

THIS POINT

in time

NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

VOL. VIII, No. 9

APRIL, 1990

ONE DOLLAR



STANDARD OIL LONG WHARF
circa 1914

MARCH MEETING

IMAGES OF RICHMOND

Will be presented by Deidre Cerkowicz, photographer and former archivist for the Point Richmond History Association.

Her informal talk will feature slides of early photographs of the Richmond area from the History Association's Don Church Collection as well as the work of...

Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, Imogen Cunningham, Judy Dater, Catherine Wagner, Henry Wessel, Chauncy Hare, Bill Dane and a few not so well known photographers.

We think this presentation will be a unique, informative and interesting view of Richmond.

Point Richmond Community Center

at 7:30 pm

March 29, 1990

Refreshments will be served

MAY MEETING

PICNIC IN THE SUNSHINE!

It's time for our annual hot dog roast and get together!

We will supply the hot dogs, buns and refreshments.

If you don't want hot dogs bring what you like and put it on the grill.

There will be more details in the May issue of the newsletter.

History Association Notes

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jerry Cerkanowicz

Three years ago when I first became president of the Point Richmond History Association I wrote in my first message to members of the need for a small building in which we could display some of the many photographs and other items that have been donated. It now seems possible that by summer we could do just that. I am referring to the small building at 139 West Richmond Avenue. At this time we are waiting for word from the City Manager's Office for information as to what we need to do in order to meet city requirements to relocate on city property.

After an approval is given to move the building, we hope to take advantage of the offers that have been made by businesses to help move it to its new location on Washington Avenue and to restore it. We would like to see it restored to its original appearance based on old photographs of it and similar buildings that were once located here in the Point. Having this building would be an asset to the community, make our History Association more visible and increase interest in our local history.

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JOIN THE POINT RICHMOND
HISTORY ASSOCIATION
NOW AS A NEW MEMBER
AND WE WILL SEND YOU
OUR 1990 WALL CALENDAR

"THE POINT"

"Drawings by Donna Roselius"
FREE!!

Once again the May meeting will be a picnic at Miller-Knox park, at which time we will present our Board of Directors for the next year.

The Point Richmond businesses plan a Point Richmond "Open House" on May 10th to acquaint people with our area. While strolling from place to place in the downtown area, people can participate in a raffle drawing, listen to a band playing in the park, and stop for food and cocktails at various locations. We plan to have our photo collection on display. For more information on this affair call Tom McGowan at 231-0244.

Thank you very much to both the Santa Fe Market and the Point Richmond Market for their ongoing support of the Association by selling our newsletters in their stores.

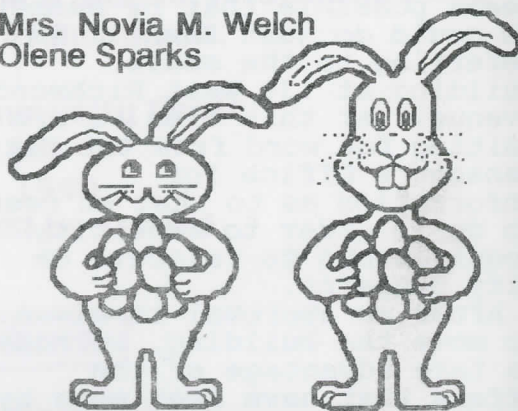
It was wonderful seeing so many of you at our March meeting, it was attended by about twenty five members. Thanks to my sister Deirdre for directing such an interesting and informative show!

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

Donna Wilson
Pauline Valenti
Mrs. William McCloskey
Albert J. Kollar
Henry A. Francis
Mr. Jack Elle
R.J. Anderson
Alexandra Gautraud
Gary Shows
Bernard Bernes
Dr. & Mrs. Bernard Dietz
Marian Sauer
Marie Louie Ostrom

And a warm welcome to new members:

Mrs. Novia M. Welch
Olene Sparks



editors notes.....

BY GARY SHOWS

Here we are back in another wonderful Spring! Thank's to those of you who responded to our plea for help in saving the Point's oldest building. This building is worth saving, more money is needed, this plea is NOT open ended as a decision must be made soon.

Shame on all of the TPIT staffers who were so late this issue! I love producing our newsletter and your work is critical to the success of the magazine, but when so many are late it becomes very difficult for me go get it out on time. By the way, thanks to the ones who were on time or early.

Feature articles in this issue include part three of Dr. Thompson's "Memories of Pioneer Point Residents", as promised more of Willard R. Spiersch's "Will Rambles on... His Point in Time", and a wonderful surprise from "some octogenarian still kicking around", Bernard Bernes. Yes, "Frenchie", we are lucky to have all of you to give us some details of the Point's history. I hope the title I gave your little piece is OK with you.

I am anticipating some problems with the History Association offset press, so Claudia at Point Richmond Print Shop was kind enough to print our cover to this issue early (she had red ink on her

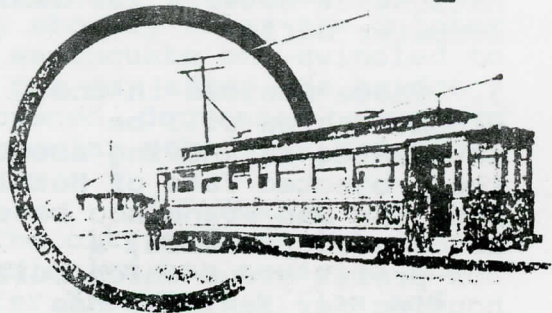
press). Sorry 'bout the old news on the inside flap.

If there are any offset experts out there that think they may be able to help me find a solution the uneven inking problem, please call me at 235-1336, or during the day at Alko Office Supply, 848-3358, it's a Gestetner machine.

THE COVER picture of the Standard Oil Longwharf was submitted by Liz McDonald, we are printing it courtesy of the Richmond Museum.

Our next issue will be May, the deadline for articles to that issue is April 20th.

EAST SHORE and SUBURBAN RAILWAY COMPANY



SENIOR NEWS

By Muriel C. Clausen

1. On your State of California Income Tax form you can check off line #44 (on form 540 and 540AO) if you wish to donate \$1.00 to support your California Senior Legislators. What if all of the State's 4 million Seniors were to check off line #44? Wouldn't that be a great boost for our CSL!

2. California Seniors who are computer buffs or who wish to learn how to use a computer can join SeniorNet, University of San Francisco (415-666-6505). There are learning sites in many parts of the Bay Area. The site nearest you can be located by phoning SeniorNet at the above number. Many interesting programs exist, including genealogy search, pen pals, learning job skills, etc. Call SeniorNet for more information on these programs. This is a new and very fast growing nationwide network for Senior computer buffs.

3. Those Seniors in the Richmond area will be interested in knowing about the projected fate of Hotel Don. The San Francisco based Bridges Corporation, a non-profit group which builds housing for Seniors, has applied for authority to

rebuild the interior of Hotel Don and convert it to 38 Senior housing units; 8 of which will be for low income Seniors. They have first applied to the National Registry to obtain historic status for the old hotel; which will mean that they cannot change the exterior but the interior will be gutted and vastly changed to this new use. The Richmond area has a great demand for this kind of housing.

4. Those Seniors in the El Cerrito area will be interested in the newly completed El Cerrito Royale Senior Congregate Housing Complex. This project is having difficulty in filling its spaces with Seniors. The El Cerrito area by contrast to Richmond has a low demand for Senior housing. This gives pause to the recent statement of the Federal Housing Authority that "all of California is falling far short of building affordable housing as required!" Maybe it's "location, location, location" as Realtors would say?



Point News

JERRY CERKANOWICZ

WAREHAM UPDATE

Pixar, a San Rafael computer graphics company owned by Steve Jobs has signed a ten year lease for 43,000 sq. ft. in Tech Center I. The company was founded in 1979 by George Lucas as the computer division of Lucas Films and produced sequences of computer animation for the Star Wars films. In 1986 Apple Computer co-founder Steve Jobs and a group of Pixar employees purchased the firm. Besides doing film work, for which Pixar won the 1988 Oscar for their animated short film called "Tin Toy" the company also produces highly sophisticated computer software for commercial and industrial use.

Pixar's president, Chuck Kolstad had hoped to find office space in Marin County where 80% of his employees live but was unable to find enough space to meet their expected future growth. The Tech Center lease will allow them to expand up to 50,000 sq. ft. over the next two years. The lease rate is \$15 a sq. ft., roughly half the going rate in Marin. In order to convince the employees that the move was a good idea, Rich Robbins, head of Wareham Development Company, rented a bus and gave them a tour of

the Point and they were pleased with what they saw.

Robbins said signing Pixar fills half the centers first phase and has given Wareham the ability to break ground on Phase 2 sooner than they had expected. Mechanics Bank will be moving into the center this summer.

FERRY

Friday March 23 was the last day for ferry service from Richmond to San Francisco. The ferry service had been supported by a \$9,000 a day subsidy from Caltrans and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Efforts are being made to restore the service and city officials are looking into the possibility of working with Berkeley and Vallejo on a ferry system. The city also plans to ask the Contra Costa Transportation Authority for Measure C transportation tax money.

It is believed that ridership, which was 500 per day shortly after the October 17 earthquake but dwindled to 60 per day after the bridge reopened, decreased because of irregular schedules and slow boats.

NATATORIUM

The city's Civic Art Commission has accepted the offer from Burl Willis and Phyllis Skaglund to restore

the original backwall mural of the Taj Mahal in the Natatorium. A picture has been found and work on the mural is expected to be done while repairs are being made to make the building safe for use. The repair work began on March 22 and is in progress.

EASTER EGG DYING

On April 14th from Noon to 4 pm at the Community Center, the annual Easter Egg Dying Contest will take place. For a small donation eggs and decorating materials will be supplied. Prizes will be awarded for the best eggs in various categories. The event is sponsored by the Point Richmond Business Association and will be administered by David Vincent, Marsha Ward and Jenne. Cookies will be served. I was not able to attend last month's kite making but I heard that everyone had lots of fun.

NEW BRICKYARD DEVELOPMENT

The big old eucalyptus trees around the Brickyard Cove quarry were cut down to make room for a new development. This development was approved by the city in 1984. Wolf Industries of Vallejo plans to build a townhouse subdivision of about 200 units.

Phone Richmond 3451

RICHMOND FRENCH LAUNDRY

L. BERNES, Proprietor

LADIES AND GENTS FINE WORK

LACE CURTAINS A SPECIALTY

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A-MID TRIVIA

by Mid Dornan (234-5334)

By now you should have been counted in the 1990 census. This is only the 20th time it has been taken as mandated by the Constitution. In how many have you been included? Originally required as a count of the population to help divide up seats in the House of Representatives, the census has become an effort to assess the state of the nation. Since 1984 there have been 65 public meetings around the nation to get the public's comments and suggestions. They considered repeating as many questions as possible from the past to maintain consistent statistics and realized that asking too much would result in people refusing to cooperate.

Ah...Springtime in the Point! Have you walked down Tunnel Avenue, with the pink fairy-like crab apple blossomed trees lining both sides of the street...or smelled the fragrant lilacs on Golden Gate...admired the unique tulip trees at Allyns and Peckhams...taken time to enjoy the tulips, daffodils and bright native poppies? Even the second story planter at 300 West Richmond added its colors of red, blue, yellow to say, definitely, it is Spring!!

Flying from Christchurch, New Zealand to attend the wedding of her sister, Cathy Forbes, were Judy and Bill Abrahams with children Devin, Colin, Jessie, Brendan, Shelley and Ariel. Trips to Disneyland and Santa Cruz were enjoyed before arriving in Richmond to visit her parents, Mary and Jim Forbes and sister Cindy. "Down Under" Judy is Dr. Forbes.

Also arriving to attend the wedding was another sister, Debbie and Rod Miller, and small daughter who came from Edmond, Oklahoma (where the live on "Easy Street!").

Latest information has it that the Grand Opening of the Mechanics Bank in the Point will be June 18th!

Are you a "Midnight Caller" fan? On March 21st a segment for the TV show was filmed in the Point. In fact, Jim and Florence Wilson "gave up" their home, 11 Montana Street, for the day while their front porch and dining room were filmed. The enormous amount of equipment and 70 odd crew members needed to produce the segment caused excitement in the neighborhood. Much sought after autographs of the stars expanded to include even crew members. Additional filming was done in the boat area around the Point. Tentative showing is the middle of April.

Does anyone else find the Caltrans directions to San Rafael from Castro confusing? Right Only..Left Only when actually, you go straight ahead!

IRS estimated taxes are due April 16. Grandma remembers those days when she thought a quarterly tax report meant sending 25 cents.

Sign in IRS Office "America -- land of untold wealth"

The only thing that hurts more than paying an income tax is not having to pay an income tax.

Definition of a Taxpayer: Some one who works for the government but doesn't have to take a civil service exam.

Where is the daylight that we save? Is there a secret hoard? Are the hours kept for us to have? If so, where are they stored?

WISHING EACH OF YOU A JOYOUS
EASTER! T'IS SPRING!


Moyle's Shoes

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Little Bear trading stamps.



Churches

OUR LADY OF MERCY CHURCH NEWS

by Eleanor Hurley

Fr. Jim Clift is to be installed as Pastor of Our Lady of Mercy on Sunday, April 22nd. Mass will be at 11:00 AM, to be followed by a reception. Plans are underway and invitations are being sent, the Bishop is expected to attend.

Renovation of the Rectory, including re-wiring has been completed and it is expected that Father will take up residence soon. Mass continues to be said daily at noon.

We have received a nice letter from the Souper Center Advisory Board expressing their appreciation to the church for our participation in their program for lunch to the many who appear daily. Tony Ferraira has told us that the number seems to increase daily rather than less. A special dinner was to be held on March 22nd at Grace Lutheran Fellowship Hall to honor all the different groups who had been assisting in the Souper Center Program.

Thanks to Amelia Drake, the Ladies Sodality is reinstituted

Our gardener, Gertrude Rondon, is busy getting the garden in shape. She has bought some new roses and is planning to plant several small border plants to bring color to the front area.

POINT METHODIST CHURCH NEWS

by Jean Reynolds

The four United Methodist Churches in Richmond are holding joint worship services during Lent on three Sunday evenings and Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The first service was held on March 4th at Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, our pastor, Michael Brown was the speaker. On March 18th, the Rev. Mrs. Dorothy Williams preached at St. Luke's United Methodist Church. On April 1, the service was at the Point Richmond Church with The Rev. Mr. Gregory Smith of St. Luke's as speaker.

Maundy Thursday service will be on April 12th at St. Luke's with The Rev. Mr. Ronald Swisher as preacher and the Good Friday service is scheduled for noon on April 13th at Easter Hill United Methodist Church.

Grace and Bob Yank have pruned, cleaned and planted new bulbs and rose bushes in the yard, it looks just great!

Mr. Holtzman Frazier was the guest speaker on March 25th while pastor Michael Brown traveled south to Los Angeles.

A new updated church directory has been published in rough form with the hope that any blanks or mistakes can be correctly entered by Easter.

POINT METHODIST CHURCH HISTORY

Church history is rich with contributions of women. One of the church groups in the early 1900's was the Home Missionary Society of the First Methodist Church whose history is reflected in their minutes, printed below and taken from the stiff cardboard covered notebook purchased from "Shoen's Pharmacy in the Point". This is the 45h installment.

April 16, 1915

Mrs. Gibbons, President of the H.M.S., in-tained (sic) the society at her home. Meeting was opened by singing No. 633 in Hymnal-prayer by Mrs. Petersen. Scripture reading by Mrs. Pritchard. Minutes of last meeting read and approved. It was ordered that society give a church extension tea on the next meeting day, third Friday in May. Following committees were appointed. Mrs. Bradley and Mrs. J.P. Smith on programme. Mrs. Lester and Totten on refreshments. After the business was transacted, an interesting programme was rendered. Mrs. Jas. Norton gave an instrumental solo, 'Lead Kindly Light', after which Mrs. Horner gave a talk on the Mite Boxes and their use giving out questions to those present on Missionary Work and the benefit derived. The Mite Boxes were then opened and found to contain \$3.72 + .33. Self-denial, #1.22.

After adjournment the hostess served light refreshments.

Mrs. Ella Gibbons, Pres
Jennie M. Totten, Sec

Sports memories

By Allan Smith

I just returned from Phoenix, Arizona but missed out on the "Cactus League. The baseball **MILLIONAIRES** started their "spring training" a week later.

This is the time of the year when many Point Richmond natives wished they were playing professional baseball again and training in Florida and Arizona. Remember the late Russ Christopher, a great pitcher, and his brother Lloyd who is still involved in pro baseball as a scout, and remember the Smith brothers, Leonard (now deceased) and Frank as well as their nephew Bryan Smith. All of the Point Richmonders had a memorable baseball career.

Although we missed the spring training in Phoenix, the famous Grand Prix of auto racing was taking place despite the rainy weather. The

race reminded me of Jack Healy, Point Richmonder living with his wife, Connie on Ocean Avenue. Jack did considerable competitive driving and was involved in races throughout the state. He raced against the likes of Phil Hill, the worldly renowned driver.

Spiro Cakos of the Point Cakos family resides in Phoenix, but Marcella and I were unable to contact him.



Memories of Pioneer Point Richmond Residents

Wm. L. Thompson

William L. Thompson, often called Louis by his friends, was born in Point Richmond on February 17, 1909, lived on Scenic Avenue, graduated from Richmond Union High School and was the first native Richmondite to go through medical school. Dr. Thompson began his practice in 1940 at 9th & Macdonald, later moving to 32nd & Macdonald until that building was sold at which time he moved to an office on Broadway. In 1979, at age 70 and after 39 years, he retired officially from medical practice. However, his many loyal, local patients continue to call him for advice.

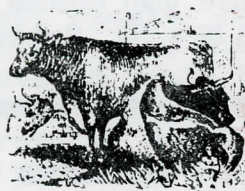
PART III

The Garvin family lived for many years in a house on Buena Vista between Idaho and Oregon Streets. It was later taken over by others including the Henry Frances. Just below on Idaho was the home of the Bernes family who ran a French laundry in town. They had two sons, August, usually called Al and the younger, Bernard. These two were known by their age group as Big Frenchie and Little Frenchie. They were a fine family. Al became prominent as an administrator in the Richmond School District and Bernard lives in Southern California in the San Diego region.

On Buena Vista Avenue lived the Beck family. They were also a fine family. Mr. Beck was a Captain on the Richmond-San Rafael Ferry for years and

piloted boats across until the bridge was built. A daughter, Elsie, was married and moved to St. Helena where she taught school for many years. The son, Theodore or Ted, taught science, mostly physics, at the El Cerrito High School for many years and did an outstanding job in organizing and maintaining the East Bay Science Fair. He still has an office in the Lawrence Hall of Science where he works with the Science Fair and a group which encourages science projects in high school and the younger college students.

One of the most prominent Point Richmond families was that of Gust Allyn who lived for many years on Idaho Street. While visiting him one time in his later years he told me his story and a remarkable story it was. He was born and raised in Greece. While he was still a child, his father emigrated to America. I presume he helped finance his family from here.



The
Santa Fe
Meat
Market

J. SAVILL, PROP.
RICHMOND AVE., below Postoff

As a teenaged young man, Gust decided to come to America and find his father, He was able to get passage on a ship to New York and worked there for several months saving his money to come west. He had last heard from his father from Richmond where, I think, he was working for the Standard Oil Company.

Gust was finally able to come west, I believe, in about 1913 and arrived at the old 16th Street Southern Pacific station. He was completely lost. He didn't know where he was or where next to go. He spoke very little English and had no idea of how to locate his father. He noted a crew at work on the railroad tracks nearby and tried to make himself understood. By the greatest of good fortune one of the laborers was Greek and

spoke the language. Better still, the man knew of his father and directed Gust to Point Richmond. He was told to wait at the Kenny Saloon at Washington and Standard Avenue as his father came there occasionally. He stayed around and eventually met his father. They lived together and Gust worked for a time at the Standard Oil Company but later developed a fine dry goods business in Point Richmond on Washington Avenue. He married Margaret Diffin and they had four children, all of whom have been remarkably successful. Gust eventually became a member of the Richmond City Council, the Mayor of Richmond and at last the Postmaster of the town. Quite a conquest for a poor emigrant boy.

Continued in May



HELP SAVE 139 WEST RICHMOND AVENUE: A HISTORICAL BUILDING

THE PROJECT

The little building at 139 West Richmond Avenue is the oldest building in Point Richmond. The property that it is on is now scheduled for development, and the little building is to be destroyed. The owners of the property, Ramon and Patience Zamrano have offered to give us the building if we can arrange to move it elsewhere. We have found a spot on city property in the triangle where we would like to move it and use it as our "museum" to display some of our Point Richmond archives.

To move the building and fix it up will take money. We can pay for some of the project but do not have the funds to do it all, so we are asking for your help. We have established a separate fund for this project and are now encouraging donations.

WE DO NOT HAVE A LOT OF TIME!



THE LITTLE BUILDING SUPERIMPOSED IN THE PROPOSED PLACE,
Thanks to Interactive Resources for this photograph.

I would like to help save the oldest building in Point Richmond.

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of: \$_____.
Make your check out to PRHA Historic Building Fund.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Mail to:

**Pt. Richmond History Assn.
229 Golden Gate Avenue
Point Richmond, CA 94801**

CONTRIBUTORS TO DATE

WALTER A. CONNOLLY

BURL WILLIS & PHYLLIS SKAGLUND
(PT. RICHMOND TRAVEL)

HANS & LORE SHAPER

MARIE LOUISE OSTROM

C. F. HOCHGESANG

WILLARD R. SPIERSCH

(Given in Memory of Ardell Cibattari)

Thank You All!

OUR 1963 RE-SURVEY

by Gary Shows

We've had a good response to our survey, but have decided to continue accepting them and tally the results in our summer issue. Of course the bigger the response the more interesting and meaningful it will be. The 1963 survey included over 800 responses and we hope to have at least 100, hopefully more by summer. So, if the 1990 Census hasn't surveyed you to death, just for the fun of it be sure to participate in our 1963 Point Richmond Survey. You will find forms during business hours on the desk in the lobby of 124 Washington Avenue.

One question that is getting some amusing answers is "How long do you think you will continue to live in Point Richmond?" Most of us really like where we live, here are some of the answers:

"Till Death"

"Forever" (15 of these)

"The rest of my life, even if I hit Lotto!"

"As long as we can"

"The rest of my life" (6)

"On and on"

"As long as I can afford it"

"Until I can't climb stairs"

"Always"

My favorite:

"27.78 years according to the mortality tables...the rest of my life"

If you live in the Point and haven't joined in, DO IT!

Will rambles on..... HIS Point in Time

by Willard R. Spiersch

**SPIERSCH BROS. PLUMBING &
SHEET METAL WORKS**

A Brief History of My Family

My father Fredrick (Fred) was born on July 17, 1883 in San Francisco, and moved with his parents to the family home in Sacramento. He was two years younger than Dick, his younger brother, Wm. Spiersch who was born in this house and lived there until he passed away in 1988 at the age of 95.

When my father finished his apprenticeship as a plumber, he was looking for a place to light, when he heard of the great prospects of a place called Point Richmond. He came here in 1902, looked it over and liked it. He then called his brother who was a journeyman sheetmetal worker, to join him. He also saw the good prospects. So, together they started up a sheet metal and plumbing shop in an existing store on Park Place. Later they moved the business to a new building at 125 Park

Place. My father was the plumbing partner and Dick handled the sheetmetal end of the business. For example, my father did the plumbing on the Colonial Hotel (now Hotel Mac).

The "Points in the Past" section in this great little publication, March of 1990 quotes from the Richmond Daily Record in an article headed "Arm Yourselves". Well, my Dad has told me that the Point in those days were the wild, woolly West. A wide open, tough place where most anything went! Well, my Dad did arm himself with a pistol, presumably for protection. One night, he was awakened by someone rattling the door and

starting up the dark stairwell, he grabbed his gun and pointed it down toward the intruder crying out "who's there?". When he didn't get an immediate response and was about to pull the trigger, his brother (who was returning from a night on the town said, "it's me you damn fool!". This incident so shook up my father that he took the gun and threw it in the bay!

My father met a beautiful young lady fresh from

her Kansas homestead, Karin Jader, who accepted his proposal and they were married in Sacramento on April 22,

R. H. Spiersch

F. G. Spiersch

Spiersch Bros.

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POINT RICHMOND, CAL.

1906. They had planned to be married in San Francisco but the earthquake and fire there on April 18th changed their plans. I never knew how they had met, but I'm glad they did! They settled in a rented cottage either on Scenic or Terrace...I've forgotten. Anyway, I was born there, and we moved to the new home my Dad had built at 230 Castro Street in 1910. I was two years old at the time.

Richard Spiersch married his Sacramento sweetheart (Gertrude Mathias, 'Gertie').

My sisters, Rhoda and Pauline were born at the Castro Street home.

The Spiersch Brothers moved their business from the Point to their new building on 13th Street near MacDonald, leaving their old shop vacant.

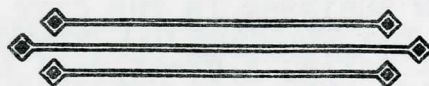
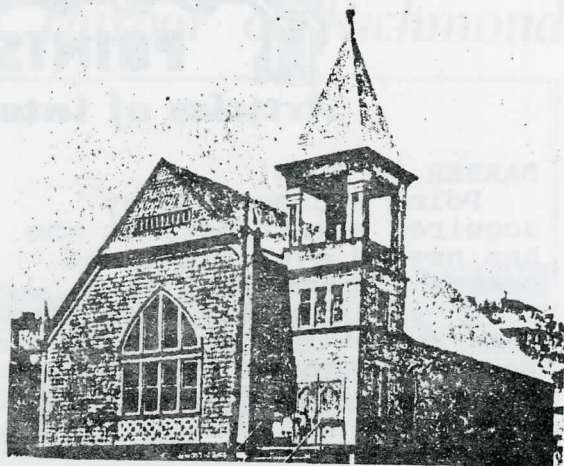
When my father passed away, Richard purchased by father's interest from the estate and he then operated both facets of the business. He later sold it sometime during the war and became Plumbing Inspector for the City of Richmond. He was a tough Inspector, and I'll bet that buildings at that time had the best plumbing systems in any city in the Bay Area!



SPIERSCH BROS. PLUMBERS AND TINNERS

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MARATHON POOL HALL

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Soft Drinks

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Everything Brand New

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Pt. Richmond, Calif.

Phone Richmond 403

POINTS TO THE PAST

Articles of interest from our archives

BARBER IN TOWN!

Point Richmond today acquired something that she has needed ever since she became a town. That is a first-class barber shop with bathroom attachments. Ernest Weise of Winslow, Arizona is the enterprising tonsorial artist who had the foresight to grasp the situation.

Richmond Record-Herald
December 11, 1902

NEW BUSINESS IN THE CITY

The Standard Oil company is not making a great deal of noise about it, but every time one visits the great refining plant just on the outskirts of the city he sees where a couple of hundred thousand dollars has been spent for additional machinery. The plant will be completed if possible by the first of the year.

Richmond Record-Herald
December 11, 1902

POLLUTION!

A grave danger to the citizens of Point Richmond is

the slough lying between the town and the Standard Oil tracks. Until recently this lagoon or slough had an opening through the railroad embankment to the bay and the tides flushed the foul drainage matter and removed it from the vicinity of the town. Of late the oil company has caused this opening to be filled in and a drainage from a goodly portion of the town runs into the slough creating disease and pestilence.

Richmond Record-Herald
December 2, 1902



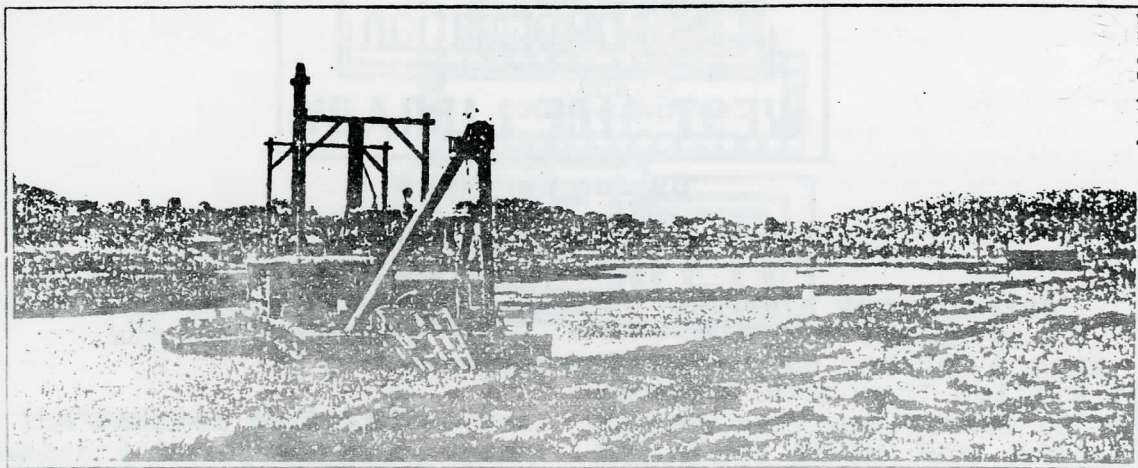
GO AHEAD...MAKE MY DAY!

Mat Maloney who drew a gun on Manuel Soto and threatened to kill him. was arrested on a charge of assault with intent to kill and placed under \$150 bonds by Judge Lindsey.

Charles Freeman who exhibited a pistol this morning and threatened to let daylight through a cook in a downtown chop house was also placed under \$100 bonds which were promptly furnished by friends.

Richmond Record-Herald
December 10, 1902

Dredging for the Future Harbor of Richmond



I took this from a special "Women's Edition" of the *Richmond Independent*, published in 1910. As the Point was once an island, I think it is interesting to look at how the land was built to make it what it is today. This dredger "sucked up" mud from the bottom of the bay and "sprayed" it to produce solid land, roadways and our present day Port of Richmond.

Gary



Realizing the advantages to be gained by the development of an inner and more protected harbor, the Point Richmond Land and Canal Company is even now engaged in a gigantic scheme of dredging.

The mud at present being removed from the bottom of the Canal and put on the streets of the adjacent land is a hard clay formation and will be found to make a perfect

foundation for the new streets. The operation of transferring this mud, it will be readily, accomplishes two purposes. First, it deepens and widens the Canal. Second, it makes that part of Richmond which was thought useless for building purposes (it being a swamp) to about the same level as the rest of the town.

The fill which is being made on the Santa Fe ground amounts to something like 900,000 cubic yards.

The machine or dredger that is doing this great work is rated at 1000 horsepower. It is operated by electric power.

The suction pipe is 25 inches in diameter, and the stream of mud and water sucked in at the mouth of this pipe and forced out at the end of nearly 3,000 feet of shore pipe, is 35,000 gallons per minute.

Richmond Independent
Special Edition, 1910

Dictionary
JAN BURDICK
THIS POINT
MRE M

For Your
Information

WEST SIDE LIBRARY

By Jan Burdick

New books at the West Side.....

PAINTING THE DARKNESS

by Robert Goddard

When a strange man appears in William Trenchard's garden in St. John's Wood one evening in 1882, and claims to be the former fiance of his wife Constance, Trenchard's whole life is overwhelmed. James Davenall had been missing, declared a suicide, for 11 years and his younger brother had inherited The Davenall Baronetcy. Yet, if James "Norton", as he calls himself, is not the missing man, who is he? There are many twists and turns in this fascinating novel before the mystery is solved.

MAASAI DAYS

by Cheryl Bensten

Anthropologists have studied, and famous writers have been inspired by the handsome, lion hunting Maasai, who regard cows as currency and move with them across the borders of Kenya and Tanzania wherever there is rain and pasture. In this warmhearted portrait of a proud tenacious people, an American journalist describes her six-year-long friendship with a group of Maasai villagers, whose

problems in adapting to or resisting new ways of life she came to understand and respect.

PILLARS OF THE EARTH

by Ken Follett

With this book, Follett risks all and comes out a clear winner, escaping the narrow genre of suspense thrillers to take credit for a historical novel of gripping readability, authentic atmosphere and detail and memorable characterization. Set in the 12th century England, the narrative concerns the building of a cathedral in the fictional town of Kingsbridge. The ambitions of three men merge, conflict and collide through four decades during which social and political upheaval and the internal politics of the church affect the progress of the cathedral and the fortunes of the protagonists.



Easter Wishes



by Anne Hanzlik

The current offering of the Masquers is a rollicking spoof laid in 18th century London. Originally a play, "Rape upon Rape" by the famous and prolific playwright and novelist Henry Fielding, best known for the well known "Tom Jones" of stage and screen, it is a satire painted with bold strokes. (The connotation of rape was obviously quite different two centuries ago from the present day definition, as were many of the mores of England of the 1700's in general.)

The names of the cast, Squeezum, Politic, Dabble, Sotmore, Ramble and Constant give us a good hint of their characters in the play. Even the costumes reveal the characters of the actors. Many of them are quite delightful as well as boldly colorful.

Ann Homrighausen as Mrs. Squeezum, clothes and mannerisms are vaguely reminiscent of her role in "Gypsy" for the Marin Comic

Light Opera production of the play, but it is very apropos for this part as well. Deborah Banks as "Hilaret", the romantic lead part is appealing in her very feminine costume and sings well also. In Fact, the large cast is well chosen and projects a gaiety in song and dance that in some degree softens the critical commentary of the play.

Fielding wrote "Rape upon Rape" early in his career while he was managing the London Haymarket theater, among others. After he left that active role in the London theater scene he produced many novels of which "Tom Jones" is the best known, but all were social commentaries, especially his view of the unsatisfactory state of penal law and administration, as well as domestic customs.

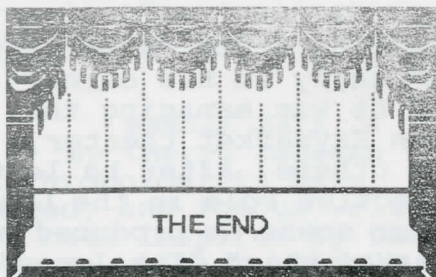
The lyrics and music by Lionel Bart and Laurie Johnson, carry the plot of the story efficiently, especially "Lock

Up Your Daughters" and the political duet by Politic and Dabble, George Adams and Bob Taylor. In "It Must Be True", the commentary on newspapers and their stories seems almost contemporary.

There is something very appealing about a musical staged in such an intimate arena as the Masquers, it involves the audience more than a musical staged in a much larger setting and a larger audience that is experienced in bigger professional productions.

It should always be remembered that the very term "amateur" defines the cast as those who act because of their love of acting as the Latin root of the word amateur, amār, is that of love.

The first night audience was wildly enthusiastic and "Lock Up Your Daughters" should have a long and successful run.



THE MASQUERS

Playhouse, Inc.

105 Park Place, Point Richmond

PROUDLY PRESENTS



A New Musical

Book by BERNARD MILES

Music By LAURIE JOHNSON

Lyrics by LIONAL BART

Adapted from the book
RAPE UPON RAPE

Directed by LINDI BAUMAN

Musical Direction by JANET HEFFNER

Choreography by EDDIE SHINE

A bright, bouncy, bawdy musical which gleefully spoofs the manners and morals of 18th century London.

THE CAST:

George Adams

Ron Anderson

Deborah Banks

Clare Bolting

John Dunn

Michael Frassinelli

Tim Hart

Ann Homrighausen

Robert Love

Paul Marsaglia

Christina Olsen

Robert Patterson

Traci Robinson

Marilyn Smith

Gerry Studier

Robert Taylor

Friday & Saturday evenings — March 30 - May 19, 1990

Sunday Matinees — April 8, 22, 29, May 6

RESERVATIONS: 232-4031 (24 hours)

Reservations held until 10 minutes before curtain

Group Rates Available

Box Office Opens at 8:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m. for matinees

Curtain: 8:30 p.m.

Matinees: 2:30 p.m.

Admission \$8.00

DINNER & THEATRE benefit for our building fund at HOTEL MAC, Thursday evening, May 17. Dinner and tickets to "Lock Up Your Daughters" for only \$23.00. To reserve, CALL: 236-4988.

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Memories of an Old Friend On the Point

Bernard Bernes / AKA Frenchie

I really enjoy Bill Thompson's and Willard Spiersch's historical reviews!

To add to the trivia of old Washington Grammar School I will add the names of some others who were in Mrs. Axtell's first grade class. They were Arthur Hoover, Howard Arnold, Harry Carlson, Willie Fischer, Harold Shawl, Howard Hughes, and myself. (See TPIT, February, 1990)

Probably no one has mentioned that the bay water came up to the edge of the school playground. There was a road separating the grounds from the water. During recess, we used to go there and catch small crabs to bring to class to scare the girls.

Marbles, mumbly peg and top spinning were the fun games. My brother, August, was one of the best marble shooters in school. We had a lot of holes in our pant knees! Another thing we used to skate and ride our bikes all

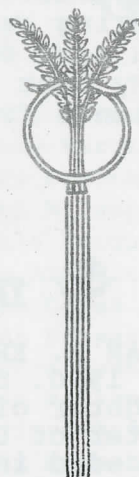
the way down Montana Street causing many bruised knees.

Someone asked about the trolley cars on Standard Avenue. (See TPIT, March, 1990, "Point Artifacts") It was a single track part of the way, with sidings to allow the cars to pass one another. The cars went up to the main gate at the refinery, turned around, and went back through Richmond to Oakland. The local fare was ten cents. We used the trolley to go to high school. We got passbooks at eight cents a ride. After three o'clock the trolleys hooked up to them to pick the workers up from the refinery. So when we got out of class at



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The place where everything is
"Class" except the
PRICES



the high school, we would get on the trailer section. As we went down Garrard Boulevard we would start bouncing the trailer section until it would almost bounce off the tracks.

Howard Topping and Webster McWhorter were the first wireless operators in Richmond. We listened to the Dempsey- Carpentier fight on Howard's wireless set (radio).

There was a sulphuric acid plant at the Standard Refinery. The fumes used to gag people in the Point. All of the houses that were painted with lead based paint turned almost black from the fumes, no environmental controls!

We used to enjoy the band music on Thursday nights across from the firehouse on Park Place. Also there was a small playground next to the Point Theatre, sort of a gym set.

It is nice that some octogenarians are still kicking around and can give you some of the past history.

My best regards to my old friends from the Point.

Point Artifacts

from James Cheshareck

James,

Regarding street cars on Standard Avenue. Yes, streetcars did run down Standard Avenue. They ran from the San Rafael Ferry through the Standard Oil Refinery to Garrard Boulevard to Mac Donald Avenue, down MacDonald and on out San Pablo to Oakland and Alameda. Our High School was on 23rd near MacDonald. WE TEENAGERS in the Point had to travel to our High School by street car. We bought tickets at school for five cents a ride.

I'm sorry to say, we teenagers were a rowdy ah.....high spirited bunch that gave the conductor and motorman premature gray hair! The streetcar pulled a trailer car in those days. We kids always rode the trailer. We found that by jumping up and down, the trailer would have a nice bounce..... giving the motorman in front the fits!

I remember that on Haloween, the bigger boys would grease the tracks by Castro Street. The cars would then slide past the turnout and at the point the Motorman applied the brakes. NOT ME!! Anyway I don't recommend this sport to anyone!!! Very dangerous!!!

Very truly yours,
Will Spiersch



Deaths.....

SUSAN M. ERICKSON, 43, of Point Richmond died on Monday, March 12, 1990. She was wife of Philip R. Erickson of the Point, daughter of Evelyn M. Kreyer of Fall River, Wisconsin and sister of Dianne Arner of Jamesville, Wisconsin. She was preceded in death by her father, Oswald Kreyer. She was a native of Fall River, Wisconsin and was retired after 20 years with the Social Security Administration.



Dear Gary,

It seems like I'm doing an awful lot of communication with your lately!

In your March issue, page 14, "Our New Building", describing the new high school, there is a mention of the school's name in gold letters on copper plate.

Well, my uncle Dick Spiersch of Spiersch Bros. in the Point, make those letters for that sign. When they razed that fine old building, I managed to save the "R" in "Richmond". It is not very large, if you indicate that you would like it for your museum, let me know as I consider this letter a Point artifact.

Please consider the enclosed check as a contribution for your new building in memory of Adell Cibattari.

Sincerely yours,
Will S.

Thanks so much again Will, for everything! Thanks for the contribution toward what we hope will be our "new building", thanks for your offer of the letter "R", made by Dick Spiersch, which was once on Richmond Union High (I think that I can accept your offer without consulting our board.....please) and most of all thanks for sharing your memories,

these articles become an important part of our written archives, please continue!
Gary

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Dear Jerry,

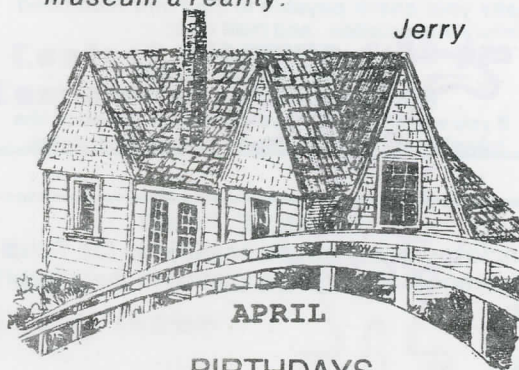
We, of Point Richmond Travel are very enthusiastic about the proposed museum in the Point's oldest building.

We would like to help by pledging \$1,000.00.

Burl Willis
Phylis Skaglund

Thank you Burl and Phylis for this very generous pledge! It wouldn't take many offers like yours to make our museum a reality.

Jerry



LOOF LIRPA
Roberta Palfini
Kari Elli
Tara Kaufman
Judy Walz
Pam Wilson
Joel Peterson
Michael Horn
Bonita Neasham
Monica Doherty
William Kretzmer
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PAM WILSON
521 WESTERN DRIVE
POINT RICHMOND, CA 94801

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

Articles for each month's issue are due on the 15th of the previous month. Please mail articles and items of interest to:

GARY SHOWS
229 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE
POINT RICHMOND, CA 94801

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Happy Easter

Calendar

- April 3** **Women's Westside Improvement Club Meeting**
11:30 am, Our Lady of Mercy Church
- Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting**
7:30 pm, Point Richmond Community Center
- April 10** **Passover Begins at Sunset**
- April 11** **Point Richmond Business Association Meeting,**
Noon at the Hotel Mac
- April 14** **Easter Egg Dying Contest, Noon to 4:00 pm**
Point Richmond Community Center
- April 15** **Easter Sunday**
- April 16** **Income Taxes Due**
- April 20** **Deadline for TPIT May issue**
- May 1** **Women's Westside Improvement Club Meeting**
11:30 am, Our Lady of Mercy Church
- Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting**
7:30 pm, Point Richmond Community Center
- May 9** **Point Richmond Business Association Meeting,**
Noon at the Hotel Mac
- May 13** **Mother's Day**
- May 20** **Point Richmond History Association Picnic**

