

THIS POINT

in time

NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION

VOL X No 5

NOVEMBER, 1991

\$1.00



POINT RICHMOND HISTORY ASSOCIATION
139 1/2 WASHINGTON AVENUE

*You are cordially invited
to attend the
Grand Opening
of the
Point Richmond History
Association Building
at 139½ Washington Avenue
Sunday, November 10, 1991
2:00 to 4:00 P.M.*

Thank You to,
Point Richmond Print Shop
for donating the invitations to our Grand Opening
Thanks Claudia!

History Association Notes

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Mid Dornan

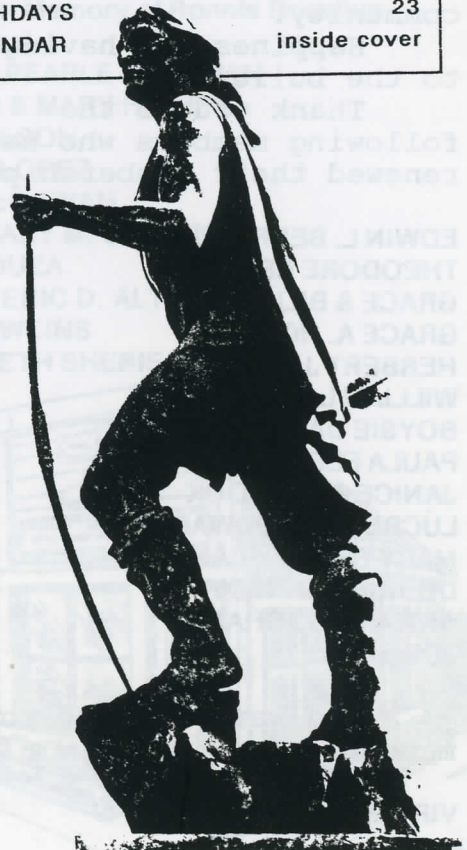
To those who had faith, who shared a vision, who gave encouragement, who voluntarily labored to preserve an historic building ...THANKS!

Many people this past month have helped prepare the building for our opening. Thanks to Margi Cellucci of Brickyard Properties for storing our belongings while a floor was installed; to Fay Hawkins for putting up signs, installing baseboards as well as a connecting box; to Martin McNair for installing the light fixtures, inside (donated by Muriel Clausen) and out, for research and advice and for being available; to Claudia Beall of Point Richmond Print Shop for printing and donating the invitations; to the Rev. Michael Brown for the threshold; to Marie and Bob Peckham for the planterbox in front; to Tom Butt and Interactive Resources for brochures and guidance; to Jerry Cerkanowicz for preparing the baseboards; to Gary Shows for the antique

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"From the President" cont. from page 1:
push button light switch; to a dedicated Board; and to Donna Roselius for making our signs, designing the invitation, providing notecards of local homes and areas she sketched and mostly for having the vision to organize the Point Richmond History Association in 1981.

Current plans are to staff the building on Thursdays 11:30 to 2:00. For it to be successful, we need people to volunteer on Thursdays. Let us know how you can help.

It is hoped you are proud of and excited about the gift of this building to the community.

Happiness is having a key to the building!

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

EDWIN L. BEDFORD
THEODORE BECK
GRACE & BILL BERK
GRACE A. HOWE
HERBERT J. HUNN
WILLIAM L. THOMPSON
BOYSIE DAY
PAULA FERGUSON
JANICE & JIM COOK
LUCRETIA W. EDWARDS
MARY CROSBY FAMILY
DORRIE KENNEDY
ANITA BROUGHAM
JOE SAVILL

And a warm welcome to new member:

VIRGINIA LITTLEFIELD

**The People Responsible
For Creating
The Point Richmond History
Association Museum**

January, 1990 - November, 1991

JERRY CERKANOWICZ
MILDRED DORNAN
BURL WILLIS & PHYLLIS SKAGLUND
(PT. RICHMOND TRAVEL)
ELIZABETH McDONALD
SHEILA FOSTIAK & FAMILY
RAMON & PATIENCE ZAMBRANO
INTERACTIVE RESOURCES, INC.
MARTIN McNAIR
DAVID VINCENT
WALTER A. CONNOLLY
SANTA FE RAILROAD COMPANY
CHEVRON, U.S.A.
THE MECHANICS BANK
CHRISTOPHER PLONA
STANLEY NYSTROM
HANS & LORE SHAPER
WILL & JEAN SPIERSCH
(Given in Memory of Frieda Moyle
Stephens)
HOWARD S. ARNOLD
AMERICAN ROCK & ASPHALT, INC
BARBARA A. OLSEN
CHARLES C. EELES
THE DORNAN FAMILY
HENRY A. FRANCIS
DONNA ROSELIUS
JOAN MEISEL
HORTENSE GNAGA McGEE
(Given in Memory of Elizabeth F. Gnaga,
Goldy Gnaga Shrewsbury,
& Frankie Greenlaw)
MURIEL & BERT CLAUSEN
MARIE LOUISE OSTROM
C. F. HOCHGESANG
DORIS SILVA
FRANK LOPEZ
TOM MCGOWAN
ROSEMARY M. CORBIN

VIRGINIA A. CHERNIAK
 MAXINE MAYER
 ADELE CHASE HOLLANDER
 BERTHA MAY McCLOSKEY
 MARIE WILSON DIETZ
 ANNE HANZLIK
 GRIFF AND CATHE BRAZIL
 TERESA NAVAS ALBRO
 MARY CROSBY & TOM PIAZZA
 GARY SHOWS
 CAROLYN & IRVING MOSKOWITZ
 THOMAS W. & MARGO TEDRICK
 TOM & LUCRETIA EDWARDS
 THOMAS E. WHITESIDES
 TOM BUTT & FAMILY
 JANICE A. HANTZSCHE
 RAIL & MARINE TRANSPORTATION
 CONSULTANTS, S.F. CROOK
 BETTY J. MARSHALL
 LUCIANA & BONNIE FORNER
 (Given in Memory of Bob Young)
 CHANNEL LUMBER
 EDWIN L. BEDFORD
 WOMEN'S WESTSIDE IMPROVEMENT
 CLUB
 GEORGE M. BATTEN
 (Given in memory of Virginia Batten)
 GRACE & JERRY CERKANOWICZ, SR.
 CHARLOTTE G. WOODS
 SONNY JACKSON ROOFING, INC.
 REMCO ROOF SUPPLY
 PT. RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD
 COUNCIL
 DORIS C. RASMUSSEN
 BOB & MARIE PECKHAM
 (SANTA FE MARKET)
 JANICE CHAMBERLAIN
 (CHAMBERLAIN INSURANCE)
 DAVID & CAROL MacDIARMID
 JOSEPH & SONJA DARLING
 BENA SALLE BOWLES
 (Given in Memory of Antone Salle)
 WILLIAM H. & ALYCE K. WILLIAMSON
 ROBERT HUBBART
 ANDREW JOHNS
 LYNN MAACK & SANDI GENSER-MACK

PATRICIA L. MILANO
 JERRY & THERESA DANIEL
 TOM POWERS
 INDIAN STATUE DAY RAFFLE
 WM. & ALYCE WILLIAMSON
 (Given in Memory of Ronnie Roselius
 Turner)
 GERALDINE MANN PETERSON,
 DESIGNER
 PRYNE BUILDERS
 MARILYN CAROSELLA & MIKE CHARTOCK
 ERIC SCOTT
 MAE MANDL
 MOHAMED WARITH
 (POINT RICHMOND MARKET)
 NELLIE PASQUINI (BISIO)
 CHRISTY & RALPH JACOBSON
 ALEX & ROBBI BATTEY
 MARGARET & MAURICE DOHERTY &
 FAMILY
 (Given in Memory of Ronnie Roselius
 Turner)
 CARL & PEARLE WESTMAN
 VICTOR & MARY HIGHFILL
 PAM WILSON
 FRANK LOPEZ
 TOM McGOWAN
 ROSEMARY M. CORBIN
 BOB SOUZA
 EMIC, ERIC D. ALTREE
 FAY HAWKINS
 ELISABETH SHERIF



editors notes.....

BY GARY SHOWS

That was some dirty local election wasn't it! I thought I was going to have to go out and get a bigger mailbox.... and how about those poor mail carriers! I'm glad it's over and hope the best candidates won and the right issues passed.

And now to the November issue, I think it's a pretty good one. It is highlighted by a reprint of an article from Al Huerta. This article was first printed in 1961 at Richmond Union High School and was submitted to me by Allan Smith. I learned some things that I didn't know, it is fun to read and I think you'll agree. If you read this publication Mr. Huerta.... thank you for writing it.

I am always looking for material on the Point. If you have anything (your own memory, an old story or newspaper article, a picture or even some current information on our community) that you think other readers might enjoy, please send them to me, let me know if you want them back.

Thanks to our regular staff for the good work. Everyone was very timely, except the churches. Sorry, there is no report from either church, hope to have them back in the

next issue.

Pam Wilson has finished transcribing the tape of the late Nell Coward Brooker's memories of the Point. I am looking forward to printing it in the Winter issue, I think it will be a hit.

I hope to see all of you at the little museum on the weekend. It really looks good doesn't it? And it is something we should all feel very proud of. I hope that everyone uses it and continues to support it and our organization.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

The deadline for the Winter issue is November 22.

~~~~~  
*Thanks to the  
October Issue Assembly Crew:*

*Liz McDonald  
Mary Highfill  
Mid Dornan  
Pam Wilson  
Jerry Cerkanowicz  
Gary Shows*  
~~~~~

THE COVER:
*Our New Little Museum as
drawn by founder and artist
DONNA ROSLIUS.*

SENIOR NEWS ^{plus!}

By Muriel C. Clausen

Many of us know that Point Richmond is officially a Historic District but have wondered just what this means.

Last month I and other members of our board met with Tom Butt and Lucritia Edwards for the purpose of learning more about how the Point became a National Historic District and what it all means. Tom & Lucretia have since donated to our organization their files on the subject, they contain all of the information on our documentation process. I will put them together in a binder and make them available to you at our new museum.

To coincide with the Grand Opening of our museum I would like to stray from my usual beat and try to help our members understand the meaning of this designation.

The National Register of Historic Places POINT RICHMOND

We all know that Point Richmond is on the National register of Historic Places; but do we know what that means and when and how it happened?

Native Americans occupied this area in the period before Europeans came here. Then in 1823 the "Lands of the San Pablo Rancho" which included this area were granted to Don

Francisco Castro who used the area for ranching. At that time the area of Point Richmond was generally known as the Potrero and was an island, separated from the mainland by mudflats and sloughs. In the late 19th century a deep canal was dredged to connect Ellis landing with San Pablo Bay for sloops to traverse; but by the end of the 19th century due to subsidence and dredging and filling the mudflats and sloughs were filled in and the area was no longer an island, but a peninsula. In 1897 Santa Fe Railway replaced the sloughs and canals, built a tunnel to Ferry Point and created the Western terminus of its railway system here. The tunnel was completed on July 3, 1900. In 1901 Standard Oil Company started its refinery business in the area; and a business and residential center developed in what is now Point Richmond. This was the business hub for this area until 1915 when City Hall moved.

In 1977 Cal Trans was making a study (E.I.S.) for State Highway 580 to pass through this area. A portion of Point Richmond and south

was studied as a possible historic district which would preclude its being cut in two by a freeway. The study was coordinated with the Heritage Research Coordinators (Mara Melandry and Lois Webb, documentors) and the district that we know as Point Richmond was declared ELIGIBLE as an historic district on July 24, 1978, E.O. 11593.

Subsequent to this determination and because of it the work of the Heritage Research Coordinators was used by the Point Richmond Historic Association in submittal of formal application to the National Register of Historic Places on October 1, 1978. Tom Butt and Lucretia Edwards worked to compile the application. This application was finally placed on the proper desks for consideration on March 2, 1979 and Point Richmond was finally named in the National Registry of Historic Places on November 5, 1979.

The area encompassed in this Historic registry includes that area within the boundaries of a rough triangle commencing along Crest on a westerly direction to the Standard Oil property; from there in an easterly direction along Tewksbury

Avenue to Railroad Avenue; south along Railroad Avenue to Richmond Avenue; east on Richmond Avenue to the foot of Nicholl Nob; south up Nicholl Nob to meet with Crest. All older buildings in the rough triangle are designated historic buildings in this concept of the National Registry of Historic Places.

The implications of this designation are: One cannot tear down old buildings without a study of their historic validity. Certain tax credits accrue to remodeling financing. Federal Projects may not invade the District. State bodies must make an Environmental Impact Report before invading the District. The City of Richmond has developed certain ordinances to maintain compliance with this heritage. And finally and most important the designation as being in the National Registry of Historic Districts instills an enormous sense of pride to those in Point Richmond who help to maintain its historic qualities.

One of the benefits of being an Historic District is that the building owners are entitled to place plaques on their property saying that they are HISTORIC!

A-MID TRIVIA

By Mid Dornan (234-5334)

We remember that the Pilgrims gave us Thanksgiving, but what do you know about these brave pioneers?

1. What investment group funded the voyage? A) Hudson Bay Co. B) East India Co. C) Merchant Adventurers D) Lloyds of London.

2. Who captained the Mayflower? A) Christopher Jones B) Christopher Marlowe C) Christopher Cook D) Christopher Columbus.

3. How many of what tribe showed up for the first Thanksgiving feast in 1621? A) 10 Iroquois B) 90 Wampanoags C) 220 Mohicans D) 125 Comanche.

(Answers at end of Trivia)

Effective November 21, to coincide with the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout, an ordinance in Contra Costa County limits smoking in sports arenas, bowling centers, hotels and theaters. The ordinance also bans smoking in restaurants and businesses in unincorporated Contra Costa and was passed by a unanimous vote by the Board of Supervisors after months of study.

Sniff! sniff! Point residents are indebted to Bill Morrow for bringing a Mechanics Bank branch to the Point. He speaks lovingly and fondly of the patronage of this bank branch and was supportive of local events so it is with mixed emotions we wish him well in his promotion and transfer from the Point branch to El Cerrito. However, we welcome his

successor, Manager Brian Hodges.

Kauai's North Shore was the honeymoon destination for Janice Alane (Hantzsche) and James Edward Cook who were married at Manka's Inverness Lodge in Inverness on Friday October 18, 1991 at 3:30 p.m.

Janice is in real estate. Jim is a High School Counselor and also a Counseling Consultant outside the school. Janice says they met romantically at Iceland in Berkeley during one of her practice sessions in early 1990.

Congratulations to Andrew Butt who has achieved the rank of Life Scout in Boy Scout Troop 104. Only one other rank is higher, that of the honored Eagle Scout.

CORRECTION: Jean and Henry Allyn (Allyn' Men's Shop) have purchased a home and commute from Sonoma....not Sonora as erroneously stated in the last issue. Sorry!

Ten members from the Point Methodist Church participated in the annual CROP/GRIP Hunger Walk and raised \$685 for the cause.

Remember the Fuller Brush? The Company celebrates its 85th anniversary this year. As in the past, products are still delivered to the doors of homes, but some things have changed since the days of the "Fuller Brush Man" who made the company a household name by wearing out shoe leather and knocking on doors. Today, many of the independent sales people do more of their selling by

telephone and through repeat orders or referrals. Brand loyalty has helped the firm stay competitive.

If you are you a "Bumstead" comic fan, you noted the Blondie-gets-a-job saga that unfolded in September making the strip relevant. The 61 year old Bumstead was created 50 years ago during the Great Depression and currently appears in 2000 papers in 55 countries. Creator Chic Young has four universal themes: eating, sleeping, raising kids and making money!

In response to years of request from the mailing public for coil stamps that tear off the rolls easier than current round-hole perforated stamps, the Postal Service began test marketing stamps with slit perforations instead of the usual round holes. Initially the slit perforations are being used on rolls of 100 29-cent flower stamps. It is the first change in this fundamental stamp design in more than 60 years.

Kate Lord has returned after visiting for a month with daughter, Hilary, in Mbasia, Kenya. Hilary, is serving two years in the Peace Corp as a Planner for the government in this coastal city. They spent the month traveling throughout Africa and at one point Kate had to charter a plane, along with some other fellow travelers, since their flight had been overwhelmingly overbooked and the next flight didn't go out for another five days!

What is worse than washing a load of dark clothes with kleenex in pockets? Washing a load of dark

clothes with a paperback book.!

Former Point residents who returned for the Annual Country Faire included Edna Hathaway and daughter, Ann Manley from Hanford; Sharon and Harry Hardwick and her mother, Lola Imlock, San Leandro.

Have you stopped to admire the new landscaping around the Point Firehouse and the History Building? Not only are the plants lovely to look at, but they are also drought resistant! Thanks... to Public Works Parks & Landscaping Superintendent Manuel Rosas and his department for the long awaited project.

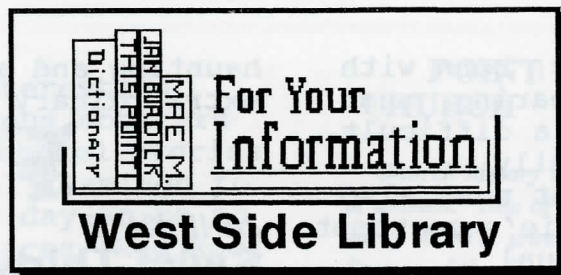
Claudia Beall, owner of the Point Richmond Print Shop, is numbered among the 'homeowners' now having purchased a place on Chanslor Avenue.

June Kunkle Blackburn came from Bemiji, Minnesota to attend her 50th RUSD class reunion and stayed at the home of school friends Marian and Fay (classmate) Hawkins. While here she attended the First Methodist Church where her father, Percy, served as Sunday School Superintendent and Chairman of the Board for many years. Her grandparents were Robert and Clara Wood.

A four letter word seldom heard anymore is....Cash!

(ANSWERS: 1 C, 2 A, 3. B)

**GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR
MANY BLESSINGS!**



by Jan Burdick
New books at the West Side.....

GEORGIE ANNE GEYER

**Guerrilla Prince:
The Untold Story of
Fidel Castro**

With the upheaval of the communist countries in Europe, it is mindful to remember we still have a country close by, Cuba, that remains in the Communist stronghold. In this important and evenhanded book, longtime foreign correspondent and syndicated columnist Geyer provides unequalled insight into the decline of its leader Fidel Castro from national hero to increasingly desperate dictator of a despairing little country.

Much of Geyer's success comes from her careful investigation of aspects of Castro's life that, in the tradition of the charismatic leader, he has sought to conceal: his origins as the son of a landowner with ten thousand acres; his time at the University of Havana, in which he alternated study of the methods of Hitler,

Mussolini, and Falangist leader Primo de Rivera with episodes of sheer gangsterism; and his marriage and liaisons and affairs.



FERNANDA EBERSTADT

**Isaac and His
Devils**

A wonderfully wise and moving novel about a loving father and his remarkable son - a novel that, like the best of the 19th century, touches on great themes.

When graduate student Sam Hooker marries Mattie, a local New Hampshire girl, he gives up his dreams of becoming a scholar, and instead takes a job as a high-school teacher in his native New Hampshire town. This sacrifice of ambition to please the no-nonsense, driving Mattie, pregnant with their first child, Isaac, is one of Eberstadt's themes. For Isaac as he grows up will blame his mother for never letting his father live

fully. And Isaac, born with poor sight and hearing, must not only survive a difficult childhood and family circumstances, but must also contend with Mattie's contempt for his intellectual brilliance, his insatiable curiosity, and his wise and loving heart.

The life and characters of a small New England town are vividly evoked, but it is Isaac, awkward and tenacious, whose search for meaning and honorable fulfillment rightly dominate the book - and touch the heart.



JOSEPHINE HART

Damage

This spare, dreamlike first novel comes festooned with blurbs from the likes of Ruth Rendell and Iris Murdoch, and no wonder, for it's an unforgettable tale of sexual obsession and its calamitous consequences.

Hart's nameless narrator is blandly successful physician and M.P. whose well-ordered life ends the moment he first sees his son Martyn's new girlfriend Anna Barton. Besotted with love for Anna and awe of her mysterious power over him (is she his slave, as she insists, or is he hers?) he begins a frantic affair with her, deceiving his wife Ingrid, his daughter Sally, and Martyn himself.

This is an elliptical,

haunting and altogether extraordinary story.



JANE KATZ

Swim Thirty Laps in Thirty Days

Katz, a master champion and swimming instructor, intends this manual to be used as an exercise guide during 30 days of prescribed workouts conforming to the F.I.T. Principle - gradual increases in Frequency, Intensity, and Time. Each day includes a prescribed lap distance, skills practice, W.E.T. (Water Exercise Technique) drills, warm-ups, and cool-downs.

With the Plunge so close by, now you serious swimmers can put this book to good use.



DEKE CASTLEMAN

Las Vegas

"How do you turn one of the hottest, driest, and most unlivable valleys on the continent into a cool, moist oasis that's accessible, hospitable, and profitable?" Castleman has the answers to these questions and all anyone would want to know about the glitter and gambling capital of the world. His concise yet thorough history of the region and development of the

city includes interesting anecdotes on famous mobsters and celebrities; hotel stories from the original Flamingo to the epic Mirage; day trips to the surrounding area (Red Rock canyon, Hoover Dam, Mt. Charleston); and of course gambling, shows and dining.

This is much more than a guidebook, although basic tourist information is plentiful.



BOY SCOUT TROOP 111 RECRUITING BOYS

If you are 10 1/2 to 18 years of age and interested in the outdoors, camping, hiking, birds, animals, aviation, science, cooking, or any number of 50 skills, you would be interested in being a member of Scout Troop 111 in the Point.

Scoutmaster Patrick Ferguson is organizing the troop which meets on Monday nights at the Point Methodist Church, Martina Street at West Richmond Avenue, 7 p.m. to 8:30. Anyone interested should show up on Mondays or call 236-0527 for more information.

There is something special about being a Boy Scout! Ask one!

POINT METHODIST CHURCH HISTORY

Church history is rich with contributions of women. One of the church groups in the early 1900's was the Home Missionary Society of the First Methodist Church whose history is reflected in their minutes, printed below and taken from the stiff cardboard covered notebook purchased from "Shoen's Pharmacy in the Point". The minutes are printed as written. This is the 59th installment.

May 18, 1917

The Woman's Home Missionary Society met in the church parlors. Meeting opened by President reading the 1st Psalm and all singing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" after which Mrs. Gillette led in prayer. Minutes read and approved.

Treasurers report accepted. Report of the Convention was given by Mrs. Gillette and Adams. Mrs. Gillette also gave an interesting description of the Alaska Home.

Mrs. Thiele favored the Society with a solo and was accompanied on the piano by Mrs. Smith.

Dues paid by Mrs. Maynard, \$1.20. The lesson from Book was given by Mrs. Bradley. Some suggestions were made in regard to getting a box ready to send the Greenville Indians in Early Fall and the members were asked to gather good warm second hand or new clothes for the box.

No further business meeting closed. Receipts 1.20 Dues Mrs. Owens .50 Mrs. McGriffin .30

Nettie Grover, Sec



MORE MEMORIES.....

of Early Point Richmond

Wm. L. Thompson

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

Thanks to Dr. Thompson for his valuable contributions to our archives.

Here is our forth series from Dr. Thompson. In this series his childhood memories fly from the Point's geography, such as the hills, the beaches and the harbor to events such as the building of the harbor and Cutting Boulevard, the Barnum and Bailey Circus, the 1915 World's Fair and the old ferry systems. Sit back and enjoy this one.

PART TWO

We used to go duck hunting in the winter with 22 rifles, out toward Potrero Point (then called Bulldog Point). We were on shore and the trouble was that whoever shot a duck

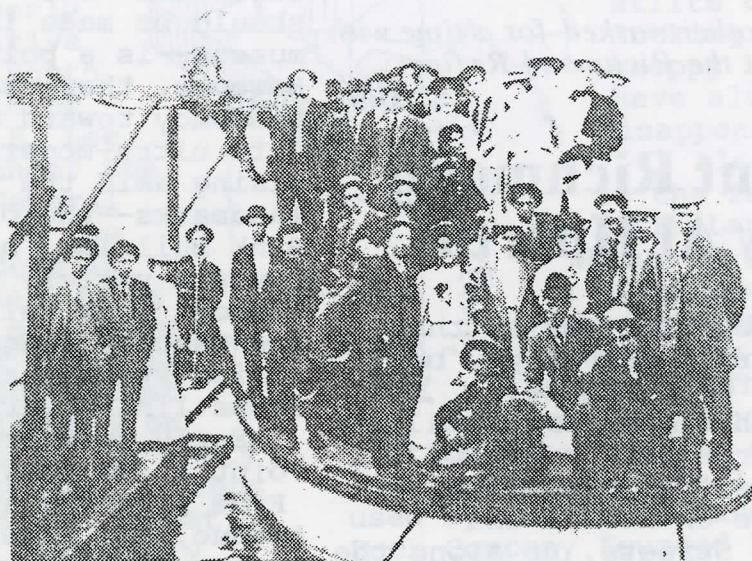
had to swim out and retrieve it. Because of the water temperatures in January few ducks were shot.

I recall one winter's day, I think it was about New Years Day when a very heavy wind storm blew up. There were many small boats anchored in the widened pool at the end of the inner harbor passage. By evening every one of these had dragged its anchor or broken its cable and was piled up on the shore. In the same storm a flat roof on a house near the top of Washington Avenue blew off and sailed down into the town.

One day before the war, about the latter 1930's, my brother and I were walking along the breakwater on the hillside aspect of the channel that leads up from the bay to the inner harbor. This was some hundreds of yards beyond where the Brickyard Cove housing is at present. My brother had his 22 rifle and we occasionally picked up a bottle along the shore and tossed it out as a target. I picked up one tightly closed small bottle and noticed that it had a piece of paper in it. Jokingly I tossed the bottle

over to Chet and told that this was a manuscript in the bottle. He opened it and we were amazed. The paper was a note stating that this bottle had been tossed into the water in the Philippine Islands nearly two years before. We thought that it might be a joke but there was a name and address included. My brother wrote to the individual at that address and soon got a most amazing reply. This man and a few others had been fishing from a small boat in a waterway near Baguio off the main island of Luzon. After

finishing their lunch one of the party took a bottle and put the name and address of one of the others in it and tossed it overboard as a joke and they thought no more about it. The man was most surprised. The bottle had traveled the great circle route and in about 2 years arriving washed up on the breakwater in Point Richmond. Another interesting feature was that the man involved was originally from San Francisco. The bottle had come home. This event was written up in the Richmond Independent at the time.



1908, a crowd on the Launch Adeline ready to leave for a trip up river. They got stuck on the mud flats in San Pablo Bay and had to spend the night there. Al Stromberg is No. 4 sitting near the bow. Others are Bill Foster, Frank Dietrich, Maggie Dwyer. (Don Church's caption)

Point Richmond

Courtesy of Allan Smith

This is re-printed from the "Spring, 1961 edition of a publication called "Landmark" which was published by THE WRITERS, a club sponsored by Richmond Union High School. The club sponsor was C.V. Lawson.

It is written by a Point Richmond student named Al Huerta. He lived on the top end of West Richmond Avenue. The illustrations are by Xavier Viramontes.

Al had a brother and I think he was the one that became a Catholic Priest in the Jesuit Order, serving at times in Brazil after being ordained in San Francisco.

Al's mother worked for a time with Chevron at the Richmond Refinery.

....Allan

Point Richmond by Al Huerta

Bludgeoned by gales that sweep across the choppy bay from the Golden Gate, sundrenched, serene at twilight with a tranquillity that stretches from the Stairley residence on Nevada and Stairley Streets, up along the winding narrow streets of Nicholl Nob Hill, Point Richmond clings to the past, battles the erosion of time and elements and holds stubbornly to an unhurried 19th century

pace of life.

Virtually ignored by the freeway that races past it from the Eastshore to the San Rafael Bridge, Point Richmond occupies the hilly domain overlooking Richmond's great inner harbor. This is the old home town.

As such, it is extremely conscious of its place in Bay Area history. Sentiment is divided as to how much of the old and original should be retained. The question of tearing down the firehouse--some argue it should be made into a museum--is a political issue. However, there seems to be a tendency toward compromise, with ultra-modern structures rising amid the familiar old landmarks--the old Richmond Bank Building, now used to house a variety store, the Nicholl City Hall, now used by the Masonic Lodge, the old police station and assorted shops lining Park Place.

Early settlers speak of the Point as if it were an island.

From Richmond Avenue to Ohio Avenue, and from Railroad Avenue all the way to Stege and 8th Streets, the land was marshy. At high water one could sail a small boat across much of it. Before 1900 it was free country, but

with the coming of the Santa Fe Railroad to this small hilly, marshy land on July 7, 1900, the population began to grow rapidly. In July of 1902, the Standard Oil Company operation was in full progress. The opening of this western isolated area by the Railroad and the arrival of a major industry started a boom.

Almost overnight the population leaped to 1,800.

Among the first families to move to the Point was that of Mr. Waverly Stairley. A native of Greenville, South Carolina, cousin of General Robert E. Lee, he had fought under the leadership of General Wade Hampton. He was one of the leaders in establishing the Bank of Richmond. His son, Duke Stairley, still lives in the red frame house that clings so prominently on the hillside, with its forty concrete and ten wooden steps leading up from the street. Also surviving is Waverly Stairley's wife, who celebrated her one-hundredth birthday in October of 1960.

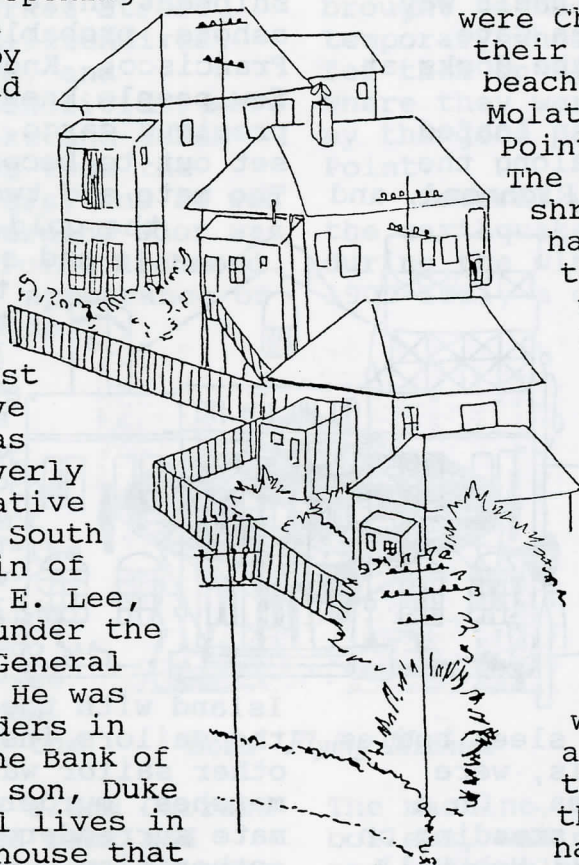
Older pioneers recall how she strolled down West Richmond Avenue on the creaking wooden planks that

served as a sidewalk, fashionably dressed beneath a fine parasol, doing her shopping amid the cries of shrimp sellers and the raw sounds of street life in this little maritime community.

The shrimp peddlers were Chinese who did their fishing off the beaches between Point Molate and Castro Point, using traps. The cries of "Fresh shrimp for sale," have died away in the silence of the past and the homes of these fishermen, set up on high weatherworn stilts overlooking the choppy bay, have also disappeared.

Also gone is the famed Ellis Landing, which contributed a great deal to the development of the city's inner harbor. This rickety wharf,

jutting out from the marsh land into the channel, was used by the Ellis Landing & Dock Company founded by Mr. George Ellis in 1880. By 1914, Ellis Landing was known as the front door of Richmond. Schooners which did the bay and river shipping, such as the Agnes Jones, were familiar sights



at the dockyards at Ellis Landing. These schooners, weighing from 150 to 350 tons, with swift sleek bodies and majestic sails, were masters of the sea. On a clear afternoon, standing on the top of Nicholl Nob Hill, one could see them, making their way through the Golden Gate, pointing toward the docks at Ellis Landing.

Seafaring men loafed about docks and along the streets of Point Richmond, and one of the tales they told was of the famous \$40,000 treasure supposedly buried on Brooks Island.

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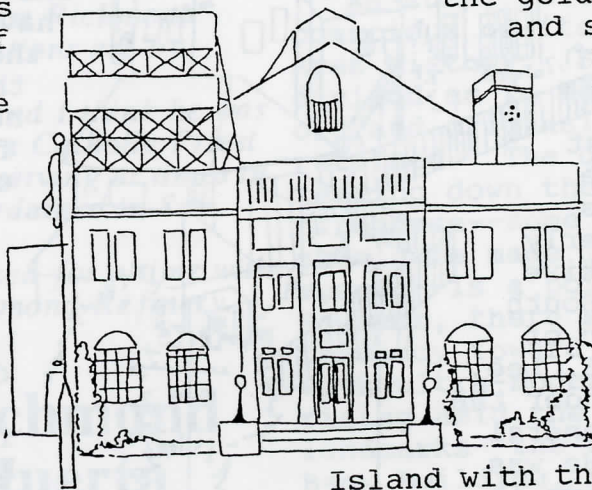
tons, with swift sleek bodies and majestic sails, were masters of the sea. On a clear afternoon, standing on the top of Nicholl Nob Hill, one could see them, making their way through the Golden Gate, pointing toward the docks at Ellis Landing.

Seafaring men loafed about docks and along the streets of Point Richmond, and one of the tales they told was of the famous \$40,000 treasure supposedly buried on Brooks Island.

As the story went, a large schooner with a shipment \$40,000 in gold coin in its hold was anchored off Brooks Island, on the side facing Goat Island. The first mate and two sailors were left on ship to protect the gold shipment while others went ashore, probably to San Francisco. Knowing that very few people knew of the precious cargo, these three set out to become pirates.

The mate and two seamen placed the gold in a long boat and sought a place

to bury their treasure. The location remains a mystery to this day. The only clue ever detected was the long boat, which was located on the southeast side of Brooks



Island with the body of one of the sailors inside it. The other sailor was found in the marshes, murdered. The first mate surrendered to the authorities. He was convicted and sentenced to San Quentin, where he died in 1914, the secret of the location of the gold going with him to his lonely grave inside the prison walls.

In April of 1906, the San Francisco earthquake caused citizens of Point Richmond to become helping neighbors to the people of the helpless

burning city.

San Francisco with all its beautiful and spacious gardens was almost buried in ashes. The buildings along Montgomery Street, the Wall Street of the West, was destroyed. The fashionable hotels along Market Street, frequented by millionaires, foreign visitors, and theatrical personalities, were filled with smoke and ashes and broken glass from the fallen chandeliers; and it was said that the burning odor was very strong in Point Richmond.

The physical appearance of the Point was also affected by the earthquake. Mrs. Ruby Ellis, a pioneer in Point Richmond, gave the following account of the event. "The quake hit violently, causing people to rush to their doors to see what had occurred. As each wave of the quake hit, the telegraph poles along Garrard Boulevard rocked back and forth, meeting in x's at each sway. The ground appeared to have been freshly turned over with shovels.

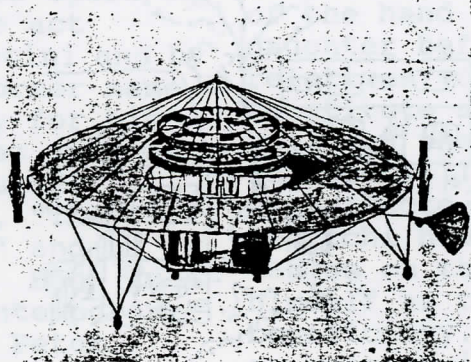
Mr. Duke Stairley, who also witnessed the earthquake, gives a vivid description of the tragedy. Mr. Stairley was resting on a schooner at Ellis Landing. It was a warm, clear day; and the water was at low tide. When the quake

hit, Mr. Stairley stood up, and as he put it, "the marshes were dancing."

Mrs. Ellis' husband, who was Marine Superintendent at Standard Oil, had ships sent to San Francisco to pick up the refugees, and many were brought to the Point. A temporary shelter was erected for them on Nicholl Nob Hill, where they were taken care of by the good people of the Point.

Several years prior to the earthquake, sometime during the winter of

1900-1901, a quiet, commonplace little man from Albuquerque, New Mexico arrived in Point Richmond. He was R.H. Botts, who six months later announced that he had patented a machine which would enable him to build a flying craft.



Botts' Flying Machine

The machine, the engine and boilers, was made of aluminum; and Botts claimed that he could generate one horsepower for every ten pounds of engine and boiler weight. In March of 1902, he began advertising shares in "The World's Aerial Navigation Company of Richmond", and in April steps were taken to form a \$100,000,000 corporation.

This fantastic amount was never raised, but enough was

acquired to construct an experimental station atop Nichol Nob Hill, and work was begun on the airship. Mr. Stairley recalls hauling the lumber for the hanger to the foot of the hill, with the aid of another person. He also constructed the seat for the airship, which was made of heavy net. But, Before the ship was ever tested, a strong southeast wind blew across the hilltop, sweeping the hanger and workshop, and the light airship, down the steep slopes, completely destroying the experimental ship. After this failure, Mr. Botts went to San Francisco, trying to obtain enough money to build another airship. The venture failed, and the name of Botts disappears from the files of the old newspapers. However, Mr. Stairley is still confident that the plane, which was built on the principle of the helicopter, would have flown. Perhaps, had it not been for the freakish gale, Point Richmond instead of Kitty Hawk would have been the birthplace of the airplane.

When World War II broke out, Point Richmond found

herself in the midst of a tremendous industrial expansion. An old resident commented recently, "I thought the old town would never be the same, but it is. It's back to normal." The new generation is changing the face of the town, it is true. They are building a new library, firehouse and a recreation hall in the triangle at Washington Avenue

and Park Place Avenue. Some of the old buildings are being torn down, others restored. But the Point manages to avoid the super-market-tract congestion of many of the newer communities. It manages to retain much of the atmosphere of the early Point

Richmond described in the old Richmond Record which commented:

"It is a pleasant experience, and one frequently enjoyed, in Point Richmond, to sit under one's own vine and fig tree, in heaven's brightest sunshine and see the fog roll up in great black terraces over the bay in the vicinity of San Francisco and Oakland, hear the coarse warnings of the fog horn on Goat Island and the submissive response by the ever cautious ferry boats."





by Anne Hanzlik

Opera has come to the Point! It is not grand opera to be sure but comic opera in the form of two one act compositions by Puccini and by P.D.Q. Bach. The former name is familiar to many for his well known favorites such as "Tosca", "Manon Lascault", "Madame Butterfly", "The Girl of the Golden West" and "Turandot". P.D.Q. Bach is a pseudonym for a contemporary Bay Area composer, Peter Schickele who has produced many pseudo baroque pieces, one of which is "The Stoned Guest".

"Gianni Schicchi", by Puccini is a light hearted piece, albeit with an ironic twist and with a rather involved "typical" opera plot involving a masquerade by Schicchi who takes the place of a wealthy dying man who, his relatives fear has left his estate to the church rather than them. There is a frantic search for the will in the cupboards, etc. of his

room, but when the finder, one of the relatives, finds it he demands a reward in the shape of the hand of Schicchi's daughter before the other relatives would be allowed to substitute a more suitable will for the original. This revised will will distribute his effects to the relatives. Schicchi however, turns the tables on them by designating himself as the chief beneficiary. All this makes an opportunity for much stage business. Joni DeGabrielle as Lauretta the daughter, sings a familiar aria with much effectiveness, and Tim Hart as Schicchi makes the most of his role with his intriguing voice. There is a large cast of relatives and attendants suitably costumed in Renaissance garb, for the action is set in 1299 Florence, a colorful scene, directed by Robert Lusk.

"The Stoned Guest" is a boffo spoof, easily recognized as such by the description of

the cast of characters in the program. The lyrics are in English which helps one to follow the plot. This part of the program is directed by Jo Lusk. The orchestra, under the direction of Joe Cravatto adds a very important part to the evening. It all adds up to another successful roster of Masquer successes.

It will be running on Friday, Saturday and Sunday until December 7th.

A Clean Park's a Good Park

Jerry Cerkowicz

On October 12, 1991 good Point Richmond citizens David Vincent, Jay Ward, Linda Andrews and her two children Aaron and Mark, James Cheshareck, Mike Holt and I cleaned up the sidewalk and masonry in and around our Indian Statue. Some bricks were becoming hard to read due to dirt and black algae. The cleaning took elbow grease, spic n' span, a wire brush and a power water blaster (which we fought over using).

All in all we had a lot of fun. Hope you noticed the difference.



THE MASQUERS

Playhouse, Inc.

105 Park Place, Point Richmond

PROUDLY PRESENTS

By:
PUCCINI



By:
P.D.Q. BACH

Directed by: JOE CRAVOTTO
Staged by: ROBERT LOVE & JO LUSK

A fun-filled double bill! Two comic operas sung in English—fully staged, costumed, and orchestrated.

THE OPERAS' PERSONNEL:

Joseph Arone
Betty Baker Bindner
Joni De Gabriele
John Dunn
Nikki Nahmens Gage
Tim Hart
Steve Hill
Steve Lockett

Robert Love
Helen Nace
Joan Nelson
John Owens
Mark Patino
Jane Rateaver
Steen Sellers
Robin Steeves

Friday & Saturday evenings — October 25 - December 7, 1991
Sunday Matinees — November 3, 17, December 1

RESERVATIONS: (510) 232-4031 (24 hours)

Reservations held until 10 minutes before curtain.
Group Rates Available

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

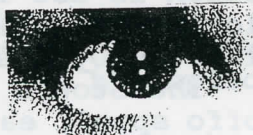
Curtain: 8:30 p.m.

Matinees: 2:30 p.m.

Admission: \$8.00

DINNER & THEATRE benefit for our building fund at HOTEL MAC, Thursday evening, Dec. 5. Dinner and ticket to 'Schicchi' & 'Stoned Guest' for only 23.00. To reserve, CALL: (510) 236-4988.

COMING: "Amahl & the Night Visitors", back by popular demand, for a limited run, opening December 18, 1991.



Office On Aging's New Address & Phone Numbers

The Contra Costa County
Office on Aging's new address
and telephone numbers are:

40 Douglas Drive
Martinez, CA 94553-4068
(510) 313-1575

Senior Information & Referral
Health Insurance Counseling &
Advocacy Program (HICAP)

Central (510) 313-1720
West (510) 374-3943
East (510) 706-4853

TDD (510) 313-1730

Retired Senior Volunteer
Program (RSVP)

(510) 313-1735

Senior Employment Program

(510) 313-1700

Also they are updating
their mailing list. If you
want to stay on their list,
please send your mailing label
along with any corrections or
deletions to the above address
by November 15, 1991. Please
no telephone calls to correct
your address.



POINT MUSEUM WISH LIST *Can you help?*

- *Refinish four wooden chairs*
- *~~Two small glass display cases~~*
- *Point Richmond pictures and memorabilia*
- *Container suitable for a donation box.*
- *Volunteers to man the museum on Thursdays*
- *Mail Slot, donated and installed*

**Two small glass display cases*

*Wish to be granted by
Dody Perry and
Our Lady of Mercy Church*

Thank You!





Cards & Letters

Dear Gary:

I was sorry to hear of the passing of Loyd Christopher. He was a classmate of mine at Richmond High graduating in 1937. He was a very fine person and an excellent baseball player.

Dr. Thompson mentioned the name of Lauritzen in his last article (*October, 1991*). I knew of a Lauritzen that had a tug and barge business at the end of Tenth Street. I believe the tug was called The General and he was in the sand and gravel business. The family home was at the corner of Tenth and Ohio. They had two boys named Bud and Dade. Perhaps someone could add to this information?

Sincerely,
Herbert (Pete) Hunn
Clarksburg, CA

Thanks Pete, by sending this information you've recorded a little Point history.

Gary

Dear Pam:

Enclosed I am sending my check for a renewal of our family membership.

I have been happy to read Willard Spiersch's articles. We were in school together and I remember his father, uncle and sister. Fortunately he

lived in a different area of The Point so our memories supplement each others.

Also I was most happy to read the note from Vivien Cook. We were good friends and we went thru grammar school and high school together and we played together on the 1925 high school football team. He was a tackle and I was an end so we often played side by side.

I was sorry to hear of Sam Janes' death. He was a friend and patient of mine. His mother, who was crippled with arthritis, was a friend of my mother. I recall his father and brother. They lived on Western Drive.

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Wm. L. Thompson
Richmond

Future Media of Point Richmond, under the endorsement of the Point Richmond Business Association will be publishing a business directory of the Point in December. The directory will be a comprehensive list of businesses, consultants, artists and services for the area.

For information on listing or advertising call 215-7539 or (415) 495-5966.

Deaths.....

JOHN CLAYTON TROWBRIDGE, a mechanic, died October 5th in a Vallejo hospital. He was 55.

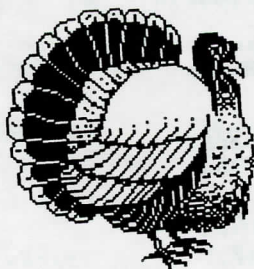
A native of Washington, Ind., he lived in Benicia a year and was a former resident of West County.

He is survived by his sons, John A. Trowbridge of Fairfield, Michael Trowbridge of Pinole and Kenneth Trowbridge of Richmond; sister, Lucille Trowbridge of Indiana; and six grandchildren.

CLARENCE "CLANCY" A. KING, a retired realtor for Bartels Real Estate, San Pablo, died peacefully Thursday at his home in Richmond. He was 80.

A native of Point Richmond, Mr. King had lived in Richmond all his life. He was a member of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Air Squadron; Richmond Elds Lodge No. 1251; he Uptown Businessman's Association, Richmond; and he was a past president of the Richmond Lions Club.

He is survived by his daughter Joyce King Davidson of Placerville; two grand- children and two great-grandchildren.



November Birthdays (234- 5334)

ANN GREINER	PAUL CORT
JASON MCGILL	ALBERT & GEORGE
BETTY DORNAN	KOLLAR (Twins)
ELSIE SPINOLA	LYNN DARLING
CLARE DOHERTY	MARY ANN GASPARD
KEVIN FONG	CHRIS BRADSHAW
DENNIS DORNAN	CRAIG SEABORG
MARIANNE FORBES	BO AMANTITE
LES CRIM	KENNY PAASCH
HAL MARSHALL	LANCE ROTTING
NICOLE VARGO	JOE SAVILE
MATHEW BERMAN	MIKE PRICE
JAMES	SHANE THOMAS
CHESHARECK, SR.	LINDA FEYDER
JAMES	BETHANY REYNOLDS
CHESHARECK, JR.	KAY PINKERTON
IDA GIACOMELLI	AUBYN EAKLES
LINDA CHESHARECK	MICHAEL BROWN
CLAUDIA LeGUE	SHIRLEY BUTT
LYNN RENDLER	JACK ELLE
GARY SHOWS	LIAM THOMPSON
BOBBIES BOZIKI	

IN REMEMBRANCE

Although Ohlene and Ed Toby had only lived at the Point a little over a year, (first in an apartment on Nicholl Avenue) while their house was being built at 441 Western Drive, their friends and neighbors were greatly saddened by the news of Ed's death on October 13th. He had welcomed his move here from San Rafael and was fond of our community and it was only too bad that he was only allowed so little time to enjoy their beautiful new home after they moved there in August. We extend our deep sympathy to Ohlene.

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" newsletter (nine 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 dates.

Articles for each month's issue are due on or before the published deadline in the calendar section of this issue.

Please mail articles and items of interest to:

GARY SHOWS
229 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE
POINT RICHMOND, CA 94801

"This Point in Time" is a publication of the Point Richmond History Association, a non-profit organization at 139 1/2 Washinton Avenue, Point Richmond, CA 94801

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TRIBUTE FUND

Enclosed is my check payable to the Point Richmond History Association in the amount of:

\$ _____

_____ In Honor _____ In Memory

of _____

From _____

Phone _____

Please send acknowledgement to:

Name _____

Address _____

Tributes will be acknowledged in the newsletter

PHONE NUMBERS

<i>Mid Dornan</i>	<i>234-5334</i>
<i>Gary Shows</i>	<i>235-1336</i>
<i>Phyllis Skaglund</i>	<i>232-2280</i>
<i>FAX</i>	<i>232-0842</i>

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Gary Shows
Mid Dornan
Dr. Wm. Thompson
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Don Church (photo collection)
Members of the PRHA
Anne Hanzlik
Muriel Clausen
Jerry Cerkowicz
Allan Smith
Al Huerta
Xavier Viramontes
Herbert Hunn
Carol Elliott

.....thanks

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- November 5** **Election Day**
- Women's Westside Improvement Club Meeting,**
 11:30 AM, Our Lady of Mercy Church
- Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting,**
 7:30 PM, Point Community Center
- November 8** **Reception for Point History Museum Contributors**
- November 10** **General Meeting of the Point Richmond History**
 Association and Grand Opening for our New Museum!
- November 11** **Veteran's Day**
- November 13** **Point Richmond Business Association Meeting,**
 Noon, Hotel Mac
- Bolivian Handcrafts Fair at Point Richmond Methodist**
 Church, 7:30pm to 9:30pm
- November 15** **Richmond Parkway Committe meeting, Community**
 Services Bldg., Conference Room One, 329 Twenty Fifth
 Street, 8:30-9:30 am
- November 16** **Richmond Museum's Annual Collector's Treasure &**
 & 17 Junque Fair, 400 Nevin Ave., Call 235-7387 for details
- November 22** **DEADLINE FOR TPIT WINTER ISSUE**
- November 28** **THANKSGIVING DAY**
- December 1** **Hanukkah (1st Candle)**
- December 3** **Women's Westside Improvement Club Christmas**
 Luncheon meets 11:30 AM, Our Lady of Mercy Church
- Point Richmond Neighborhood Council Meeting,**
 7:30 PM, Point Community Center