

# THE TATTLE



## JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY-COLMA

### GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

First, let me thank Vaughn Jones and his Centennial Performers for a thoroughly enjoyable encore performance at our January member celebration. New historical commentary and music selections were prepared for this second centennial music program to the delight of all. The Guild is fortunate to have members who so generously share their talents. The Guild provided special treats of red velvet cake and bubbly with our usual generous donations of refreshments by volunteers.



Encore for the Centennial Performers: Judith Christensen, Michael Rocchetta, Dana Smith, Rich Rocchetta, Elinor Charleston ("performing" in the kitchen), Vaughn Jones, Sue Von Hagel, Gloriann Jones. Hats all around!

I am extremely gratified by the report of our membership chair, Michael Rocchetta, that we are close to 80% membership renewal to date for the current 2012 year.

We're changing our program format slightly for the March meeting. Rather than have an evening meeting on the third Wednesday of the month, we've decided to have it during the afternoon of Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> [St. Patrick's Day]. We want to officially debut our newly completed fireplace gas insert at the museum, and we want you all to join us for a "hearth warming." So, from noon to 3:00 PM on that day we will host an open-house for one and all to view this milestone in the continuing evolution of your museum. Our special thanks to our carpenter Steve Arsenault and sheetrocker Rocco Stagnaro for their fine work, to Mark Fontana for the donation of the granite mantel,

### MARCH DAYTIME EVENT

### SPECIAL MUSEUM OPENHOUSE AND "HEARTH" WARMING



*Celebrating our new renovated fireplace*

**Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Noon to 3 pm**

**Daly City History Museum**

**6351 Mission Street**

*Light Refreshments*

Drop in anytime during the three hours to join our Board and Guild family of members for socializing and "history chat."

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

"Theatres of the San Francisco Peninsula" will be presented by Arcadia authors Gary Parks and Jack Tillmany, with a special emphasis on Daly City and Colma venues. We will be meeting at our usual time (evening) and place (Doelger Center Caf ).

**Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>,  
7 P.M.**

**FREE - REFRESHMENTS**  
101 Lake Merced Blvd  
Doelger Center Caf 

1930s newspaper ad for the Daly City Theatre - double billing!

**DALY CITY THEATRE**

**NOW PLAYING—**

**WE DARE YOU TO SEE — TOGETHER  
DRACULA  
AND  
FRANKENSTEIN**  
The Double Horror Show of the Century  
Also LATEST MARCH OF TIME—  
UNCLE SAM, THE GOOD NEIGHBOR  
Color Cartoons  
CASH NIGHT — Saturday

**SUNDAY, MONDAY, TUESDAY, Dec. 18-19-20—**  
Edward G. Robinson in **I AM THE LAW** | June Lang and Lynn Bari in **MEET THE GIRLS**  
Also an added attraction in technicolor  
**THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**  
With John Lital  
DINNERWARE—Monday Night

**WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, Dec. 21-22—**  
Foot McCrea and Andrea | J. Lee and Bessie  
Leda in **YOUTH TAKES A FLING** | **THE HIGGINS FAMILY**  
GIANT TEN-O-WIN — Wednesday

**FRIDAY, SATURDAY, Dec. 23-24—**  
**BROADWAY MUSKETEERS** | Weaver Brothers and  
Elvia in **DOWN IN ARKANSAW**  
With Margaret Lindsay, Ann Sheridan, Marie Wilson, John Lital and Janet Chandler  
**KIDDIES—Win 10 Toy Stool Trucks—Sat. Matinee**  
CASH NIGHT — Saturday



### President's Message, Cont'd

donated services from Garcia Plumbing of S.F., and volunteer painting and finish work by Michael and Rich Rocchetta.

Instead of having a speaker, set program, and raffle, the fireplace will be the center of attention, along with newly reconfigured floor and wall exhibits. In addition, we now have on display four vintage water colors by a gifted unknown artist of Top-of-the-Hill landscapes; these were painted sometime around World War II and were formerly part of the Daly City Public Library's collection. Also, on permanent exhibit are ten framed museum-quality photographs of the Broderick-Terry Duel Re-Enactment of 1974. These are from the collection of the late photographer/restaurateur Frank Spadarella of Toto's pizza fame. He generously donated these to the Guild many years ago, and they tell the story of the great duel which officially ended dueling in California. So definitely plan to stop by to see the new exhibits, warm yourself by the 'fire,' and reminisce with both old and new friends. We'll supply the refreshments and "warmth;" you supply the excited and inquisitive bodies.

I want to emphasize again that there will be no set program. No great, or not so-great, oratory or speechifying. One and all are free to stop in anytime between noon and 3:00 PM to socialize and historically reminisce. While street parking in the immediate area is both limited and metered, you may park free of charge in the lot of our good friends at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 1399 Brunswick Street, corner of Hillside Boulevard. This is but a short walk to the museum at 6351 Mission Street. We'll look forward to seeing you 'round the fire[place]!

### DONATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, GUILD NEWS

*Thanks to:* **Bunny Gillespie** (and the late **Ken Gillespie**) for 18 consecutive *Tattler* contributions of history-filled centennial articles; **David Schooley** and **San Bruno Mountain Watch** for donations of historical, environmental, and poetic materials on San Bruno Mountain; **John and Jean Gallagher** for 1950s news clippings on Stoneson residential development and Kings Market; **Mark Weinberger** and **Marcus Gonzalez** for supervising the installation of our new fireplace heating unit and bringing the project in below budget; **Annette Hipona** for 1960 Westlake and Daly City maps; **Marie Brizuela** for a Michael Amorose wine guide, "No Cellphones" sign from Seton, and a 2004 article on Mario Ciampi in an architecture journal; **Susana Gilden** for her NY Times crossword puzzle mentioning Daly City; **our Board** for continuing docent duty and special museum clean-up duty on

Saturday, February 25, docent volunteers **Carole Hutchins** and **Christina Hernandez**, and archive expert volunteer **Russ Brabec**. Guild member and author **Rob Keil and wife Espie** welcomed their newest "edition," baby Henry Santiago Keil on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

### HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

**San Mateo County Museum** (2200 Broadway, Redwood City) presents its Courthouse Docket Program Saturday, March 24 at 1 pm in Court Room A. Author Susan Snyder will discuss historical California diaries featured in her latest book *Beyond Words: 200 Years of Illustrated Diaries*. (Program free with entrance.)

**Colma Historical Association**, 1500 Hillside Blvd., Colma. Second quarterly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**2012 Free San Francisco History Expo.** - Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, 11-4 pm at the Old Mint at Fifth and Mission Streets, S.F. Special programs and a (rumored) appearance by Emperor Joshua Norton. The San Francisco Museum and Historical Society hosts twenty-five S.F. historical organizations displaying mini-museums. More information at: <http://www.sfhistoryexpo.org/>

**Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation Lectures:**  
Cypress Lawn's Reception Center, 2nd Floor, Administration Building, 1370 El Camino Real, Colma. 2- 4 pm. Free – light refreshments.

**March 18** - Michael Svanevik presents *Lost in the Pacific – Amelia Earhart*

**April 15** - Loren Rhoads presents *World Views of a Cemetery Explorer*



**San Bruno Mountain Watch** – Docent led mountain hikes are scheduled on the first Saturday of each month and Ohlone shell mounds hikes are held on the third Saturday. Hikers meet at the SBMW office at 44 Vicitacion Ave, Brisbane at 10 am and hikes end at approximately 1:30 pm. No charge - donations are welcomed. Wildflowers are beginning to bloom! Call 415-467-6631 for more information or visit the website at [www.mountainwatch.org/about-our-hikes/](http://www.mountainwatch.org/about-our-hikes/)



**Rare badge of Henry Doelger's Private Police.**

Image provided by Vaughn Jones



## EVENTS AND SONGS 1912-1914

Centennial Performers Excerpts, Jan. 2012 Script  
by Sue Von Hagel

(with contributions by Vaughn Jones, Rich Rocchetta, & Dana Smith)

Today we're going to treat you to the events and songs of the years 1912 through 1914. 1912 was the second year of incorporation of the City of Daly City. Some of the important events of that year were: New Mexico and Arizona became states (they would be the last to be admitted until Alaska and Hawaii in 1959); the Republic of China is established; Roald Amundsen announces the discovery of the South Pole; the Dixie cup is invented; celebrities born that year were Danny Thomas, Perry Como, Art Linkletter, Gene Kelly and Julia Child.

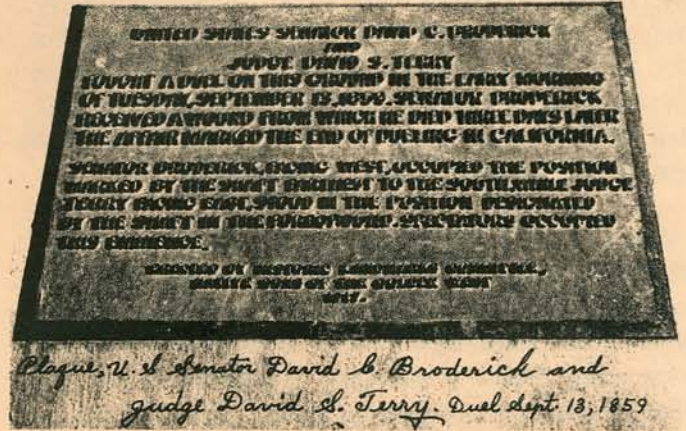
The big political news of the year was the presidential election. The Republicans were to nominate William Howard Taft. Their slogan was: Stay on the raft with William Howard Taft. But former president Theodore Roosevelt was not happy with the un-energetic and easygoing Taft, so he founded the new independent Bull Moose Party to run himself. This split the Republican vote and made Woodrow Wilson the first Democrat in the White House since Grover Cleveland in the early 1890's. Wilson's favorite song was "Oh You Beautiful Doll"

Barbershop harmony is one of the great American inventions. The contemporary image of barbershop harmony is couched in a romanticized perception of the "Gay Nineties" with a dapper, white, middle-American barber and their patrons posed next to barber poles in attitudes of harmonizing. There is however, little in the mainstream literature of the period to reinforce this image. The literature of African-American history origin shows both the concept of male quartet singing in barbershops and the particular style of harmonizing that has also come to be known as barbershop.

The British liner Titanic strikes an iceberg in the north Atlantic and sinks in April 1912, taking with it over 1500 lives. The year 1913 was the third year of incorporation of Daly City. The 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution is ratified authorizing the Federal Government to impose and collect income taxes. The Rockefeller Foundation begins operation with a one-hundred million dollar donation from John D. Rockefeller. The Panama Canal is completed. Ford Motor Company introduces the first moving assembly line. The Federal Reserve Bank is created. President Richard M. Nixon and President Gerald Ford are born.

In 1912 Daly City passed an ordinance which stated "It will be unlawful to engage in disorderly or immoral dancing for an example: turkey trot, bunny hug, Texas Tommy. A fine of \$50 could be exacted from offenders.

Song selection arranged by Vaughn Jones: *Oh You Beautiful Doll, Play That Barber Shop Chord, Peg o' My Heart, Nearer My God To Thee, Some Of These Days, Ballin' the Jack, By the Light of the Silvery Moon, On Moonlight Bay, Ragtime Cowboy Joe, Melancholy Baby, Alexander's Ragtime Band, Aba Daba Honeymoon, Down Among the Sheltering Palms, There's a Long, Long Trail.*



Mark Weinberger located this Internet of the plaque that used to be on the hillside near the two markers at the Broderick-Terry duel site. Mark notes, "For years all that remained was the cement slab on which the bronze plaque was embedded. That was later removed after the plaque was stolen. Until now, I had never viewed it." The location of the plaque is still unknown.

## STEVEN JOHNSON FIELD - HIS LINKS TO DALY CITY HISTORY

By Dana Smith

Justice Stephen Field



Stephen Johnson Field arrived in Gold Rush San Francisco after a long journey by way of Panama. He became the 5<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of California before his appointment by President Abraham Lincoln as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, where he served from 1863 to 1897.

The *Redwood City Democrat* reported the death of Daly City's famous pioneer Robert Sheldon Thornton on December 14, 1916, recounting a story of Thornton's trip to California via Panama in 1852 and a very interesting connection to Stephen Johnson Field. "During the trip he [Thornton] saved the life of a man named Fields, who later became the famous Judge Fields of the U.S. Supreme Court at the time of President Lincoln."



In 1865 after six years of ongoing court battles, Robert Thornton went to Washington, D.C. to appeal the Colma Hills settlers' land dispute to the U.S. Supreme Court. Owners of the Laguna Merced Rancho had laid claim to the homesteaded lands of the settlers and when the California court ruled against the settlers, the case was referred to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1863.

In Thornton's account "Brief History of Colma's Early Days" published in the *Daly City Record* on September 25, 1915, Thornton mentions encounters with Fields on his trip to the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., but curiously does not mention saving Field's life on the trip through Panama during the Gold Rush years.

"A little incident happened while I was on the deck of the Sonora bound for Washington. The Chief Justice of our [California] Supreme Court who wrote the decision against us greeted me with a smile and inquired where I was going. I said 'Washington' and remarked that 'I suppose that is where you are going.' He said 'yes.' I knew Lincoln had appointed him as one of the United States Supreme Judges. I felt that he would be against us in that court, but I was wrong. I sailed with him home to California... and he was always good company on shipboard. [Later, Thornton returned to Washington, D.C. to witness the verdict.] While Judge Greer of the Supreme Court was reading the decision in our favor, Judge Field left the bench and beckoned to me from the bar. I repaired inside the curtain of the court where Field shook hands with me and congratulated me on winning my case. He was always my friend afterwards..."

The December 1865 ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of the Colma settlers was a unanimous decision. If the story about Thornton saving Field's life is true, one wonders how much this shared history might have influenced that favorable decision. Did Fields and Thornton recall and discuss the Panama incident on their shipboard voyages to and from Washington, D.C.? Why doesn't Thornton mention saving Field's life in his own first-hand history? Perhaps further research and additional documentation may answer these intriguing questions.

Later, Stephen Fields once again connects to Daly City history. California Supreme Court Chief Justice David Terry, who infamously killed California's U.S. Senator David C. Broderick in the Broderick-Terry duel fought in what is now Daly City in 1859, was the lawyer representing Sarah Althea Hill in her claim that she was the legal wife of silver baron William Sharon and was owed a share of Sharon's fortune through divorce. Sarah eventually married her appeals lawyer David Terry. Justice Stephen J. Field, a former friend of Senator Broderick's, heard the case in 1888 as the senior justice

of the federal circuit court in California. Field ruled against Mr. and Mrs. Terry in a final appeal, and jailed them both on contempt of court. The Terrys vowed vengeance. On August 14, 1889, David Terry assaulted Field at a train station in Lathrop, near Stockton, California. Field's bodyguard, United States Marshal David Neagle (formerly assigned to Tombstone, Arizona), shot and killed Terry. Neagle was arrested by California authorities on a charge of murder. The issue was resolved by the United States Supreme Court decision that determined that the Attorney General of the United States had authority to appoint U.S. Marshals as bodyguards to Supreme Court Justices, and that Neagle had acted within the scope of his authority.

## JOE'S OF WESTLAKE

By Marcus Gonzalez  
(excerpts from Westlake Walking Tour Notes)



The bar juke box is fully stocked with Dean Martin, Tony Bennett, and Frank Sinatra.

If you could point to a single building that best represents the Westlake District, it would have to be Joe's of Westlake. Opened in October 1956, this legendary, mid-century restaurant has now served several generations of diners. In both interior and exterior features, Joe's of Westlake is very much a large-scale Westlake house. When you first approach it from the east, its slanted roofline, building setbacks, landscaping, and visual rhythm of tall, wood-framed windows remind you of a Henry Doelger Westlake house. This is no accident. Joe's was mainly designed by Chester Dolph who was the primary designer of the Westlake home interiors.

It was opened in 1956 by restaurateur Bruno Scatena. Local legend has it that builder Henry Doelger wanted to have a good Italian restaurant within walking distance of his sprawling new Westlake home, nearby on Northgate Avenue.

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**GIFTS IN MEMORY OR HONOR** of a person are gratefully accepted by the Guild. Please include a name and address where we can send notification of your gift.

Please consider including the History Guild of Daly City/Colma in your will.





Robert S. Thornton playing his violin

## REMEMBRANCES OF A GRANDDAUGHTER

A glimpse of the personal side of Daly City Pioneer Robert S. Thornton and his wife Sarah - excerpts from a 1971 interview with granddaughter Josephine Lindsay Greene De Perrio

"I remember grandpa one time had a very patriotic urge, he was

very proud. He had this huge flag between the trees from one side to the other. Oh, it was huge! And everybody in the town came around to see it...

He loved his violin. He used to play the ho-down fiddle and I used to dance a jig... [he played] Arkansas Traveler, I remember that one well... I used to jig for all I was worth and if I could jig longer than he could play, I would get a nickel. He and mother both belonged to a Whist club and he would play and they enjoyed his playing, but I don't remember him playing for receptions or anything like that. At home he would play whether you wanted him to or not.

[At Christmas] Grandpa always had a lovely tree... One year when I was ten years old and my grandfather was talking to my mother and grandmother he said he didn't want anything for Christmas ... everybody got their gifts and he sat there drumming on the table. My mother said, 'What's the matter papa?' And he said, 'Well, where's mine.' My mother said 'you didn't want anything.' He said, 'You didn't think I meant it?' So she went out of the room and brought back a nice package. She got him a lovely muffler and a lovely silk handkerchief. "Well, that's more like it," he said.

My grandmother liked her home very much and she was a marvelous housekeeper and cook. To be invited to Mrs. Thornton's for dinner - you know at that time how travel was - so if anybody would come, my grandmother would have them stay over. Maybe two days to a week... there was an oldtimer who used to come... she would say, 'Something smells good. I guess it would taste good if I was invited.' So my grandmother would always invite her."

## YOU BASK, AH, MOUNTAIN

By David Schooley, Founder of San Bruno Mountain Watch from a book of San Bruno Mountain poems  
*Nothing Need be Said*

You bask, ah, mountain  
collecting  
incidents of passage  
like a lazy magnet,  
moon  
resonant with sun.  
Wind stirs trees and grass.  
Your roots tuned to the earth ringing rock  
as  
dwellers in your silence  
come and go across the creek  
and thickets of the valley slope.  
Hummingbird, rabbit,  
jackrabbit, quail,  
a black snake  
parting summer reeds,  
dipping, swims across the spring.  
A dragonfly touches down on the moss wall  
and all around honeybees nuzzle  
in the bay tree blossoms.  
You bask, ah, mountain  
in the light.

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In 1884 Banker Charles Crocker acquired core holdings of a huge rancho known as Canada de Guadalupe la Visitacion y Rodeo Viejo including most of San Bruno Mountain. After Crocker's death in 1888, the former Rancho lands passed to the Crocker Land Co., eventually to Visitacion Associates, a consortium of Foremost-McKesson and Amfac, Inc. Visitacion Associates then co-owned 3600 acres of San Bruno Mountain with the Crocker Land Company. In 1978 Crocker Land Company settled litigation with San Mateo County by donating 546 acres and selling the county 1100 acres of land along the main ridge, which later became San Bruno Mountain County Park. The state of California later bought and donated 256 more acres. In 1989 a State Bond Act added Buckeye and Owl Canyons to the Park. In 2004 an indigenous village site between Brisbane and South San Francisco was added to the park. There are 20 rare plant and animal species on the mountain representing one of the last remnants of the ancient and unique biological ecosystem known as Franciscan habitat.





## THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY/COLMA

### DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

6351 Mission Street, Daly City, CA 94014

650/757-7177

Current Hours: Every Tuesday, Thursday, and the first and third Saturdays of the month from noon to 3 p.m.



Please visit us on Facebook/  
Daly City History Museum

### FIRST CLASS MAIL

## 2012 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, Membership Chair Michael Rocchetta thanks the nearly 80% of our membership who have sent in their member renewals for 2012.



**If you find a reply card and return envelope in your copy of this edition of the Tattler, it is a gentle reminder that we have not yet received your renewal.**

Our programs and all improvements in the museum building, including the recent renovation of the fireplace, have been paid 100% by your private donations. You are a valued member of our History Guild family and your interest and support of local history continue to inspire all our volunteer efforts!

### GUILD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

<b>Mark Weinberger, President</b>	415/750-1939
<b>Richard Rocchetta, Vice-President</b>	650/992-9144
Guild Program Director	
<b>Dana Smith, Vice-President</b>	650/892-2166
Museum Director	
<b>Judith Christensen, Treasurer</b>	650/756-3128
<b>Marie Brizuela, Secretary</b>	650/755-7188
<b>Marian Mann, Director</b>	650/991-9386
<b>Michael Rocchetta, Director</b>	650/756-3960
<b>Marilyn Olcese, Director</b>	650/755-5616
<b>Dave Crimmen, Director</b>	650/589-5852
<b>Marcus Gonzalez, Director</b>	650/757-9767

*Board meetings are held as necessary and are open to the membership. Please call Mark for further information.*

**Ken Gillespie (1924-2011), President-Emeritus**  
**Bunny Gillespie, Secretary-Emerita** 650/755-5123  
**Elinor Charleston, Hospitality Chair** 650/755-8267  
**Michael Rocchetta, Member Chair**

**Tattler Editor & production: Dana Smith**

Contributors: Dana Smith, Mark Weinberger, Rich Rocchetta, Marcus Gonzalez, David Schooley, and Sue Von Hagel.

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