# THIS POINT.... in time

## The Point Richmond History Association

www.PointRichmondHistory.org

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SPIERSCH BROS PLUMBING, 157 PARK PLACE, POINT RICHMOND, CA.....1917?

# Coming Soon to Point Richmond Christmas, 2009

Holidy festivities begin on Saturday, Povember 28th with our traditional Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the Downtown Triangle.

Caroling at 5:30

Santa Claus will arrive at approximately 6:00 and our new Christmas Tree will be Lit.

\*\*\*\*

# From the President

## By Mid Dornan

Along with Lina Velasco from the City's Historic Preservation and Design Review Committee, I viewed the four stained glass windows removed from the former Trinity Episcopal Church, 235 Washington Avenue. As a condition of their removal the Point Richmond History Association was given custody of these historic windows now being stored in the basement of the now Dakini Temple. They are to be checked yearly in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's and National Trust for Historic Preservation Guidelines.

Our Walking Tour of Point Richmond brochure prepared by Bonnie Jo Cullison for the Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau is very popular. It can be found in the box outside our Museum.

Our Open Museum hours will resume to Saturday, 11:30 - 2:00 now that the Farmer's Markets are discontinued. Being open on Wednesdays was effective.

Our history association was enriched with the service that member Liz McDonald provided. As Vice-President many years, her programs always were timely and informative.

Liz will be missed.

PRHA archive image #0259, enhanced by Thomas Mercer-Hursh

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Thank you members for your renewal:

**Madeline Albright** Dee Rosier **Ken & Kay Madison Family** Louie P. Barra Sherri Mertle Thomas Mercer-Hursh & Theresa de Valence \*\* Alice Jordan Family James Wilson Spiro Cakos \*\* **Bruce & Sandra Beyaert Family** Judith F. Buhlis Charlotte (Kermabon) Birsinger Gloria Groff **Emile @ Edwyna Pleau Family** Henry Gondola Barbara & Jeff Ward Family Ken Blonski & Louise Fender Family Margaret Morkowski \*\* Ellen Schaefer Pat Dornan \*\* **Conniel Healy** 

And a warm welcome to these new members

Rocky Saunders Bill Smith Family James W. Haves

\* Gift Membership

\*\*Special Member, Thank You!



## Thank You!

## Santa Fe Market

## **Point Richmond Market**

For selling
"THIS POINT....in time"
For us

Because of the success of the new Farmers Market, we have changed our Museum Hours:

Wednesday 4:30 pm to 7:00pm Thursday 11:30 am to 2:00 pm

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

- Betty Dornan
- Bruce and Ann Bartram
- Pat Pearson
- Mid Dornan
- Bonnie Jo Cullison
- Susan Brooks
- Anita Christiansen
- Sonja Darling
- Margaret Morkowski

## The Cover:

A mashup of PRHA archive image #0368-DC of Spiersch Plumbing over a modern photo of 157 Park Place. (Mashup and modern photo by Thomas Mercer-Hursh)

# Editor's Notes

Gary Shows (510-235-1336)

We really have a great group here and I want to recognize them Thanks to Mid Dornan for her work that makes TPIT interesting, mainly her A-MID TRIVIA, but along with A-MID TRIVIA she includes many other interesting things that may be about the Point or may not. She is the 'spice' of the Thomas Mercer-Hursh does many newsletter. things in every issue to make it interesting and eye catching. Besides his photo restoration gallery, he enhances every picture I include and creates the cover. We have a wonderful pair taking care of the churches, there's Dee Rosier for the Catholics and Jean Reynolds for the Methodists, I thank them both for their timely, quality contributions to TPIT. Both churches should be pleased and proud of their respective representatives. Then there is Margaret Morkowski. No one has covered the Point goings on since the late Alan Smith and the late Roy Jones. Margaret does an important job for our newsletter by giving us current Point news. I think we probably have one of the best play reviewers in the business Theresa de Valence. I would like to recognize Pat **Pearson**. Pat always has her finger on what is the most important thing the PRHA is involved in and lets us know where it stands. She always has something interesting to add.

Finally thanks to my partner **Jerry Cerkanowicz** for his many tasks, like helping me with facts, proof reading this and that, sorting and labeling, filling out stupid post office forms and physically taking the bagged newsletters to the McVidie Post Office Station for mailing.

## Thanks to you all and happy holidays!

The deadline for the next issue of "THIS POINT....in time" is January 17th.

# Thank You! Our Special Supporters!

## History Makers

Doug & Rosemary Corbin Kathe Kiehn Elizabeth M. McDonald Transcept Pharmaceuticals, Inc. John A. Thiella & Rosa T. Casazza

## Corporate Sponsor

Timeworks Inc. Clock Company Stephanie, Patti & Stephen Kowalski First Church of Christ, Scientist

## History Preservers:

Royce Ong Edward J. McGarvey Gilda Markarian Kevin, Renee & Griffin Knee Jean & John Knox David & Anne Roth John Helfrich Sandi Genser-Maack & Lynn Maack Thomas Mercer-Hursh & Theresa de Valencé John & Nancy Mengshol Donna Wilson Linda Andrew-Marshall Margaret Morkowski Patricia Dornan Paul & Zoe Mukavtz Bob & Ellie Strauss

## A-Mid Trivia

## Mid Dornan (510-234-5334)

Q: Has the United States ever had three presidents in one year?

Answer at end of Trivia

The much publicized H1N1 (swine flu) virus was discussed by Dr. Harvey Kayman for the Point Richmond Village Forum at the Methodist Church, He explained the risk, who needs it, where you can get it etc. Dr. Kayman is a Public Health Medical Officer for the California Department of Public Health, Acting section Chief, Bioterrorism and Planning Section, heads the Immunization Branch and resides in Point Richmond.

\*\*\*

A patient went in to see the doctor and the nurse asked her some questions.

- "Name?" asked the nurse.
- "Sandra Brown" said the patient.
- "Address" asked the nurse.
- "Crest Avenue, Point Richmond"
- "Flu" asked the nurse

"No, I walked. It's just around the corner.

\*\*\*

After collating the September/October newsletter, the staff surprised Gary and Jerry with champagne to celebrate their first anniversary.

\*\*\*

On Halloween the most haunted house in the whole Point was at 530 Santa Fe as Rod and Bonnie Satre had demons, crawly things, skulls, spiders, treats and tricks! If you scared easily, who of you avoided the witching place?

\*\*\*

Doing nice things for people is one way to change attitudes of others. Start a random act of kindness and watch it spread.

\*\*\*

Appendicitis isn't just a young persons illness anymore. Our founder, Donna Roselius, living in Oregon, is recuperated from a burst appendix after spending three weeks in the hospital.

\*\*\*

Incidentally, Donna had to recover quickly (at 98 pounds!) as she wanted to be at grandson Eric's wedding rehearsal dinner in Livermore on November 6th.

(Sightings of Donna in the Point likely around this date!)

\*\*\*

The Spooky Pancake Breakfast (Famous Boy Scout Buttermilk Recipe) at the Methodist Church on Halloween did not have spiders in the batter as some envisioned!

\*\*\*

Sonja Darling, barely home from visiting her 93 year old mother in North Dakota, received a message her younger sister was in critical condition in the Yuma, Arizona hospital so flew to be with her. (as this goes to press, her sister is doing better)

\*\*\*

Within 10 years, for the first time in history of mankind, the number of people in the world age 65 and older will be greater than the number of people age 5 and younger, according to new U.S. Census Bureau.

\*\*\*

On a recent September Sunday the Crest-Belvedere annual pot luck found 60 neighbors gathering on Kate Harps' and Dale Roberts' outdoor deck. New residents meet old, familiar meet unfamiliar. Mary Crosby organizes the event and keeps the tradition going. They encourage other Point neighborhoods to plan a similar casual get together. Good eats and lively conversation are guaranteed. And strangers may become friends.

(note: This is an enviable and model Point neighborhood.)

\*\*\*

Who was having the most fun at the historic Point Richmond Fall Pumpkin Fun Fest? The kids on the hay ride or the driver of the tractor, Tom Butt?

\*\*\*

What fun seeing so many cute little under four year old face painted GIRLS playing in the Pumpkin Patch. They outnumbered the little BOYS that day. (who seemed to be in buggies yet.)

Jan and Jerry Feagley will be honored at the Richmond Chamber of Commerce "Thanks for Giving Luncheon" on November 17, at the Hotel Mac.

\*\*\*

Feagley Realty, Jerry and Jan Feagley, were also recipients of the 2009 Richmond Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award at the Contra Costa Council luncheon in May.

\*\*\*

Former Point residents Kay (Mayfield) and Ken Madison, now of Springfield, Oregon, were recently in the area visiting family. Ken has promised to write some Point memories. (expecting it soon!)

\*\*\*

Has board member Mary Highfill 'blackmailed' Bill Villanero into watering the planter box in front of the Museum? The flowers are beautiful!

\*\*\*

Where else but in our Indian Statue Rose Garden would you find a basket of green apples with a sign: Free apples? They have already been washed.

\*\*\*

Once you are a grandparent, who would have expected the multiplied joys going with grandchildren to the Library, pushing the endless swing, dancing round and round or watching them perform in the high school Marching Band? The Band part was my latest joy as Rachel and Robert (Roberta's children) were a part of the impressive 206 member Woodbridge High School Band invitational exhibition where 20 schools participated in competition.

\*\*\*

Note: Friends of the Bay Trail Free bicycle

valet parking and tune-ups now are available during weekend brunch at the Boiler House Restaurant on the Bay Trail in Richmond thanks to a partnership with Richmond Spokes and the National Bike Registry. While there, be sure to pick up one of the elegant, informative Marina Bay Trail Guides available in dispenser boxes along the Bay Trail throughout Marina

\*\*\*

The little red Flyer wagon has been updated with fold up seats and seat belts!

\*\*\*

If a single tree only yields about 2-4 pounds of roasted coffee annually, how many trees are you drinking?

\*\*\*

The rubber bowl spatula was the worst invention for youth--it eliminated the joy of "licking the bowl".

\*\*\*

What two letters of the alphabet spell big trouble for your teeth?

D-K

\*\*\*

Those of you not attending the Point Richmond Neighborhood Council meeting are missing what is happening and what future plans are being proposed for this area. President Peter Minkwitz runs an efficient and informative meeting.

Altha Humphrey has the coffee ready. Because of the holiday, there will not be a November meeting but do show up at the last Wednesday in December, at the Community Center at 7:30 and add your voice to the neighborhood.

\*\*\*

The proposed Casino and development at Point Molate is still in the planning. California has some 60 Casino-sponsoring tribes but the large scale casino gaming here has far exceeded the contours of the measure sold to voters in 2000.

\*\*\*

ANSWER: Once. In 1841 Martin Van Buren was succeeded by William Henry Harrison. He died a month later so John Tyler took over.

## Church News



**By Dee Rosier** 510-232-1387

drosier@sbcglobal.net

The year quickly rolls on to its end as we approach the busy holiday season.

Father continues to find time to oversee the parish and still find time to travel. He recently spent time with relatives in Connecticut and Rhode Island, but his latest was a 10-day stay in France, which he thoroughly enjoyed. One of his exciting weekends was a steam engine ride on the Niles Canyon Railway. Parishioner, David Roth is active in the group.

Many have been generous in donating used clothing which was recently delivered to St. Vincent de Paul in Oakland for distribution to the needy.

The last of our pancake breakfasts was recently held and will again resume in the spring. Revenue from the breakfasts equals the income previously generated from our annual BBQ's.

Income is spent on parish maintenance. Enough thanks cannot be given to all of the pancake breakfast volunteers.

Father is contemplating honoring long time parishioners during an afternoon gathering. More to follow as plans are formulated. He also plans to conduct a series of talks on the family as a place of healing. The talks will probably take place on a Saturday morning, followed by lunch in the church hall.He has plans to trout fish after Thanksgiving. Perhaps we should schedule a fish fry?

There are a number of donated books in the church hall, which up for the taking.

When Father Brian Kromholtz recently celebrated Mass, there was no acolyte to assist him. Several parishioners were asked, but did not qualify, that was until eyes found Brenda McKinley who performed the task with expertise.

Envelopes for All Souls Day are available. The envelopes, with the names of the deceased are placed on the altar during the month of November and remembered in all Masses.

There has been an increase in visitors and new parish members. Our doors remain open in order to welcome you. If you would like to become a permanent member, you will find a form located at the back of the church.

After the recent rain (and there was lots of it) the flowers in the garden now stand proudly and shout with color.

Our support to the local Souper Kitchen continues. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Edwina Murray – 233-7529.

Anna Schwarz has left Pt. Richmond to reside at Bay Park Retirement Residence. It has not taken her any time to acclimate. She recently hosted the Daytime Bible Group in her new digs, which are outstanding. She is on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor and completely encased in windows that allow her a fantastic view. We were all delighted to have Amelia Drake and Marian Voight (previous Pt. Richmond residents) join us.

The recent rains did not keep several parishioners from travel – Tom and Nana Boone

flew off to Puerta Vallarta, Jack and Edwina Murray cruised to Mexico, as well as Michael and Katherine Workman who cruised to Alaska. Upcoming travelers – Fred and Diane Siegmund, Nancy and Stan Toledo will accompany Msgr. Kraus (Santa Maria Parish) on a trip to Israel.

Angie Kirkpatrick celebrated a recent memorable birthday accompanied by all of her family attending Mass – a great gift.

Get well wishes to John Gerk, who had shoulder surgery and Vera Garcia who had neck surgery.

Thank you to Javier Lopez, Michael Workman, Jim Chesareck, Tom Boone and Dean Smith for the excellent job of making the inside of the church sparkle.

Condolences to the Gerk family in the recent death of their son, Timothy.

Condolences to Lorraine Jolivett-Quinn in the recent death of her husband.

Katherine Workman will be recognized as Woman of the Year representing Our Lady of Mercy by the Oakland Council of Catholic Women.

Be sure to check out the colorful note cards of our parish and rectory painted by Linda Drake.

No need to ask how proud they were of their granddaughter attending Mass with them, you could tell from the happiness expressed on their faces – isn't that true Diane and Fred Siegmund?

Remember in your prayers: Jack Healy, Maurice Doherty, Al Frosini, Frankie Mello, Bill Smith, Katherine Workman and John Gerk.

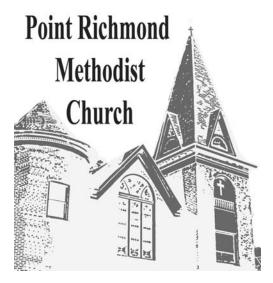
Smith climbs to the top of Mt. Sinai to get close enough to talk to God. Looking up, he asks the Lord...."God what does a million years mean to you?

The Lord replies, "A minute."

Smith asks, "And what does a million dollars mean to you?

The Lord replies, "A penny."
Smith asks, "Can I have a penny?"
The Lord replies, "In a minute."

SEE YOU IN CHURCH



By Jean Reynolds 510-235-2988 jeanormr@pacbell.net

The CD *Traveler Unknown* is available now for \$15. A CD release concert on Sunday, September 20, featured the original jazz quartet from the January 2009 concert recorded on the CD: Dan Damon, piano; Kurt Ribak, bass; Lincoln Adler, sax; and Randy Odell, drums. Only Canadian flutist **Bruce Harding** was missing from the mix: it was another great concert event!

**Point Richmond Village** has started a **speaker's series** that meets at the church once a month. The latest speaker, on September 25, was **Harvey Kayman, M.D.,** who shared how we should prepare for flu season. For the latest info and recommendations on the flu, see the website: http://www.cdc.gov/flu/

On Saturday, October 10, we took part in the GRIP Harmony Walk "Get a GRIP on Homelessness." Our community was once again reminded to Have a Heart for the Hungry and Have a Heart for the Homeless. Walkers asked for pledges and joined with others from the community at the beautiful, newly landscaped Civic Center Plaza to rally to support GRIP

programs like the Family Shelter and the Souper Center. Some businesses and congregations sponsored the walk and either included their business logo on the event shirts or had their organization noted on a "Burma Shave" sign along the route. Students in some of the area schools made posters to represent the theme of the walk. GRIP staff and volunteers judged the posters and walkers honored contest winners and all artists at the start of the walk.

Our All Church Conference took place on October 15. Elder Linda Prendergast, pastor of Pinole United Methodist Church, presided as we set our pastor's salary, elected committee members and officers, recalled the past year, and evaluated our congregational vitality. Jennifer Metz is our new Administrative Board Chair. We offer enormous thanks to Mid Dornan who has served with such commitment as Board Chair for the last several years.

We acknowledged our artistic side with a **Silent ART Auction** on October 24, at the Point San Pablo Yacht Club. Members and friends donated art pieces, bid on art items, enjoyed live music and partook of various morsels of food. We have many talented artists in our midst, and it is a treat to have a chance to acquire new art to admire and ponder.

The young people led the worship service on October 25. Sarah Thompson and Heather Damon each shared their faith stories during the sermon time. Liam Thompson was the liturgist and usher, Bethany Reynolds was the worship leader, and Christine Silva-Netto did the children's time. The Angel Choir: Sarah Thompson, Lillian Karl and Kelsey Tostenson, danced and sang with support from the voices of Liam Thompson, Heather Damon, Bethany Reynolds, Christine Silva-Netto, and David Reynolds. David Reynolds ushered. The poise, passion and confidence of the young people are an inspiration and we benefit and learn from being able to share and interact with them as an integral part of our community.

Norma Wallace, on behalf of the United Methodist Women, collected funds for art supplies at Washington School. Bethany Reynolds offered the long-lived youth fund and her donation to start a

collection for Hymnal supplements for the pews. Donors gave enough money for the hymnals, and they are on order. **Judy Buhlis** raised funds for the church by selling note-cards with the church image on the front.

#### On the Calendar:

Amphion Music Society plans a free concert as part of one of their regular meetings November 15, 2 p.m. at the church. Amphion Society membermusicians perform a variety of music with the advantage of the sanctuary and its great acoustics.

<u>Dinner Theater, Thursday, November 19:</u> Dinner at the Hotel Mac and Rocky Horror Show live at the Masquers' Theater. Tickets, at \$40 each, available while they last from Jean Reynolds, 510-235-2988.

<u>Thanksgiving Interfaith Worship Service</u>: Thursday, November 26, 11:30 a.m.

Free Community Thanksgiving Dinner: November 26, Noon to 2:00 p.m. Sit down and let the Point Richmond businesses and church community serve you a complete Thanksgiving feast!

<u>Thursday, December 17, 7:00 p.m. Christmas</u> <u>Concert:</u> Features the Joyful Noise Choir, the El Sobrante Adult Choir, soloists and other musical guests.

December 19, <u>Bake Sale</u> 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Delicious holiday baked goods for your family enjoyment or parties. Location TBA. Last year, we were at the Community Center next to the library in Point Richmond. In years past, we sold from the lobby of Interactive Resources on Park Place. Check the website to be sure as the event approaches so you don't miss out!

December 24, <u>Jazz Christmas Eve</u>, 7:00 p.m. Come early for seating in the sanctuary.

For updates to the church calendar, find us on the web courtesy of David Moore of Sincere Designs: http://www.pointrichmond.com/methodist



## POINT METHODIST CHURCH HISTORY

Mid Dornan

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

#### DEC 4, 1928

The Social League met in the M.E. Church parlor with Mrs. C.B. Jones and Mrs. J.J. Meise as hostesses. The meeting opened by repeating the Lord's Prayer led by our Pres. Mrs. Burdick.. There were 14 members present. Minutes of previous meeting were read and approved.

Move and seconded that Laundry bill of \$2.53 be paid.

Move and seconded that \$10 be paid to church.

| Dues                 |      |                |
|----------------------|------|----------------|
| Mrs. Alexander       |      | .60            |
| Ladies Aid for Recep | tion | 3.50           |
| Plate Offering       |      | 1.56           |
|                      |      | \$5.66         |
| Church               |      | \$10.00        |
| Laundry Bill         |      | <u>1.56</u>    |
|                      |      | \$12.53        |
| Bal                  |      | \$38.29        |
|                      |      | <u>5.66</u>    |
|                      |      | 43.95          |
|                      |      | - <u>12.52</u> |
|                      |      |                |

\$31.42 New Bal.

Mrs. Shaw Sec



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

## Items of Interest Point Richmond, 1914 Richmond Independent

- 7-1 J.P. Arnold bids goodbye to the
  Force. He has made 4,157 arrests
  in the 5 years he has been Chief of
  Police. E.J. Gilliland was the last
  man to be arrested under his
  regime.
- 7-6 Ed Garrard elected Mayor by 7 to 2 vote.
- 7-14 City Hall war on between John Nicholl and Wall.
- 7-29 John Nicholl dies.
- 8-11 \$123,400 to pave Cutting Blvd from the Point to 23rd Street.
- 10-17 Old 2 room Standard Avenue School is now the Club House for the veteran firemen.
- 10-17 The population of Richmond is 18,201 according to the new directory.
- 10-29 John Nicholl makes donation of \$1000 to Womens Improvement and the Richmond Womens Club.
- 11-1 The Richmond Hospital closes today. (ed. Abbott Hospital on West Richmond.)
- 11.15 Drs. Abbotts in their new offices above the Bank of Richmond.

## WWIC, Est. 1908

## Jane Vandenburgh

Established in 1908, WWIC is the oldest women's service organization west of the Mississippi. We meet at 11:30 on the first Tuesday of the month from September through June in the community room of the Point Richmond Methodist Church.

We reconvened on September first with a concert by the Barkstick Choir, led by Marion Kent and accompanied on the piano by their new accompanist, Dave Shank. This was a sing-along of American standards, including, "Aint She Sweet," "Moon River," and "Bye Bye, Blackbird."

The hostesses for this first meeting were the in -coming officers: Margaret Morkowski, president, Linda Newton, first vice president, Connie Lompa, second vice president, Susan Brooks, secretary, Sonja Darling, treasurer. We missed Sonya, who was home with bronchitis. Other officers collected the yearly dues of \$15.

We welcomed new members. Robin Summers Mitchell and Robin asked everyone to come to Point Richmond's community wide Halloween party at the Hotel Mac, drinks and light be followed by a performance of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," across the street at The Masquers Playhouse, 105 Park Place.

The members voted on speakers for the year, signed up for luncheon hostess duty, and discusses old business and the activities we have to look forward to in the year ahead. Our new Sunshine Committee will be headed by Norma Wallace, who asks that WWIC members volunteer to bring getwell cards to those members housebound, together with dessert.

Our meeting on October 6 hosted Pam deWitt as speaker Pam, of the recently formed Point Richmond Art Collective, described the newly reorganized deWitt Gallery. Now an artists' collective, PRAC represents painters, Jim deWitt and Margaret Fago, photographers Geri Brown and Armondo Piccioto, also the found-metal sculpture

of Joe Brooks. The collective includes the works-in-glass of William Sistek and the jewelry of Arlin Robins, who also works in bronze and paints. Pam deWitt continues her custom-framing business in this same location, 121 Park Place, on the town square.

This was a lasagna luncheon was offered as a fundraiser for the club and served by the officers, Margaret Morkowski, Linda Newton, Connie Lompa, Sonya Darling, and Susan Brooks.

The hostess committee was comprised of Alice Encinas, Lori Nova, Susan Hesse, and Jane Vandenburgh. The committee decided to make this as green and as cost-neutral an event as possible, using cloth napkins and tablecloths already owned by committee members as well as materials gathered in the natural environment for decorations. Alice provided an amazing variety of eucalyptus branches, dried grasses and seed pods she's gathered for use in her work as maker of botanical and flower-based creams and essences. The only gas required in decorating the tables was used by Lori in driving to Costco to pick up the Mexican fruit ices served on a stick to avoid the use of an extra paper plate for dessert.

Our next meeting will be on the second Tuesday in November, in deference to the election.



## Out and About Town

Margaret Morkowski (510) 234-4219

As we write our articles, Halloween is here. On Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> about 450 Kindergarten through sixth graders participated in the Annual Washington School Halloween Parade though the Point Richmond Business District. Police Officers on motor cycles with lights flashing, safe guarded the little ones, their parents and teachers. School principal, Lisa Levi said it all took about an hour and a half... way shorter than last year when a train "cut" the parade in half with the little ones in town collecting candy and the older children wondering when the train was going to move. By the way, do any of you know when this tradition began? Please let us know.

The Washington School Many Hands Project (residents and business owners in the Point who grant funds to each for teacher supplies and for special programs) had fun "Partying on the Bay" on October 21<sup>st</sup> at the Doug and Louise Williams' home. The Many Hands Project Board would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of the event. Donations were less than usual this year because of the economy, but it not too late for you to contribute and receive your "apple." For more information, please call me at 234-4219.

## **Up-Coming Events:**

November 26<sup>th</sup> is Thanksgiving Day and Point Richmond Business Association (PRBA) is organizing the Point Richmond Turkey Shoot. Bring your goats, dogs, birds, vintage vehicles friends and family for this "awe inspiring annual event." We meet in front of the Plunge at 10 am. Then we're off to The Spot for the poetry reading and the "Shoot." This decades' old tradition is a great little "activity" for Thanksgiving morning while the Turkey roasts. Please call 234-4219 for more information.

November 28th, Saturday, 5:30 pm. The

PRBA sponsors the Annual Point Richmond **Tree Lighting with Santa**. The evening begins with caroling, lead by the Point Richmond Methodist choir and includes refreshments and of course, an appearance by Santa. Many of the stores and restaurants will be open that evening so come and make a "night of it." The celebration will be held in the Indian Statue Rose Garden. Call 234-4219 for more information.

On various dates through out Novembers and December the Point Richmond Methodist Church (235-2988,) the Christian Science Church and Reading Room (233-1209) and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church (232-1387) will be having special events and celebrations. Please call them for dates and details.

In January and February of 2010 look for the doors to open on the historic Richmond Natatorium, i.e., "The Plunge" and the Grade Opening Celebration. It was just on August 4, 2008 that the Save the Plunge Trust invited us to the "Wall Breaking" event and now we are looking forward to the grand opening. The Save the Plunge Trust is still working hard to raise funds to match the \$500,000 grant from the Valley Foundation. If you would like more details or contribute to the restoration of the Plunge, please call Rosemary Corbin at 235-5779.

Remember, for an update on what's new, call the **Point Richmond/West Side Branch Library** at 620-6567 and the **Point Richmond Community** Center at 233-6881.

Happy Holidays to you all.



## An Interview with Fascinating Anna Schwarz

Interview by Tania Mantua

## Leaving Czechoslovakia

Anna Schwarz does not live a life of regret, at age 97 her burning desire is to feel as if she was 95 again. She has lived in Point Richmond for over 50 she was born in Hainspach, Czechoslovakia on April 1, 1912. She has been an active swimmer all her life and this has led to many opportunities and many friendships. She was born to Anna Henning who was German and Wilhelm Kosak who was Czech, she had a brother. Wilhelm, four years her senior, and a sister, Frida, 4 years her junior. They lived in the northern part of Czechoslovakia known as Sudetenland and were members of the Catholic Church. Anna grew up in a turbulent time and ultimately she fled Czechoslovakia. In 1921, almost a quarter of the population was German in Czechoslovakia and the majority lived in Sudentenland. Anna attended the University of Prague which led to her teaching career. She taught languages including Czech and German, history and was in charge of the music She started out teaching elementary school and later high school. Anna has a love of music and plays several instruments including the guitar, accordion, organ and she sings.

In 1932, Anna attended a masquerade party dressed as a Geisha. She spotted Walter Schwarz at the party and asked her dance partner to introduce her to him. Walter was a Jewish businessman who had just returned from Central and South America. He was very popular; his father owned a winery and Walter worked for him for a time as a salesman. Walter also promoted movies, talkies, and traveled to Honduras and Guatemala to sell the movies to movie houses. He was one of the few people in town to own a car. Anna said he was very handsome despite the fact that he was so bald. After being introduced to

Walter she asked him to dance but he told her he was taken for the next dance but he would save the following dance for her. She spent the rest of the evening dancing with him and he gave her and a friend a ride home. The day after meeting Walter, there was news that Anna's grandfather had died. She had to leave town suddenly and was not able to communicate with Walter for three days. When she returned to work, Walter visited her and they started dating. Things were changing in Sudetenland, in the 1930's controversies between the Czechs and the German minority were intensifying. There was a high unemployment rate and people were interested in the extremist and populist movement and the Sudetendeutsche Party (SdP) became popular. This party was starting to align itself with Hitler and the Nazi party. One day, Anna was summoned to the principal's office and she was fired because she was engaged to a Jew. Her termination papers were stamped with a German swastika. As Anna hurried out of the school, one of the other teachers spat in her face.

On April 24, 1938 the SdP issued the Carlsbad Decrees, demanding autonomy for the Sudetenland and the freedom to profess Nazi ideology. If these demands were granted, the Sudetenland would then be able to align itself with Nazi Germany. Walter had decided to immigrate to the United States. He was worried about his future as a Jew in Czechoslovakia. He worked with the U.S. consulate at first but was frustrated that things were taking too long. He decided to work with the Holland consulate and first emigrate to Amsterdam and later to the United States. The Sudetenland was relegated to Germany between October 1 and October 10, 1938. The Czech part Czechoslovakia was invaded by Germany in March 1939. Walter was able to get out of the country 24 hours before Hitler came but Anna was unable to join him.

Anna remembers being depressed. She had

lost her job and she thought Walter had left her forever. She talked with her mother who suggested she go on a pilgrimage. They walked for two hours to a church on a hill. Once there, as was custom, Anna prayed while climbing on her knees over the 30 or 40 steps leading to the door.

There was news that Hitler was coming to Bohemia. There was to be a large reception and more Nazis were arriving in town to prepare for his visit. Anna and her mother were out walking and a Mercedes with swastika flags stopped them and offered them a ride home. They accepted and Anna's mother invited the officer in for coffee. He was helping organize the reception and a newspaper in Hitler's name. A week later, he returned to their home and extended an invitation to Anna to come to Hitler's reception. Anna's Mom elbowed her and encouraged her silently to attend. She accepted and later drove to the next town with the officer. They arrived at the town square which had been set up with a podium and a carpet of red carnations. Hitler arrived with six handsome body guards. Anna said that physically Hitler wasn't much to look at but once he started speaking he commanded her attention. She found him to be a powerful orator. In later years, when she saw Charlie Chaplin movies she couldn't help being reminded of the time she saw Hitler speak. She saw some of the teachers she worked with at the reception and they were very surprised to see her in the company of the Gestapo. After the speech, they went on to dinner and dancing at a local hotel. Hitler did not join them but there were many powerful officers from the Gestapo and Nazi party. She danced with many officers at the hotel and even danced with the officer that was in charge of the Dachau concentration camp.

A stranger showed up at the door of Anna's home with a letter from Walter. The letter introduced Hank Donker, a professional guide, who was hired by Walter to smuggle her to Holland. Her instructions were to pack only a toothbrush and her visa. Anna put on her fur coat, high heels and her four carat diamond engagement ring and said a tearful goodbye to her mother. She

told her mother she was off to visit her brother. but, her mother knew exactly where she was going. They left on November 10, 1938 on a train bound for Holland. Anna and Hank traveled from Bohemia to Dresden on to Leitzig on their way to Amsterdam. She noticed the sky was very red and she asked Hank if he knew why. It was the night of Kristallnacht, or the night of the broken glass, which was a coordinated attack on Jews, their property and synagogues. More than 200 synagogues were destroyed and thousands of homes and businesses were ransacked. 91 Jews were murdered and 25,000 to 30,000 were arrested and deported to concentration camps. Kristallnacht was triggered by the assassination of a German diplomat by a German born Polish Jew.

The train ride was tense. Hank and Anna posed as an engaged couple returning to Amsterdam to visit his mother. When the train arrived at the border of Holland, men from the Gestapo boarded the train to check everyone's papers. Hank and Anna were ordered to go to the station office for questioning. They were interrogated for 3 hours and Anna's engagement ring was confiscated. They placed her ring in an envelope with her name on it but she was never to see her ring again. While they were interrogating Anna, Hank noticed some other officers making calls and he felt they were signaling other officers to come and arrest Anna. They were told there would be a 2 hour wait for the next train and Hank felt they could not risk waiting. It was pouring rain and Hank told Anna she would have to hike to the Holland border where he would meet her with a taxi. She had to climb a hill to get to the border and her high heels were no help. She arrived at the border in muddy stocking feet and a wet fur coat, Anna said she looked like a drowned rat. Once she mounted the hill, as promised Hank was there with a taxi which took them on to Amsterdam.

> More of Tania Mantua's interview with Anna Schwartz in the next issue of TPIT

## Archive Photo Gallery

## Spiersch Bros. Plumbing

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



Left: #0368-DC from our Don Church Collection

Below: #0063
-DC from our
Don Church
Collection.



Right: #0263-CC from the Contra Costa Museum of History



Below: #0158-DC from our Don Church Collection



# Rocky Horror Show at the Masquers

A review by Theresa de Valencé, TdeV@bstw.com

I was a virgin until that night. Assistant Director **Michelle Pond** told me that's the label for someone who's never seen *Rocky Horror*. As always, virgins are rare. Written by **Richard O'Brien**, *Rocky Horror*, has for 30+ years drawn a huge cult following; Director **G. A. Klein** has seen the production upwards of 500 times.

G. A. Klein directs a big show: *Rocky Horror* has lots of glitter, a copious cast and sweeping, grand music. I was surprised by how many popular snippets are tunes from this show. Music Director **Pat King** and five other musicians (**Wesley Asakawa, Ben Barron, Barbara Kohler, Jo Lusk** and **Julio Reyes**) sound like an entire orchestra.

From my seat in the audience, I don't know how to separate what comes from the minds of the directors from those of the production crew, cast or author. Or, in this case, the aggregation of years of cult performances. It doesn't matter, except at times like now, when I'm trying to understand theatre and correctly attribute credit. I've spent the days since seeing the show recalling extensive vignettes wondering how so many fine details got into one show.

The set, designed by **John Hull**, unfolds like Russian Matryoshka dolls, each layer revealing a new world. **Anjee Norgaard** choreographs a beauti-



ful dying scene amongst others. Costumer **Dianne Beaulieu-Arms** has turned black into a colour. Everyone involved with costuming clearly had fun. Lighting Designer **Greg Wilson** and Electrical Magician **Bob Westman** have both been very clever.

On a dark and stormy night, a young couple drive to visit a friend. This scene is very inventive and brilliantly simple. Predictably, the car breaks down, but the way it fails adds icing to the cake—foretelling that one is in for a special treat.

One unexpected and most enjoyable aspect of regular theatregoing is that one sees actors taking on new parts, giving the performance much greater depth. Like most amateur audience members (be they book readers or theatregoers), I see the actor and character as synonymous. You *are* your character. We voyeurs have no idea about the real person behind the character, but we get new and tantalizing intimations with each part you actors play. This was especially true in this performance by Todd Carver, Ted Bigornia and Larry Schrupp.

Dr. Frank N. Furter is played by **Todd Carver** (photo, centre. Photos by Jerry Telfer). The last time I saw Todd, he was a good-looking male jock exuding testosterone—not attractive to me. In my memory he smells of beer and old sweat. As Dr. Frank, he's a long way from a heterosexual girl's daydream, but I found him ... well, interesting. Much more provocative. So now I figure there's more depth to the man.

Dr. Frank is most frightening when he first appears to timid Janet (and us). It feels horrid caught in his clutches. As the show unfolds, Dr. Frank's tantrums make him more human, more forgivable. In Act II, he brings us very close to tears. Masterful.

Todd's was one of the voices I really liked, brassy and big. And that pout! In others I've always thought pouts an indelible trait, but his is new. I also wonder what the mailman would've said if Todd had answered the door while acclimatising himself to those shoes!

Janet Weiss (**Sophia Rose Morris**, *photo*, *right*) begins as an empty-headed girl focused on the most important thing in life: a ring.

She's a strait laced college girl with firm ideas. When danger arrives, she looks stripped—more

than other scantily clad actors. With added vulnerability comes other changes. She's a beautiful girl dressed—undressed, she's perfect—a firm pudding, nicely rounded. It's easy to understand why other characters found her irresistible. It's not until her exchange with the boy-god that she begins to look mussed. By then her metamorphosis warns us that a new monster may have been unleashed.

In the beginning, Janet seems diminutive—perhaps because others wear high heels—and timid. Yet her voice is attractive and strong, both soft and loud. She delivers a powerful performance.

Brad Majors (**Raymond C. Duval**, *photo*, *left*) is the other half of the conservative couple. He's got plenty of down-home and protect-the-little-woman attitude which soon gets short shrift in Dr. Frank's castle. As Brad gets his button-down shirt removed, so do his prejudices get unbuttoned.

We really come undone when Brad takes on Elvis Presley. One can watch a handsome, smiling actor and be completely unmoved—but when that actor displays great glee with his own actions, the sheer ebullience shines through. He's wild!

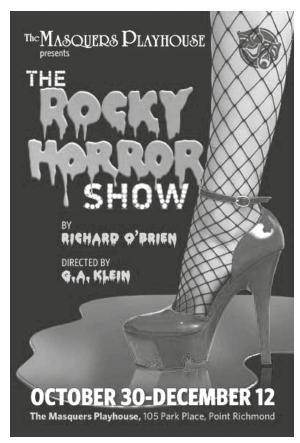
Usherette/Magenta (**Patty Penrod**) is a powerful singer. Though the tunes weren't pretty—neither rôle was pretty—she belted out song. She's a tatty usherette to a low budget sci-fi flick—we *know* we're in some kind of nightmare.

This time, just like the last time I saw Patty, she seems to have been cast in whole cloth from the Director's imagination for the sole purpose of being a perfect character for the play. She can't possibly be real with that perfect body stuffed into shiny nylons, round face, and perfect cheeks.

Yet Magenta has a nearly constant sneer. When her character changes, she becomes colder, less voluptuous. By the end, we are certain she tortures people. If you had to wear your hair in those wire hair curlers, you'd be cranky too.

Riff Raff (**Ted V. Bigornia**) is surely a parody of bad horror sci-fi with his hunchback and creaking door laugh.

Ted has a strong voice. This is a new rôle for him—less jaded and smart-mouthed. Most of the success of Riff Raff's characterization is not vocal, coming from his mannerisms—he positively slithers



at spots—and his expressions—seeming happy when someone is in trouble, unhappy otherwise.

Riff Raff's devotion is not absolute, intimating future suspense. His delight at rôle reversal validates the notion that victims become the oppressor. He becomes a dangerous man with a death ray gun—it's so awful, it's actually funny.

Narrator **Robert Love** is a cozy grandfatherly type who metamorphoses into Alfred Hitchcock—a man who reanimates childhood fright because he looks so very nearly normal, but underneath has strange ideas of entertaining pleasures. The narrator opens the gilt-edged book, we feel him unleash secret magic worlds—and our life is no longer safe.

Robert's skill imbues everything with great import—even eating popcorn—we feel like puppets under his care. Sometimes he plays orchestrator,

Continued on page 21

(Continued from page 17)

sometimes participant. He draws audience attention, holds it, then tweaks it. Robert wins my Actor Most Enjoying Himself award. He's having great fun—and makes us have fun with him.

Columbia (**Vicki Zabarte**) is a lovely, devoted acolyte who fawns attractively over the doctor, evilly helping him perpetrate his schemes. She is in cahoots with Magenta.

Later Columbia reveals how unhappy she is giving the audience a rare reality check—we see that we can all watch indignities perpetrated without moving a finger to stop them.

Ultimately Dr. Frank reveals what he thinks of her sacrifice.

Rocky (Nic Candito) is Dr. Frank N. Furter's current gold lamé creation, a fair flawless fledgeling. Like a great many other beauty icons, we don't see much substance to him. Perhaps he is a little vacant-headed because he's only hours old. Or maybe he has learned a few things—he certainly has the self absorption typical of bodybuilders when he parades his splendid body.

Rocky's sole personality trait is to develop a tendency, unexpected by all, unwelcome to the doctor, and vividly graphic.

Portrayal of Dr. Everett Scott shows a new side of **Larry Schrupp**. The doctor's a staid professor in a tidy tweed coat who interjects a little normalcy into an event which has unravelled into something very odd indeed. There is a spot where his German is near incomprehensible (see my rant about foreign accents (http://tinyurl.com/pf8vzr) but this may be due to script and music volume.

Dr. Scott's arrival seems to offer hope to the two captured souls though it starts out pretty darn embarrassing and mutates into something else again. Larry's range is ever-increasing with two dramatic changes in demeanor in this performance—one of which quite took our breath away! He has to be seen to be believed!

Eddie (**Paul J. White**, on opening night **Robert Rich**) is a creation and former love object of the mad doctor. Robert's is a beautiful, deep

voice. Sorry also to have missed Paul whom I remember fondly from his last performance here.

The phantoms are very individualized. Susan Amacker has great animation in a lively wig. Sean Beecroft is what happens to the boy next door when he drinks some of the fizzy juice. Irene Franzen is a majestic Valkyrie in a slightly less regal rôle. Sarah Mosby is a schoolteacher happily running amok. Daniel Morgan is a man to watch too. I missed the early interchange between two main characters, because I was so busy watching Daniel's face—mobile and exotic. The phantoms are a large group constantly moving and changing—laurels due to choreographer. The stage has expanded to include the proscenium and the aisles—and the phantoms use all of the space though they disappear without fanfare, then reappear with added effect. So smooth, it looks positively easy. And of course, those dancing, partly nude, provocative bodies are mesmerising.

I've never liked science fiction or horror, and *Rocky Horror Show* is in the worst traditions of either genre. It's curious that by intermission I wanted to sing and stomp and dance, but midway through Act II, I wanted to cry. The ending was weak, relying on convenient, sappy science to tie up the story—a common sci-fi failing. Plenty of parts were hokey. It's also obvious that many years of many people watching this show many times has rubbed off something to the audience—there's an expectation in the air: the play's so atrocious, it's camp.

If you've ever felt the urge to join a theatre production just so you could sing along, this show will make you feel that way, even if you can't or won't sing. Masquers does have a midnight performance of Rocky Horror on Nov. 21 which invites audience participation, but there are many performances where you can just watch.

An exotic, erotic event—even for virgins—especially for aficionados.

This review is abridged from that published at http://www.ReviewsByTdeV.com. Join the mailing list by sending me an email.

## **Point Richmond Pioneers**

## 1975 Interviews from Gary Darling

In 1974 and 1975 fifteen year old Gary Darling conducted seven biographical interviews with Point Richmond pioneers. He did these interviews to fulfill the requirement of a service project to the community for the highest rank of Eagle Scout in Boy Scout Troop 111 of Point Richmond. They were published in the old Point Counterpoint newspaper 39 years ago. We think they are good enough to publish again and show a wonderful reflection of time's influences. So we will reprint an interview with each issue of TPIT. As you read them, don't forget how long ago they were written.

# "Some of the Originals" as remembered by Karl Feudner

Karl Feudner's father arrived here in Point Richmond in 1902. Immediately he started a bar with a partner, Henry Hanger. In doing this he was preparing the way for the rest of his family which arrived in 1905 from Dixon, California. The Feudner family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Feudner, Karl, and Karl's sister Gertrude. Their first house was located in Smoky Row (now Oregon Street near the Plunge). Karl's father's bar was well known as the Eagle's Nest Bar. Directly beside (but in the same building) was the Eagle's Café run by Oliver Wylie.

Karl went to Standard Avenue School and finished his elementary schooling in Washington School. Instead of attending high school, he got a job at Standard Oil Refinery and took a leave of absence in 1917. He then started his molding trade at the Santa Fe Foundry, and finished it through his jobs of making tubs. After this, he returned to Standard Oil for a number of years. In 1941 he got a job with the Atlas Foundry, and from there he retired in 1965. Karl is a present living at 319 Nevada Avenue.

The following are some of the original businesses that were in their "prime" in about 1910: Leitner's Cigar Store (now the Spot Liquor Store), Schelien's Grocery (first grocery store in Point Richmond) located on the corner of Castro

Street and Standard Avenue, Gaston's Grocery (now the Masquer's Playhouse), Eagle's Café run by Oliver Wylie (located on the now empty lot between the Pool Hall, 49 Washington Avenue, and Mariners Tavern, 101 Park Place), Eagle's Nest Bar, run by Karl's father, Moyles Shoe Store (where the Hotel Mac is now, which was formerly known as the Colonial Hotel), a Chinese laundry (located beside the shoe store on Cottage Avenue), King Brothers Cigar Store (where the Post Office is at present), Obrune's Bar (now the Gingham Goose, 100 Washington Avenue), Nelson's Bakery (now the Mariners Tayern. ) which was run by the grandfather of Richard Nelson, the present Mayor of Richmond.

One of Karl's fondest memories was the world famous Wolgast and Nelsone fight which took place here in Point Richmond in about 1910. A special stadium was built for the fight. Many people came from all over the world to witness this event. They came by the train loads, and every hotel in Point Richmond was full. The actual fight was 42 rounds long (the biggest in the world). Karl got to see the fight, and has since treasured it in his memories.

Another very interesting thing in the Point's history, was that prior to Boy Scout Troop 111 (formerly known as Troup 1) there existed an organization known as Calfee's Brigade, which was run by Reverend Calfee (grandfather of David Calfee, a well known judge). This club was for boys, and was supported by the residents of Point Richmond.

## William L. Thompson, M.D.

## Old Historic Road Grades in the Point Richmond Hills

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, then put it all together in a single publication. Thank you Dr. Thompson!

Because of the housing developments in the subject area, more than ever be aware that Dr. Thompson wrote this almost 20 years ago.

#### Conclusion

On the bay side of the hills three road grades were laid out starting at the end of Crest Avenue. The upper one was the route to the summit described above. The lower road bed zigzagged down a ridge to the base of the hill near the old Bernardi residence. This route gave rise to a lower road which extended around the base of the hills just above the old brickyard which was located in the flat where the motorcycle club building now stands. From here it extended along the base of the hills and over the low ridge that now separates the Brickyard Cove marina from the Miller-Knox Park.

The third of these grades took a middle course around the hill at about the same level as the Santa Fe reservoir. It continued on to a low spot in the ridge visible from the Miller-Knox Park. This depression in the ridge was deepened by the old road workers for about 15 feet so that the expected road could pass through the ridge and join a long extension of the East Scenic grade on the north east side of the hill. We we were kids this depression

was known to us as "the cut". This grade did not continue any further on the bay side of the ridge.

The continuation of the old East Scenic grade, starting from its junction with Buena Vista Street, passed on along the north east side of the Potrero Ridge to join with the old grad from the bad side at the cut described previously. Just beyond its junction with Buena Vista it rose slightly to pass around Murray's point above where the Washington School now stands. The house below on the point was built very early by the Murray family and later was the home of the Hanny family. From this point another old eroded grade passed slightly upward and back across the north face of Nicholl Nob to pass above and behind the place where the old Thompson and Morrison homes were later built. This old road continued on to its termination at the end of Crest Avenue. Tear its point of termination later both the Burns family and Fred Fredericks built small homes now long gone. Beyond Murrays Point this old grade of East Scenic was completely destroyed by a quarry which was excavated to obtain dirt fill for an extension of the Standard Oil Plant. This route was destroyed almost as far as the cut I previously described to where it joined the old grade from the bay side of the ridge.

The two old road beds which joined at the cut continued on as a single brush covered path around the marsh side of the range of hills tending slightly downward. After a short distance this trail was intersected by another which joined it at a right angle from below. This began at a primitive brush covered road which passed along just above the base of the hill and was somewhat like the Glen Avenue grade mentioned before. This area now is the section covered by the sewage disposal plant and an area of large warehouses.

These two old roads, one from the East Scenic trail and the other passing along just above the base of the hills finally merged at a point where a long gentle ridge extends down from the crest of the Potrero ridge. At this area there had been another grade which extended on up to the top of the ridge. Originally it had been barely visible but at the start of World War II this road was repaired by the military and lightly paved to give access to an anti aircraft battery which had been installed on the ridge to give protection to the shipyards. Traces of the gun settings and old dugouts still remain.

Beyond the point where the old road ascended the ridge the old extension of Scenic Avenue continued on originally above the old Schmide home to a low point in the crest of the ridge. Here it passed over to the bay side and continued along on this side to the end of Potrero (Bulldog) Point. On the bay below this depression was a very fine beach which we knew as Long Beach. This was shallow and was an excellent beach for children. The road here from East Richmond Avenue to this point was passable for cars and I recall automobiles using it at the time I was in high school. Beyond the point where the grade crossed the ridge the route was badly eroded and passable only by foot.

Potrero point at the very end of the ridge originally had been a relatively level area about 50 or 60 yards across and about 50 feet above the water. It had one of the larger shell mounds in the Richmond area and also had a large buckeye tree growing on the mound. In early life I had done a

little excavating on this mound.

The entire end of Point Potrero from the ridge that the road climbed to the anti aircraft battery had been entirely destroyed by quarry action to furnish fill to cover the marshes when the ship yards, especially shipyard #4, where constructed during the war. Millions of tons of land fill was excavated at Potrero Point with it the tree and Indian mound with several burials were completely destroyed. The entire terminal half mile of the ridge had been erased and some minor quarrying still goes on there for other industrial reasons.

This gives an idea of the extent of these old graded roadbeds. They were failures because they did not result in further extension of human habitation in the area, some of the region is now incorporated into the Miller-Knox Park complex. I have written this so that people in the future will understand what was there in the past. The old roads were very narrow and passing on them as they were originally made would have been impossible. However, they marked routes where future useful roads could have been laid down with better grading. I have often wondered at the equipment that was used to do this grading. It must have been very hard work with the tools available then. As I noted before I believe that similar old roads beds were graded at the same time in the regions north of the Santa Fe tracks and these were probably re-graded into the useful passages in this present residential area.



## Caesar Frosini's Legacy

Patricia Pearson

The Frosini family consisted of Mother: Rose Orsini, father Quintillio Frosini (Pisa), children: Sergio Caesar Frosini, b. 2/3/15, Alberto (Al) Frosini b. 9/11/17, Frieda Frosini Alonzo, b.7/27/19. The Frosini house, historically 433 Contra Costa Street, was renumbered by the City as 411 Contra Costa Street. A History Association Plaque is affixed to the outside of the residence.

Ceaser Frosini's daughter, Diane Frosini, gave me permission to share with you the Point Richmond adventures of her father which he entitled <u>Caesar Frosini's Legacy</u>. They consist of several short stories. I have attempted to present the stories in chronological order as a series.

## This excerpt is Part Three:

At the early age of ten, we Goat Hollow characters would comb the beaches, always looking for salvage, walking a mile either south or north. On the return home, we would look to steal fruit from some unsuspecting owner that is if it was summer. Some of our hikes were as far south to the old brickyard, about 3 miles away. Next to the brickyard was an abandoned quarry and it was a beautiful swimming hole, (naked). Then north we would walk to the end of Western Drive, and walk past the San Rafael and Richmond Ferry to Winehaven and ride horses bareback. But one time Leo Giovannetti was thrown off and broke his wrist. Well, that was the end of that.

I must tell you of Jerry the Greek. He was an oiler on Standard Oil tow boats, particularly Tow Boat #1. He somehow got permission from the Captain to escort little me on the boat on various trips it made. Primarily this tug escorted loaded and empty ships to and fro through the Golden Gate. On commercial ships the tugs were referred to as "pilots". I can't explain how eager I was to make these trips, as food and sweets were abundant. Jerry had a room downstairs in our

house. (We had 5 rooms that were rented to single men and also a 2-room apartment next to the basement wine cellar. ) Those boat excursions only lasted one summer, as there had been an accident involving another boy. Standard Oil, thereafter, stopped all such tug boat visits period.

Herein is my western day episode: It is my memory that I was 12 or 13 years old. In those summer days or at least three or four times during summer, cattle would come from Marin County via the San Rafael Ferry. Of course no autos were allowed when a herd was being transported by the ferries. Generally, 60 – 80 steers came across to Point Richmond and from the ferry onto Western Drive. It was quite a site to see the steers bellowing, etc. Of course, the mothers would be hollering for their children to come home.

The cowboys, generally 2 or 3, would hire two or three boys to keep the slow ones moving. We were given willows 2 or 3 feet long. Sometimes the steers were ornery and trampled someone's vegetable garden or flower bed. If that happened the owners were compensated. The drive for us boys wasn't more than 2 to 2 ½ miles. It followed Western Drive from the ferry and then through the tunnel and ended at Cutting Blvd.

On one drive, I had an ornery steer that caused me problems, but I stayed with him and kept using the switch. We were approaching Cozy Cove where the cliff is 50 to 60 feet high above the bay. Unexpectedly, this steer turned on me. Down I went to the ground. Fortunately he did not have horns, but I kept rolling toward the cliff, when bystanders rushed down and threw a couple of rocks at the steer and managed to ward him off me. By then, one of the cowboys came up in a hurry and lassoed the steer and brought him to the front. I was sore for a couple of days, but, luckily, no broken bones. Only once did the boys follow the herd all the way to the Stege Slaughter House, and we got 50 cents. Otherwise we were paid twentyfive cents and away we would go to the Turkovich Ice Cream Parlor. An ice-cream cone was three cents and a soda was five cents.

Another episode, again when I was about 13 years of age. I suddenly got the bright idea of

building a cave. (near the area of the cattle incident) Picture the base hill probably 50 feet long, a sheer bluff. We had to build a trail to the site and I commenced to dig a large hole and, of course, I had help at times. When the project was finished, I had two rooms about 6 feet by 6 feet.. The project took 1 ½ years to finish.

The first step was to build a roof and I dared not to take a piece of lumber from my father. Our gang of four would steal from others at night. That winter we were lucky to find some salvage on our beach. The roof was completed with 4 x 4 supports of plywood, and the covered with roofing paper and dirt. That winter was pretty stormy. But

my cave roof stood up. The cave was 6 feet deep and we lined the walls also. Old Monk gave me enough heavy hip mat to cover our dirt floors. In one corner I built a small pit of bricks and a stove pad for our stove. We had Mr. Lewis build a door and frame with hinges, hasp and a lock for the entry. We built a table, of course and the four of us somehow found a couple of pots, salt, pepper shakers, cutlery, glasses, etc. I had several antique furnishings and two old fashioned oil lamps.

Note: "Goat Hollow" is the area bordered by Contra Costa Street and Tremont, to Pacific, to the Bay. There is a Pocket Park on the beach now..





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We lost our beloved friend and neighbor, Liz McDonald, on October 12. She was 87 years old, and had lived life fully on her terms, in her own house, right up to the last minute. She was our close friend and neighbor for 41 years, and a substitute grandmother to our children. Their tribute to her follows.

Doug and Rosemary Corbin

## Liz.....

Few people combine the somewhat incongruous traits of a whip-smart mind and a kind heart. Elizabeth McDonald did. She was generous, brilliant, honest, practical, patient, no-nonsense and fascinating. We and the rest of Point Richmond miss her.

We loved Liz as our grandma - she lived next door to us and our natural grandparents had passed away long before we arrived. She and her husband, Bill, welcomed us in their house as if it were our second home. We often stayed with them when our parents were out of town. On such occasions, Liz must have endured sleepless nights as she shared a bed with Diana ("The



Eggbeater"), and sent us off to school with an extra sweater and more elaborate and tastier lunches than normal. She also let us "help" her in her garden and never chided us despite the damage that our hide-and-seek or ball games must have caused her lawn and flowers. For most of our youth, we shared a cat, who shrewdly preferred Liz's canned tuna over the dry kibble we served him in the Corbin house.

Most special occasions of our memory include Liz - birthdays, graduations, weddings, Christmas Eves, Mothers' Day and, most of all, Thanksgiving. Liz always fixed Thanksgiving dinner for our family and her brother, sister-in-law, and step-mother. Her stuffing was moist and savory, and those little pearl onions that never appealed otherwise were a special treat at her house. She must have used butter liberally.

The best gifts for Liz were always books. She read voraciously, with a deep curiosity about the world and its past. We would all try to get our hands on the latest historical non-fiction or biography to give her for birthdays and Christmas. Of course, she could have written many of those books herself. She complimented one gift with a chuckle: "I found two factual errors." No doubt she was right!

Liz's true passion was history, particularly about Russia and the Second World War. In the days before the Internet, we had our own ready authority for any historical question: Liz, *The Expert*. Consulting her was more reliable and more interesting than turning to the encyclopedia. She had a flypaper memory for all historical details. Not a gathering went by without a new story of the lovely Russian Amber Room, tales of tsars, tsarinas, kings and queens alike, or accounts of detestable German generals. Remarkably, Liz seemed to have committed to memory most of the European royal genealogy. She taught herself Russian and fulfilled a life-long dream when she traveled to Russia.

Liz loved spending time with her family, friends and neighbors on Crest Avenue, recalling old stories and trading new ones. All who spent time with her will certainly remember her boisterous greetings - "HIII!!!!!" - and her cannon-shot laugh. There was only one Liz McDonald. She will be deeply missed.

Appropriately, Liz was active in the Point Richmond History Association. It blended her twin passions for history and her community. Her family has asked that those interested in making a gift in her memory consider a donation to PRHA. Its address is 139 ½ Washington Ave., Point. Richmond, CA 94801.

With love, Diana and Jeff Corbin October 14, 2009

## Cards, Letters & E-Mail

Dear Mid,

I read your plea for the survival of your local post office. In San Jose we have a small branch P.O. in a card-gift shop. The employees are so friendly but not paid by the U.S. Postal Service. This small office can do most of what a regular office does. Change is certainly the name of the game and too common these days on all fronts!

You know, I was Penny McGee, Al & Hortense McGee's daughter. Mom was born at 64 Western Drive in 1915 to Eliz. & Sydney Gnaga. I was in your family store when a child, pre -10 yr. old since my family lived in the Point., In '45 - '50 we were at 44 Scenic & Grandma Gnaga lived at 22 Tunnel Ave. "The Point in Time" is fabulous.

Best Wishes, Penny McGee Canario San Jose

Dear Pam and Friends.

Thinking of you as Oregon begins her coasting into Fall, our favorite time of year.

Don't forget our guest room awaits anyone wanting to experience "Northwest of Normal".

Fondest wishes to all, Ellen and Dennis Happy Valley, OR Mr. Shows,

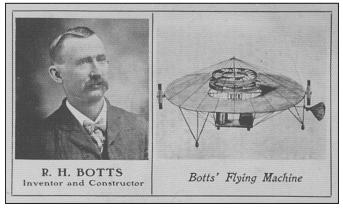
Your recent reprinting of Dr. Thompson's essay on Robert H. Botts prompts this communication. I am very familiar with the activities of Botts. He is my great grandmother's brother. Botts was a topic of conversation around the dinner table when I was a child (I am 72). I am preparing an article on Botts containing information about him unknown to your readers or Dr. Thompson. I would like to submit the article to you for your consideration for a future issue.

I have had this information and known of your publication for many years but I have hesitated to provide not wanting to lessen the aura of mystery surrounding Botts. I can assure you some mystery will still remain and our icon will not suffer.

Best regards, James W. Hayes Haymarket, VA 20169

I am very happy that you have decided to share this information, I have it and it is interesting and presented beautifully. I plan to share it with everyone in the next issue. Below please find a little teaser.

> Thank you very much, Gary



As a child in the lat 1940's I was fascinated by a card in our Oklahoma home with a picture of a man and a "Botts' Flying Machine". Attention getting words on the back of the card said "Get off the Earth". My mother told me the individual depicted was one of our relatives. The card was actually a stock offering and promotional device, and was eventually lost. Fortunately a cousin provided this photograph of it.

James W. Hayes

## Birthdays November

LaVerne Rentfro Woolman Heinz Lankford Ann Greiner Paul Cort Jason McGill Lynn Rendler Betty Dornan Mary Ann Gaspard Shirley Butt Chris Bradshaw David T. McCarthy Clare Doherty
K. Patrick O'Higgins
Jason D. Crowson
Bob Larsen
Dennis Dornan
Kenny Paasch
Lance Rotting
Joe Savile
Shane Thomas
Liam Thompson

Gary Shows
Linda Feyder
Nicole Vargo
Spiro Cakos
Bethany Reynolds
Kathryn Pinkerton
James Cheshareck, Sr.
Aubyn Eakles
James Cheshareck, Jr.
Audrey Edwards
Ida Giacomelli

Bobbies Boziki
Linda Cheshareck
Katrina MacDiarmid
Albert Kollar
Viola Kennedy
David Dolberg
Mohamed Warith
Charlottte Birsinger

Jerry Feagley

Ilana Dolberg

Kayla Dolberg

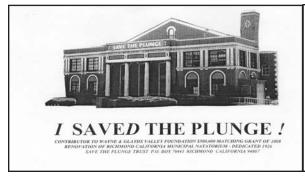
Bob Burdick

## December

Jean Allyn Lydia Jahromi Michael Cheshareck Hazel Paasch Marian Hawkins Eric Turner Cris Creed Jeff Corbin Seth Fenton Mike Turner Richard Barnes Edna Hathaway **Donald Smith** Lauren Nason Jean Eakle Christina Nagatani Fred Frve Marilvn Darling Christine Hayes Linda Mertle Thomas Mercer-Hursh

## January

Henry Allyn Doug Greiner Ann Bartram Les Hathaway Richard Palfini Donna Buhler Jeff Quist Alphonso Diaz Cindy Rosier Ed Paasch John Cutler Mitchell Heckmann Tom Brennan Jan Burdick Diana Kaffan Diana Mertle McHenry Jim Wilson Marilu Fox Sonia Darling **Brad Feagley** Lynne Erskine Robert McIntosh Elaine Harris Marian Sauer Linda Marshal Mary Highfill Kristina Hollbrook Sparta Chiozza Bryan Smith Lupe Morris Louis Cunan Frank Kenny



## Get Your Own "I Saved the Plunge" Magnet!

Send a tax deductable donation of \$10.00 or more to:

Save the Richmond Plunge Trust P.O. Box 70443 Richmond, CA 94807-0443

And we will send your 3" x 5" magnet to you.

## Deaths.....

**Elizabeth McDonald** died October 12, 2009 in her home in Point Richmond at the age of 87. "Liz" was a beloved part of the Point Richmond History Association and will be missed by all of us. Please see a loving tribute to her memory on page 24.

**Beverly J. McCaskey** died October 13, 2009. Age 71. Beverly worked for Tectonics in San Francisco and Emeryville. She was preceded in death by her husband Terry and son Evan. Beverly is survived by her son Sean. A gathering was held at the family home on Golden Gate in Point Richmond on Sunday, November 1.

**Ruth Wood Mullen**, our oldest birthday member died August 31, 2009. Age 102. Born in January 1907 in Franklin, PA. After her mother passed away when she was less than 3 years old, her father, John Weston, in 1911 moved to Point Richmond. She attended Washington Grammar School and Richmond Union High School. She married Robert J. Wood in 1926 but he died in 1933 Ruth and her 4 year old son, Robert Weston Wood then lived in the Point with her parents. Ruth married Jeremiah Mullen in 1960 who died 8 years later. Ruth moved to Rossmoor where she lived for 36 years. She was the oldest member of the historic First Methodist Church, joining in 1920. Her son Robert, preceded her in death in February 2009. Ruth is survived by her daughter-in-law Becki of Vacaville, two grandsons, 5 great-grandsons and 2 great-great- grandsons.



## EXCLUSIVE OVER 90 CLUB

## An impressive list that grows each month.

Mark Gebhart - 96

Gretchen Van Tassel Shaw - 92

Ed Squires - 93

Anna Schwarz - 97

Viola Lala Kennedy

Al Frosini - 92

Lee Christian - 93

Shoney Gustafson -93

Jean Moyle Spiersch - 95

Madelilne Bellando Albright -92

Charlotte Kermabon Birsinger-92

Jerome Vloebergh - 93

Lupe Padilla Lopez - 95

Goldie Mobley-96

Delphina Franco - 92

Reva Ward - 95

Steve Wyrick - 94

Bernard Dietz 95

Avis Blanchette - 95

Ruth Mallette - 97

Roger Wiese - 93 Ann Hanzlik - 96

Thelma Mae Harvey - 93

Eunice Ruth Hursh - 93

Dody Perry - 93

Betty Dornan - 91

Edna Hathaway - 91

Mary Tom Coe - 90

Jerry Cerkanowicz, Sr. - 90

#### 100 Year Club

Gordon Miller - 101

Rena Cairo Gonsalves - 100

Please send corrections and additions to "Over 90 Club" to midornan@sbcglobal.net

## CALENDAR/DIRECTORY

#### ARTS OF POINT RICHMOND

Contact: Linda Drake, 510672-0793

#### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE READING ROOM

510-223-0487

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

900 Dornan Drive, Miller/Knox Regional Park. Sunday 12:00 to 5:00. Special openings on Saturdays and Holidays. Admission is \$4, \$2 over 65 & under 12, max. family admission is \$9.00, 510-234-4884 for details.

#### MANY HANDS PROJECT TO SUPPORT WASHINGTON SCHOOL

Contact, Margaret Morkowski, 510-234-4219

#### **MASQUERS PLAYHOUSE**

Quality productions, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm, Sunday Matinees at 2:30 pm. Tickets are \$18. Dinner at the Hotel Mac and the play on Thursday, for only \$45. Call 510-232-4031 for reservations.

## PARENTS, RESOURCES AND MORE (PRAM)

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

## PARENT, TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Becky Jonas, President, 510-235-0157

#### POINT RICHMOND BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Meets 2nd Wednesday each month, Hotel Mac, 12-1:30, Contact: Margaret Morkowski, 510-234-4219.

#### POINT RICHMOND COMMUNITY CENTER

Info: 233-6881

#### POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Museum at 139½ Washington Avenue, open Wednesday 4:30 to 7:00 and Thursday's 11:30 to 2:00. The deadline for the next issue of TPIT is Friday Jan. 17, 2010. Info call Pres. Mildred Dornan at 510-234-5334.

#### POINT RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Meets last Wednesday each month, Point Richmond Community Center; 7:30 P.M Contact: Peter Minkwitz, President. 510-232-3663

#### POINT RICHMOND VILLAGE

"Helping You Help Yourself" Contact: Linda Newton, Chairman 510-595-5566

#### POINT RICHMOND/WEST SIDE BRANCH LIBRARY

Information call 510-620-6567

#### **RED OAK VICTORY**

Open Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday 10am - 3pm. \$5 donation for adults, \$4 seniors, \$2 children. Sunday Breakfast September 10th and October 12th, 9 am - 1 pm, \$6 adults children FREE

#### **SAVE THE PLUNGE TRUST**

Contact: Rosemary Corbin, 510-235-5779

## **WASHINGTON SCHOOL**

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

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

Richmond's longest standing women's club. Contact: Margaret Morkowski, President. 510-234-4219.

| I would like to join the P.R.H.A. |      |                   |         |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------|---------|--|--|--|
| N                                 | ame: |                   |         |  |  |  |
| Address:                          |      |                   |         |  |  |  |
| Phone:                            |      |                   |         |  |  |  |
| Type of membership (check one):   |      |                   |         |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | Single            | \$20.00 |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | Senior (65+)      | 15.00   |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | Family            | 25.00   |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | History Preserver | 50.00   |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | Corporate Sponsor | 75.00   |  |  |  |
|                                   |      | History Maker     | 100.00  |  |  |  |

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

## Pam Wilson 521 Western Drive Point Richmond, CA 94801

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

## Main Contributors to this Issue:

| Imain Contributors to this issue: |                   |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Gary Shows                        | Editor            |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mid Dornan                        | Various Articles  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thomas Mercer-Hursh, Ph.D.        | Design/Photo      |  |  |  |  |  |
|                                   | Enhancement       |  |  |  |  |  |
| Don Church/Allan Smith            | Historic Photos   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jerry Cerkanowicz                 | Proof/Information |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pam Wilson                        | Membership Info   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jean Reynolds                     | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dee Rosier                        | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| William Thompson, M.D. Article    |                   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Theresa de Valence                | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Margaret Morkowski                | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Donna Roselius                    | Line Drawings     |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pat Pearson                       | Articles          |  |  |  |  |  |
| Diana & Jeff Corbin               | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gary Darling                      | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tanya Mantua                      | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jane Vandenburgh                  | Article           |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anna Schwarz                      | Information       |  |  |  |  |  |
| James W. Hayes                    | Information       |  |  |  |  |  |

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

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

### Gary Shows 229 Golden Gate Avenue Point Richmond, CA 94801

or

email: gary@alkos.com

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Thanks ALKO office supply for hosting our site

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