

JANUARY
2016

THE TATTLER

JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY - COLMA

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

Happy new year to one and all. We hope that everyone had a joyous and festive holiday season. As we start 2016, we thought it only fitting to have our first program of the year focus on a topic we've often been asked about, the storied history that is the Olympic Club. This also happens to be our second in a series of golf courses/country clubs within the Daly City environs. You might know that the Olympic Club spans two counties, with most of its 'holes' in San Francisco but definitely extending into San Mateo County and Daly City. The golf course is divided by Skyline Boulevard on the western end, though the club has an underground pedestrian tunnel that remedies that situation and allows for uninterrupted play on its Ocean Course. The other Daly City boundaries extend from Lake Merced Boulevard on the eastern side to Northgate Avenue at the southern end. Briefly, the club was established in 1860 and enjoys the distinction of being America's oldest athletic club. There are two historic clubhouses; the City Club near San Francisco's Union Square and Lakeside that straddles the Pacific Ocean. Architect Arthur Brown, Jr., who designed San Francisco City Hall, also gave life to the Lakeside clubhouse, which opened in 1925. Along with the Ocean Course there is the Lake Course. Each course has 18 holes. The club hosted its first U.S. Open Championship in 1955, followed by 1966, 1987, 1998 and 2012. In 2007 the U.S. Amateur Championships was held at the club, also, the 2004 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship, and now the inaugural U.S. Amateur Four-Ball Championship in 2015. The club has been the home for numerous other local, regional, national, and international champions over the years. Such venerable and star golfers as Ben Hogan, Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson, Payne Stewart and Tiger Woods have played here. You are sure to learn a great deal more about the rich history of the Olympic Club as General Manager Pat Finlen tells how the club came to be, its role today, and what the future holds.

Thank you to all those who have renewed their support of the Guild with their 2016 memberships. We sincerely appreciate your continued patronage of Daly City's only
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DAYTIME HISTORY MEETING

Sunday, January 17, 2:00 PM
101 Lake Merced Blvd. Daly City
Doelger Center Cafe

The Olympic Club General Manager Pat Finlen
presents

The History of the Olympic Club



U.S. Open at the Olympic Club June 19, 1987, and a young Arnold Palmer at the Club. Photos from *SF Chronicle* archive.



REFRESHMENTS:

Will be provided by **June Neuhaus, Pat Hatfield, Rich Rocchetta and Mark Weinberger**. This is our annual member party and the Guild will provide special treats (bubbly to toast in the New Year, and special cake). Thank you to refreshment donors and to our gracious Hospitality Chair, **Annette Hipona**, and her assistant **Grace Gonzalez**.



*TIME TO RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP FOR 2016!*

If you find a return envelope in this newsletter, it means we have not yet received your renewal donation. You are an important part of the Guild family!

historical organization which preserves, protects, promotes, and promulgates its fascinating and illustrious history. To those who have upgraded their memberships, we offer an additional "Thank You!" Membership dues and the occasional donation are what keep the Guild on sound footing and continually operating in the black. Finally, a hearty welcome and our sincere gratitude to all new members who have decided to join the fold. A word of caution: be careful. Our historical talks are contagious, and we're sure that once you've attended one you'll be back for more, which is our fondest hope.

THE TATTLER – IN CONTINUOUS PUBLICATION BY THE GUILD SINCE 1982

Before the History Guild adopted the name "Tattler" for its newsletter, the name had an association with the earliest published media in the area. In 1912 the first *Tattler* was started by Ben Silva as a chatty monthly flyer *The Colma Tattler*, which humorously declared its mission to be "to report doings in Colma, Daly City, and vicinity witty, wise and otherwise." In 1914 it became a weekly publication by editors Robert Behre and Ben Neuman. It then evolved into the *Daly City Record*. The Christmas edition of 1915, displayed in the museum's Timeline exhibit bears the dual name *Tattler and Daly City Record*.

For over 20 years Bunny Gillespie, who worked in public relations, served as editor and Ken Gillespie, who worked in the graphics field, took on the design and publication of the Guild's *Tattler* and built a loyal following. After assisting in production for two years, Dana Smith, who is an artist and has a background in graphics, took over editing and production in 2008 and continues in this demanding volunteer position.

We occasionally get letters from members who are *Tattler* fans. The note printed below is from longtime member Bianca Caserza:

*Dear those,
The "Tattler"
articles keep getting
better + better.
I read each copy
at least three times
Thank you for all
your excellent articles.
I'm sure you spend
time for all of the
research for these
historical treasures.*

Bianca

Michael Rocchetta has been engaged in a special project to assemble and archive all the issues of the *Guild Tattler* and to scan them in digital format to be linked to our website. This is a huge project which will come to fruition in the new year.

(Editors note: Thank you Bianca for your kind words of support. You have beautiful handwriting... almost a lost art in this day and age.)

**THE GUILD REMEMBERS
GEORGE LAGOMARSINO & STUART HOPPIN**

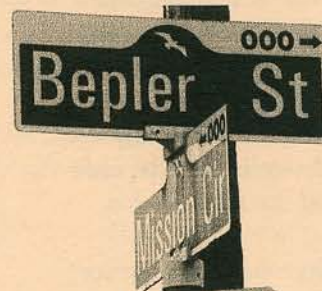
George Lagomarsino passed away peacefully in November at the age of 90. George was a prominent realtor in Daly City for over 50 years. His uncles were Rico and William Lagomarsino, realtors in Daly City, and Fred Lane who was mayor of Colma in the 50s and 60s. Our condolences go out to the family.

Stuart Hoppin passed away in early December. Stuart and his wife Ruth were members of the Guild since its inception. Ruth, a published writer and founder of the Poetry Guild, was instrumental in donating that group's funds to the History Guild when it disbanded. Our condolences go out to Ruth and the family.

JUSTICE BEPLER, EARLY PIONEER

Based primarily on excerpts from a research paper by Russell Brabec

Russell Brabec comments, "I became interested in the people of the northern San Mateo County who settled there after the gold rush and statehood. During my 38 years of employment with the City of Daly City, I observed that most of the written history of this era was of those people who settled in the central and southern part of the county. Thus I began a project of researching many of the settlers of the northern part of the county... The basis of my information came from the records of San Mateo County, the California Digital Newspaper Collection (internet) for nineteenth century and very early twentieth century newspapers, and the main library of San Francisco for city directories and newspaper microfilms."



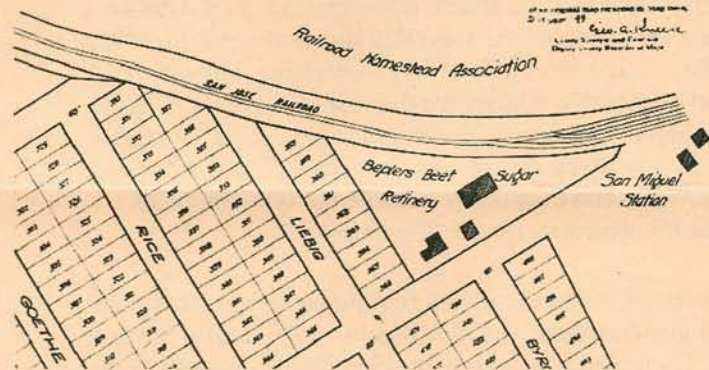
Justice Bepler, an early settler and a native of Prussia, acquired land during the 1850's, at the Top of the Hill in Daly City. He owned the Abbey House property, but he was not a proprietor. Sailors were

known to have been shanghaied from the Abbey Roadhouse as unwilling crew members on sailing ships.
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Bepler, cont'd

In 1856 San Mateo County held its first election and the Abbey House was the polling place for the Colma precinct, which included most of the north end of the county. There were about 50 eligible voters and 500 ballots were cast. Later a judge filed a lawsuit charging election fraud by the Chris Lilly gang of racketeers who were then proprietors of the Abbey Tavern and were using it as their headquarters in an attempt to take over San Mateo County. The Abbey House still existed in 1906 across Mission Road from the Daly dairy when refugees fled south from the earthquake and fire. No records have been found that document its demolition and to date no photographs have been found of the Abbey House.

Bepler deeded property to Israel Graham Knowles which later became the land on which John Donald Daly and William Henry Kinne built a farmhouse at the Top of the Hill. Kinne then sold out his interest in the property to John Daly. Bepler Street, named for Justus Bepler, is at the Top of the Hill where the newest Daly City fire house is now located.



From 1869-1870 beet sugar was made here by Bepler in a small factory near San Miguel. While he demonstrated the capability of the land for raising sugar beets, with a capacity of 50 lbs. a day manufacturing on such a small scale was not financially viable. Bepler also owned properties in Marin County, where he died in 1875 in Novato. The newspapers reported, "He has not been very well for many months, but his death has caused much surprise and regrets. He was a native of Prussia, only 48 years old, though he looked much older."

IN APPRECIATION

Thanks to: Carolyn Livengood for her donation of archives of her articles for the *San Mateo Times* column she wrote for many years, which regularly featured the lecture programs of the History Guild. Carolyn continues to promote our programs in her blog.

(<http://www.mercurynews.com/carolyn-livengood>)

Carolyn also donated a DVD featuring the Police Athletic League (PAL). Thanks to Russ Brabec for his donation of research papers on Justice Bepler and early cemeteries in Daly City and a tape of Avalon Canyon

and Mussel Rock from 1982. Carole Hutchins deserves praise for putting together the 1943 spring edition of "The Scoop," the Crocker School magazine donated by Lucille Tromberg. Carole did a job worthy of a professional archivist. And finally, thanks to Judith Christensen for her very generous donation of a new giant 60 inch television to the museum for displaying historic videos. Judith won the prize at the Chamber of Commerce holiday party. The TV was donated to the Chamber event by Allied Waste.

DUGGAN'S, THE LONGSHOREMAN'S STRIKE OF 1934, AND THE PRICE OF BANANAS

A historical note of interest from the November lecture on the history of the Duggan's Mortuary and its ties to the 1934 Longshoreman's strike in San Francisco:



William Duggan driving the funeral hearse for victims of "Bloody Thursday". Photo by Duggan's Serra Mortuary

In 1934 the Longshoreman's Union in San Francisco organized a strike against ship owners. By mid-July the General Strike had become one of the biggest and bloodiest in San Francisco's history. July 5th became known as "Bloody Thursday" when SF police and the National Guard attacked the union hall and shot into a crowd, killing two. The following week more than 40,000 people filled the streets of San Francisco in a funeral parade for those who had died. William Duggan (Grandfather to Bill and Dan) led the procession. William Duggan was both a teamster and a mortician.

The Longshoreman's union became one of the most powerful in the nation when they won recognition, wage increases and a union-controlled hiring hall. A railroad shipment of bananas that could not be unloaded because of the strike was sent to Colma to feed hogs. The whole town had more than their share of bananas. (*SP Trainline* magazine, Winter 2005.)

FIRE TRUCK DONATED TO MEXICO, 1966

In 1968 a surplus 1941 Mack fire truck was donated to the City of Madero, Mexico (population 60,000) located on the Gulf of Mexico, some 300 miles south of the

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Mexican border in spite of some daunting "red tape" – the truck was detained in Laredo, Texas for a year and was finally permitted to enter the country after much negotiating between Daly City's fire chief, Herbert Ritzman, and the Mexican government, including a final plea to the President of Mexico himself.

1996 members of the Daly City Council and Fire Chief presenting keys to the Madero Fire Department



**CONRAD H. PAVELLAS (1913-2000)
COMMUNITY ACTIVIST, CHILD POET**



Dancer Isadora Duncan

(Information gleaned from the family blog by son Ron Pavellas, who now lives in Sweden.)

Conrad Pavellas was born in Marin County in 1913. His mother, Lucille, was enamored of the revival of ancient Greek arts, lead by the dancer Isadora Duncan. Lucille and her sister

Genevieve were instructed by Raymond Duncan, Isadora's brother. His early days were spent in Mill Valley where he was home schooled until the age of 9



when Marin County authorities insisted he go to regular school. This was the end of him dressing in togas as if he were living in Ancient Greece.

At age 6 he gained fame as a

child poet protégé with the publication of the book "In Praise of the Sun." Despite this unusual beginning in which his mother and tutors taught him classic literature and history, Greek, Latin and the arts, he eventually took

a more conventional path. He destroyed all the early photos of his childhood and copies of the poetry book, but both survived and are archived at UC Berkeley.

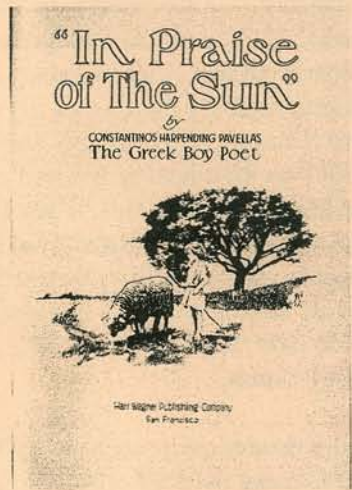
He was in his senior year at Berkeley (in political science and he was in the R.O.T.C.) when his mother, father and uncle George D. Papageorge-Palladius all died within a year. He dropped out at age 21 and took over the family business, a Greek-American newspaper, *The Prometheus*. His family had money in the teens and early 1920s, but it was all gone by the depression when Conrad was

employed in the Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to help combat unemployment in the Great Depression. He was a socialist (eventually the Secretary-Treasurer of the San Francisco Socialist Labor Party), and later an ardent Democrat. He met Artemis Pagonis when he was traveling the west coast to collect subscription money for *The Prometheus*. They married and eventually worked for the war effort at the Kaiser Richmond shipyards building Victory Ships. Conrad started working for the San Francisco Examiner as a linotypist and eventually became the typographical union's chairman for the *The Examiner*.

Conrad decided to buy his first house to accommodate the growing family, and it was to be the fateful move to 62 Theta Avenue, Daly City. Son Ron comments on his father: "Conrad was involved in many community efforts in his lifetime, the most satisfying and productive being his building and leading, with others, the Original Daly Protective Association (ODCPA)." OD CPA was formed to prevent the destruction by redevelopment of the oldest area of Daly City at the Top of the Hill, which became known as "Original Daly City."

Conrad became known for his ardent oratory, waving the US Constitution during fiery speeches at City Hall. After winning the battle to save homes from redevelopment, Conrad, Joe Guisto, Ernie Pezzola and other OD CPA stalwarts continued neighborhood activism.

Conrad eventually retired to San Jose where he passed away at age 87 in the year 2000, just before OD CPA revived the battle against redevelopment by opposing the extension of eminent domain powers. (Redevelopment in the state was ended by the California legislature in 2011.) OD CPA continues today, with Guild Treasurer (and City Council Member) Judith Christensen as President.





Conrad Pavellas is the third from the right. ODCPA gathering for a rally, 1972.

JAMES B. ROOF 1910-1983 FAMED BOTANIST FROM DALY CITY

James Roof was born in Daly City four years after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake in a refugee shack. As a child he played around Lake Merced and as a preteen he transplanted his first seedling, a Monterey cypress growing along the flume going to the lake. During the Great Depression, he joined many who fled to Mt. Tamalpais and then Point Reyes as places to live off the land during hard times. He eventually found employment in a nursery of the US Forest Service in Berkeley as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). He also began taking botany classes at the University of California. He eventually became the Director of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Tilden Regional Park in the East Bay. His *Guide to the Plant Species of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden* is still viewed as an important contribution to the field.



James B. Roof Visitor Center, Tilden Park

Watching for areas scheduled for development was an important part of Jim's rescue trips for rare plants in order to bring them into cultivation prior to their extinction in the wild. He became a leader in the California Native Plant Society from its inception. He played a key role in passage of the state's endangered

plant law. He was active in the study of rare plants on San Bruno Mountain.

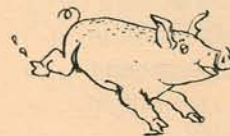
DALY CITY CEMETERIES

Excerpts from a Research Paper by Russ Brabec

Everyone has heard of the multitude of cemeteries in Colma, but adjacent Daly City has four active cemeteries. The lands for these properties were acquired from descendants of two Irish-American families, Bridget and Patrick Morgan Brooks and Elizabeth and Owen McMahon. These two pioneer families held lands comprising today of southern Colma, northern South San Francisco, and southern Daly City.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, cemeteries in San Francisco became the target for closure by developers. The Chinese Cemetery bounded by Arguello, California, Euclid (or Jordan) Streets was also affected. The Ning Yung Company had on its books fully one-half of all Chinese in the United States.

The Chinese, victims of discrimination, had no opportunity in the Colma cemetery area. Ellen Maria McMahon Barry, daughter of pioneers Elizabeth and Owen McMahon sold land for a Chinese Cemetery which now lies at the intersection of Hickey Boulevard and Callan Boulevard. Later, pioneers Patrick Brooks and J. A. Christen also sold property to the Ning Yung.



IT USED TO RAIN PIGS!

1937 – A. G. Shinazy, Daly City resident since 1919 comments on the hills of Broadmoor which were terraced on green slippery clay causing landslides in the area. "I remember 25-30 years ago seeing 300-lb. hogs come sliding down the hill from the old Callan Hog ranch." (Daly City Record 3/1/1962 "It Used To Rain Pigs!")



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

FIRST CLASS MAIL



THE DEATH OF THE #40 TROLLEY LINE



1949 – The City of San Francisco decided it would not continue the United Railroad trolley line into Daly City. San Mateo County was not interested in purchasing the line from Daly City to San Mateo and the

last electric trolley #1235 left San Mateo on Jan. 16, 1949 after 46 years of service. Not a single resident of San Mateo County appeared at the hearing to decide on the fate of the #40 line. The line had been averaging loses of \$340 a day as customers chose to drive their cars rather than use the once-popular trolley.

The tracks remained on Mission Street until the palm trees were planted in the late 1950's/early 60s. August Conci planted the palms when he was Daly City parks Superintendent. At Christmas time Conci put lighted stars on the trees. The 280 freeway was built in the early 60s to accommodate increased auto traffic and in 1972 BART came to Daly City to re-establish a commuter rail line when the freeways became too crowded.

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Dana Smith, 2nd Vice-President/Museum Director
Judith Christensen, Treasurer
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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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