

THIS POINT.... in time

NEWSLETTER

The Point Richmond History Association

www.PointRichmondHistory.org

Vol. XXIV No. 4

December/January, 2005/06

\$3.00



2 West Richmond Avenue, 1910

*Henry Sirenberg's Saloon, The Tunnel Hotel, Duggan's Kitchen,
Bill's Seafood Restaurant, Duggan's Diner, Mack's Tavern,
Villa Sorrento, Dorothy's Corner, The Point Bar & Restaurant*

PRHA Museum Ornament Only \$20

*Available for sale at the
museum, see page 2 for hours.*



detail



Please send:

_____ Little Point Richmond Museum Ornament(s)

I am enclosing \$20 for each plus \$6.95 shipping

I am enclosing \$18 for each plus \$6.95 shipping, I am a member of PRHA

Send my ornament (s) to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

*Please allow 1 week for shipping
Limited quantities available*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Mid Dornan

As a child, did you ever feel the years passed too quickly? Holidays and especially Christmas always seemed to never come! This Christmas when you are sharing past memories, think of writing some of them down to share with our readers.

Looking for a gift? How about a membership in THIS POINT....in time? It is like the Energizer Bunny, it keeps on giving with each issue. We have History Building ornaments as well as a Plunge Video for sale. Avoid the crowds, help a cause and visit our museum. Consider being a volunteer this next year for a couple hours once month! Support from members and readers keeps this association active.

Take time to enjoy the holidays of choice which for me is a Happy Christmas and A Joyful New 1006.

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Original Photo



The Cover

Our cover photo, before and after Thomas Mercer-Hursh "cleaned it up and gave it a new paint job" it. Notice he even helped out the sky. Pretty cool, eh?

This Point.....in time

*Thank you members for your membership
renewal:*

Doug & Rosemary Corbin
Henry P. Gondola
Lupe Lopez
Bernadette Bisio
Nellie Bisio Pasquini
Evelyn Neville Macdonald
Don Amantite
Kathe Kiehn
Evelyn Thill
George & Barbara Coles
Mid Dornan
Phyllis R. Bogue
Don & Diane Diani
Susan Snyder & Richard Niedhardt Family

And a warm welcome to these new members:
Loren Smith
Elena Gonzales & Jon Sutinen

Thank You!

Santa Fe Market and Point Richmond Market

*For selling
“THIS POINT.....in time”
For us*

Museum Hours:

*Thursday 11:30 am to 2:00 pm
Saturday 11:30 am to 2:00 pm*

*Thank You!
Our Special Supporters!*

History Makers

Sherri Mertle
Doug & Rosemary Corbin
Kathe Kiehn
Elizabeth M. McDonald
Janice Cook & Jeff Lee
Margi Cellucci

Corporate Sponsor

Timeworks Inc. Clock Company
Stephen Kawalski Family

History Preservers:

Royce Ong
Edward J. McGarvey
Gilda Markarian
Kevin, Renee & Griffin Knee
Jean & John Knox
John A. Thiella & Rosa T. Casazza
Catherine Burchell



This Point.....in time

EDITOR'S NOTES

Gary Shows (510-235-1336)

How time flies! Here is your holiday issue. My usual thank you to everyone who makes this publication interesting and attractive.

I don't have a lot of time to put into it but I want to remind you once again about our website and that you can view most of our photo archives on it. To see them navigate your computer browser to pointrichmondhistory.org and you will find them available for viewing by category. We would like to expand on the collection, so if you have any Point Richmond historical photos that might be interesting please donate them to the PRHA or loan them to me for a few days so I can scan them. You can give them to a museum attendant or drop them to my attention through the mail slot and I will scan them and see that you get them back.

I wish everyone a happy holiday season and a good 2006! May war and violence end and for a change, may the poor get richer.

The deadline for the February/March issue will be January 20, 2006.

The November issue assembly crew was:

Jerry Cerkowicz
Gary Shows
Pam Wilson
Betty Dornan
Pat Pearson
Bruce Bartram
Bonnie Jo Cullison
Sonja Darling
Mid Dornan
Margaret Morkowski
Francis Smith



**Original
Indian
Statue**

0242-DC

Thanks to the Volunteers who open and close our history museum on Thursday and Saturday:

Betty Dornan (Director)
Bruce and Ann Bartram
Pat Pearson
Mid Dornan
Bonnie Jo Cullison
Dody Perry
Anita Christiansen
Sonja Darling
Margaret Morkowski
Alyce Williamson

The Cover

2 West Richmond Avenue, Point Richmond, CA 94801

Photo by Gary Shows, the real spiffy look is courtesy of Thomas Mercer-Hursh.

This Point.....in time

A-MID TRIVIA

Mid Dornan (510-234-5334)

Question: Who was the first female governor in U.S. history, what year was that and which state did she govern? ANSWER: at end of trivia.

We know it is the holiday season when a big Poinsettia plant arrives to make festive our little history museum. For this, we thank you David Vincent.

The Many Hands sponsors at Washington School were honored in October at the Western Drive home of Martin and Janice McNair. Guests met Principal Roz Plishner who introduced the teachers. An explanation of the Dual Immersion program at Washington means students beginning in Kindergarten are being educated in both Spanish and English. By the time the student is in the Fourth grade, he/she should be proficient in not only speaking, but reading and writing both languages.

Have you noticed or visited the NEW Washington School? Rumor has it they plan an Open House for the community in January. Classes are moving from the portables into new classrooms. Watch for the official opening!

Hazel and Russell Paasch are wished speedy recoveries. Shortly after Russell returned home from his knee surgery, Hazel fell and broke her shoulder. Who takes care of whom these days?

Speaking of falling, Pat Pearson tripped on something, hitting her head as she fell causing a brain concussion. Fortunately, her daughter Julie from Sacramento happened to be with her to help. Since Pat had volunteered to assist with the Methodist Church's annual free Thanksgiving Day Feast, Julie stepped up to the plate so Pat could recuperate! (Now that is a real mother-daughter relationship!)

Sympathy is extended to our Corresponding Secretary, Mary Highfill on the loss of her beloved husband, Vic.

Preserving history is one of the Point Richmond History Association roles in the community. Not everyone is a history buff, but it seems exciting to see the oldest trainmasters reading room station being restored in our 'front' yard! It is using a space created by the Santa Fe Railroad when they agreed to preserve the ONLY DUAL FUNCTIONING WIG WAGS in the nation. (See complete article elsewhere in this issue)

If you're having problems remembering appointments or where you left the car keys, it could be an empty stomach is to blame. Psychologist Paul Gold, of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, says his research of overnight fasters indicates that the right level of blood sugar enhances memory storage. But don't take this as a good excuse to chow down on candy bars galore. Too much sugar doesn't work.

Thanksgiving was special for Bonnie Jo Cullison and Richard Nelson as Bonnie Jo's parents and brother came from Oregon to share the day with them. AND, her parents stayed at Hotel Mac, a treat in itself. (*How often we tease when we say, "If I ever have guests, I'll let them stay at my house and I'll go to Hotel Mac!"*)

Heather Damon is a freshman at Davis but there is evidence her father, Pastor Dan Damon, has shown more anxiety over the transition from home to college than Heather, ha!

Good Old Days: Saturday afternoons in Richmond when you went to the movies--a double

(Continued on page 8)

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CHURCH NEWS



*By Dee Rosier
510-232-1387*

As sure as there is a fall season, the leaves do the same. Each year I try to keep up with them and ultimately have to admit that they have again won and I have lost.

Preparing for the Advent season, a group of parishioners met and cleaned the inside/outside of the church. The outside area was power washed and the inside thoroughly cleaned. Father's comment was that he could turn an eye on dust, but certainly acknowledged cleanliness.

Through the courtesy of a parishioner, the parking lot has been striped. We will now be able to put it to beneficial use. The parking lot is private and always reserved for parishioners during Mass and other church activities. There are some spaces that are rented and reserved by individuals on a daily basis. While on the subject of parking – the loading/unloading spot in front of the church is being abused by vehicles taking the liberty to park there permanently. There may be a need to place a sign indicating Mass times. Hope the abusers can read.

Father intends to focus our next Parish Council meeting on a discussion of parish finances and budget. Before we can consider any significant repairs, we have to make sure that we have the means to meet ordinary expenses. We all know that

a new roof is a major priority. In order to do the roof the building needs to be retrofitted. When the decision of where to start is established, the parishioners will have the final word.

After the 9:00 AM Mass from December 5-7; Father will conduct a short Advent retreat. It will be on life, being alive, having a life, getting a life and living well the only life we have.

In a ceremony to be held December 6, all Eucharistic Ministers, Acolytes and Lectors will be commissioned by Father O'Rourke. The rites have their origins in the early days of the church and remind us of our roots of service in the lives of the first Christians. These are formal, public roles once reserved to the clergy but, in the early days of the church, fulfilled by lay people. The rites of commissioning were once steps to the ordination of priests.

Music for Mass is specialized, but still has to be good. Sunday Mass is our principal parish gathering. Father is open to using people with musical skills in the liturgy. If you qualify, give him a call. The organ that refused to play is now gone. Musicians love our church because of its great acoustics. A recent performance by two classical guitarists proved the point.

On the first Sunday of Advent, the Giving Tree was set up in the back of the church. It has become an annual event and one that provides us an opportunity to share. Stars have been placed on the tree, each with a specific gift request. We are asking that each parishioner take a star, or maybe two, purchase the item and return it unwrapped to a box which will be provided on the last week of Advent. This year the gifts will be donated to the Family House of Children's Hospital of the East Bay. The Family House is a place for parents of hospitalized children to stay.

During the month of November and in honor of All Souls Day, the names of our deceased loved ones were placed on the altar and remembered during daily masses. On Veteran's Day, Father placed a bouquet of flowers near the bronze plaque honoring

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those who served in the military, only to have someone steal it.

Congratulations to Nicole Moyer who recently wed William Cruz in a ceremony in Emerald Bay.

Remember in your prayers Jim Chesareck who recently underwent bypass surgery. We also continue to remember Theresa Meneghelli, Adolph Brossard, Sue Kafka and Mary Shipler, and Frank Mello.

Condolences to the families of Philomena Feyder and Dolores Hamamoto - two very exceptional ladies whose losses will be shared by many.

It's an annual event for my kindergarten friends to meet at the Episcopal Church in Crockett for Calico Christmas. As we were holding court and enjoying a cup of tea and cookies, who should walk in but Pat and Mid Dornan. Can't ever get too far away from Pt. Richmond and its people. Years ago, my husband's uncle, Reverend Milton Terry was the minister at the church in Crockett, as well as the one located on Washington Avenue here in the Point. While working the election board this year, I noticed the Crockett connection here in the Point - George Martin, Paul Murphy, Carla Contestable and Mike Heckman. Because of the change in location, working the board this year was somewhat hectic. Believe that Mid Dornan will agree.

If there is a running event, you can be sure that Bob Peckham is there. He and Marie spent a weekend visiting a friend in Montana.

Happy Birthday granddaughter, Jennifer.

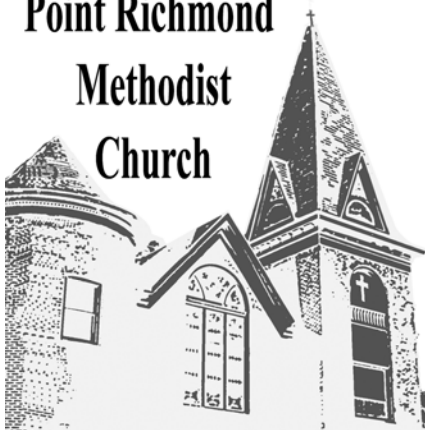
Happy holidays to all.

In order to see the rainbow, you must endure some rain.

See you in church.



Point Richmond Methodist Church



By Jean Reynolds

510-235-2988

jeanormr@pacbell.net

On October 30, we celebrated the release of Pastor Dan's new CD with a sing-along in the evening. Dan has three published books of hymns and some of his hymns appear in several denominational hymnbooks. His songs are a pleasure to sing, so a sing-along was the best way to celebrate the CD release. He recorded it in Toronto this summer with a church choir and musicians at the church of his friend Alan Whitmore from the Hymn-Writers Society.

The past few weeks we saw orange UNICEF boxes in the offering plate. Some of the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and neighborhood children trick-or-treated for UNICEF this year. The children collected almost \$80; UNICEF promised half of all money collected will be used for hurricane relief in the U.S.A.

November 13 was Laity Sunday. We heard our bishop's letter addressing the Judicial Council decision in favor of a United Methodist pastor who refused to let a gay parishioner transfer membership from another church. Our bishop and the Council of Bishops think that church membership should be open to all. Many who were in worship signed a letter to the Judicial Council to ask them to change their ruling and to support the United Methodist

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policy of open membership.

November 20: The Angel Choir sang “Santo, Santo, Santo” in Spanish and English during worship. The Angel Choir sings at least once a month and worship attendance has burgeoned on the days they sing! Rehearsal on Saturday mornings still sizzles, and new singers are welcome at 10:00 a.m.

November 24, The Thanksgiving Feast: Local businesses and individuals made the huge task possible despite the limits of the church kitchen. Christina de Leon and Juanita Hoffman coordinated the volunteers, donations and food prep this year. Tinna Manasala cooked the yams; Nyonnoweh Greene cooked cornbread stuffing from scratch. Many Point Richmond businesses contributed generously: Vertigo Software, The Santa Fe Market, Edibles, Hotel Mac, Hydrangea, Starbucks, The Spot Liquors, Hidden City Café, Little Louie’s, Washington School, RosaMaria’s Café, and The Pub at Baltic Square all donated food, money or services. Be sure to thank them for their donations and patronize their establishments! A volunteer crew of a dozen made short work of peeling seventy pounds of yams at the peeling party on Tuesday afternoon. Lots of volunteers before, during and after the event and the approximately one hundred fifty people who came to share the meal made the day one to be thankful for! The Rescue Mission graciously took our leftover food, and made our effort go farther. We are thankful for our Point Richmond community!

On the Calendar:

December 11, 5:00 p.m. The Joyful Noise choir presents selections from Handel’s *Messiah*, complete with strings, trumpet, and organ. Eileen Johnson directs. The choir benefits from several bonus singers from the community. The concert is our holiday gift for all who come to listen and perform. Bring your own score or share one of ours and join us for the Hallelujah Chorus finale.

See you at Interactive Resources on Saturday,

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December 17, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., for the fourth annual **Holiday Bake Sale** sponsored by the church. Come early to choose your favorite holiday cookies, candy, pies and cakes. Gift a friend, neighbor or yourself with a tasty homemade treat. You will surely find something lovely and delectable at the bake sale. All profits benefit the church general fund.

Christmas Caroling: On December 18, join us for chili and cornbread at the church at 5:00 p.m. Caroling in the church neighborhood will follow. Call Jean Reynolds (235-2988) for information.

Jazz Christmas Eve: December 24, 7:00 p.m. Sing Christmas Carols, hear the Christmas story and some special jazz offerings with the Dan Damon Trio. Enjoy the festive lights, flowers and bright dÈcor in the sanctuary. Come early to get a good seat!

Christmas Day: Sunday, December 25, 11:00 a.m. “Yes, Virginia, there is a church service on Christmas Day, if Christmas falls on Sunday!” We encourage worshippers to dress like their favorite character in the Christmas story (Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Angel, Wise Man, donkey...you get the idea!) or dress casually: wear pajamas, robe, slippers, sweats or warm-ups. Sunday School will take a break that day.



*The Point
from the
Plunge
(Photo by
Gray Shows)*

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 70th installment.

Oct. 3, 1927 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 69th installment Nov 15, 1927 The regular meeting of the Social League was held at the home of Mrs. Diller with Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Diller as hostesses.

Lord's prayer repeated. Minutes read and approved. Mrs. Schmidt made report concerning dinner. Mrs. Glennie appointed to take care of yarn booth. Moved and sec. that Mrs. (cannot read writing) be made an honorary member of the Social League. Moved and sec. that appoint last Tuesday of Dec. a clean-up day. Mrs. Dingle appointed ch. of com. of planning luncheon.

\$7.62 - previous balance

3.10 - bills

(\$2.50 - plant

.60 - laundry

\$3.10)

\$6.52

1.70 - collection

\$8.22

.60 - dues

\$8.82 - new balance

(Ed: Minutes unsigned but appears to be hand-writing of Vernita Danner.)

The Social

MORE A-MID TRIVIA

feature--for only a dime. Plus a cartoon and newsreel, too! Sometimes even the latest episode of a favorite serial, like Flash Gordon. There are those who remember the ten cent price even included a free ice cream.

Ah, those "Good old Days!" There is nothing like having the electricity go out to put the good old days in proper perspective. Even miss those wacky Burma Shave Roadside signs like:

- Henry the Eighth
- Prince of Friskers
- Lost five wives
- But not his Whiskers
- Burma-Shave

Mark **Sunday, December 11, 5:00 o'clock** on your calendar now. Relax and get into the holiday season by enjoying music from the MESSIAH at the festively decorated sanctuary of the Point historic Methodist Church. The Joyful Noise choir is joined by other talented voices from the community accompanied by musical ensembles This is the church's gift to the community and is free.

A recent report by the Center for Disease Control & Prevention disclosed that almost 60 percent of youngsters from ages 6 to 19 have never had a cavity in their permanent teeth! Dentists credit dental sealants, fluoridated water and toothpaste, dental insurance and an increasing health conscious public.

What is Christmas? Is it a Spirit and Philosophy--that "it is more blessed to give than to receive? Is it Hanukkah and the Festival of Lights? Is Christmas only for children? Or is it a season when we cast away doubts and prejudices and really do something for one another? Celebrate your faith and wish others well.

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WWIC ACTIVITIES

Alyce Williamson
510-234-4219

The Women's Westside Improvement Club Meets at the Point Richmond Methodist Church.

Written for Alyce by Margaret S. Morkowski

The Women's Westside Improvement Club (WWIC) had its third meeting of the season on Tuesday, November 1, 2005. Our speaker was poetess Jennifer Fox Bennett who told us of her exciting trip to the Kingdom of Jordan this past summer where she was to present her work at an international literary reading.

Our President, Margaret Morkowski called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She then thanked the November hostesses Lori Nova, Carol Paasch, Janice Cook and Jane Diokas for bringing the beautiful and dramatic fall table decorations as well as the delicious homemade carrot cake. All were a great success with the members and guests.

Sonja Darling, our treasurer, congratulated the Club on the successful fundraising luncheon held in October. Margaret asked the ladies to contribute ideas for various day trips we may make this spring. Current ideas include a tour of "Playland Not by the Beach" a soon to open museum with artifacts from "Playland by the Beach." The museum is to be located on San Pablo Avenue on the boundary of Richmond and El Cerrito. Another suggestion is a tour of the Bark Stix bakery, the local dog-treat making company on Garrard Avenue. Do you have another good idea?

We are sad to loose one of our members, Muriel Bluhon. (See announcement on page 21 of this TPIT.) Muriel was a delightful lady,

always interested in learning something new, often the first to "volunteer" to help with the next activity and always ready to go to a party. Muriel was one of the ladies in the club who lovingly restored the Rose Garden area in the Indian Statue Park. We will miss Muriel very much. Our thoughts are with her family.

Our December meeting is traditionally our Holiday Celebration luncheon. This year on December 6th, we'll be gathering at Annie Janes' "25 West" restaurant on Richmond Avenue. Annie is a long time member of the Club and she will serve a tossed green salad followed by a choice of entrée to include turkey, snapper or roasted pork with vegetables, rice or dressing. This will all be followed by Christmas cookies and other Holiday goodies. After dessert, keeping with tradition, Anna Schwarz will play her accordion and lead us in singing Christmas carols. This is always great fun.

After all of the Holiday partying, we won't meet in January but we will be back at our regular meeting location at the Point's Methodist Church for our first meeting of the New Year. It will be held on Tuesday, February 7, 2006 at 11:30 A.M. Bring your lunch, we'll provide coffee, tea and dessert. We'll have a good time and would like to have you join us. Please call with questions. Have a nice Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

(Continued from page 8)

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND AN EVENTFUL
NEW YEAR 2006 !

ANSWER: Nellie T. Ross succeeded her late husband as governor of Wyoming, becoming the first female governor in U.S. history 1925.

This Point.....in time

Moving the Historic Trainmaster's Building November 10, 2005

Article and Photos by Margaret Morkowski

As you may have probably noticed, the historic "Reading Room," more recently known as the "Trainmaster's Building," has moved but is not quite settled into its new "home" across from the Plunge.

This historic, c 1903 building began as the Santa Fe employee's Reading Room. According to the *Richmond Independent*, printed in 1905, there were "... about 500 books, all current magazines, pool and billiard tables, and bath rooms at Richmond reading room of which Mrs. Ida B. Baker is librarian." The motto of the department was "Give a man a bath, a book and an entertainment that appeals to his mind ... and as he becomes more faithful to himself, he is more valuable to the company." "...the high mental and moral tone of the Santa Fe employees is due to the reading room system. The people of Richmond have no argument to offer on that score...."

Railroad records show that in 1944 the Reading Room was moved, remodeled and probably converted into office space for use by the Trainmaster. Since 1992 the building, by then located near the foot of South Macdonald Avenue, has been left unused and unoccupied. This historic building, built in Richmond, at the railroad's western terminus, is the only known surviving yard building associated with the railroad from the earliest days of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Facility.



Moving day was quite exciting. At 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, November 10, 2005, after many days of site preparation, the men of Mike Rogers' Moving Company and various staff of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) began the move. The entire move had to take place on the BNSF property since the building, with the mover's steel supports and wheels, was too high to fit under the freeway

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overpass on South Garrard Avenue.

The move was a slow process. Four sets of tracks had to be crossed and three freeway overpass sections had to be cleared. In addition, chain link fences had to be cut, electric wires had to be lifted and metal barriers had to be removed.

At each set of tracks, Mike Rogers and his men had to build a ramp over the tracks. Staff from the BNSF would prepare the site, removing any debris and dumping new rock in place. Then Mike's men would place wooden ties, lumber or metal plates in place around and over the tracks to form ramps so that the moving truck and the 80 ton building with its steel supports, could cross the tracks. Each set of tracks provided a different set of challenges and each set of ramps was unique.



About mid-way in the move, the building had to be maneuvered below three portions of the U.S. 580 Freeway. The clearance wasn't much more than a few inches. We all held our

breath and cameras snapped as the massive building moved slowly along.

The last tracks to cross were on a curve and the extended time needed to prepare the ramp conflicted with a scheduled train. During the extended wait and prep-time, jacks were placed under the rear of the sagging building to add needed support. Then, after the train had passed, the jacks were removed, metal plates were placed across the tracks and a crane held the electric wires high above the moving building as it successfully crossed the tracks.



The last 250 feet of the move was over a dirt field and then a sharp right turn was needed to maneuver the building into place. About 5:00 P.M., just as the sun was setting over the hill, Mike's men used the jacks to gently lower the building on to its temporary blocks. Cheers of celebration and relief were heard. It was all quite exciting.

Point Gateway Project is Underway!

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ARCHIVE PHOTO GALLERY

Historical Photo Restorations by Thomas Mercer-Hursh, Ph.D.

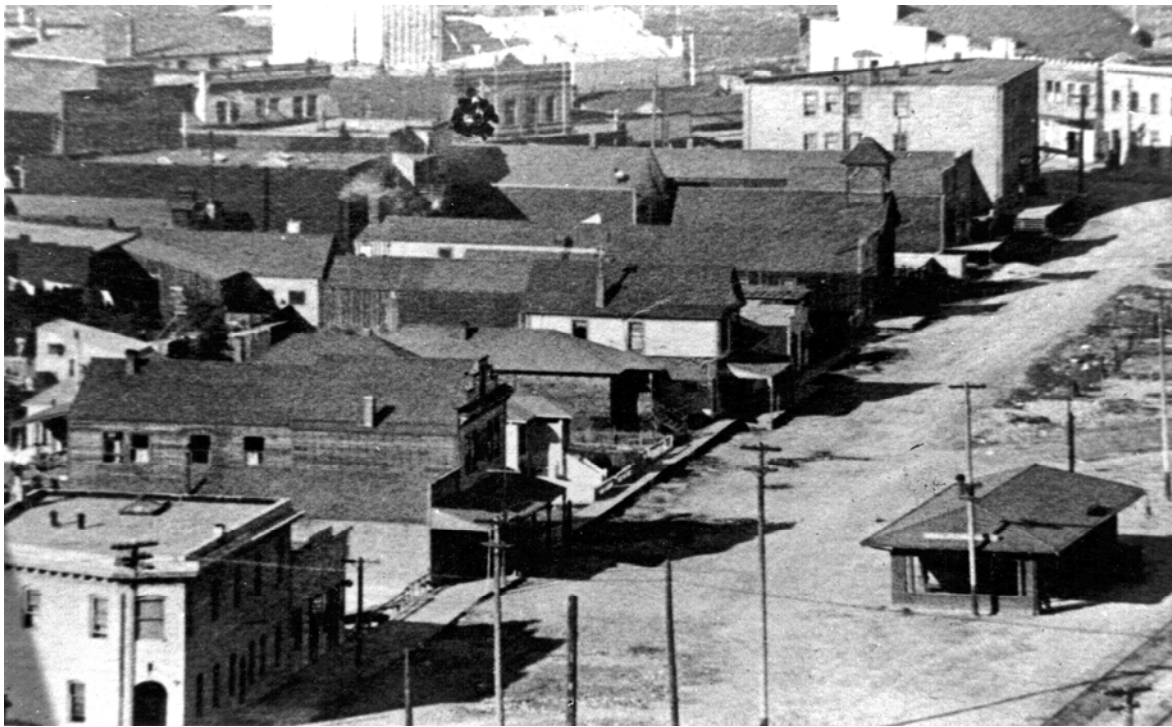


Above: Summer of 1901. Smokey Row Houses in the center, Henry Sirenberg's Saloon upper center, nearly alone at the corner of Richmond and Railroad. (0071-DC, Photo from Don Church)

Below: View from Nicholl Knob on the intersection of Richmond and Railroad. Note John Nicholl's "oil" well and the Point Theater under construction. (0008-DC, Photo from Don Chursh)



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Above: Railroad Avenue in 1911. Note Sante Fe Depot on the right, Henry Sirenbergs Saloon in the lower left, and Pat Dean's Opera House in the upper center (0015-DC, Photo from Don Church)

Below: January 1903 looking down West Richmond Avenue. (0076-DC, Photo from Don Church)



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I met Historian Steve Gilford at the PRHA May General Meeting. He told me that he had written many history articles for Kaiser and offered to share the ones that are of local interest. I took him up on his offer and now present the first of a series of his articles. I think you will all enjoy them. Gary

On This Date in Kaiser Permanente History #174 August 15, 1941

By Steve Gilford

Henry Kaiser Builds His First Ship

In 1941, Henry Kaiser didn't have many shipbuilders on his construction crews but up on the Columbia River at Coulee Dam he'd been building an innovative executive team and a loyal, efficient workforce. Kaiser knew that the Coulee project was nearing an end and he began moving men and equipment down to Richmond as soon as he could. The transferred crews went to work in the shipyard with the same spirit that had helped them finish an "impossible" dam across the Columbia River years ahead of schedule.

Within a month of signing the contract to build thirty ships, Kaiser, crews had begun building the first of what would ultimately be seven West Coast shipyards. Marshland along the Richmond, CA shore was transformed into solid earth upon which to build a fleet of ships. Just four months later, the workers were ready to lay the keel of their first ship, the Ocean Vanguard. Now "Hurry Up Henry" was building ships and shipyard simultaneously. As the yard was built around



*HJK (L) with
shipbuilding partner, WS
"Pete" Newell, Pres.
Bath Iron Works*

her, the new ship rose in the ways. Remarkably, the Ocean Vanguard was ready for the water in just four months. Kaiser finished the entire contract nearly a half year ahead of schedule.

Before Ocean Vanguard was even launched, the US government realized that they needed a new fleet of their own freighters. Time was too short for them to design a new ship from scratch so they took the basic Thompson Ocean class design, made a few changes and that became the Liberty Ship.

In the midst of the Twentieth Century, a Nineteenth Century ship design became the largest class of oceangoing vessels ever produced. Two thousand, seven hundred and ten Liberties were built. Richmond can be proud that the first ship of that basic design slid down the ways of the Kaiser yard there sixty-years ago today.

It should be remembered, too, that sixty years ago today, when that first bottle of champagne was smashed across the bow of the first of the 1,490 ships Kaiser would build during World War Two, Sidney Garfield's prepaid medical care program, forerunner of today's Kaiser Permanente, was already taking care of the Shipyard construction workers and shipbuilders.

Some Miscellaneous Notes:

Sometimes shipyard workers had to learn to live with bitter disappointment when the results of all their efforts went to the ocean bottom. On September 13, 1942, the Ocean Vanguard was torpedoed by the German submarine U-515 70 miles east of the island of Trinidad and sank with the loss of eleven lives.

Cyril Thompson, leader of the British Merchant Shipbuilding Mission and son of the designer of the Ocean class vessels, remained in the US for several months assisting in the design and planning of the Kaiser (Todd-California Co.) Shipyard. On his way back to England, his ship was torpedoed. He spent nine hours at the oars of a

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lifeboat before he and the other passengers were rescued.

The ship pictured at the beginning of Pt. 1 (#173), had an unfortunate history, too. She was one of the 200 Liberty Ship casualties of WW II. Today she is well known to sport-diving amateur archaeologists. One of them described her recently: "One of the most visually spectacular wrecks off Virginia, the Ocean Venture was a 7,174 ton freighter sunk in 160' after being torpedoed by the U-108 on February 8, 1942. The majority of hullplates lie flat on the sand on either side of the wreck, littered with various other wreckage. The amidships area, the 'cathedral' area, is the highest portion of the wreck at approximately 125'. From the large engine, one can follow shaft alley to the stern, large lead ingots on either side. The wreck has greatly fallen apart. The stern proper is listing to port with the remainder of stern structure scattered around the sand. The bridge is upside down just off of the port side. The helm, telegraph, numerous portholes, and many other artifacts have been recovered. The Venture still has numerous loose portholes throughout the wreck, though most are contorted from multiple depth charges subsequent to the sinking. Due to its distance offshore, the

Venture can have incredible visibility."

©2002 Steve Gilford Sageprod@aya.yale.edu



*Two proud workers watch launch of first ship from
Kaiser shipyards,
Ocean Vanguard
August 15, 1941*



*Liberty Ship, Jeremiah O'Brien, built in the Todd
yards in*

*Maine, steams seaward on the first leg of her 50th
anniversary return to Normandy Beachhead - 1994*



This Point.....in time

William L. Thompson, M.D.

Childhood Memories of the Point Richmond Triangle



Dr. Thompson was born in Point Richmond on February 17, 1909. He grew up in the Point, attended Washington Elementary School and graduated from Richmond High School in 1926, attended U.C. Berkeley and in 1929 at the age of 20 was admitted to the UCSF Medical School. He completed his medical school in 1933 and interned at Highland Hospital before joining the Civilian Conservation Corp. as a contract surgeon for the Army. Dr. Thompson practiced medicine for 39 years in Richmond, we are lucky to be the recipient of his written memories of his life in Point Richmond. This is a reprint of his gift to all of us. We will reprint his entire series. Thank you Dr. Thompson! Enjoy!

Part Three (Final)

Further east on Richmond Avenue was a large wooden building which was the site of a competing grocery operated by Julius Stiefvater. We knew both of these grocers and shopped in both stores. In the building above was the meeting place of the Odd Fellows lodge. My father was a member of the Odd Fellows and my mother was a member of its associated lodge for women, the Rebekahs. This lodge was very popular in the mother lode country in post gold rush days and my father joined it there.

Between McWhorter's and Stiefvater's stores were several smaller buildings one of which was the office of Bob Dornan's Richmond Supply Company. Bob immigrated from Ireland and settled in Richmond in about 1905. Shortly he established his supply company which served a very important local need. He had warehouse facilities out near the Santa Fe where he kept his stores of hay, feed, grain, wood, coal and other materials. Bob was a large powerful man who delivered supplies by himself all over town. First he used a horse and wagon and later obtained an old odd looking truck. I remember Bob climbing up our long steps carrying on his back a huge bale of hay or sack of coal or grain apparently with little effort. His wife Trannie ran the office for him. The Dornans were very good

friends of ours and they and their family were very prominent and valuable citizens in early Point Richmond.

There were other businesses in this block. I recall a real estate office. I think that one of the locations was Chris Machado's barber shop was in this area. His wife had been one of the earliest grammar school teachers in the Richmond-San Pablo area. One of his daughters, Evelyn, was my office nurse and assistant for many years.

Another building between Stiefvater's and Tunnel Avenue, housed the old post office. This was a two story building with rooms above. In about 1940, shortly after I began medical practice here, I was called to see a small elderly man in a room here. It was said that at one time he had been boxing champion of the world in one of the lighter weight classes. Unfortunately, I cannot remember his name.

The old post office had a great bank of hundreds of post boxes. In early days there was no home delivery of mail and most residents rented boxes. Others and the transients used general delivery. Even later when delivery at home had been instituted it did not include people on the periphery of the town so they retained their boxes. Almost daily one of our family stopped in for the mail. I recall that our original box number was 696.

This Point.....in time

Next to the post office was a shoe repair shop where we occasionally had repairs done. However in those days most people did their own shoe repairs. At home we had various sizes of shoe lasts, awls and other tools for shoe repair. We used the leather from old discarded machinery belts for the soles. It worked fairly well.

Just beyond the bank was a store that sold many items, almost like the later 5 & 10 cent stores. It had a candy counter which was quite intriguing to children. One looked for a long time to learn what would be the most one could buy for a penny. I believe the store was run by the Neals (possibly Neills). The lady that ran the store was most patient while we decided how much Fourth of July fireworks we could buy for a quarter. Fireworks then consisted mostly of packs of fire crackers, sparklers and occasionally roman candles and sky rockets.

Up the street a door or two was a low wooden building that held the office of Dr. Palmerton Campbell. He was the doctore that brought my brother and me into the world. Later I used to go there to have numerous small cuts sewed up. He was a fine understanding man and we got along well. He

was a competent doctor for his time but not overly industrious.

Beyond here up Richmond Avenue and nearly to Santa Fe Avenue was Charlie's butcher shop run by Charlie Riegert. As children we enjoyed going there with our mother. Seeing my brother and I, old Charlie or one of his helpers would cut a weeny sausage (now a hot dog) and give each of us half. It was a real treat. The only thing was that pieces were rarely equal in size. Later when I was older and going to the Washington School, I often had to stop there after school to purchase the meat for our dinner.

The only other building of importance close to the triangle was the old city hall on lower Washington Avenue. City business was done here after the meetings were removed from the old Critchett Hotel. Later this was abandoned when the population of Richmond required a larger quarters more centrally located. This old building was later taken over by the Point Masonic Lodge.

Yes, the triangle has been from the start the heart and soul of Point Richmond and we hope that it will continue to be for years to come!

Dr. Thompson's Son in law Gab Togner wrote a touching eulogy to Dr. Thompson at his memorial in 1998, you can read it at <http://www.alkos.com/prha/thompson.html>.



*Corner of Nicholl and
Santa Fe*

*0081-DC archive
photo from our Don
Church Collection,
enhanced by Thomas
Mercer-Hursh*

This Point.....in time

This fact diary is, a book of newspaper headlines and interesting events in Early Point Richmond it was compiled by Don Church and is one of the items left for us by Allan Smith.

Items of Interest Point Richmond, 1911

- 12-7 C.B. Welch dies. Painter who lived near reservoir on Water Street, heavy drinker but when sober was excellent organist and played for various churches around town.
- 12-8 New book on Richmond out. 62 pages with pix of Grand Canyon on front and Indian Fountain on back.
- 12-10 Business men of West Side favor paving streets, now a sea of mud. Have been graded.
- 12-17 House warming at new Colonial Hotel by Kate Reardon.
- 12-21 Oil works spreading over marsh.
- 12-28 Bad wreck on street car line when switch is left open. 5 injured including John Nicholl.
- 12-30 SP builds fence to force people to use subway. Have been cutting across tracks.
- 12-31 New Chateau at Grand Canyon leased.
- 1-2 Ora McFarland weds Frank Palmer
- 1-3 Mrs. J.F. Hutton winner of auto will sell machine. Her family does not care to assume the burden of such a luxury!!
- 1-4 W.F. Belding celebrates his 70th birthday in Abbott Hospital
- 1-6 Site of Washington school was accepted by Council from Wernse for \$8000. It is 305x200x170. He will also fill in the swamp for \$3000.
Gunboat Smith, Richmond Heavyweight fights for his own money!
- 1-12 Fence over SPRy is torn down by enraged people.
L.A. Brick cannot keep up with orders, running 2 shifts. Shipments from L.A. to Vancouver B.C.
- 1-13 4" gas mains are being layed on Park Place. All of Point should have gas within a few months.
- 1-17 Drillers of Nicholl oil well are down 290 feet.
- 1-20 Big Dock Co buys lands between Ferry Point and Pt. San Pablo; 600 acres about 2 miles long. Immense system of docks is planned.
- 1-23 Richmond has lowest tax rate in the state. \$2.07 per \$100.

Does anyone know where the “Grand Canyon” was in Richmond as referred to in the second item?

This Point.....in time



Hot Dog Day at Washington School

By Pat Davis Pearson

In The 1950's and 60's the Washington School P T A had a fund raising Hot Dog Sale once a month,. The hotdogs were sold through the window of the all purpose room to the children in the Playground. The serving crew was made up of PTA members who cooked the dogs, warmed the buns and assembled the dogs for the customers., Hot Dog Day was a major event. The school had no cafeteria so the sale was the only opportunity the children had to buy their lunch.

My memories of the sales were triggered by Dee Rosier's column in This Point in Time describing the activities at the bar-b-que fund raiser at Our Lady of Mercy Church.. I read the names of helpers Angie Kirkpatrick and Connie Healy and remembered working with them at the hot dog sales. When I helped with the Methodist Church committee for their Country Bazaar, I realized that most of that crew was also veterans of hot dog day. Present were Florence Wilson, Bo Amantiti, Fran Smith, Helen Valentine, and Mid Dornan

The Hot Dog Sale Day menu consisted of hot dogs, orange drink and Hostess Snow Balls. .Not exactly nutritionally sound food, but, enjoyed by all. The dogs were simmered in a large stock pot, put into the buns, and passed through the window to the customer along with the bag containing the orange drink and the Snow Ball.. I think the price of the meal was thirty-five cents.

I will stick my neck out and list the people in addition to the names mentioned above whom I remember from 1955-62 as helpers on Hot Dog Day. I know I do not have all the names. Maybe some of you reading this can write in and add to the list or. to the memories:. Mary Highfill, Bonnie Forner, Louise Genosick, June McClure, Mary Giacomelli, Hazel Paasch, Edie Bill, Sylvia Stewart, Virginia Cherniak ,Mary Berg,, Grethe Tedrick, Bessie Squires, Josephine Palenchar, Phyllis Ferguson, Brenda McKinley, Donna Wilson, Helen Crim Mary Forbes, Betty Pearson, , Ruth Decker.

Many of these helpers are still in the area and still helping in the community, many have moved and, sadly some have died. I remember all of them and I am sure a lot of students from the 50's and 60's remember them and Hot Dog Days at Washington School.

My thanks to Pat Dornan and Julie Davis Simmons For their help with this story.



PRAM Update

From Diane Anderson

Have you noticed the growing numbers of children in the Point? Have you seen the families using the playground, biking through the tunnel, and dining at local restaurants. Richmond might be in a financial crisis, but PRAM (Parents, Resources and More), located right here in Point Richmond is making a big difference to families with young children in the Greater Richmond area. PRAM is a community-driven non-profit organization that supports families with young children living in the Greater Richmond, California area. Our intent is to create a vibrant, involved community of healthy, happy, well-educated parents and children. We strive to be inclusive and creative in all that we do.

Now serving the community of West Contra Costa County, PRAM was founded as Point Richmond Association of Mothers in 1998 through the efforts of a group of Point Richmond residents (mostly mothers) who saw their neighborhood in a state of decline and wanted to improve their quality of life. PRAM was incorporated in 2004 as a non-profit 501c3 corporation. *It is run solely through volunteers.* Since its inception, the organization has focused its work on serving families with young children through educational programming, play and social opportunities, and community stewardship. The achievements of 2004 included:

- Wrestling the Fieldhouse (our community center) back from the city of Richmond
- Re-establishing Fieldhouse programs using

volunteers (to replace laid off city employees)

- Launching a new web-site and membership database
 - Marketing and expanding PRAM's services for our membership and the community
- A 46% increase in membership

PRAM has *a particularly important role as a community connector.* Families (currently 135 member families) come together through a continuum of programs, extending from playgroups to cultural and recreational activities held at the Fieldhouse, to parenting education programs and social events, to volunteer service in community betterment projects.

Due to intense growth, poverty, and a lack of programs and services for children in our city, the creation of interconnected communities of friends with children ages 0-5 is our goal. We appreciate your financial support as we try to continue our mission. In particular, we are raising money for art, music, creative movement and language programs for the FieldHouse. Our goal is to raise \$15,000 in order to sponsor and subsidize 15 such programs which would serve over 200 children.

If you love the arts and love seeing the children scootering on the sidewalks and strolling through town, please consider a donation to PRAM. With all our efforts, we can continue to grow our village, making the Point an even more wonderful place for all of us. All donations are tax deductible. You may send donations to PRAM, 110 E. Richmond Ave., Richmond CA 94801. Please contact Diane Anderson, President, 510-234-3333, with any questions, comments, or fundraising ideas!

This Point.....in time

DEATHS.....

Victor Lloyd Highfill died on November 11, 2005, he was 86 years old. He was born in Canada, and has lived in Point Richmond since 1942, and was a retired employee of Wilson & Kratzer Mortuaries. He was the loving husband of Mary Highfill. He is also survived by his children, Kristen L. Javellana and her husband Roy, and Larry S. Highfill and his wife Judy. He was a loving grandfather to his grandchildren, Javellana and Steven, Kerrie and Nathan Boykin, Kevin and Beth Highfill and Jarrett and Kristen Highfill, and great-grandfather to Hailea and Hannah Boykin, Wyatt Highfill, Kayla and Jay Highfill. He will be remembered by a host of family and friends.

Lola I. Peterson died on Friday, November 4, 2005. Age 87. She was a native of Point Richmond where she spent most of her life and raised her daughter, Signe. Her husband Bertel and daughter preceded her in death. Lola was a Girl Scout Leader. Graveside services were held at Sunset View Cemetery.

Dolores Hamamoto died on November 10, 2005, age 74. She came from the Philippines in 1957 as a bride and fell in love with the old Victorian house in Point Richmond, known as the 'Curry House' on Santa Fe and Nicholl, and lived there ever since. Following the death of her first husband, Gregoria Austria, she married George Hamamoto in 1968. She has been active in the Philipino-American Association and was an avid gardener. Some may remember her on the election board at Washington School. Dolores is survived by her husband, George; daughters Georgette Austria, Melbourne Beach, FL and Isabelle Murphy of Point Richmond and three grandchildren. Also is survived by brothers Santos and Vicente Mailo and Sisters Josephina Quillopa, Rosalina Nopia and Helen Daniels. Services were held at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in the Point.

Muriel Bluhon died on Thursday, November 24, 2005, two days before her 86th birthday. Muriel lived in Point Richmond on Western Drive with her husband Peter for about 2 years. Previous to that, they had lived at Brick Yard Cove and in Pasadena. Muriel, a native of Wales, was an active member of the Women's Westside Improvement Club and was one of the ladies who lovingly restored the Rose Garden area at the Indian Statue Park. Muriel was well loved by her neighbors, acting as "back-up babysitter" for some of the little ones and enjoying Friday morning breakfasts with a group of the neighborhood ladies. In addition to her husband Peter, Muriel is survived by her son Peter and her daughter-in-law Agnes of Kensington.

(Continued on page 22)



This Point.....in time

Deaths continued

Bessie Anne Squires in Pebble Beach, California on Thursday, October 27, 2005. Age 88. A native of Porterville, Bessie was married to George Edward Squires for 65 years and they lived in Point Richmond most of those years until moving recently to a retirement home in Clovis. Bessie was a cosmetologist, past president of Washington PTA, member of the Methodist Women's Society of Christian Service, Point Richmond History Association, Women's Westside Improvement Club, Bible Studies and a part of the Crest Avenue Neighborhood Group. She is survived by her husband George Edward Squires of Clovis, daughter Janice Jones of El Cerrito, daughter Pamela Frogge of Albany, twin daughters Suzanne Unser of Pebble Beach and Dianne McIntosh of Coarsegold, all of California, also three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Memorial services were held on Saturday, December 3, 2005 at the Point Methodist Church.

Robert W. Burchell on November 16, 2005, age 86. Bob was born and raised in Idaho, graduated with honors from the University of Idaho, He was a naval officer,, schooled in electronics at Princeton and M.I.T. and served in the South Pacific during W.W.II. An engineer at Chevron, Bob retired after 30 years of service. He is survived by his wife Catherine, and was the father of sons Bob and Tom and the late Bill.

Philomena Elizabeth Feyder on October 24, 2005 while at her Water Street home. Age 92. She enjoyed her family and her gardens, the symphony and needlework. Her husband, Robert preceded her in death in 1990 but she is survived by her daughter Linda, son Michael, two grandchildren and a brother George Sasges of McAllen, Texas. Mass was held at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in the Point.

CARDS, LETTERS & E-MAIL

Dear Pam:

Here are our dues for the Point Richmond History Association. How could we have found out that our dues were due? And when where they due?

Rosemary Corbin
Point Richmond

Thank you Rosemary! A good question that might help everyone understand. The issue of TPIT before your membership expires you will have a stamp on the address side of your newsletter stating that your dues are coming up. The next issue will have a form on colored paper tucked inside that says "Your membership will be expiring with the next issue". Your final issue will have a handwritten note on the first page of your TPIT. Pam

This Point.....in time

BIRTHDAYS

December

Jean Allyn	Christine Hayes	Linda Mertle	Christina Nagatani
Seth Fenton	Marian Hawkins	Michael Cheshareck	Thomas Mercer-Hursh
Hazel Paasch	Jeff Corbin	Eric Turner	Jerry Feagley
Cris Creed	Mike Turner	Teresa Meneghelli	Inez A. Pestana
Edna Hathaway	Lauren Nason	Richard Barnes	Ilana Dolberg
Debbie Seaburg	Marilyn Darling	Jean Eakle	Kayla Dolberg

January

Henry Allyn	Jeff Quist	John Cutler	Bena Bowles
Donna Buhler	Ed Paasch	Diana Kaffan	Diana Mertle McHenry
Cindy Rosier	Jim Wilson	Marilu Fox	Brad Feagley
Tom Brennan	Robert McIntosh	Elaine Harris	Marian Saue
Sonja Darling	Mary Highfill	Kristina Hollbrook	Sparta Chiozza
Linda Marshal	Lupe Morris	Louis Cunan	Frank Kenny
Bryan Smith	Ann Bartram	Les Hathaway	
Doug Greine	Saryl Weinstein	Richard Palfini	



Exclusive - Over 90 Club

An impressive list!

Ruth Wood Mullen (98)
Anna Schwarz (93)
Jim Kenny
Ruth Mallette (93)
Alice Helseth (94)
Jean Moyle Spiersch
Rena Cairo Gonsalves (94)
Anne Hanzlik (94)
Lupe Padilla Lopez

Anita Brougham
Al McGee (92)
Reva Ward (91)
Lloyd Farley (90)
Oretta Eaton (90)
Avis Blanchette (91)
Mark Gebhart
Bena Bowles (91)
Laura Kurtz (90)
Dulcie Johnson (91)

Louise Hammond (91)
Goldie Mobley (91)
Maxine Stoddard (90)
Dorothy Ruthnick (92)
Steve Wyrick (90)
Barney Dietz (91)

An even more exclusive club!

Our 100 YEAR CLUB:

Bonnie Kirkman (102)
Have we missed anyone?

This Point.....in time

CALENDAR

GOLDEN STATE MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM AND EAST BAY MODEL ENGINEERS SOCIETY

900 Dornan Drive, Miller/Knox Regional Park. Interested in Museum Membership? Museum is open to the public Saturdays and Sundays and July 4th and Labor Day noon to 5 pm. Business Meetings and Workshop on Fridays 7-10 PM. 510-234-4884.

MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE

Quality productions, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm, Sunday Matinees at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$13, cash check or credit card. Reservations and program, 510-232-4031.

Dinner at the Hotel Mac and the play on Thursday, for only \$28. Call 510-232-4031 for reservations.

PARENTS, RESOURCES AND MORE (PRAM)

Regular meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month from 7-9.110 East Richmond Avenue (The Fieldhouse). For more information call President Diane Anderson at 620-6843.

POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Meets 2nd Wednesday each month, Hotel Mac Banquet Room, 12-1:30, Lunch Reservations \$11.

Contact: Paula Aasmus, O.D. 510-235-5228.

POINT RICHMOND COMMUNITY CENTER/FIELD HOUSE & PLUNGE

Info: 233-6881

POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Museum at 139½ Washington Avenue, open Thursday's and Saturday's, 11:30 to 2:00

The deadline for the February/March issue of TPIT is Friday January 20, 2006.

POINT RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Meets last Wednesday each month, Pt Richmond Community Center; 7:30 P.M Contact: Don Woodrow, President, 234-3107.

RICHMOND ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND

The REDF is a non-profit corporation dedicated to ensuring that future development here is well-planned, sensitive to the environment and in compliance with city, state and federal laws. Citizen support is encouraged. Information, call 510-215-6100. General membership public meetings are held monthly. Details are available by calling 510-232-0405.

WASHINGTON SCHOOL

Contact: Roz Plishner, Principal 510-232-1436.

WOMEN'S WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT CLUB

Contact: Margaret Morkowski , President. 510-234-4219

To update or add your organization or event to our calendar, please contact Gary Shows, 510-235-1336, or email him, gary@alkos.com, or send your request to 229 Golden Gate Avenue, Point Richmond, CA 94801

This Point.....in time

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Type of membership (check one):

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

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

Pam Wilson
521 Western Drive
Point Richmond, CA 94801

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

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

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

Gary Shows
229 Golden Gate Avenue
Point Richmond, CA 94801
or
fax 510-965-0335
or
email: gary@alkos.com

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Steve Gilford	Article
Pat Davis Pearson	Article
Diane Anderson	Article

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Visit our website

PointRichmondHistory.org

Thanks ALKO office supply for hosting our site

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Red Oak Victory Information 510-235-7387
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