

# THE TATTLEER

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

### GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

As the year draws to an end, I am reflecting on our successes over the past year and how far the History Guild has come over the past 37 years. The recent passing of Guild Charter member Al Teglia makes me think of how we have transitioned from the founders group to a still vital organization with the new mission of operating a public museum. Many organizations flounder at this crucial juncture, but the Guild has continued without missing a step.

We took on the Herculean task of negotiating with Daly City for use of the old John Daly Library building and then spent a year in renovation. With new responsibilities, we had to evolve professional financial procedures and work together in an amicable and cooperative way. Managing a professional public museum is a continuing, sobering experience and we continue to grow with this responsibility. At times this growth has been painful, but I think I can speak for the entire board when I say we have had a pleasant year and there is a certain glow from continuing improvements in the museum, a string of fascinating lecture programs, our Internet presence with a very professional website and an active Facebook community, and the continuation and expansion of our *Tattler* newsletter. It's worthy of note that the *Tattler* has been in constant publication for over 25 years.

So, in this edition, I am looking back to all the people who preserved our local history and forward to all of us who are continuing in their footsteps with our interest and support, whether it be by serving on the board, presenting lectures, donating documents and artifacts, ongoing membership financial contributions, providing food at our presentations, working to keep our organization and museum functioning, or writing articles, publishing books, and creating videos on local history. Preserving history doesn't just happen, it takes people who care and people who are willing to expend time and resources to make it happen. We all deserve a collective pat on the back. Thank you!

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## DAYTIME HISTORY PROGRAM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2 PM

ENGINEER TED TRONOFF

*Presents*



1949, Westlake after grading

### *The development of Westlake*

This is our daytime annual birthday party with special guest Ted Tronoff, who was the chief engineer of Westlake subdivision builder Henry Doelger. Mr. Tronoff will talk about his firsthand experiences in the development of Westlake.

**101 Lake Merced Blvd. Daly City  
Doelger Center, Meeting Room #5**

(Due to a schedule conflict at the Doelger Center, we will be meeting just this one time in Meeting Room #5)

**THANK YOU JANUARY REFRESHMENT DONORS: Pat Hatfield, Rich Rocchetta, Michael Rocchetta, Grace and Marcus Gonzalez, and Dana Smith.** Thank you to our gracious Hospitality Chair **Annette Hipona**. Special cake and bubbly!

Our membership drive for 2015 is coming to a close and if you find a return envelope in this issue, it means we are still hoping to receive your renewed membership (unless this mailing and your donation have crossed in the mail.) Remember, we are an all-volunteer organization that exists only because of your private donations. 100% of your donation pays for the ongoing expenses of the Guild organization and museum.

We are starting the New Year off with a couple of fantastic lecture programs. I would like to ask every member who enjoys our lecture programs to please invite a friend to a future meeting. I hope you all agree that we provide a great service to the public.

I hope to see you at our January lecture and party. On behalf of the board and our Guild family, best wishes for the New Year!

## SAVING THE HISTORY OF DALY CITY, A TIMELINE By Dana Smith

**1961** – Arthur Bodein, who arrived in the area in 1906 as a refugee from the San Francisco earthquake and fire, chaired the 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee celebration in Daly City. A Historical Research Committee was formed to collect historic pictures for display at Jubilee events. After the anniversary celebration, historical interest continued.

**1965** – Arthur Bodein wrote a letter to the City Council suggesting the formation of “a committee to collect and then find a place to display documents of Daly City’s history.” A Historical Research Committee of fifteen members was chaired by City Librarian Sam Chandler. Twenty-one interviews were made of Daly City pioneers and nearly 2,000 photographs were collected. The photo collection would become the basis of a book published by Chandler in 1973, *Gateway to the Peninsula, A History of the City of Daly City*. Members of the Historical Research Committee were listed in the preface to the book: Arthur Bodein; Henry Sundermann, Edmund Cavagnaro, Maude Hanselman, Ethel Hahn, Edward Dennis, Frances Rickmann, Jean O’Rourke, Bernard Lycett, Anthony Giammona, Lillian Fletcher, Lanti Malloy, Lyal Ingersoll, and Velma Yule. The growing collection was first housed at the Westlake branch of the Daly City Public Library and then moved to the Serramonte branch in 1975.

**1968** – Historical pictures were presented to Daly City’s Historical Committee by police sergeant Henry Sundermann, Jr. on behalf of his late father

**1976, June 13** – A Daly City parade celebrating the nation’s bicentennial attracted over 5,000 participants, and 25,000 spectators.

**1977, Oct.** – A History, Arts and Science Commission was declared by the City Council with seven members who advised the Council on matters pertaining to history, arts and science activities under the administration of the City Librarian. The commission formed individual guilds, each part of an umbrella non-profit organization known as the Daly City Advocates.

**1982** – The History Guild of Daly City / Colma was founded with one part-time grant-subsidized city employee.

**1983, July** – Mayor Jane Powell dedicated the photographs and oral history manuscripts at the Serramonte Library as “The Samuel C. Chandler History Collection.” The History, Arts & Science Commission announced a project to research and identify the photos collected by retiring City Librarian Samuel Chandler.

**1986** The History Guild of Daly City/Colma became an independent entity with by-laws and elected officers.

**1987** – Bunny and Ken Gillespie were designated as the Official Daly City Historians. They had published *The Great Daly City Historical Trivia Book* in 1986.

**1992** – Sept, the Mini-Museum of Daly City, operated by the History Guild of Daly City, was dedicated in the Serramonte Library.

**1993** – The Colma Historical Association was founded in the adjoining community of Colma.

**1999** – Bernard Winn’s book *From The Top of the Hill: Growing up in the Daly City of the ‘20s and ‘30s* was published.

**2003** – Bunny Gillespie’s book *Images of America: Daly City* was published, the first of three titles she authored by Arcadia Press.

**2006** – Rob Keil published *Little Boxes: The Architecture of a Classic Midcentury Suburb*. The photo-filled book focused on the Westlake district of Daly City.

**2008, January 22** – The History Guild of Daly City/Colma occupied the original John D. Daly Library with an agreement to lease the building for 20 years (renewable) for a \$1 a year. The Guild began a year-long renovation of the facility.

**2008** – Bunny Gillespie published the second Arcadia book *Images of America: Westlake*.

**2009, March 15** – History Guild of Daly City/Colma opened the former John D. Daly Library building at Cont’d pg. 3

6351 Mission Street as a non-profit museum with nearly 300 people attending the opening and dedication of the original room as the Ken and Bunny Gillespie Room. There was an unveiling of granite plaques donated by V. Fontana & Co. Earlier in the year the Samuel Chandler photo collection moved to the new museum from the former Mini-Museum in the basement of the Serramonte Library. Mr. Chandler attended the opening.



Mark Weinberger, Dana Smith, and Michael Rocchetta celebrating with champagne on the day we received the key to the vacant library. Note metal book stacks.

**2011** – Daly City celebrated the centennial of its incorporation. The Centennial Performers (led by Vaughn Jones) presented a historical musical medley at the Guild's January meeting. Bunny Gillespie and Dave Crimmen published the Arcadia book of photos *Then & Now: Daly City*.

**2011** – November, Mark Weinberger established the Guild Facebook page online.

**2012** – November 14<sup>th</sup>, Century 20 Theater in Daly City presented *Daly City: Growing Up in America*, a documentary directed by Bryan Kingston and sponsored by the History Guild. In March, the Guild unveiled its Centennial project, the restored fireplace and hearth in the museum's Gillespie Room.

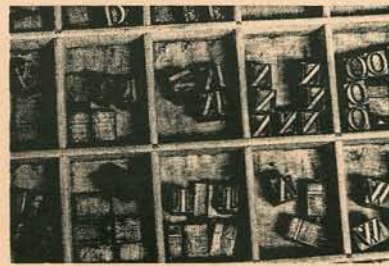
**2013**, November, opening of the *A Walk Through Time* timeline exhibit at the Daly City History Museum. This first curated exhibit is ongoing, a thesis project for a Master's Degree in Museum Studies at SFSU by History Guild Board member Dana Smith. It was inspired by the universal *Timelines of History*, an Internet world timeline created and maintained by Board Member Algis Ratnikas.

**2014** – The Guild's website goes online.

**2014** – Robert Keil and Monique Lombardelli presented the completed documentary *Little Boxes: The Legacy of Henry Doelger* at our March general meeting.

...and history continues to be made and documented.

## ARION PRESS



The fine press tradition of typesetting, letterpress printing, and bookbinding is carried on in the nearby San Francisco Presidio at Arion

Press, designated an "irreplaceable cultural treasure" by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It is a living tradition where 100 year-old equipment is kept running for the production of limited edition books printed with metal type.

At our last meeting Mark Weinberger invited Guild members to attend the free tour in early December. Board Members Judith Christensen and Dana Smith attended and would like to add our recommendation to that of Mark's. Even with the usual tour fee of \$10, this is a fascinating nearby historic treasure. Public demonstration tours of the historic printing and bookmaking facilities of Arion Press and the historic typefoundry of M & H Type are held Thursday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. and last approximately an hour and a half. There is a charge of \$10.00 per person, payable by cash or check. Reservations are required. call (415) 668-2548 or e-mail [grabhorn@arionpress.com](mailto:grabhorn@arionpress.com). [www.arionpress.com](http://www.arionpress.com)

## IT'S HIP TO BE UNCOOL IN DALY CITY

by Bob Calhoun

*Editor Note:* In mid-November technology writer Will Oremus described Daly City as "the Bay Area's equivalent of purgatory." Daly City resident, author, and pop historian Bob Calhoun wrote this somewhat irreverent but entertaining rebuttal in Valleywag media blog (reprinted). He recently visited the Daly City Museum to research another Daly City topic.

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To be fair to Oremus, he does call this "an unfair characterization in many ways," and his critique is framed from the perspective of techies who work at well-funded startups (like Reddit) and their opinion of San Francisco's closest neighbor. Oremus' straw-geeks see Daly City as "drive-through country" lacking "a quaint town center with restaurants and coffee shops." Cont'd pg. 4

It's Hip, cont'd

As a resident of Daly City who also used to live on the same block of Third Street in San Francisco that Reddit now occupies, I was moved to write this piece not as a rebuttal to Oremus, but more as a, "Yeah, so..."

Daly City IS the dumping ground for things banned, or at least greatly curtailed, within San Francisco's rarefied borders. Big box stores, used car lots, every fast-food chain you can think of will meet you in Daly City as you cross the San Mateo county line going southbound on Mission Street. Daly City boasts not just one Home Depot, but two Home Depots. And if that isn't enough, there are also two Targets (if you count the one in nearby Colma)—one on either side of Highway 280. How's that for convenience?

Now you can look at all of this seeming suburban blight and call my town a pit, but let me tell you about the tree in front of my single-family home. Every so often, a city truck towing a water tank drives up to that tree and waters it. Sometimes the city workers prune the tree as well. And you know why Daly City can afford to take such good care of these trees that line the sidewalks in front of her "ticky-tacky" houses (as Malvina Reynolds put it in the snobbiest folk hit of all time)? Because people from San Francisco take their Ubers and Zipcars up here and buy crap at our big box stores. That's why. And we also have some pretty good libraries, parks and rec centers as a result of this exodus of sales tax revenue out of San Francisco.

Oremus mentions the Cow Palace, saying it "plays periodic host to rodeos and gun shows." While this is true, he forgets to mention that the Moo House is also the place where Evel Knievel punched out some Hells Angels before jumping over a row of muscle cars, and The Who had to pull some guy out of the audience to play drums because Keith Moon had passed out. While the monster truck pulls and the annual Dickens Faire may only echo Daly City's former glory, you can bet that nothing this cool will ever happen again in San Francisco. All you're going to get there are yacht races, Oracle World, and several other monuments to Larry Ellison's sad male ego that have a way of wasting tax payer money and tying up traffic.

Daly City has Val's, a steakhouse and lounge with a menu and décor that has been unchanged at least since the Johnson Administration. The bar has the region's prerequisite shrine to the San Francisco 49ers offset with oil paintings of topless women with bouffant hairdos. Val's main competitor for Daly City's fine family dining dollars, Joe's of Westlake [closed 2014], bears the distinction of being the place where Anton LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan, liked to chow down on a steak served with a mess of greasy raviolis. Sadly, Joe's

of Westlake is currently undergoing renovations, but hopefully the new owners will have the sense to not change too much.

Admittedly, the rumor that a proposed move to Daly City caused dissent among Reddit's ranks is met with a sense of relief around here where there's reason to fear that all those nearby gobs of money will ooze out of San Francisco and Atherton and engulf Val's, Joe's and our twin Targets like ravenous blobs fueled by Bitcoin and fully-vested stock options. One can only wonder what the line at the Fil-Am BBQ would be like if so much douchiness was transplanted here. And what of the nurses, firemen, and auto mechanics who can actually afford to live here, close to the big city where they work? None of them are losing sleep over Daly City's lack of "rock star butchers" or world-class mixologists. Believe me.

Oremus writes Daly City is a "limbo between being able to afford to move to San Francisco or one of the tonier Peninsula suburbs and being priced out of the metro area altogether." And again, I say, "Yeah, so?" We get it. Daly City is deeply uncool, but being uncool is what's saving us. Those of us who *choose* to live here like me still get to be less than a mile from San Francisco without the hassle of living there. Daly City ain't Austin or Portland. We don't need to keep it weird, but it's okay that techies think it sucks. Keep Daly City uncool. Please.

**A BIT ABOUT BOB:** Bob Calhoun was born in San Francisco and currently calls Daly City home. His books include offbeat topics such as the wacky world of conventions and wrestling. He is a regular contributor to *Film Salon*.

*Defending Daly City from ridicule:* Mr. Calhoun's defense of Daly City has some historic precedence. Around 1918, H. H. Smith (who made a business of hauling earthquake shacks from San Francisco to Daly City and later became a longtime Mayor of the city) became fed up with the jokes on the San Francisco vaudeville circuit where comedians made Daly City the butt of their jokes. He took out a full page ad in the *Sunday Examiner* with the title "Daly City, a good place to live," with a list of Daly City's accomplishments (from original notes by George Kirchhubel, 1974, History Guild Archives).

#### ORIGINAL BUSINESSES AT SERRAMONTE CENTER by Michael Rocchetta

Former DC Police Chief and Guilder Facebook friend Gary McLane wrote us asking if we had information on the original businesses at Serramonte Center. Michael Cont'd pg. 5



Vintage photo of the ceiling waterfall, Central Mall. Serramonte Shopping Center opened in 1968. Built on the former Christen Dairy Ranch, it was the first covered shopping mall in North San Mateo County.

Rocchetta put on his thinking cap, and responded. When Serramonte first opened these were the following restaurants:

The Flaming Pit was a formal sit-down restaurant, located on the northeast corner (right side) just when you entered the east mall entrance, before they built Mervyn's. The Flaming Pit changed a little while later to the Ranch Inn. (same location). The Roast House: a "hauf brau" type restaurant was located on the right side of the mall as you faced Montgomery Wards (now Target). Mel's Coffee Shop was a small sit-down coffee shop (owned by the Mel's drive-in in SF), located where the food court is now located in the space now occupied by an Italian pizza place (formally Sbarro's pizza). Newberry's variety store had a lunch counter and it was located at the east corner across from Wards (now Target). Montgomery Wards had a small sit-down restaurant in the back of the store. Macy's also had a small restaurant, downstairs where the small appliances and cookware are now located. Note: there was no food court when the mall opened and no "fast food". Denny's, Farrell's (outside) and a small "food court" came later.

### THE GUILD REMEMBERS TOM POLLICITA & AL TEGLIA

Longtime History Guild member **Thomas Pollicita** died in Merced, California in mid-November. He was born in San Francisco in 1927 and graduated from Galileo High School in 1946. He served in the Navy and eventually received his Masters degree from San Francisco State University. Tom taught at Colma Intermediate School, eventually becoming Principal. He retired in 1985 when the school was renamed in his honor Thomas R. Pollicita Middle School.

Former Daly City Mayor **Al Teglia** died in late October in Roseville after a long battle with cancer at age 83. A child of Italian Genoese immigrants, Teglia was born in Colma in 1931 and moved to Daly City in 1949. He attended Jefferson High School and studied horticultural at College of San Mateo before working for the San Mateo Union High School District for 38 years, eventually becoming operations manager. Teglia served three terms on the Jefferson Union High School board of trustees, worked for the San Mateo County Human Services Agency and served five terms on Daly City's City Council, including four terms as mayor. It was the political wisdom of his era that no one could be elected in Daly City without his help and nod of approval.

Al Teglia survived his first wife Verna Kunz and in 2008 married longtime friend Frances Foglia. His charitable activities were many and he was a charter member of the History Guild of Daly City/Colma.



We thank Frank Maffei for sending this picture of a youthful Al Teglia in 1940.

Frances said her husband's beloved rescue cats, Pia and Dolce, were at his side until the very end.

**DONATIONS AND GUILD NEWS:** Thanks to: **Linda Minnix** for the donation of a like-new dehumidifier for the museum. Congratulations to **Mike Wilson**, longtime Guild member and volunteer back in the 1980s organizing the Chandler Photo Collection, on his retirement from the Daly City Finance Department. He worked for Daly City since his youth and was responsible for initiating the risk management program. Congratulations to our Guild Treasurer **Judith Christensen** on her re-election to the Daly City Council after an absence of six years. We just received an update from the engineering department of Daly City that the California Coastal Commission recently finished their review of the plan for improvement for **Mussel Rock**, which includes picnic tables and historic signage. The Guild has been involved in the ongoing project. We will keep you informed of progress on these long-anticipated improvements. We have just received another inquiry about a Daly City WWII soldier, 2nd Lieutenant **Robert Nelson McCune**, who was lost in the air battle over Europe and whose name is inscribed on the Wall of the Missing at the American War Cemetery at Margraten, The Netherlands. Robert was a varsity football player for Jefferson High School. More to follow on Robert McCune in the next edition of the *Tattler*.



# THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY/COLMA

## DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

6351 Mission Street, Daly City, CA 94014

650/757-7177

Current Hours: Tuesdays and Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m.



Please visit us on Facebook at "Daly City History Museum"

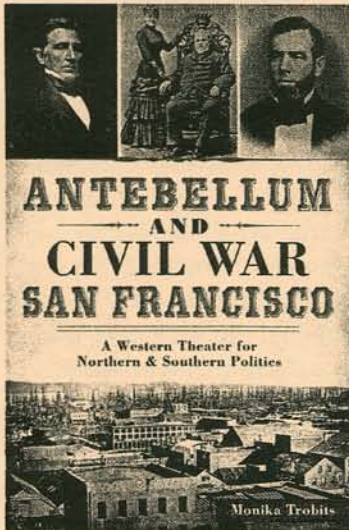
[www.dalycityhistorymuseum.org](http://www.dalycityhistorymuseum.org)

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**



### DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Mark your calendars for our March meeting.  
WEDNESDAY, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm



Author Monika Trobits lectures on "The Bay Area and the Civil War."

This regular evening meeting will feature author Monika Trobits speaking about her new book *Antebellum and Civil War San Francisco*, with a special emphasis on the Broderick/Terry Duel.

#### GUILD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Mark Weinberger, President 650/757-7177  
president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org

Richard Rocchetta, Vice-President  
Dana Smith, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President/Museum Director  
Judith Christensen, Treasurer  
Algis Ratnikas, Secretary

Directors: Michael Rocchetta, Marcus Gonzalez

Ken Gillespie (1924-2011), President-Emeritus  
Bunny Gillespie, Secretary-Emerita  
Annette Hipona, Hospitality Chair

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

History Guild of Daly City/Colma is a  
501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization  
Memberships begin at \$25 per year.

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