

THE TATTLE

JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY - COLMA

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Cow Palace, proudly located in Daly City, not San Francisco--though a parking lot on the grounds does reside over the San Francisco County line. To share this and other fascinating bits of the storied history of this venerable institution with us will be the Diana Colvin, Mayor of Colma, who happens to be the Rentals and Operations Officer for the Cow Palace. The idea for the Cow Palace can be traced to the 1915 Pan-Pacific International Exposition, and over the years has hosted such events and luminaries as: Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus, 1949 U.S. Heavyweight Boxing Championship, Grand National Livestock Expo, Horse Show, and Rodeo, 1964 and 1956 Republican Conventions, Liberace, John F. Kennedy, Beatles, Rolling Stones, Elvis Presley, and so many more. Diana will reflect on the rich legacy that is the still vibrant Cow Palace of Daly City.

I am very pleased to announce that the Guild has added new content to our web site since we debuted just a couple of years ago. We have added a brand new page which will give members and the public at large access to more than 100 copies of vintage *Tattlers* from over the course of more than 30 years. Director Michael Rocchetta, with the overwhelming gratitude of the board, undertook this project on his own. He sought to recreate as many *Tattlers* from yesteryear as possible, which was no easy feat as we did not have an entire set in its completeness from which to work. Due to Michael's yeoman efforts, what follows is as complete and encapsulated a history as possible at this time. There are some gaps here and there. With the passage of time and as more resources come our way, we hope to fill in the holes so that we have as complete a picture as possible of the Guild beginning with its inception in 1982. For now, however, we'll have to make due with starting our vintage *Tattlers* back in early 1985 and spanning the range of more than three decades to the present. To view this rich and varied history of the Guild simply visit our web site: <http://dalycityhistorymuseum.org> and choose *The Tattler* tab at the top of the page. Happy reading!

We recently acquired a limited number of *Gateway to the Peninsula*, the first official history of Daly City written by the late Daly City Librarian and historian Samuel Chandler. This frequently requested 1973 book has long been out of print. It is for sale for \$10 in our gift shop and at meetings. Be sure to get yours while supplies last.

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EVENING HISTORY MEETING

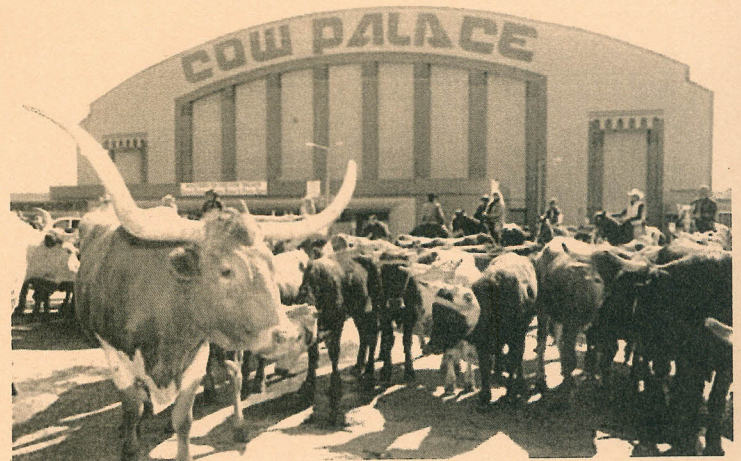
Wednesday, May 18th, 7 PM

101 Lake Merced Blvd. Daly City
Doelger Center Cafe

Presents

THE HISTORY OF THE COW PALACE

Diana Colvin, Mayor of Colma
Rentals and Operations Officer for the Cow Palace



REFRESHMENTS: Will be provided by **Pat Hatfield** and **Marcus and Grace Gonzalez**. Thank you to refreshment donors and to our gracious Hospitality Chair, **Annette Hipona**, and her assistant **Grace Gonzalez**.

Your donations are appreciated for our fundraising raffle, organized by Rich Rocchetta.

Help the Guild grow.

Invite a friend to our next meeting.

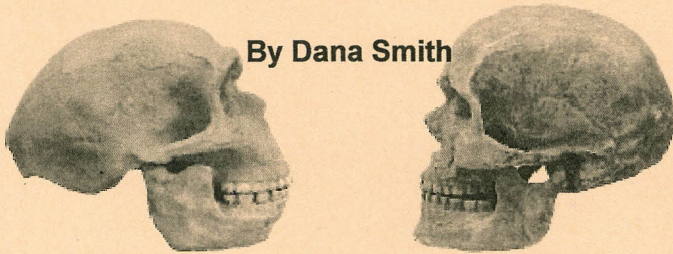
Finally, we have some exciting, big projects in the works for the museum later this year. We are busy planning for some new permanent exhibits and technology to grace the facility. Have we peaked your curiosity yet? Good. We will have updates in future *Tattlers*, but be sure to check our web site and for the most immediate news, our Facebook page.

History is contagious--pass it on!

Proud to be a Neanderthal

Finding Our Roots through DNA

By Dana Smith



April 25th is National DNA Day, the day I discovered I am a Neanderthal, or to be more exact almost 4% Neanderthal. While this may seem to be a small amount, it is more than 83% of the people tested by the popular genetic testing company 23andMe. When I heard about the Neanderthal Genome Project on the PBS program "Decoding Neanderthals," despite the bad public image of my sub-species, I took the test hoping to be a survivor of these long-extinct humans. I would like to think that my intuitive artistic abilities and close connection to animals and the earth might be due in part to these tough Ice Age hunter gatherers.

Researchers extracted the DNA from the bones of a 38,000 year-old female Neanderthal and through the miracles of modern science were able to track the DNA and compare it to the DNA of modern humans, like me. The Neanderthals survived the harsh conditions in Europe for at least 300,000 years before Homo sapiens migrated from Africa around 40,000 years ago to the Neanderthal homeland, outnumbering them 10 to one. After another 10,000 years, the Neanderthals disappeared, thought to have been killed and driven to extinction by the more advanced humans. The presence of Neanderthal DNA in human populations today indicates that Homo sapiens must have mated with Neanderthals and produced fertile offspring, who inherited segments of Neanderthal D.N.A. Researchers believe that Neanderthal-human interbreeding was frequent and within 10,000 years Neanderthals were bred out, or as researchers say "genetically swamped." In other words, they "Made Love, Not War." Successful breeding hybrids would indicate that both groups of humans were so closely related that Svante Pääbo,

whose team sequenced the Neanderthal genome, believes that Homo sapiens and Neanderthals are a single species. Pääbo says, "I would see them as a form of humans that are bit more different than humans are today, but not much."

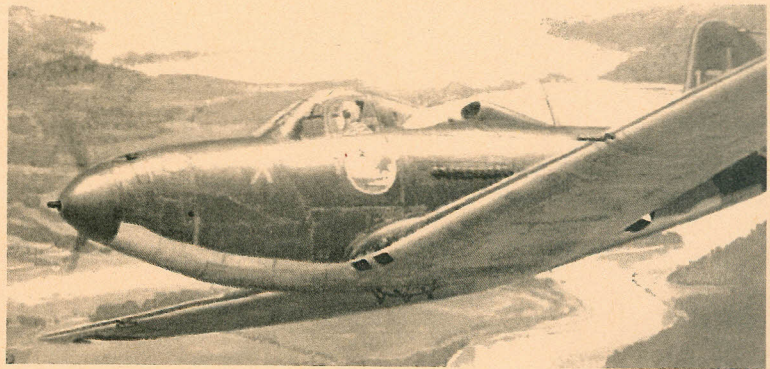
I find the news exhilarating and optimistic. In these days of jihad and genocide, it is strangely heartening to know that my Neanderthal kinfolk were assimilated and not annihilated.

And I'm certainly not the only Neanderthal in Daly City. Most people with a European ethnicity are 1-2% Neanderthal. DNA testing may reveal some interesting genetic history.

Aviation Archaeologists Discover Crash Site on San Bruno Mountain

By Jeff Christner

Editor Note: Jeff Christner recently contacted me through email after a previous conversation at the museum. I will be meeting him and his son soon after this edition of the Tattler goes to press. We are thrilled to have his materials for our museum archive and displays.

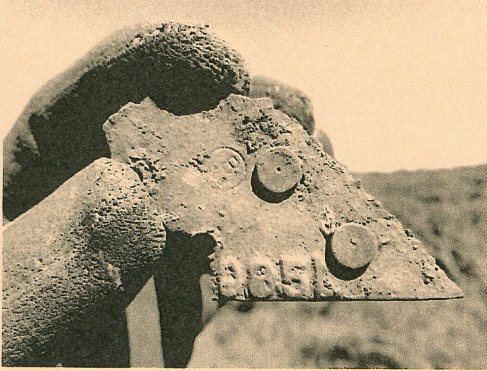


My son and I are also aviation archaeologists and we took a look at some of the information and news articles you [Daly City History Museum] had about the two plane crashes in Daly City on 12/5/1943.

Technically only one plane crashed in Daly City on Alexander Street, however, the other plane was only noted in the articles to have crashed "in the hills nearby". We had been researching the location of the second crash, which is only about 150' away from the city line proper, and early last year we found the remains of the aircraft. The pieces are small and scattered, but no doubt we found the location where the second plane went down. I have digital copies and a printed out binder of information/photos for you that I'd like to drop off

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should the museum wish to have it. On the morning of December 5th, 1943 in Daly City, California two P-39Qs crashed two minutes apart. Initial reports suggested a mid-air collision but the military later discounted that theory. Both aircraft were part of a flight of five aircraft on a routine training mission from Mills Field (SFO) down to Pigeon Point on the San Mateo County coast and back to Mills Field. While returning to Mills Field the flight got lost in the overcast near San Bruno Mountain and two of the planes crashed as a result of not being able to navigate on instruments or due to spatial disorientation. Another pilot who was part of the flight of five, 2nd Lt. James Fowle, reported he stalled and entered a steep spiral as a result of entering the overcast while at the same time trying to avoid a mid-air collision with others in the flight, but thankfully he was able to regain controlled flight and later landed safely.



Artifact at the San Bruno Mountain crash site, Photo: Jeff Christner.

After recently receiving the death certificates from the County of San Mateo for both pilots, I can safely say that the prior confusion about who crashed where has been resolved and my album has been updated with the correct information. That being said, contrary to the media reports, I believe that Flight Officer Criswell actually crashed first in the hills, followed two minutes later by 2nd Lt. Hopkins' crash into the house.

Why did the media get the reports of who crashed first wrong? I believe the crash into the house was the first reported crash due to the amount of emergency calls that must have been placed shortly after it happened. And while the crash in the hills was actually first, members of the 140th Signal Radio Intelligence Squadron probably ran to the crash site (per their witness statements) and only after doing so sent someone back to one of the buildings to phone in the report of the aircraft down, making that the second reported crash. All that being said, the military crash reports still have some of the witness statements and photographs attached to the wrong reports.

At 9:20 a.m. P-39Q-10 tail number 42-20836 piloted by Flight Officer George Criswell, 22 years of age, was killed when he "crashed in the hills" very close to the location of the 140th Signal Radio Intelligence Squadron. At 9:22 a.m. P-39Q-15 tail number 44-2437 piloted by 2nd Lt. Wallace Hopkins, 20 years of age, crashed into a house at 73 Alexander Ave. in Daly City. 2nd Lt. Hopkins was killed in the crash, but even though he crashed into a crowded neighborhood, nobody else was injured or killed. Regardless of who crashed first, this was a senseless tragedy for the families of these young pilots, both taken well before their time.



2nd Lt. Hopkins crashed into the house at 73 Alexander Ave. Acme Photo from the Jeff Christner collection.

April 3rd, 2015 I set out to find the location where Flight Officer Criswell lost his life. With new information as to the correct location of the 140th Signal Radio Intelligence Squadron, who were the first ones to reach his crash site, I suspected that I could find it in short order. Technically Flight Officer Criswell's crash site is in unincorporated San Mateo County in San Bruno Mountain County/State Park, but it's less than 150' from his crash site to the Daly City border which is why media reports and the military crash reports list both crashes as occurring in Daly City.

Guild News and Appreciation

Bravo to Board member Michael Rocchetta on the completion of his *Tattler* archive project. New volunteer Sarah Rochette from Pacifica will be working on indexing archive material. Sarah was a former volunteer at the Phoebe Hearst Museum of Anthropology. Rich Rocchetta continues to work his way through a backlog of printed material and photos to be filed by subject. Russ Brabec made donations of material on the 1998 Mussel Rock slide, 1968 DC strike, and an '89-90 Chamber of Commerce

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Directory. And we can't overlook our forever young former Hospitality Chair and still active community volunteer Elinor Charleston's 100th Birthday on May 1st. Happy Birthday Elinor, you are a gem!

1878-1906 A WALK THROUGH TIME by Dana Smith

Highlighting local events and their relationship to the wider stage of history. Excerpt from the exhibit, Daly City History Museum.

U. S. President James Garfield was assassinated less than four months after taking office in 1881. In 1882 Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act barring Chinese immigration until 1904. The 1880's saw the rise of racism in the Southern States under a system of segregation known as "Jim Crow." 1884 saw the beginning of the national suffrage movement to give women the vote with the Equal Rights Party suffrage convention held in nearby San Francisco. Helen Hunt Jackson's tragic novel *Ramona* on the mistreatment of an orphan Indian girl in California became so popular it was reprinted 300 times, drawing tourists on the new railroad line to locales in Southern California that were mentioned in the book. By this time Native Americans in California had suffered a hundred years of genocide and disease.

In 1883 Buffalo Bill (William F. Cody) was taking his Wild West Shows across the nation as Native Americans resistance was crushed and buffalos were slaughtered almost to extinction. In 1886 the Apache leader Geronimo surrendered, followed by the last major conflict of the Indian Wars at Wounded Knee where Sioux fleeing the reservation were massacred by the cavalry. In 1889 Congress passed the Indian Appropriations Bill, proclaiming that lands in the former Indian Territories were now opened for homesteading.

The Statue of Liberty was dedicated in New York Harbor in 1886. That same year in San Francisco Adolph Sutro opened his Sutro Baths built to accommodate 1,600 swimmers near Seal Rocks and John McLaren began landscaping Golden Gate Park. Across the country labor unions were met with police and state and federal troop violence when they began striking for an 8-hour day. The United Mine Workers, the American Railway Union, and coal miners organized for better pay and working conditions as the Congress of World Socialist Parties selected May first as International Workers' Day in support of the U. S. labor struggle. Close to home, the Carmen's Union organized

San Francisco streetcar workers and a failed strike effort left four dead and twenty seriously wounded in 1907, just the beginning of a long history of violence against union organizing in San Francisco.

People began to settle in the area north of Colma Village near John Daly's dairy. Many Italian farmers began changing from vegetable farming to hog ranching. I. G. Knowles and R. S. Thornton began running three large four-horse stages from Colma to San Francisco. In 1891 a stately two-story schoolhouse with cupola replaced the original schoolhouse at Colma (formerly known as Schoolhouse Station) and poles were being put up in the area for electric street lights. 1892 saw the opening of quarantine stations for immigrants at Angel Island Immigration Station in San Francisco Bay and Ellis Island Immigration Station in New York Harbor. In 1893 the San Francisco-San Mateo Railroad Co. began electric streetcar service to Daly's Hill. Branch lines were later run down Mission Street to the cemeteries and in 1903 eventually to San Mateo. In 1894 a fuse factory was built and a county school bond was passed for the building of the Vista Grande School, both in the north end of the growing community. Less than a year later the fuse factory was completely destroyed in an explosion and fire that killed one and injured seven. It was soon rebuilt. On the south end of Mission Street, Belli's Victorian two-story Pioneer Store was built at San Pedro road and Mission Street. Nearby, Union Coursing Park, a dog racing track, was built in 1898 and a streetcar extended to reach the grandstand. Boxing came to Colma with the opening of Joe Millett's training camp in 1900 and the licensing of boxing exhibitions at the White House Gardens in Colma Village. James Coffroth, known as Sunshine Jim, was licensed for his boxing arena 50 feet south of the San Francisco County Line. In 1901 Theodore Roosevelt became President after the assassination of President William McKinley. Ellis Island Immigration Station was overwhelmed with immigrants from Europe.

Life was about to drastically change for the 50 inhabitants engaged in hog ranching, dairy farming, and growing cabbage and potatoes in the small village near John Daly's dairy known as Vista Grande, which would later become the original incorporated area of Daly City. On April 18th, 1906 a magnitude 7.8 earthquake left most of San Francisco crumbled and burning as scores of people fled south along Mission Street. As the fires were dying down, John Daly sent wagons loaded with milk for the survivors in the city while refugees slept in his barn and camped on his dairy pastures. The
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American Red Cross set up a relief station for emergency rations and building materials at the Colma Lumber Yard. Before the year was out, a Vista Grand Improvement Club was formed among the growing refugee settlement at Daly's Hill.

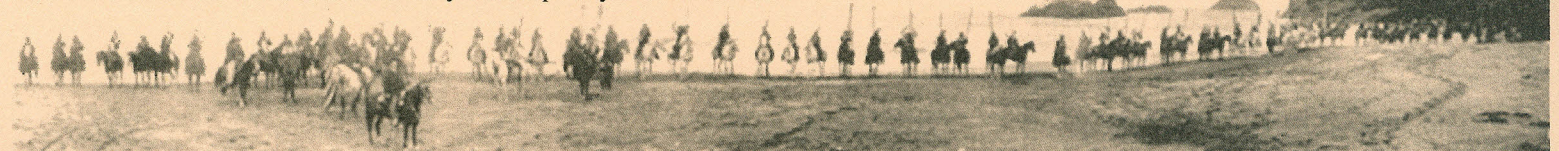
"A scene never to be forgotten was the three days of fire raging in San Francisco. I still remember people, some with a cat, dog, or canary, walking out Mission Road, turning to look at flames and smoke over their shoulders every now and then, but not actually coming to a stop. It seemed they couldn't get far enough away."
1906 eye witness Edmund Cavagnaro



Line of refugees leaving San Francisco, 1906. Below, earthquake shacks being moved a year later... some to Daly City. SF Public Library collection.



1902 - "Buffalo Bill" Cody and his traveling Wild West Show on San Francisco's Ocean Beach. Buffalo Bill's act included a re-enactment of the riding of the Pony Express, Indian attacks on wagon trains, stagecoach robberies, and as a grand finale a re-enactment of Custer's Last Stand in which Cody himself portrayed General Custer.



OTHER HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation

Lecture Series (FREE) All lectures begin at 2 pm at the Cypress Lawn's Reception Center, 1370 El Camino Real, Colma, CA. *Light Refreshments Served.*

Information: 650.550-8811

May 15 – MIDWAY, 1942 – Time for a Command Decision. Lecturer: Michael Svanevik, former Professor of History, San Mateo College.

June 12 – The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and How New Research is Done. Lecturer: Richard Hansen, author of *The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake.*

July 17 – Discovering Your Family History. Lecturer: Ron Filion, founder of the *San Francisco Genealogy* website.

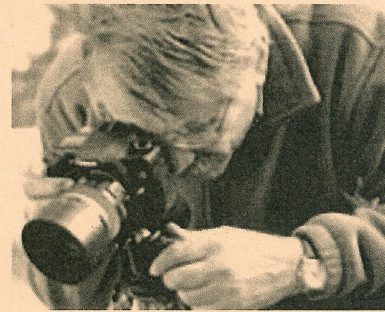
Tour Series (FREE) All scheduled tours are held on Saturdays and start at 1:30 pm at the Noble Chapel (located on Cypress Lawn's East Gardens). *Light Refreshments.*

May 21 – VISIONARIES & BUILDERS – Those Who Transformed the American West. Michael Svanevik

June 18 – PAUL BUNYAN AND THE CALIFORNIA FOREST Michael Svanevik

July 9 – NEGLECTED NOTABLES — Little Known Names; Great Contributions. Michael Svanevik

A Little "Natural" History



New Guild member Fred Stevens has co-authored a ground breaking book "California Mushrooms, The Comprehensive Identification Guide." He has led numerous mushroom walks and

consults with physicians and veterinarians on mushroom poisonings. His mushroom photos are spectacular, some taken in the Colma cemeteries and other local sites.

Contact Fred Stevens fstev2barb@gmail.com if you spot an interesting fungi in the area.



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



Shown above is the wall in the box office at the Cow Palace where such stars as Elvis, Tom Jones, the Beatles and others have signed their names after concerts and performances. In 1963 Bob Hope was the first performer to sign the Cow Palace Box Office Wall, thus beginning a tradition for many famous entertainers.

History Quiz: What famous rock star had his 22nd birthday at the Cow Palace in 1966?

Answer: That would be the July concert of Mick Jagger as the Rolling Stones played the Cow Palace in front of a crowd of 17,000, young people described by the *San Mateo Times* as "decrying contemporary middle class values and shrieking about hypocrisy."

GUILD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Mark Weinberger, President 650/757-7177
 president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org
Richard Rocchetta, Vice-President
Dana Smith, 2nd 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.**

Tattler Editor & production: Dana Smith,
 director@dalycityhistorymuseum.org
 Your comments and suggestions are always welcome!