

# THIS POINT....in time

## NEWSLETTER

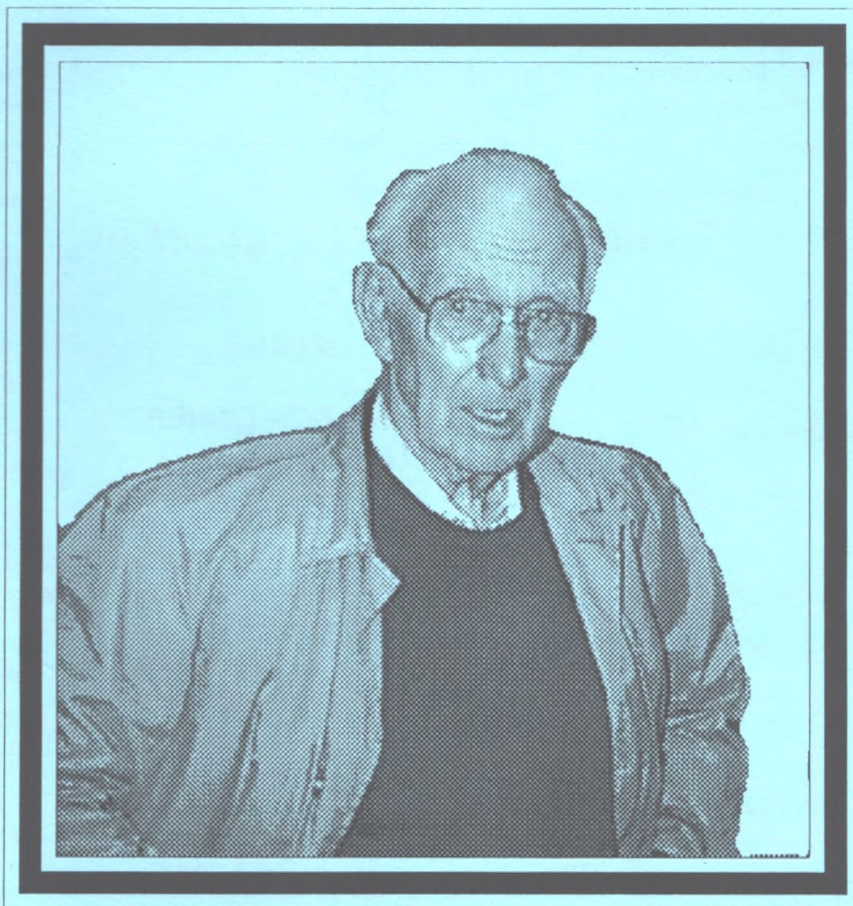
The Point Richmond History Association

[www.alkos.com/prha](http://www.alkos.com/prha)

Vol. XVII No. 5

February/March, 1999

\$1.50



William L. Thompson, M.D.

1909 - 1998

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF POINT RICHMOND  
ANNOUNCES THE

*1999 SWEETHEART OF THE YEAR*

*MILDRED "MID" DORNAN*

*Super Mom  
Church Leader  
Civic Leader  
Point Historian  
Totally Awesome Grandmother  
But still a  
Kid At Heart*

Please join the CELEBRATION DINNER  
Honoring Mid on  
February 11, 1999 from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m.

**RICHMOND GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB**  
1 MARKOWICH LANE (Giant HWY exit off Richmond Parkway)

Hors d'oeuvres - Dinner - Entertainment  
Tickets - \$25 (Benefit Church Roof Fund)

For Reservations Call

**FRAN SMITH**  
222-2999

or

**SHIRLEY BUTT**  
237-2084

We expect a crowd, so we suggest you send your check before February 5th, payable to  
First UMC, c/o Fran Smith, 2574 Sheldon Drive, Richmond, CA 94803

# From The President

**Mid Dornan**

This issue is dedicated to Dr. William L. Thompson who died December 8, 1998. Born in Point Richmond in 1909 he was a Point icon. I knew him first professionally; he delivered my three daughters. Raised in a home on Scenic Avenue, he attended Washington School and grew up on the hills in the Point. A knowledgeable and learned man with a photographic mind, he contributed many invaluable articles to 'THIS POINT....in time'. His papers documented early Point history. He knew the facts, better still he remembered them and put them in writing. They included 'Life in Old Point Richmond', 'Medical History of Point Richmond', 'Memories of Pioneer Point Richmond Families', 'Other Point Memories'. He wrote of ink-well days before fountain pens and ball points. He told of candles on Christmas Trees and could recall the number of buckeye trees in the Point with their locations, where there were Indian mounds and once said he didn't recall a single robbery in Point Richmond when he grew up adding "Most people didn't have much to steal." Perhaps his greatest contribution was his article on 'Professor Botts and his Flying Machine'. Copies of correspondence with the Bancroft Library and the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum are on file. They were unaware of this 1902 pre-Wright Brothers flight attempt off Nicholl Knob until he documented it. Had this flight been successful, Point Richmond would be in

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history books.

As a doctor, nurses commented on his surgical abilities. When he volunteered for World War II he was ordered to stay in Richmond to help in the critical shortage of doctors here. When gas rationing caused problems for home calls he was told to take common carriers or a taxi! He recalled one day he had 44 emergency room cases for which he was paid \$6. A Naturalist, he spent most vacations in wilderness areas. A recognized pathologist in the state, he also found time for community service by being involved in school athletics, helped form the Richmond Museum and served on the Camp Fire Board.

Lewis, as some called him, was a remarkable man. One of a kind. We are grateful for his legacy of Point Richmond memories.

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

**Lucretia Edwards**

**Marian Sauer**

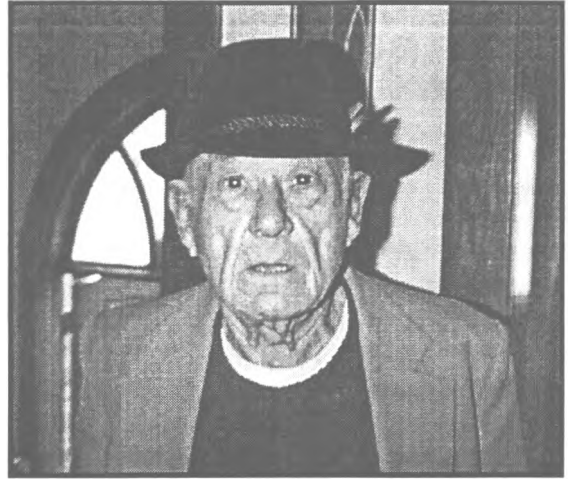
**L.S. Markarian**

And a warm welcome to the following new members:

**Mark M. Gebhart**

**Beverly M. Lyon**

*Thanks to Mary Highfill and  
Liz McDonald for planting the  
lovely new flowers in the  
planter box in front of the little  
museum!*



*Bill Kollar at our January Meeting, Bill stars in the film "The Plunge: Time Laps Through History." He claims to be the first to swim in the Plunge.*

*Museum Staff Coordinator Betty Dornan thanks volunteers who staffed the History Building in December and January.*

*Thank You!*

**Santa Fe Market**

and

**Point Richmond Market**

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

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

### **Museum Hours:**

**Thursday**

**11:30am - 2:00pm**

**Saturday**

**11:30 - 2:00pm**



# Gary's Column

Gary Shows

This issue is dedicated to Dr. William L. Thompson who passed away December 9, 1998. With his written contributions to this newsletter, Dr. Thompson gave a awful lot to our community. He put his vivid memories of old Point Richmond into words that will live on forever. I am very grateful to Dr. Thompson and intend to republish some or all of his work either in this newsletter or a separate publication as time and space permits.

Usual thanks to all who contributed to this publication, good to have the Westside library news back. Congratulations to "Sweetheart" Mid whom the title truly fits perfectly!

It was good to see so many attending the January meeting and I really enjoyed the film. Between the Plunge restoration project and the Red Oak Victory ship return we really have a lot of exciting things going on in here in Richmond.

The deadline for the April/May issue is March 19th with an anticipated date of assembly of April 1st.

Thanks to the December/January issue assembly crew:

Pam Wilson  
Mid Dornan  
Jerry Cerkowicz  
Gary Shows  
Betty Dornan  
Sonja Darling  
Mary Highfill  
Liz McDonald



*Mid Dornan and Ellie Strauss  
At our January Meeting at Methodist Church*



*Mayor Corbin arriving at our meeting, she is  
President of the Save the Richmond Plunge Trust.*

**The Cover:**  
**Dr. Thompson at a Point Richmond  
History Association meeting in  
1997.**

# A-Mid TRIVIA

-Mid Dornan (510-234-5334)

Question: Still standing are the personal residences of every U.S. President except one. Can you name which one?

Answer at end of Trivia.

\*\*\*

By the time this issue reaches you, the next six weeks will have been determined by that little guy in Punxsutawney, PA, the groundhog. The February 2 celebration goes back mainly to German settlers who watched animals for signs of spring. They watched for a hibernating animal, to appear. When they came to America there weren't many badgers or bears so they watched the groundhog. The common belief was that if the day was sunny, the groundhog would see its shadow and go back underground meaning six more weeks of winter. Weather experts have never found this method really works!



Valentines Day is on a Sunday this year. For the romantic who would like to married that day, Alameda County will accommodate you. The Clerk-Recorder's office will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. to issue marriage licenses and to perform wedding ceremonies. To those who recall \$3 license fees... now they are now \$79. The wedding ceremony costs \$50.

\*\*\*

The Doug Corbins are announcing the engagement of their son, Jeff to Janette Schue from upstate New York. A law student at Stanford, Janette and Jeff plan to be married after her graduation in the summer of 2000. Jeff is doing post doctorate work at U.C. Berkeley in plant biology.

\*\*\*

A girl, Ann Livia Brady, arrived December 8, 1998, 3 weeks early, weighing 5 lbs. 3 oz. Daughter of Melissa and Colin Brady, she is their first child and both Mom and baby are doing fine.

\*\*\*

JUNK: something you throw away two weeks before you need it.

\*\*\*

Potential commercial artists from Room 18 at Washington School decorated the Christmas windows of the Santa Fe Market in December. Another class decorated the live tree outside in front of the store.

\*\*\*

A man had been pulled over to the curb for speeding. The police officer, pad in hand, snapped, "OK, what's your name?"

Valdimarsky Yubanowitz Merkowitskyavics," the driver replied.

"Well," said the policeman slowly as he pocketed his pad; "don't let me catch you

speeding again."

\*\*\*

Coming from Ohio to spend Christmas here were Carla Beckerley with Laura, William and baby Jackson.

\*\*\*

Marion Tedrick and Jerry Burgin announced their engagement on December 4th with plans to be married in April 1999. Marion is a graduate student at Southern Oregon State in Ashland and working at the BLM.

\*\*\*

Good News! A twenty-five percent cut in vehicle license fees? The fee is based on a vehicle's estimated value and is separate from the registration fee. Average savings will be \$43.

\*\*\*

Coming to help celebrate their mother as "Sweetheart of the Year" are daughters Kathy Barnes, Oxford, Mississippi and Dr. Roberta Dornan Palfini, Irvine, California.

\*\*\*

You can't lose weight by talking about it. You have to keep your mouth shut.

\*\*\*

'round the circle-

Rags make paper  
Paper makes money  
Money makes banks  
Banks makes loans  
Loans make poverty  
Poverty makes rags.

-Parakeet

\*\*\*

If you'd like to have your name removed from telemarketers' lists, you can write to the DMA at P.O. Box 9014, Farmingdale, NY 11735.

\*\*\*

The basic human needs: food, water, PHONE.

\*\*\*

Cheers to that Harvard study claiming chocolate lovers may live longer! However, a decade from now, the world may start running out of chocolate. The 1998 cocoa crop is falling behind the previous harvest by more than 1 million metric tons because of a lack of rain on the Ivory Coast. Cacao trees take about six years to yield cocoa beans and grow best in the shade of taller rain-forest trees. The average American eats about 11.7 pounds of chocolate a year. Quick, pass the chocolate!

\*\*\*

Anna Qsofsky, daughter of Cindy Forbes, grand-daughter of proud grandmother, Mary Forbes' has completed her Veterinarians Degree of Medicine at Davis. Congratulations! Isn't this the dream of most children, at some time in their lives?

\*\*\*

Pat Pearson is hosting a 75th birthday party for her husband Frank on February 7th at the home of Virginia Cherniak. Before moving to Otis, Oregon several years ago, Pat and Frank



lived in the Point many years. Coming to help celebrate will be daughters Jenny and Stephanie from Seattle and Julie from Sacramento. Frank, in jest, remarked he wanted to see all his old friends...if they were still alive. Ha!

\*\*\*

Rosemary Corbin has been elected a leader of leaders. She was chosen to be head of the Contra Costa County Mayors group. 'Tis often said, if you want something done, ask a busy person.

\*\*\*

Donna and Rosy Roselius literally breezed through the Point in December enroute from Port Orford, Oregon to spend Christmas, first with grandchildren in Sonora and then heading to Tucson to be with the other two grandchildren. *(P.S. they were in that motorhome on which the book is based. One presumes they made it. See book review.)*

\*\*\*

Kelly Darling von York has completed requirements for her Associate Arts Degree at Contra Costa College.

*Amelia Drake*

\*\*\*

Bob Peckham...don't you think you are going too far adding a dislocated shoulder to your other health problems lately!! Just GET WELL.

\*\*\*

Brace yourself for a deluge of millennium madness preparations for the next year.

\*\*\*

REMEMBER SOMEONE SPECIAL ON VALENTINE'S DAY

\*\*\*

ANSWER: There isn't a home for William McKinley, our 25th President who was born in Niles, Ohio.



*Lucretia Edwards and Ellie Strauss conferring after our January Meeting*



# 50 Attend January PRHA General Meeting

*By Mid Dornan*

The bi-yearly general membership meeting on Sunday, January 17th was attended with a full house in Friendship Hall at the Methodist Church. The big attraction film, "THE PLUNGE, TIME LAPS THROUGH HISTORY" was not a disappointment. It was especially meaningful to have in attendance William Kollar, the FIRST person to enter the 'Natatorium', as it was called when it opened. Also on hand was narrators Lucretia Edwards and LeRoy George Williams. Members commented one voice in the plunge history film was missing...that of Georgie Johnson who was like a fixture.

Save the Plunge is a monumental task which Mayor Rosemary Corbin has accepted to chair, but it is Ellie Strauss running the fund

raising programs. One of the Point's most valuable assets, the Plunge is used by people of all ages, shapes, sizes, nationalities, and economic needs. It is recreational and therapeutic. IT MUST BE SAVED!

It was exciting to read the credits at the end of the film. Filmed on location in Point Richmond, California it credits individuals as well as the History Association. Filmmaker Alchemedia was nominated last year for an Academy Award—does that clue you to the quality of this production!

The film is not yet in its final print but will be by March when it will be shown at the Community College theater to the general public. If you missed our showing, don't miss this one.

## SAVE THE RICHMOND PLUNGE TRUST

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

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

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Please clip out and send with your check to P.O. Box 70443,  
Richmond, CA 94807)

*THIS POINT....in time*

# Church News

## Our Lady of Mercy

*Dee Rosier*

232-1387

It's a New Year and time for new beginnings.

We celebrate the birth of Jesus in December. It is also the month when our Parish glows with our annual decorations and the celebration of special Masses. Each year the display takes on new meanings and warms our hearts.

Our Parish Assembly was held on Sunday, December 20th. It was a very special event. Santa (Peter Lespier) and his helper (Mary Lespier) distributed gifts to all in attendance. Amelia, Shirley and Angie had the hall decorated and served coffee, muffins and fruit. Anna provided the music for the sing-a-long. Each parishioner brought a wrapped gift which Santa distributed to all those in attendance. The remaining gifts were given to the residents of Family Manor Rest Home.

Midnight Mass was celebrated by Father Paul Devine, and our parish glowed with all the lights and candles. Our talented parishioners were outstanding in their musical performances. Javier Lopez headed up the brass section, accompanied by Sean and Erick Siegmjord. They were complimented by Joyce Angell (harp) and Rod Phillips (organ and bagpipes). Vocalists were Cynthia Young and Jonie Phillips. It was a memorable evening. Our loyal parishioners are responsible for such events. Special thanks to Jonie and Rod for

their many hours in making Midnight Mass a reality. Michael Smith donated the Christmas trees and set up the Christmas Crib. What would our Parish do without the Smith Family who are always there to lend a hand? Adolph Brossard decorated the outdoor shrine with lights. Anna, Betty and Claudia provided the music for Christmas Day Mass.

Just as at home when the Christmas Season is over, all of the decorations must be stored and put away until the following year. Special thanks to good stewards Mary and Peter Lespier, John Gerk, Dean and Michael Smith, and Adolph Brossard for taking care of this task.

Annual church calendars are available thanks to the generosity of Bob and Marie Peckham and the Santa Fe Market. Church support envelopes are also available if you haven't picked them up from the table at the back of the church, please see Father Jim. At the end of the year, Al Rife prepares a statement of church donations for each participating parishioner which is mailed to your home for income tax purposes.

Our donation to the Richmond Souper Kitchen totaled \$3000 for 1998. Remember "Kindness is the one thing you can't give away - it always comes back."

Christine Young celebrated her 14th birthday by making her debut as a Lecturer. It was really her gift to us signifying that youth is interested in church participation and can pick up where we leave off. Welcome Christine to the world of Lecturers and we look forward to a repeat performance

Our condolences to Darlene and Jim Byers on the unexpected loss of their son Steven (1964-1998). A Memorial Mass for Seven was

held at our Parish on January 9th

Phyllis Feyder was recently hospitalized and we wish her well in her recovery. Amelia Drake took a fall and we hope that she is up and dancing soon. Remember all of our other Parishioners who are unable to attend Mass regularly. In this the cold and flu season, let's hope it passes quickly. I have had mine for the last three weeks and cannot find anyone to take it from me.

Mary Ann Albright, secretary at St. Cornelius, is retiring. She has taken care of our financial records for the last six years. We wish her well as she steps into a new path in her life. Her successor, Carolina Susaki will continue to handle our records.

We have a shortage of Eucharistic Ministers and are looking for volunteers. Some Parishioners have already expressed interest. If you would like to become an Eucharistic Minister, please contact me (232-1387) or Brenda McKinley (527-6284). A training class will be held and new schedules will be forthcoming.

I leave you with a toast for 1999:

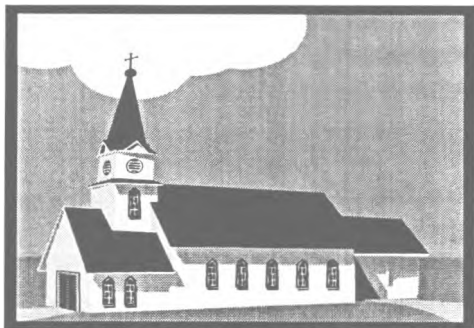
Here's to the bright New Year

And a fond farewell to the old,

Here's to the things that are yet to come

And to the memories that we hold

See you in church.



## Point Richmond Methodist

*Jean Reynolds*

235-2988

Michael Owen Mandt was baptized on January 17. Michael is the son of Carol Mandt, the nephew of Pat Cefalu and the youngest brother in our church family. Michael's grandmother and uncle were on hand, too, and the morning worship was followed by a baby-shower held in his honor.

All who came enjoyed an evening sing-along time in Friendship Hall with Bay Area songwriter, editor and musician Yohann Anderson on January 10. Yohann is a great storyteller as well as musician. Donuts, mulled cider and cocoa were served to please during the break. Organizer Jessie West hopes to institute a tradition of "Second Sunday Sing-longs" featuring a variety of musicians. Yohann is slated to return on April 18, (mark your calendar) but a singing in March would hinge on other musicians to lead.

The Monday night book study group is reading Dostoevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov".

We will celebrate Souper-Bowl Sunday on January 31. Those who attend worship will bring a can of food and \$1 (or more) to donate to the Richmond Souper Center. This outreach event is observed nationally to raise money and provide food donations for local agencies all over the country. It is almost as good as football.

Coming Soon:

Mid Dornan, of Point Richmond History Association fame, will be honored at a dinner at the Richmond Golf and Country Club on February 11, 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mid is

our "Sweetheart of the Year" for 1999, and we will get a chance to show our appreciation to her that evening. To make dinner reservations, call by February 5: (510) 222-2999 or (510) 237-2084. The proceeds of the dinner will go toward the retirement of the church-roof loan.

Lenten Hymn Sing, February 21, 4:00 pm.: Area United Methodists will gather for a singing led by Pastor Dan. Pastor Dan is recognized internationally as a hymn writer; we always feel blessed to have him here.



Enjoying refreshments after the January meeting are  
Ellie Strauss, Mid Dornan, Anne Hanzlik, Marj  
Bellati and Mae Mandl.

## Point Methodist Church History

-Mid Dornan

*Church history is rich with contributions of women. One church group in the 1920's was the SOCIAL LEAGUE of the first Methodist Episcopal Church whose history is reflected in their minutes printed below and taken from the canvas covered, red leather cornered notebook which cost \$1.15. The minutes are printed as written. This is the 36th installment.*

Nov. 21st 1925

Social League met in the Methodist church parlors.

Mrs. Mythen and Mrs. Stender as Hostesses.

Meeting was opened by repeating the Lord's Prayer.

Roll call found nineteen members present.

Minutes of previous meeting read and approved.

Final preparations were made for the bazaar.

Motion was made and carried to have but the one meeting in December-that of Dec. 1st.

Following bills ordered payed:

Richmond Rose (flowers for Mrs. Erickson)	.75
Mrs. Parker (fancy work)	.50
	<u>1.25</u>

Adjourned  
secy, pro tem  
Erma Parker

Receipts of meeting

Mrs. Parker dues	.60
tea fund	<u>1.85</u>
on hand	26.63
paid out	<u>1.25</u>
balance	\$27.83 cash on

## A Message from Lucretia Edwards.....

Dear Cohorts and generously participating members of the Point Richmond Holiday Food Drive:

In 1990 a Board member of the Contra Costa Food Bank asked me if I would organize a food collection in Point Richmond. I gladly agreed to try, since while we live in a wealthy county, it is sadly true that there are in our county many areas and individuals in need of a helping hand.

So, ten years ago we slowly and carefully started developing our strategy for collecting food. The Contra Costa Food Bank, headquartered in Concord, provided us with all the necessary materials; the flyers describing the Food Bank and food drive, the envelopes for monetary contributions, the brown paper bags for the cans and boxes of food, the barrels to hold them, and the trucks which delivered the empty barrels to us and later took the full barrels away.

Our responsibilities were to choose a suitable date for the Food Drive, accessible locations for the collection barrels, and a number of generous-spirited workers; first to staple the flyer and the contribution envelope to the brown paper bag, and next to be responsible for delivering this packet of material to every house in the block to which the worker was assigned.

For our date for the Food Drive we always chose one of the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas when the spirit of giving runs strong. Space was made available for the collection barrels at our Library, our elementary school, the Mechanics Bank, Rosemary's Bakery, interactive Resources, the Point Richmond Market, the Santa Fe Market, Pixar. And each year twenty Point Richmond individuals cheerfully took on the job of making certain that each household received the relevant information about the Food Drive.

This has been a nice project and a successful one. Though it was the first, and for a time the only food drive in this area, Brickyard Cove, Brickyard Landing and Marina Bay now have their own food drives, and there are many others, including the mail carriers, motor-cycle clubs, the newspapers and the refinery to name a few. But I am about to give up on our Point Richmond Drive as I am 82, and though many 82-year-old women are full of vim and vigor, my vim and vigor are diminishing. I have tried to interest others in managing the Food Drive, and three years ago a good friend was kind enough to agree, but she has been sick at food-drive-time, on two of the three years since. In addition, some of our faithful neighborhood walkers have moved, or are ill or running out of energy, as am I. I should be happy to teach anyone all I know about the mechanics of a neighborhood food drive, but I cannot continue to be in charge.

So, on behalf of the Contra Costa Food Bank and the people served by it, I want to thank everyone in Point Richmond who: 1: provided the space in their work places for barrels and who: 2. Cheerfully and uncomplainingly volunteered their time and dispersed information, and who: 3. Contributed food and/or money for fellow mortals who are a bit down on their luck. Gratefully,

Lucretia Edwards



# In Memory of William Lewis Thompson, Jr. 1909 –1999

*This Eulogy was given at Dr. Thompson's final services by Gab Togner, husband of daughter Patricia Thompson.*

## **Dad's Eulogy**

William Lewis Thompson, Jr. was born in Point Richmond on February 17, 1909. Thus began a life in Richmond during the first decade of the 20th century that would be connected with the town well into the last decade. According to his brother Chet "Lewis" as he was called by his family and closest friends while he was growing up, was a quiet child. He was comfortable around family and neighborhood friends, but shy and aloof in the larger school setting, earning the nickname "Lonesome Lew". He was very studious, with an almost photographic memory which allowed him to store and retrieve vast amounts of information. This was particularly useful when Lewis would lead the neighborhood group of kids on imaginary safaris and explorations.

Days around Richmond for dad and his brother were spent playing various sports out and around the neighborhood. Dad liked sports at a young age, an interest that he would continue throughout his life. There was also

much time spent going down to the bay to fish for perch and rock cod, using worms or clams that were abundant down by the water. A fishing pole consisted of a long stick with some line, and nuts and bolts for weights. The boys also caught crab with homemade crab nets.

Lew, Sr. as his father was called, worked for the Standard Oil Company as a foreman. He enjoyed the benefit of two weeks vacation each year, a rarity in those days. Because the family didn't own a car until 1917, vacation meant arranging for a buckboard wagon to come pick up their camping gear and haul it to the train which would take them to Emigrant Gap near Bear Valley. Other relatives would also arrange to be there at the same time. In 1924, the Thompson family obtained a permit to build a cabin on Forest Service property near what is now Kyburz along Hwy 50. Lew, Sr. and the two boys worked on the cabin over the next two years during his vacation time and completed it in 1926. One can understand why dad grew up with such a love of the mountains and hiking, having spent almost all his summer vacations in the Sierras. It also provided him with an entirely different climate zone, complete with unique flora and fauna to occupy his inquisitive mind.

Dad went to Washington Grammar School, Roosevelt Junior High School (Teddy Roosevelt that is!), and Richmond High school from which he graduated in 1926. While in high school, he not only excelled academically, but also lettered in football and track. He entered U.C. Berkeley as a premed student and in 1929 was admitted to the Medical School at UCSF at the ripe old age of 20. It was in college that people started calling him "Bill". He commuted back and forth to medical school in San Francisco by ferry since no bridge was yet built spanning the bay. He completed medical school in 1933 and interned at Highland Hospital before joining the Civilian Conservation Corps as a contract surgeon for the Army.

After the CCC's dad served as a resident physician at the Kern County Hospital in Bakersfield and then spent one year in post graduate study of surgery and surgical techniques at the Cook County Hospital in Chicago. In 1939, he returned to Richmond and opened his medical practice. In addition to his practice, he also began what was to be 36 years of service as medical examiner and forensic pathologist for the Contra Costa Coroners Office. In 1946, he married Dolores Lynch, a medical technologist at the Richmond Hospital. For their honeymoon, they climbed Mount Lassen, although dad would always have to mention how he had previously done it by himself much faster!

Looking through old newspaper clippings, it appears that during the 50's and early 60's dad was prominently mentioned about every other week in the Richmond independent. He was a trustee during the formation of the Richmond

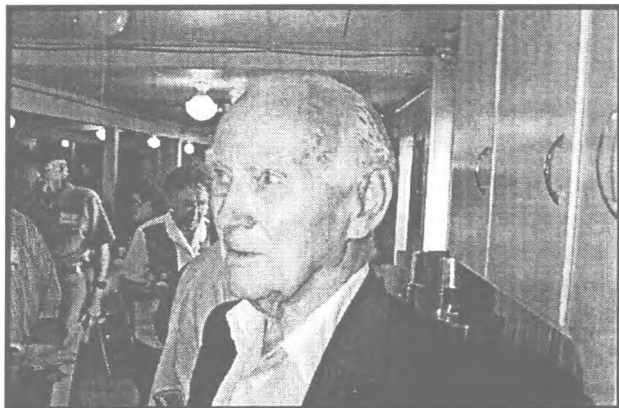
Museum Association and one of the founding doctors behind the starting of Brookside Hospital. He was an active member and served as Vice President of the Richmond Grid Club, which focused on local high school and college level sports. He was also frequently mentioned in relation to his work with the Coroner's office. In one particular case, dad connected a skeleton that was found to a man who had been missing for over a year, providing information that led to the arrest of two men for murder. The paper concluded, "Dr. Thompson, according to Dr. C. L. Abbott, county coroner and Sheriff James Long, has proven to be one of the outstanding autopsy surgeons in the entire state and his findings and reports have been particularly helpful in many cases. In some, his findings have been the clues upon which have hinged the solution of crimes."

A number of newspaper clippings mention his travels. In addition to his familiarity with the Sierras, having traversed the entire John Muir trail several times, he also traveled extensively throughout the Southwest. He rafted down the Colorado, the Green, the San Juan, and Yampa rivers decades before it became popular. He hiked to remote locations that only Indians and the hardest individuals had been to. He came back from these trips with slides and movies and spoke to various groups about the importance of preserving these natural treasures. When the two girls were old enough, the entire family took vacations to these places that he found so fascinating, and it was partly as a result of this influence that both Pam and Pat studied anthropology and history in college.

Dad was a very strong and determined hiker. In his book, "My Canyonlands," Kent Frost, a famous Southwest tour guide wrote, "A few trekked out to backpack with me over old horse and deer trails, to sleep on cave floors beside campfires. Dr. Bill was the first. His steam engine stride set the pace for us in Dark Canyon, a huge corridor of exceptional beauty." Having hiked with him when I was in my twenties and he in his 70's, I can attest to the doctor's steam engine stride. One of his dear friends, Dr. Mel Hurley, used to say that whenever he was hiking with dad and needed to rest (which was often), all he had to do was pick up a rock and ask dad what it was. He was then guaranteed a lecture of sufficient length to catch his breath.

There were also numerous newspaper photos showing dad at community functions or concerts with Dolores by his side. He didn't enjoy being photographed, but I'm sure that when she was in the picture, it didn't occur to him to say that the camera could break.

To think that he did all these things while also making house calls, hospital rounds, and holding daily office hours is astonishing. As his old



chum and Point Richmond native Ted Beck said, "he was the last of a dying breed of doctors."

Unlike many of you, my memories of dad only go back to 1972. I would accompany Pat home on

weekend visits from UC Davis which often involved attending the Cal football game with the Thompson's in the seats that he had held for many years. It was at those Cal games that I learned that USC football players are always paid, professional athletes that have no business being involved in college athletics, and that the Stanford band is a disgrace to humankind. Other immutable truths according to Bill Thompson are:

- Suits only come in blue;
- There's nothing that can compare with a dinner of meat and potatoes, preferably without sauce of any kind, and never should lips touch a casserole.
- Frozen peas, carrots, or corn are the only vegetables fit (just barely) for human
- consumption;
- A butter sandwich, cheetos and a stack of cookies make a fine lunch.

Cholesterol didn't seem to be a problem for dad.

Becoming part of the Thompson family, I also learned that dad celebrated Ground Hog's day and thought that Hallmark was missing a golden opportunity. Hence, family and a few friends took to sending him Ground Hog's Day cards every February 2nd.

Dad finally retired in after 39 years practicing medicine in Richmond and 46 years of total practice. Of course, habits die hard and he

continued to see some patients for a number of years after his official retirement. In his retirement years, he continued to read professional journals as well as numerous magazines about nature, history, geography, and the like. Dad often hiked around the Point Richmond hills and Point Reyes, and he especially enjoyed seeing the wildflowers in the spring. If a family member were along for the hike, they were treated to a recounting of the times he saw a mountain lion, a fox, or a herd of deer on the very same trail early one morning. He and mom were able to take a few memorable trips before she became too ill to travel, and then after he had spent so many years looking after so many in Richmond, he devoted himself to caring for Dolores.

It was during this time that he also began putting on paper his memories of the places and

people around Richmond. He became a frequent contributor to the newsletter of the historical society. He sent his pictures of the Botts airplane, an unsuccessful contemporary of the Wright brothers, to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

As he did his entire life, dad spent his last years doing what he considered useful. He never sought the spotlight, and wasn't comfortable as the center of attention. But his record of service to this community over the years puts him in an elite group. He would have been surprised by today's turn out, but I'm not.

Dad --- you used to sing, "If I had the wings of an angel." Now you do.



*This Point....in time*



# SHHH!

*By Biblio Tek*

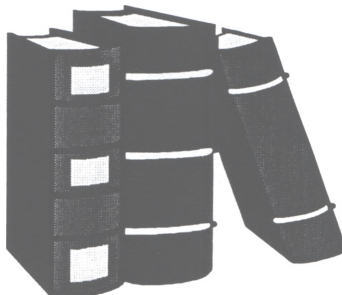
## **Westside Branch Library News**

**W**e're into the new year and new things are happening at The Point and the Westside Branch Library. Lynn Whitson, our librarian, was the speaker at the first meeting of the Point Richmond Association of Mothers (PRAM). The group, many of whose members met at Story Time at the Library on Thursday mornings, provides contacts and support for new mothers. Lynn's talk was "It's Never Too Early," - to start reading to your children. The Library through The Smithsonian Reading is Fundamental program - provided each mother with a new book to read to her child.

The response to The Best Sellers Club has been wonderful. Countless best sellers have been donated to the Library, giving us all a great new selection. After you've read a current best seller in hardback or paper, you can drop it off at the desk in exchange for

hurrahs, high-fives, and many, many thanks. Because of space limitations, the branch cannot accept older hardbacks, but they will be gratefully accepted at Main Library.

What to read on rainy winter nights? Thanks to The Best Sellers Club, we have "The Victors" by Stephen Ambrose. It is a nonfiction account of Eisenhower and "his boys." We also have "The Greatest Generation" by Tom Brokaw. Anglophile mystery fans will find intrigue in the books of M. C. Beaton - one series is set in Scotland and another is set in the Cotswolds. Children and adults alike will enjoy Harry Potter and "The Sorcerer's Stone" by J. K. Rowling. This enchanting fantasy which won the British National Book Award, Children's Book of the Year, is about an ill-treated orphan who discovers he is a powerful wizard. Happy reading!





# Allan Smith's Point

## Hal

It is a sad situation when you live over 25 years in a small town, die and get buried without many of your friends and acquaintances knowing about it. This happened to Mr. Harold Boydan on December 26, 1998 from a heart attack in his apartment.

Hal was the gentleman who lived in one of Cooper's Apartments (the old Abbott hospital) located on West Richmond and Santa Fe Avenues across from the Catholic Church. Everyday you could see him standing on the corner smoking his pipe and watching the world go by. Also, at 6:00 a.m. each day he would take his morning constitutional walking through the tunnel to the park and sit observing the maritime activity on San Francisco Bay. Hal couldn't be missed as he walked very briskly, military style and was identified by his Colonel Sander's beard and curved pipe.

Hal was the only one besides our good friend Johnny Toffoli who remembers who "Haywire Mac" was. Toffoli actually knew him personally. During the 1920's on KFRC radio in San Francisco, "Haywire" Mac had a very popular band called the Blue Monday Jamboree. Al Pearce was the announcer (Does this bring back any memories?).

"Haywire" Mac was Harry Kirby McClintock, celebrated radio minister of the Columbia Broadcasting System and Victor recording artist. Among many songs he wrote were: "Big Rock Candy Mountain", "Hallelujah", "I'm a Bum", "The Bum Song" and "The Little Shirt My Mother Made for Me".

"Haywire" Mac died in 1957. He had requested cremation with the ashes strewn on his

beloved Mt. Tamalpais. However, state and local governmental rules prevented his request.

More about this Native Son of the Golden West who was raised in Oakland, CA in following issues.

## Dr. Thompson

The first native Point Richmonder to become a Doctor of Medicine was William Louis Thompson, who passed away last month at the age of 89. Dr. Thompson had a very successful career. He was a great contributor to our Point Richmond History Association newsletter and the Richmond Museum of History. His last article, published in November, 1998 was about Ivan (Maj) Hill who taught physical education at Richmond Union High School and was the coach for all sports starting in 1920.

The day before he died, my wife and I met him and his brother Chet, walking in the Miller-Knox Park. Dr. Thompson was relating past Point Richmond historical memories and it seemed he knew every inch of the Point Richmond hills especially from Ferry Point.

The climb up Glen Avenue to his home below Nicholl Knob was a challenge in itself. I was familiar with Glen Avenue, which was a wooden boardwalk from Buena Vista Avenue, as every morning I had to deliver the San Francisco Chronicle to the Thompson residence on top of the hill. Many mornings I would wait for the Doctor so I could hand deliver the paper, instead of climbing the hill, much to the consternation of the Williams family who lived at the top of Montana Street, which was my next port of call.

*Anne Hanzlik*  
*Reviews*  
*The Masquer's Production*



*By William Shakespeare*  
*Directed by Tim Hart*  
*January 22 – February 27, 1999*

**A New Look at an Old  
Classic**

**by Anne Hanzlik**

**S**hakespeare's love story is interpreted in the current production at the Masquer's with a starkly modern set and refreshing costumes, but with the time and story intact.

The numerous scenes and acts are indicated in the program but there is a minimum of background difference in any

of them. However, this minimalism heightens the dramatic effect of the skill of the players giving an exciting and stirring performance.

The program lists five acts with many scenes which result in quite a lengthy evening but the opening night audience was receptive and attentive throughout.

Michael Armstrong's Romeo was appealingly youthful in his lethesome actions. Keith Barlow as Mercutio was a dominant presence in his handsome costume. James Doyle as Friar John gave an unusual and distinctive portrayal in that important rols as also did Jim Fye as Friar Laurence.

The feminine half of the play's title Juliet, played by Anais Koivisto was appealingly attractive and youthful. The rest of the cast, who have all contributed often and ably to many previous Masquer's productions.

Much credit should go to Tim Hart as Director as well most importantly the "fight choreographer" which was really great. The costume crew contributed a visual pageant with their original and imaginative interpretation of Elizabethan clothes.

In the total Romeo and Juliet performance added up to another Masquer's theatrical success. You shouldn't overlook seeing its remaining performances before it closes on February 27th.



*Anais Koivisto and Michael S. Armstrong  
portray star-crossed lovers in the Masquers  
Playhouse production of William  
Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." photo  
by Jerry Telfer*

 **The MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE**  
*presents the classic love story*

# ROMEO AND JULIET

William Shakespeare's eternal tale of  
the passion of a girl and boy from feuding families  
who dare to love against all odds, no matter what price they must pay.  
A story that will be told forever. Directed by Tim Hart.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY EVENINGS**

**JAN. 22 – FEB. 27, 1999**

**Sun. Matinees: Jan. 31, Feb. 14, 21**

## THE CAST

Michael S. Armstrong • Keith Barlow • Jim Doyle • Jim Fye  
Terisa Greenan • Anais Koivisto • Bruce Lundy • Scott Nordquist  
Brent Rosenbaum • Rebekah Walendzak • Grey Wolf • Greg Wood

**24-Hr. Reservations: 510 232-4031**

*We accept VISA and MasterCard. All reservations must be prepaid. All sales final.*

Box Office opens 7:30PM, Matinees 2PM • Curtain 8:00PM, Matinees 2:30PM

Admission \$10 cash, check or credit card. Group Rates available.

**NOW AIR CONDITIONED**



Dinner at the Hotel Mac and "Romeo and Juliet"  
THURS., FEB. 25, \$28. Call (510) 236-4988

A Book Review from Mid Dornan

## ***Root-Bound***

### ***Twenty-four days in a Motor Home***

Author: Donna Roselius

Publisher: Roaring Sea Arts, P.O. Box 220, Port Orford, OR 97465

Price: \$12.95

Donna Roselius has again proven her limitless talents with her book, "ROOT-BOUND – Twenty-four Days in a Motor Home". Donna wrote, edited, published and hand-bound her hardcover editions.

After reading the Forward (Automotographical Information) one can only wonder from where came the courage to proceed on a twenty-four day adventure. The tone of the book is summed up in one sentence: "Then he took the final step to invite disaster. He made reservations at RV parks for each night."

The book is light, humorous and fast reading. It takes you to Donna's 50th High School Reunion in Rochester, Minnesota and on routes to find both hers and Rosy's roots.

If you know Donna, you will especially enjoy the book. Worth owning.

# Sports Memories

by Allan Smith

Super Bowl XXXIII and the season will be over by the time you read this. Point Richmond was always well represented when it came to providing good players to the game of football. Several have played professionally but none have ever participated in a Super Bowl.

I have a newspaper picture of the 1935 Richmond Union High School football team which won the Alameda county Athletic League Championship. Of the 45 members of the team, only Chip Cecchi and J. A. Vincent were from Point Richmond.

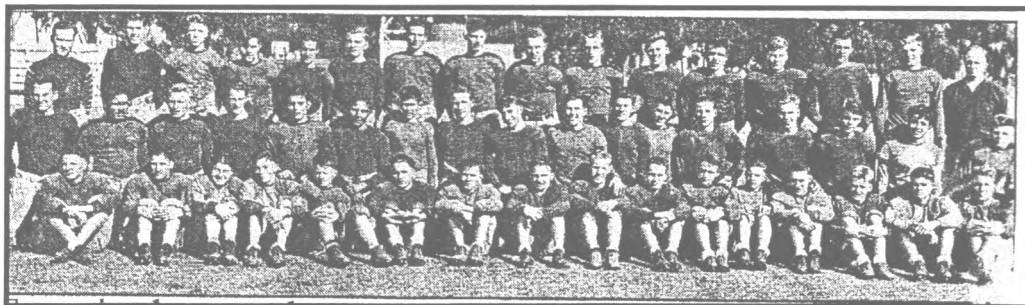
My baseball item for this issue regards the late Dr. Thompson and the great legendary, left-handed, big-league baseball pitcher named Vernon "Lefty" Gomez. Gomez was from Rodeo, CA born in 1908 and like Dr. Thompson attended Roosevelt Junior High and Richmond Union High Schools. Gomez pitched for the New York Yankees at the age of 22 and was in five World Series. Dr. Thompson and Lefty

Gomez attended school together and were good friends. The Doctor said that Gomez had great potential as a baseball pitcher during his teen years and related to me many of his memories of this great baseball player from Rodeo.

I should have recorded my conversations with Dr. Thompson regarding his memories of Point Richmond and his Richmond school years.

## Joe Dimaggio

Joseph Paul Dimaggio, known as "The Yankee Clipper" and "Joltin' Joe" is in very serious physical condition as I write this. Joe is considered to be one of the greatest baseball players of all time. He was born in Martinez, CA in 1914 and played with the New York Yankees at the age of 22 in 1936. Prior to playing in the Big Leagues he was a member of the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League. We saw him play many times during his minor league career.



*1935 Richmond High School Football Team, won the Alameda County Athletic League Championship*



## CARDS & LETTERS



Dear Mid:

Thank you for the invitation to attend the Plunge film and I would have loved being there to hear about a favorite subject of mine, "The Plunge". As a youngster the Natatorium was my second home. There must have been a huge magnet as many of us were attracted to it. Ha! Too bad there isn't a way for us to see it, or is there? Would you show it in May?

They were warning motorists not to go over the summit in the Siskiews due to 'black ice'. So many car pile ups and accidents with trucks....it is too treacherous. Tref Ross would surely appreciate seeing it I know, but how could he attend? Couldn't.

That was a fantastic picture on the TPIT Gary Shows placed as the front cover with Tref and Ted, his brother, and the Allyn boys as well.

Here's a cute one:

When high school kids wear rags  
today

We call it self-expression.

When I was young and dressed that  
way

We called it 'the Depression'.

Looking forward to seeing you after spring when the roads are safe to travel in May. You have a new attraction: A ship alongside Point Richmond Dock No. 1, I

believe – THE RED OAK VICTORY!

Cheers!

Betty Glass Marshall  
Grants Pass, OR

Dear Mr. Shows:

I want to add my bit to the discussion of Anton Sallee's Auburn. This car was a magnificent maroon and black four door convertible sedan. A most upscale car that "Uncle George", gave to Anton for his use. I remember the car well, as I used to sit on the curb in front of the Anton's house on Richmond Avenue, and polish the wire wheels which was a tough job for a 15 year old kid. I remember we used "Simonize" which was tough to apply. The car had a Columbia axle and a huge straight 8 flat head, and an engine turned dashboard.

One time I remember having a beef with Tony, and in those days there were still horse drawn wagons at the Point. I got a half block away from Tony, hollered something unkind and he picked up a road apple and threw it right in my mouth. Ugh! He was a heckofa pitcher, at least with road apples. Believe me, it is still vivid 66 years later.

Let's hear something from Bena Bowles, Anton's sister for more on the Auburn.

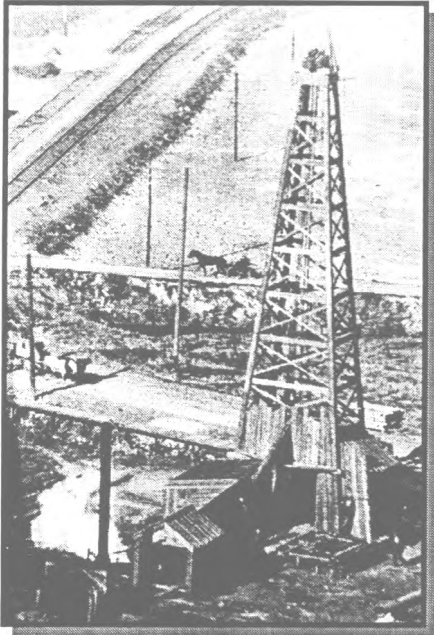
Best Regards,  
Ed Garrard  
Sonoma



# Deaths....

**William L. Thompson** died on December 9, 1998 as his home on 35th Street. He was 89. Born in Point Richmond, raised on Scenic Avenue and he was a lifelong Richmond resident. He opened his medical practice in Richmond in 1939 and retired 36 years later. He was the first doctor that was born in the Point. Some of his affiliations included the California Academy of Science in San Francisco, Audubon Society, Campfire Girls Camp Seabow Board and Point Richmond History Association. He is survived by daughters Pamela Everhart of Arizona and Patricia Thompson Togneri of Moraga, brother Chester Thompson of Richmond, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. His wife, Dolores, died in 1992.

**William H. Williamson** died on January 8, 1999 at his home on Crest Avenue. He was 83. A native of Mississippi, Bill lived in Point Richmond for 57 years. He was retired after 24 years with the Richmond Police Department. Bill was a member of Richmond Elks Lodge 1251 and Bay Cities Lodge 337, Free and Accepted Masons. He is survived by his wife or 48 years, Alyce, daughters Patricia Williamson of Pleasanton and Nina Yost of Richmond; sisters Nina Osborne of LaHabra and Elizabeth Hoyt of Iowa, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren Memorial services were held at the Richmond Elks Lodge.



*John Nichol's oil well.  
Mr. Nichol only struck water  
though and therefore  
eventually became the site of  
the Richmond Plunge.*

# February Birthdays

ED GARRARD	ARLENE HARTMAN	MITZI KRUSE
HORTENSE GNAGA MCGEE	BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA	DOUG BUSBY
DIXIE COPELAND	VELMA HEALY	STEVEN MERTLE
ALLAN SMITH	KIM WARD	MARY SHUR
CHRIS ROTTING	DODY PERRY	PERLE WESTMAN
BESSIE SQUIRES	CONNIE HEALY	CARRIE WICKMAN DORN
BARNABY EDWARDS	LANDOW HOWE	PHILIP DORN III
HELEN VALENTINE	WALTER MCMILLAN	

# March Birthdays

KAROLYN MACDIARMID	BRIAN RICHARDSON	MAXINE MAYER
VIRGINIA CHERNIAK	AVIS BLANCHETTE	DOLLY FROSINI
JOANN BRAY	CAMP FIRE GIRLS	REBA DOWN
CAROL DARLING	MYRON PESTANA	PHYLLIS FEYDER
CARL PAASCH	GEORGE LEROY WILLIAMS	JEAN KNOX
GIRL SCOUTS	WINNIE GUISTI	ELIZABETH BUHLER
DALE HAWKINS	BERNICE SHOWS	WENDY WIRTH
CAROL PAASCH	ALEXANDRA GAUTRAUD	RICH SCHULD
JANICE JONES	RACHEL E. PALFINI	LUCILE COTTINGHAM
ALLAN SMITH, JR.	NAOMI HUFFSTETTER	MEYER
MARIE WILSON-DIETZ	BEN BRAY	ISOBEL FOLSOM
DELPHINA FRANCO	MARY VALENZANO	EDWIN LOUX *

\* BORN IN POINT RICHMOND

# 90 Year Wonders!

NAOMI HUFFSTETTER	1905	WILLARD SPIERSCH
LOUISE BANKS		WILLIAM KOLLAR
RUTH WOOD	1907	LOUIS SHAW
MAE MANDL		
BERNARD BERNES	1908	

*Born in Point Richmond?  
Let us know and we will BOLD your name!*

*This Point....in time*

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

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

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

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

Type of membership (check one):

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior (65+)	12.00
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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 months.

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

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"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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# Calendar

## *February/March, 1999*

**February 10**  
*Wednesday*

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting  
Noon at the Hotel Mac

**February 11**  
*Thursday*

"1999 Sweetheart of the Year" award and celebration.  
Richmond Golf and Country Club, see inside front cover.

**February 13**  
*Saturday*

Valentine Making Contest  
Noon, Point Richmond Community Center

**February 14**  
*Sunday*

Valentine's Day

**February 15**  
*Monday*

President's Day Holiday

**March 10**  
*Wednesday*

Point Richmond Business Association Meeting  
Noon at the Hotel Mac

**March 17**  
*Wednesday*

St. Patrick's Day

**March 19**  
*Friday*

**Deadline for April/May issue of TPIT**

**April 1**  
*Thursday*

All Fools Day

**April 3**  
*Saturday*

Easter Egg Dying and Basket Making Contest  
Noon, Point Richmond Community Center

**April 4**  
*Sunday*

Easter Sunday