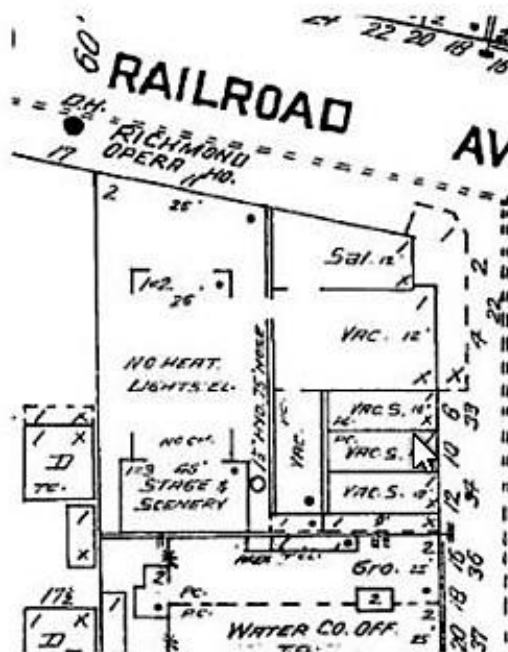
Richmond Opera House.

Expanding to that section of the Sanborn shows the theatre with Stage & Scenery in the rear. The building is outlined again in the 1916 Sanborn Map with an added balcony, lights, and electricity.

Bernard Berne provided further confirmation in the September 1990 "*This Point...in time*", when he confirmed the location next to Pat Dean's Saloon at the corner of Standard and Washington. He recalled sneaking into the theater through the ticket window and leaving through a dark tunnel to Washington Avenue.

By 1930, there is no building on the site and the location today is a vacant lot. A mention of the end of the opera house and possibly the infamous Curtis curtain is found in the February 1985 edition of "*This Point...in time*", in an interview with Bill Berk. He recalls an old rowboat called 'Number 7' and the fitting of a certain sail to it:

When the old Point Richmond Opera House closed down, they moved the advertisement covered stage curtain to Maple Hall on Ohio Street. Soon Maple Hall fell into disrepair and stopped operations. Bill remembers the heavy



(Continued from page 19)

canvas curtain which he and his friends removed from Maple Hall. They cut it to size and mounted it as a sail on old number seven.

Thanks to author Richard Schwartz for the inspiration and information that led to this article. His book, "**The Man Who Lit Lady Liberty, The Extraordinary Rise and Fall of Actor M. B. Curtis**", provides many more fascinating stories from the vaudeville era and early silent movie years. Many thanks to long-time editor Gary Shows for some of the local references to the Opera House and for his decades as editor of "*This Point.....in time*". There are nearly 150 editions available online, a true treasure, available to all, preserving the long history of Point Richmond.



## POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

*courtesy Griff Brazil*

### PARKING

At the April Business Association meeting, Dick Danker of the City Public Works Department talked about the possibility of angle parking along Park Place and making Park Place a one-way street. Mr. Danker voiced doubts about angle parking making space for very many more cars to park. He and Walter Connelly are to take a survey to determine reactions to a one-way street.

Danker also spoke about the aligning of Cutting Boulevard as it enters the Point.

### INDIAN STATUE DAY ...

President David Vincent announced that the Statue Park fund now has \$8460. Committees will begin planning Indian Statue Day.

## Office Boy In Collision Is Uninjured

Levi Rosier, while riding home from his work at the Standard Oil offices was run into and badly shaken up by a local auto driver on Second street yesterday afternoon. It happened that Rosier was turning from Second street into Bissell-avenue when he noticed the auto bearing down upon him, but on account of his speed he was unable to turn to either side and ran headlong into the oncoming machine. The driver seeing that an accident was to occur, used the emergency brake with the result that the boy escaped uninjured, while the wheel was totally demolished.

*The date of the above article was 5-17-1913 and given to me by Don Church. The Rosier in the article was my father-in-law..*

*From Dee Rosier*

*The article on the left is from "THIS POINT.....in time" Vol. IV-9, May, 1986, yes 32 years ago!*

# How Water Street Got Its Name

by Caitlin Hibma

You might assume that Water Street, a cul-de-sac branching off the intersection of Santa Fe and Pacific Avenues, gets its name from its hilltop location and sweeping views of the blue waters of San Francisco Bay. The arrow-straight path of the street, its newfangled cul-de-sac form, and the dominance of modern houses suggest that it was a later addition to Point Richmond; perhaps some small subdivision laid out on a previously unbuildable hilltop. To some extent that's true, but the actual purpose for the street and the reason for its delayed development lies in its name: Water Street provided access to one of Point Richmond's earliest water storage facilities.

A Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from 1903 (post-dating the town's establishment and pre-

dating its incorporation by only a few years) shows that Water Street existed even then. There were no houses lining the street, just bare grassland, but the street dead-ended into "The Richmond Water Company's Reservoir Site." The map notes the presence of three water tanks, resting on the ground, which stood at the very end of the street. These tanks are visible, alone on the hilltop, in a number of historic photos. Each held 10,000 gallons of water. "High level supply," is noted, meaning that the tanks supplied water to properties located at higher hillside elevations than the flat downtown area, which was supplied by the Richmond Water Company's Main Tank at the southern corner of Potrero Avenue (now Cottage Ave.) and Martina Street. Water was sourced from wells located out in the marshlands northeast of town and was pumped to the Potrero and Martina main tank, then up to the Water Street tanks by a gasoline engine and a small pump apparatus.

Two years later, in 1905 (the year Richmond was incorporated), the Water Street reservoir site had been upgraded with a round concrete holding





tank about 120 feet in diameter and boasting a 1,074,000 gallon capacity. The tank appears to have been sunk into the ground, its top flush with grade and covered by a corrugated-metal-on-wood roof that may have been surrounded by a fence. It, too, is visible in a number of historic photos; easily spotted on the domed hilltop. The three old tanks remained at the end of Water Street in 1905. Notes on the water system indicate that the reservoir facility fed five miles of pipes and supplied 18 hydrants throughout town.

1906 marked the demise of Richmond Water Company, when Syndicate Water Company bought it out. Shortly thereafter, People's Water Company bought Syndicate out. This is evident in the 1909 Sanborn map, which shows that the three old tanks had been removed and the big reservoir was People's Water Company property. The former main tank at Potrero and Martina is still illustrated on maps, but is not labeled as a municipal facility, suggesting that the Water Street reservoir had supplanted it as the town's primary water storage facility. An additional water main had been added, which may have brought water into the reservoir from the San Pablo Filtration Plant in Berkeley, a perk of being part of a much larger regional system. At that time, Pt Richmond consumed 500,000 gallons of water per day.

People's Water Company was the largest water company on the East Bay in the opening decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, supplying water to communities stretching from Richmond to Oakland. It went bankrupt during a severe drought in 1914, but the name still appears on the Water Street reservoir on a 1916 Sanborn map. That year, the company was reorganized as the East Bay Water Company, a predecessor of today's East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD).

By 1930, the reservoir at the end of Water Street was labeled accurately as the East Bay Municipal Utility District Reservoir. The mains had been rerouted to run diagonally southeast from the

reservoir then branch to the east and west. Since 1906, 175 miles of water mains had been laid throughout Richmond as the city expanded. 31,200 people (including those in developed areas outside of the Point) consumed 3,500,000 gallons a day.

In 1951, after its World War II-era boom, Richmond was home to 103,743 people and the local water system was enhanced to include an additional reservoir, in the form of a 1,670,000 gallon steel tank, located at Point San Pablo. This improvement and the general growth and complexity of the system beyond the Point Richmond neighborhood led to the Water Street reservoir's decommissioning in the mid-1950s. By 1958, the concrete tank appeared simply to have been filled in and the cul-de-sac graded and paved, with its terminus on top of the reservoir. Aerial photos from that year show the ghosted outline of the reservoir's rim partially circling the end of the cul-de-sac. By 1968, lots had been subdivided surrounding the cul-de-sac, but were not necessarily improved yet. By the late 1970's, Water Street was built out with apartment buildings and houses. A small cottage, now addressed 233 Water Street and built pre-1905, is the only house that was present on Water Street throughout its long history as an access road leading to Point Richmond's early water supply.





# Message in a Bottle

*Thanks to Dee Rosier*

*Bob was a Point resident and lived on Nevada Street. He was a Chevron retiree.*

HAGATÑA, Guam — A family from Washington received an unexpected but heartwarming surprise, that word of their message in a bottle sent from beaches of California, had floated miles across the Pacific Ocean and landed on Guam's shores nearly three years later.

A few months following the passing of their father Robert "Bob" Mahan, his daughter Wanda Roberts, and her family sent their father's legacy on a voyage from a beach in Navarro on Sept. 9, 2015.

During one his fishing trips hunting lobster and crab, Edward Paulino, resident of Inarajan, discovered the bottle on Feb. 3, 2018, on the shores of Malojloj.

The pink bottle, now faded from overexposure to water and sun, safeguarded its contents.

Edward Paulino, unbeknownst to him, opened the bottle to find the life legacy and memories of a family from Washington, and shared his findings with his daughter, who was in complete disbelief at first.

"My father enjoys collecting interesting items on the beach," said Gerika Paulino, daughter of Edward Paulino.

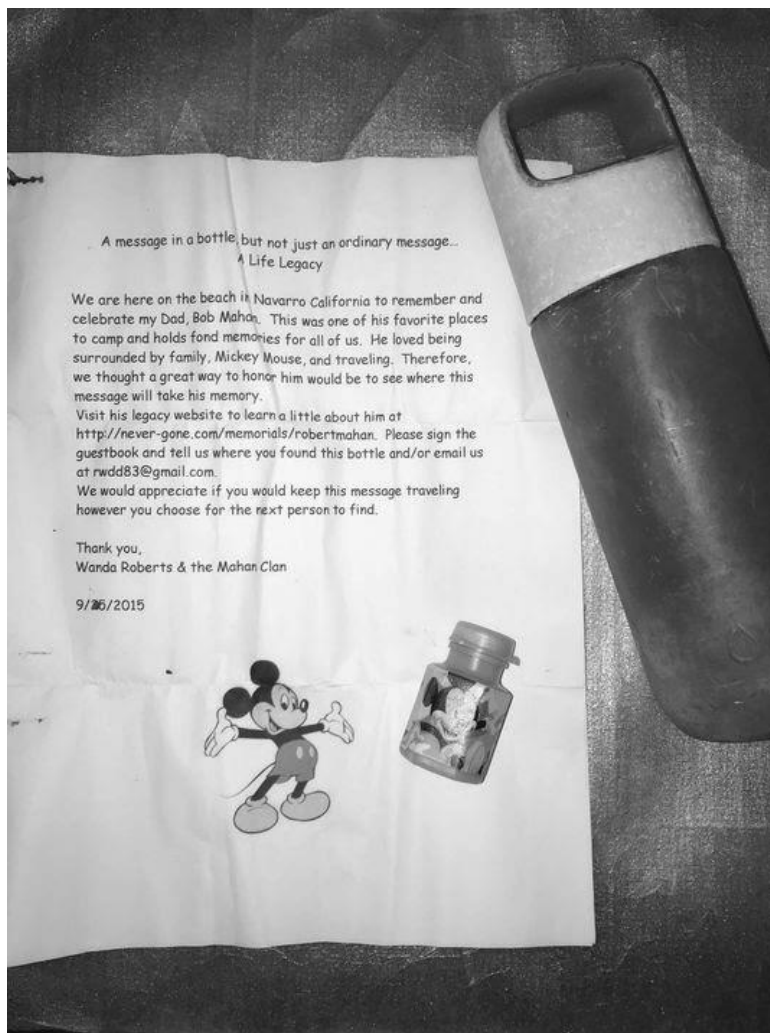
"He told me about it a

couple days later," she said. "He was really excited and pushed me to contact the family."

She also said that finding a message in a bottle is a once in a lifetime chance.

"It's amazing that the bottle traveled such a long distance." With the help of social media, she reached out to Wanda Roberts, a couple days after the bottle was found.

"Greetings from Guam ... I'm pleased to inform you that your message in a bottle has successfully traveled across the Pacific Ocean to this small island I call home," Paulino wrote.



*This is from a "fact diary", a book of headlines and interesting events in Early Point Richmond. It was compiled by Don Church from the "Richmond Independent", "Point Richmond News", "The Leader" and "Richmond Herald Record". It is one of many historical items left for us by Allan Smith.*

## Items of Interest Point Richmond, early 1900's

### ***The Record and The Leader***

#### ***Point Richmond was called Eastyard or West Side***

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 07-01-1914 | J.P. Arnold bids goodbye to the force. He has made 4157 Arrests in the 5 years he has been Chief of Police.              |
| 07-06-1914 | Ed Garrard elected Mayor by 7-2 vote.  |
| 07-07-1914 | Buelah Lee screams as burglars start in her window in their home at Stege, they flee.                                    |
| 07-24-1914 | Still blows up at Refinery. Gas and flames kill 1; seriously burn 2.   |
| 07-29-1914 | John Nicholl dies. <i>(ed. note, this is the elder father of John H. Nicholl)</i>  |
| 08-01-1914 | New St. Josephs Cemetary grading under way.  |
| 08-04-1914 | 1 woman killed in the tunnel; 1 seriously injured.   |
| 08-11-1914 | \$123,400 to pave Cutting Blvd. from Point to 23rd Street.   |
| 08-20-1914 | A raid on two Blind Pigs at the Point.   |
| 09-09-1914 | St. Josephs Cemetary dedicated.  |
| 09-03-1914 | S.O.Co Annual Clam Bake at the Pole Yard.  |
| 09-22-1914 | Nicholl testing his old oil well for water supply. It was drilled to 1300 feet but has cemented it off at 130 for water. |
| 09-26-1914 | Lester Stromberg guilty of passing bad check.  |
| 10-03-1914 | Abbott Hosp. to become a rooming house.  |
| 10-01-1914 | W.D. Grady, local lawyer is in jail for talking and being drunk in court.  |
| 10-07-1914 | J.D. Smith kills Woods cat and is fined \$10. Well worth it he says.<br>Blake Bros. take over the San Pablo Quarry.      |
| 10-10-1914 | Rev. Peterson new pastor at 1st ME Church and looking for home.  |
| 10-17-1914 | Old 2 room Standard Ave school is now the Club House for the Veteran Firemen.  |
| 10-24-1914 | J.P. Arnold now in local taxi business.  |

***If you're riding ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still there.***

***-Will Rogers***

# *Birthdays*

## April

LOOF LIRPA  
Kathy Dornan Barnes-  
April 1  
Billie Bonham Shaw  
Erin Frame  
Roberta Dornan Palfini  
Charlene Smith  
Ruth Wilson

Paula Israeli  
Pam Wilson  
Don Amantite  
Joel Peterson  
Lori Meister  
Charlotte Knox  
Monica Doherty  
Eric Hoiland

Rosemary Corbin  
Alison Lord  
John Maxwell  
Sherri Mertle  
Carol MacDiarmid  
Gloria Smith  
Robert J.Palfini  
Terry Downey

Sharon Mertle  
Charline Barni  
Louis Stockdale  
Joni Loux Emerson  
Donna Diaz  
David Roth

## May

Douglas Corbin  
Patricia Beth Dornan  
Diana Corbin  
Eva Marchitiello  
Richard Mattuecci  
Jon Doellstedt  
Sara Eeles

Rena Gonsalves  
Sandra Loux Fuller  
Muriel Clausen  
Sophia Dolberg  
Julina Smith  
Anne-Catherine  
Hadreas

Roger Glafke  
Henry Marchitiello  
Shoney Gustafson  
Winifred Boziki  
Norm Reynolds  
Patrice Verhines  
Mark Healy

Karen Brougham  
Hilda Gozzi-Reed  
Annabella Feese  
Lorenzo Feese



Snow in Point  
Richmond?  
No, it's the  
remaining fire  
fighting foam from  
the Simms Fire.

Thanks to Heinz  
Lankford

# THE OLD OPERA HOUSE

TPIT, Vol IX, no 3 Sept 1990

Bernard Bernes./AKA Frenchie

The Opera House was located on Standard Avenue about one half block north of Washington Avenue. Pat Dean's Saloon was next door on the northwest corner across from Kenny's Cigar Store.

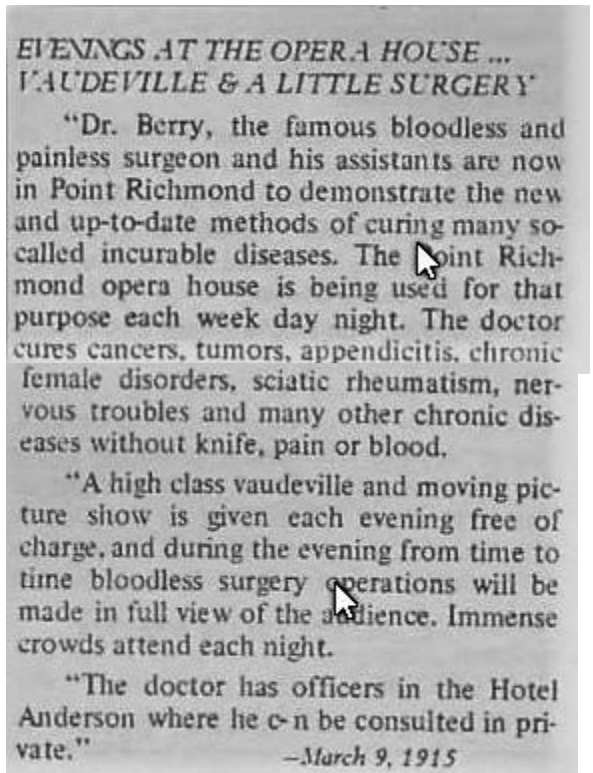
The Opera House had a recessed front and ticket office so people would not have to stand in the rain waiting to get in. It had a sloping floor for the lower floor, and a balcony in the rear, and along both sides, almost to the stage. The dressing rooms were under the stage. Access to the dressing rooms from outside was by a tunnel opening on Washington Avenue.

When the Opera House was vacant, we boys would sneak in through the ticket window and then exit through the tunnel onto Washington Avenue. It was scary going through because it was pitch dark inside and there were rats running around.

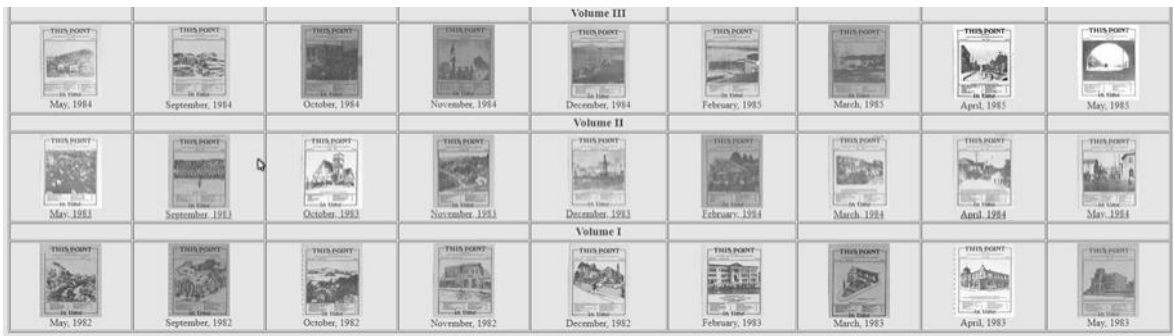
It was mostly a movie house and entertainment center. They used to show the old flickers such as "Tarzan of the Apes" and "Elmo the Mighty". It had numerous uses after the Point Theater came in. It was used by Carrie Ellsworth to put on shows of her dancing classes, all these little girls were real cute in their routines.

Later a lower floor was installed. Some churches and club groups used it to put on fund raising shows. Also, medicine shows were quite prevalent.

Mid



See page 18 to read more on the  
Old Opera House  
From Fran Cappelletti





# EXCLUSIVE OVER 90 CLUB

Martha Bielawski - 95  
Muriel Clausen - 94  
Mary Bianchini Highfill - 94  
Tom Kenny - 93  
Loretta Stevens Johromi - 92  
Billie Bonham Shaw - 96  
June Beesley Sosabal - 94  
Helen Wysham - 93

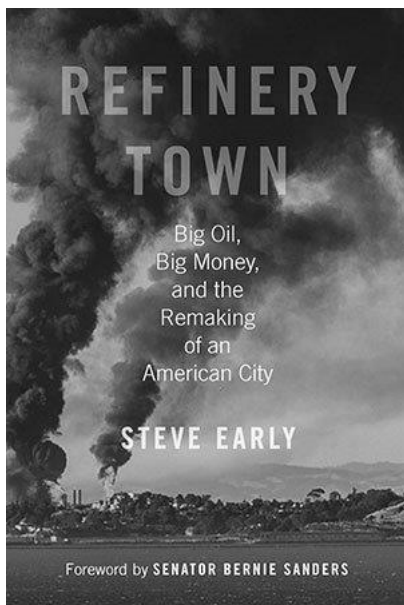
Alice Williamson - 93  
Mid Dornan - 96  
Morris Simpson - 95  
Brenda McKinley - 91

Please send corrections and additions  
To [Middornan@gmail.com](mailto:Middornan@gmail.com) or call  
510.234-5334 and leave a message.

*Age is merely the number of years the World has been able to enjoy time with you.*

## CENTURY CLUB

Madeline Bellando Albright - 101  
Delphina Franco Tawney - 100



*Thanks to Steve Early for donating a copy of his book "Refinery Town" to the PRHA. It is in our little museum for our members.*

*Some people try to  
turn back their  
odometers. Not me.  
I want people to  
know 'why' I look  
this way. I've  
traveled a long way,  
and some of the  
roads weren't  
paved.*

# CALENDAR/DIRECTORY

## ARTS OF POINT RICHMOND

*Art is for everyone, the artist, the viewer, the Point is art.* Meets at 139 Washington Avenue. Contact: Irene Hightower, irene1328@comcast.net More info: <http://www.artsofpointrichmond.com/index.html>

## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE READING ROOM

114 Washington Avenue, Point Richmond, 510-223-0487

## GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM AND EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

900-A Dornan Drive, Miller/Knox Regional Park. Sunday 12:00 to 5:00. Adults \$5, children under 11 and seniors \$3, family \$10. Trains run on Sunday and Wednesday 11-3, Saturday 12-5 viewing only. 510-234-4884 for details or [www.gsrmr.com](http://www.gsrmr.com)

## MANY HANDS PROJECT TO SUPPORT WASHINGTON SCHOOL

Contact, Margaret Morkowski, 510-234-4219

## MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE

The Masquers remains closed for building repairs. For more information see the website, <http://www.masquers.org>

## PARENTS, RESOURCES AND MORE (PRAM)

A volunteer, nonprofit organization serving families with children 5 or under. Playgroups, social events, educational opportunities, Information go to <http://www.PRAM.net> or call 510-215-1734.

## PARENT, TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Joanna Mina, Contact, 510-235-0157

## POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Contact: Andrew Butt, 510-236-7445

## POINT RICHMOND COMMUNITY CENTER

Info: 510-620-6905

## POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Museum is at 139½ Washington Avenue, and open Thursday's 11:30 to 2:00 and Saturday 11:30 to 2:00. See the *Editors Notes* on page 3 for next TPIT deadline. For information call President Mildred Dornan at 510-234-5334.

## POINT RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Meets last Wednesday of each month, Point Richmond Community Center; 7:30 P.M.

Contact: Margaret Jordon at 510-412-3673

## POINT RICHMOND/WEST SIDE BRANCH LIBRARY

Information call 510-620-6567

## RED OAK VICTORY SHIP

Open Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, 10am to 3 pm. \$10 Donation/Boarding fee.

Pancake Breakfasts one Sunday a month, April - June, August - October, \$9/adults, \$5/kids under 8 years,.

For more information call the ship at 510-237-2933 or the Richmond Museum of History at 510-235-7387 or visit

[www.richmondmuseum.org](http://www.richmondmuseum.org)

## RICHMOND MUSEUM OF HISTORY

400 Nevin Avenue, Richmond. Open Wednesday-Sunday, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. For more information call 510-235-7387

## RICHMOND SWIMS

The Children and teens "Sail Fish" and Masters swim teams at the Richmond Plunge. Contact: Coach John Schonder, 510-504-0330 - September 25, 2011 open water bay swim raises money for coaching, equipment, pool fees and swimming scholarships for inner-city youth throughout Richmond. More info at <http://www.richmondswims.org/> or call 415-892-0771

## ROSIE THE RIVETER NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK VISITOR CENTER

1414 Harbour Way South, Oil House next to Ford Craneway.

For more information call 510-232-5050 or visit [www.nps.gov/rori](http://www.nps.gov/rori).

See page 22 for programs. GREAT movies all day

## WASHINGTON SCHOOL

Washington School at 565 Wine Street offers traditional and Spanish dual immersion curriculum, K - 6th grade. Contact principal Lisa Levi at 231-1417 for more information.

## WOMEN'S WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT CLUB (established 1908)

Richmond's longest standing women's club. Contact: Linda Newton, President. (510) 235-0081

**Additions/Corrections? Email Gary Shows, [garyshows@gmail.com](mailto:garyshows@gmail.com)**

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

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

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

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

E Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership (check one):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior (65+)	15.00
<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 (five 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

**email: garyshows@gmail.com**

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

**139 ½ Washington Avenue**  
**Point Richmond, CA 94801**

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**Bonnie Jo Cullison, Museum Manager/Staff Coordinator**

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Don Church/Allan Smith	Historic Photos
Jerry Cerkawicz	Information
Mark Kornmann	Proof Read
Pam Wilson	Membership Info
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Donna Roselius	Line Drawings/article
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Heinz Lankford	Photo
Altha Humphrey	Article
Rita Gardner	Interview

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Visit our website

**PointRichmondHistory.org**

Join our Facebook Group  
**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/prhafan/>**

Richmond Museum of History 510-235-7387  
Red Oak Victory Information 510-235-7387  
Rosie the Riveter Park 510-232-5050

*The Point Richmond History Association is registered with the IRS as a 501 (c) (3) organization. Contributions to the PRHA are deductible under section 170 of the code.*

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