

THE TATTLER

JOURNAL OF DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

We are very pleased to have with us the speaker we had originally scheduled for our January general membership meeting. Jack Palmer is a nonagenarian who took a bad fall and wasn't able to join us. Health and mobility permitting, he has agreed to speak on the history of Crocker Masonic Lodge 212 at the top of the hill. Jack is a longtime Daly City resident, elder statesman and historian of the venerable Crocker Masonic Lodge 212 at 17 Hillcrest Drive; the lodge, dedicated in 1936, is located across the street from the museum at the corner of Hillcrest Drive and Mission street. Jack is a wealth of knowledge about both the formation of the lodge and the historic structure that houses it. While Daly City has no official historically landmarked or protected properties, this building is most worthy of such designation. It is a classic example of an art deco edifice, with onyx ceramic tile adorning the main entrance and ornate insignias placed toward the roofline. Also, there are leaded stained glass windows that capture the various Masonic emblems. Fluted and Doric linear lines in the facade, both vertical and horizontal, grace the Hillside Drive and Mission Street sides of the building. Finally, there is a commemorative granite plaque that was dedicated in the 1980s by Yerba Buena Chapter No. 1, E Clampus Vitus and Crocker Lodge No. 454 & A.M. This plaque, with artwork by our late president Emeritus Ken Gillespie, was prepared at the Pioneer Colma monument shop of Donohoe & Carrol. It is secured to the Hillcrest Drive side of the property and reads: *Near this site from 1868-1907 was the 250 acre San Mateo Dairy ranch operated by pioneer resident John Donald Daly, for whom Daly City was named upon incorporation of the city in 1911. Among his philanthropic gestures was the opening of his Daly's Hill property to refugees of the disastrous 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.* We believe this will be a most stimulating meeting, highlighting both the art deco lodge and the illustrious history of one of our nation's most indelible fraternal orders, which can trace its roots all the way back to the founding of our country and indeed even earlier.

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HISTORY EVENING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15TH

AT 7 PM

JACK PALMER
Presents

**HISTORY OF CROCKER MASONIC
LODGE 212
AND DALY CITY MASONS**

(This is a presentation that was originally scheduled for January 2019)



Masons Stephen Buck and Jack Palmer (right)

DOELGER CENTER CAFÉ

**101 LAKE MERCED BLVD.,
DALY CITY**

Free to the public – loads of free parking
Light refreshments

President's message, cont'd

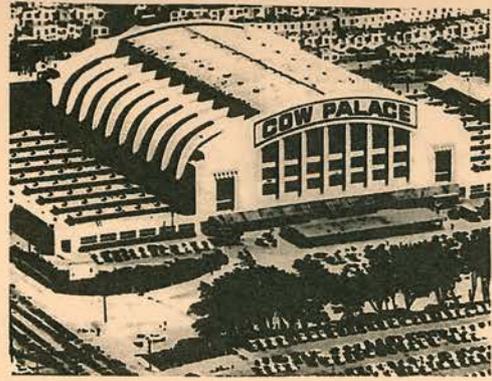
I am sorry to share that there is a movement now underway that would ultimately lead to the demolition of the Cow Palace. Every decade or so there is always a movement by politicians to wrest control from the state--it is a state owned and operated facility--turn it over to the 'local community,' which would then result in its condemnation and removal. Residential housing with the possibility of mixed-use commercial would then replace it. In other words, the land would be redeveloped as housing. This year there is stronger movement happening, with the effort led by State Senator Scott Wiener, who represents both San Francisco and Daly City. He has authored Senate Bill 281, which if it is voted out of its various committees and makes its way through the legislature, would then go to the governor who is widely expected to sign it into law. That would then seal the fate of the Cow Palace forever. Your board has taken the position that the Cow Palace is historic, fully-functioning, community resource, and worthy of preservation and continued use. Unfortunately, none of the politicians including the DC City Council, San Francisco and San Mateo County boards of supervisors, Assemblymen Phil Ting--who also represents Daly City--or David Chiu support it. All have endorsed SB 281 and are solidly against preservation. This is truly distressing.

While the Guild is an apolitical organization, we do not endorse or oppose candidates for elective office--we will always weigh in on matters that affect local history within the Daly City boundaries. This is exactly one such instance. To that end, we are in complete agreement with the individuals leading the fight, and it is definitely an uphill fight, to save the Cow Palace. You can visit their web site

www.savethecowpalace.com. This is a fantastic resource that contains all the information you will need to make your voice heard. It is largely led by the folks who put on the Dickens Christmas Fair at the Cow Palace each year, and certainly hope to do so for many more years to come. We encourage you to voice your opposition to SB 281 by calling and/or writing the elected representatives referenced above and letting them know of your desire to preserve, protect, and promote our shared local history. Please see the history of the Cow Palace, Part I inside. Additional installments will appear in future *Tattlers*.



The Beatles played the Cow Palace in 1965



The original façade of the Cow Palace



A contemporary view of the Cow Palace during the Grand National Rodeo

For your consideration, the Guild recommends the following nominations for the term of 2019-2021:

Mark Weinberger, President
Rich Rocchetta, First Vice President
Marcus Gonzalez, Second Vice President & Museum Director
Algis Ratnikas, Secretary
Judith Christensen, Treasurer
Michael Rocchetta, Director
Dana Smith, Director

Besides the above, we have received no inquiries of interest to date. These nominations and any from the floor will be voted on at our May General Membership meeting.

Thank you to our refreshment donors
and our gracious Hospitality Crew:
Grace and Marcus Gonzalez

HISTORY OF THE COW PALACE— PART I

The following is shared from a presentation by Colma Town Councilwoman Diana Colvin, Rental and Operations Officer of the Cow Palace Arena & Event Center, who addressed the Guild on May 18, 2016--the 75th Anniversary. Prepared by Mark S. Weinberger

Does anyone know the date that John F. Kennedy made his historic appearance at the Cow Palace? It was on November 1, 1960 at the Democratic presidential political rally that the handsome, articulate and charismatic man stirred the imagination of his growing throng of supporters by offering his initial proposal for the Peace Corps Program. Combined total attendance that night both inside and outside of the Cow Palace was estimated to be over 44,000 Kennedy fans.

Now for a bit of sports trivia, who can name the professional hockey teams that have played at the Cow Palace? The San Francisco Seals played from 1961-1966. The San Jose Sharks played from 1991-1993 as did the San Francisco Shamrocks, the San Francisco Spiders played from 1995-1996 and the SF Bulls played two seasons from October 12, 2012 to January 27, 2014.

What's in a name? Where did the name of the Cow Palace originate? There are a number of stories, most of which are a source of urban legend about how the name Cow Palace came to be. One story that has the some grain of validity is that when the ground breaking for the Cow Palace took place in 1935 the country was in the depths of an economic depression and news surrounding the project was adverse. There was much abrasive opposition to the fact that, in such economically turbulent times funds were being squandered on an unnecessary livestock facility in a port city. So as the story goes, a feature story appeared on the front page of a local newspaper. The writer referred to the huge concrete building as a "palace for cows." A copy desk man whose name is unknown edited the story. In final print the building's name came out Cow Palace and indeed the rest is history. This story is has never been substantiated. Although the name appears on the arched roof of the historic building in bright red, 16 foot tall letters, the official name of the Cow Palace is the 1-A District Agricultural Association.

IN THE BEGINNING, "THE DREAM"

In 1915, a group of business leaders from San Francisco had a dream founded on their observation of the overwhelmingly popularity and success of the livestock show at the San Francisco Pan-Pacific International Exposition and a vision of the City becoming the West Coast livestock capital.

They vowed that the San Francisco Livestock Exposition would be different than the nation's two largest livestock shows: The International Livestock Exposition held annually at the Amphitheater adjacent to the now defunct Chicago Stockyards, and the American Royal at the Kansas City Stockyards. These existed as extensions of meatpacking plants which subsidized the livestock shows. San Francisco planned to present the show in a self-contained pavilion. That was the dream and it was based on a real need. During this era, half of California's commerce was related to the livestock industry. The Gold Rush had led to a demand for red meat, and the livestock industry was growing rapidly. However the State lagged far behind in building superior herds and flocks, and in producing its own meat and dairy products. There was a need for a local facility where cattlemen could converge to exchange ideas, buy quality feed stock and see their animals judged and sold. In 1925, the Chamber of Commerce conducted surveys and confirmed an accelerating community interest in an annual exposition and it was thought that the exposition would tie San Francisco to the agricultural interests of the west coast and bring business to town.

The San Francisco Exposition Company was formed to finance the huge project. Nineteen firms and individuals each contributed \$20,000 and land was purchased in the Marina District where the 1915 fair had been held. It was hoped within one year a \$600,000 exhibit building would be constructed but a financial war began. In 1925, the California Supreme Court prevented San Francisco from buying the project that would be payable over 17 years. It ruled that the city could not obligate itself beyond one year of city revenue.

The California legislature passed a \$250,000 appropriation and Governor James "Sunny Jim" Rolph, Jr. signed it in 1931. The stipulation was that the No. 1-A District Agricultural Association, organized that same year [encompassing San Francisco and San Mateo counties], must procure a similar sum and obtain title to a suitable site. In response to the petition of fifty eminent citizens of the two counties, Gov. Rolph appointed an eight man board of directors. The new directors started looking for an appropriate site and deemed the predominantly residential character of the Marina was highly undesirable for a huge livestock pavilion. The land was sold and contributors' investments returned. A \$25,000 surplus from the sale was used to purchase 25 acres [which expanded later to 67] in Visitacion Valley, on Geneva Avenue and title was vested in the state.

TO BE CONTINUED IN SEPT. TATTLER

THE BANDS OF DALY CITY

By Algis Ratnikas

They drilled, they marched and they traveled near and far to entertain audiences for much of the 20th century. I was not able to find anything online regarding band music in Daly City for this period and so relied on information from the Daly City Museum Archive. Here we have a picture of the old Daly City Amateur Band taken in 1925. For ten years it was led by Mrs. Trixie Beeson of 472 Irvington St. The band was then sponsored by the Colma-Vista Grande F.O. E., Aerie 1848.



The official Daly City Band was organized in 1928 by conductor Geo. E. Brenner, but some sources put the date at 1930. In 1939 Mr. Brenner composed "**Sounds from Treasure Island**," during the Golden Gate Int'l. Exposition. It was written as a trumpet solo. His compositions also included works for the Clyde Beatty Circus. The band was often asked to march in the mammoth San Francisco parades.

We have a small flyer for the band's Feb. 8, 1942 Grand Patriotic Concert at Jefferson High School.

GRAND PATRIOTIC CONCERT
★
Daly City Band
ORGANIZED IN 1928
GEO. E. BRENNER, Conductor
★
JEFFERSON UNION HIGH SCHOOL
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1942
Commencing at 2 P. M.
★
Introduction: Mr. Henry Sundermann, Sr.
Address: Judge John J. Fahey, Jr.

In 1946 Daly City band conductor Geo. E. Brenner took his band to the Napa County Fair. On July 4, 1948, the DC Band won the grand award for general excellence in Redwood City, "despite their ill-fitting trousers and uniforms." Daly City's first outdoor band concert in June, 1957, drew a paltry 50 people. In August 1957 the DC Band performed at Westlake with Phyllis Adams, Miss Daly City. On August 9, 1958, The DC band performed for Daly City Day at the San Mateo County Fair. Mary Cunningham, our own "Miss Daly City" presided over a special booth there.

On June 6, 1959 the band under Conductor Brenner gave a free performance at the Westlake Shopping Court with numbers from popular musicals of the time. On June 16, 1962, the band performed for a pre-Father's Day program at Westlake. On September 15, 1962, the band performed again at Westlake. In 1964 Mr. Brenner premiered his composition "**Romantic Californ-i-a**" at Stern Grove and soon stepped down as band leader. He was succeeded by Roland Terry.

Daly City Band conductor Geo. E. Brenner died on Dec. 6, 1965. In 1972 Henry Niebolt, a South San Francisco teacher and professional musician, revived the band with weekly rehearsals at the Serramonte High School band, room 227. Tuition was \$1. Niebolt had met Mr. Brenner in 1945, when he began carrying his tuba to classes taught by Brenner.

In the mid 1990's the California Wind Ensemble, formed in 1910 in San Francisco's Richmond district, relocated their rehearsals to Westlake Park and began to be called the Daly City All Stars.

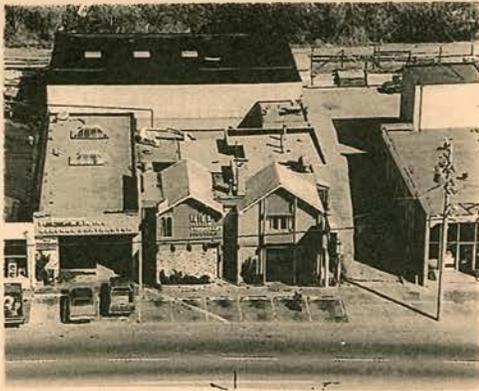
If Tattler readers have any more information regarding the Bands of Daly City, we would be very interested in your feedback.

GIFTS TO THE DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

Below are items received by the museum during 2018 to the present and the person who donated them. We wish to thank everyone for their generous contributions to Daly City history!

- Russ Brabec** – Matchbook cover "Villa Mateo".
- Mike Gerrans** – coat hanger from Arthur's of Westlake.
- Vaughn Jones** – Matchbook cover "Westlake Doelger Homes/Westlake Town & Country Shopping Center" and matchbook cover "Silver Café, 5999 Mission St., D.C.", Jefferson High School Yearbook – June 1944, Westmoor High School Yearbook – 1959, 1976 photo of 37 Northridge (Patty Hearst stayed there in 1974), book "One Knee Equals Two Feet" by John Madden.
- Shirley Plank** – 2017-2018 yearbook from Susan B. Anthony elementary school.
- Perky Ramroth** – 8 ½ bound volumes of the "Westlake Times" newspaper covering the years 1954 through 1961 and six months of 1966.
- Frank Risso** – Temple Judea Religious School Journals of 1956, 1957 and Congregation Judea Religious School Journal of 1958. News photo titled "Honeymooners Killed by Monoxide Gas" in Daly City dated 11-6-1939).
- Richard Rocchetta** – Coffee mug "Westlake Furniture Gallery" (store on Mission St. north of Jefferson High).
- John Spittler** – 1956 PTA Scrapbook from Woodrow Wilson School, Woodrow Wilson school photos of grade 3 (1958), grade 4 (1959) and grade 5 (1960) and 8-17-1942 SF Examiner article of blimp crash.

**FROM THE PHOTO COLLECTION
OF THE DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM
AND ARCHIVE**



One of the most popular restaurants in Daly City during the late 50's through the 1990s was Toto's Italian Restaurant. Located at 1913 Junipero Serra Blvd. their pizza was popular with those of all ages. The owner, Frank Spadarella was also an accomplished photographer whose photographs of the Broderick-Terry dual re-creation of are on display at the Daly City History Museum.

**2019 HISTORY DAYS AT THE OLD
U.S. MINT** By Dana Smith

I hadn't attended History Days for a couple of years and was astounded to see how much the event has grown in recent years. It was held on Saturday and Sunday March 2-3. If you have never attended, this really is a must-see event for anyone interested in history and best of all it is FREE. We will be sure to put a notice in the *Tattler* again so you can put this on your calendar for 2020. I went on Sunday and would recommend attending both days to take advantage of all the booths and lectures in two theatre rooms.

This year wearing period costumes was encouraged and there were many photo opportunities with reenactors in elaborate costumes - even a feather bedecked Emperor Norton from The Tenderloin Museum. Take a shopping bag when you go next year to hold the many free maps and other handouts offered to visitors. My favorite free resource is "Creek & Watershed Map of San Francisco" provided by the SF Public Utilities Commission and researched by the Oakland Museum. A vintage topographical map and vintage photos are on one side of the large foldout, and a current street map showing underground creeks and other natural features from 1850 on the opposite side. Also, The National Japanese American Historical Society distributed a full-size reproduction of the poster instructing Japanese-

Americans to assemble for transferring to internment camps in 1942 under the Civilian Exclusion Order.

My favorite exhibits were parts of a scale model of San Francisco produced during the Works Projects Administration to employ artists during the Great



Depression in 1938 (see article below) by the SF Public Libraries, and a 3-dimensional earthquake shack made out of plastic plumbing pipe to show the small size of the shacks by the Bernal History Project complete with photos hanging from the pipe frame and a very engaging volunteer interpreter.

The expansion of online resources is also of note. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has a photo archive of 20,000 images at [SFMTA.com/photo](https://sfmta.com/photo). Shaping San Francisco with the help of many neighborhood history organizations is digitalizing SF neighborhood newspapers at <https://archive.org/details/sanfrancisco newspapers>. The San Francisco Ghost Sign Mapping Project is focused on vintage signs that are fading from our urban landscape. SFGHOSTSIGNS.COM

Each time I've attended History Days I learn of new organizations with a surprising wide range of interests. New to me this year was "The Emperor's Bridge Campaign" concerned with all things Emperor Norton at (EmperorNortonat200.org.) They are advocating naming the Bay Bridge after Norton who had the original idea of a bridge back in 1872. You might find the Institute for Historical Study of interest if you are a researcher, writer, archivist. (this.org)

It was my impression that there were a lot more younger people in the crowd this year and this bodes well for the future of history organizations. There also seems to be a trend toward neighborhood history with many smaller organizations focused on their local neighborhood, specific ethnic group, or protection of a particular cultural icon.



**DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM
& ARCHIVE**

6351 Mission Street Daly City, CA 94014
650/757-7177
Open Tuesdays and Saturdays noon to 3 p.m.



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

www.dalycityhistorymuseum.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

California Historical Society:

Special Exhibits on view until September 8th
*Overland to California – Commemorating the
Transcontinental Railroad*
Westward – The Course of Empire
678 Mission Street, San Francisco
11 am – 5 pm Tuesday through Sunday
GALLERY ADMISSION: \$10. General Admission
\$5 Seniors and Students with ID
FREE for members and youth under the age of 18

**Cypress Lawn Historical Foundation
Lecture Series**

Lectures begin at 1 pm at the Cypress Lawn's Reception
Center. Free to the public. Refreshments.
1370 El Camino Real, Colma info. 650.550-8812
May 19th: *The Tiny Kingdom of Fortune and Grace – An
American Actress Rescues Europe's Smallest
Principality* (Prof. Michael Svanevik)
June 16: *Taming of the Outside Lands – History of the
Richmond and Sunset Districts* (Lori Ungaretti)
July 21: *Disaster at Sea – Tragedy of the Luxury Liner
S.S. Central America* (Prof. Svanevik)
August 18: *The Magic of 19th Century Stereopticon*
(Docent Richard Hansen)

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
(1926-2017), Secretary-Emerita, Grace and Marcus Gonzales
Hospitality Crew

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

**Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive is a
501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.
Memberships begin at \$25 per year.**

**Guest Tattler Editors: Mark Weinberger, Rich
Rocchetta, Algis Ratnikas, and Marcus Gonzalez.
This edition production: Michael Rocchetta**

**We take a short summer break after this May
meeting with the next general meeting and lecture
scheduled for September 18th. Have a great summer!**