

THE TATTLER

JOURNAL OF DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

We hope you thoroughly enjoyed our own Monika Trobits' presentation on "Murder and Vengeance in the South Bay." This was a fantastic talk—all given by Monika always are!--and the compliments given made it one of our most popular by far. For our March general membership meeting we are very pleased to welcome Jim Torlakson, originally of Daly City, Westmoor alum, and longtime resident of Pacifica. Jim will speak on his latest project, a book entitled *Torlakson's Daly City: My Hometown in watercolors, oils, and etchings*. He is a professional artist and author who has both painted and written extensively over the past 50 years. He has exhibited in numerous museums and galleries all over the country; his books and magazine selections are too numerous to recite. Please visit his web page www.jamestorlakson.com.

To quote the author about his book, "Photorealistic watercolor, oils, and etchings by James Torlakson. All images depict scenes of Daly City, CA, the hometown James grew [up] in."

About the artist and author: James "Jim" Daniel Torlakson is an American artist known for his photorealist oil paintings, watercolors and aquatint intaglio etchings.

Early life

Born in San Francisco, California on February 19, 1951. Growing up in the Westlake neighborhood of Daly City, Torlakson moved to Pacifica by the sea in 1971 where he has lived since becoming a professional artist. He started drawing at an early age, encouraged by his parents, who entered a drawing of his in the *San Francisco Chronicle* "Daily Junior Art Champion" when he was six years old; he was awarded first prize. He studied general fine arts and received a B.F.A. in 1971 at California College of the Arts, graduating before going onto complete a Masters of Arts in 1975 at San Francisco State University.

Continued on page 2

Lecture & Meeting

Sunday, March 17th

2 pm

Merced Room, Westlake Park Pacelli Gym

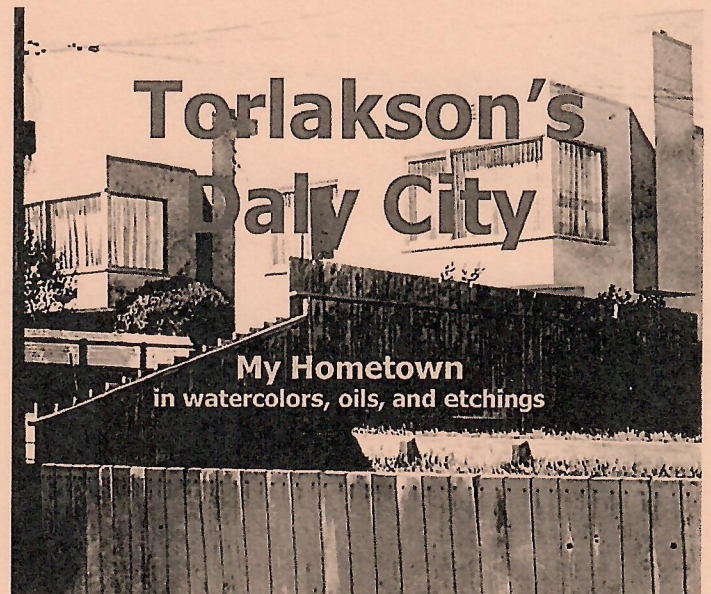
Jim Torlakson

Presenting his recently published book:

Torlakson's Daly City: My Hometown in watercolors, oils, and etchings

Everyone welcome to this free event!

Lots of free parking – refreshments- raffle



President's Message con't

Work

Torlakson's photorealism subject matter and imagery have centered on "every day" America including trucks, railways, amusement parks, waterfronts, fireworks booths, [and] deserted drive-in theaters....

Please join us for what promises to be another fascinating journey down memory lane which will focus on the historical, artistic and literary elements of the Westlake neighborhood of Daly City.

Thank you to all who have renewed their 2024 memberships and to any new members who have now joined. An extra BIG thank you to those who decided to increase their level of membership; it really means a lot and makes a huge difference when it comes to paying the bills. If you haven't had a chance to return your envelope, please know that it is never too late and we sincerely appreciate all levels of membership.

You now have the option to receive your *Tattler* in digital format and via email delivery if you prefer to a paper copy. Please let us know if you would like to receive an electronic copy instead. Let us know by emailing us at info@dalcycityhistorymuseum.org. If you do not inform us to make the change, you will continue to receive a papery copy. Offering an email version of the newsletter allows us to conserve precious resources, save on printing and postage costs, and provide a seamless transition. Thank you for your consideration and informed consent.

I am very pleased to share that we now have a secretary to fill the position, but not the shoes, of the late Algis Ratnikas. We of course lost Algis in January 2023 and have been without a secretary ever since then. Thank you to Rich Rocchetta, who often filled in to help us with minutes. Perky Ramroth is our new secretary. Her late parents, Ken and Bunny Gillespie, were co-founders of the Guild. She is a Millbrae resident, but whose heart never left Daly City—just the fog! Perky is also on the board of the Colma Historical Association, so she keeps herself busy with each community's links to the past, which can often overlap. Welcome, Perky!

Jumping right into the mix, Perky is organizing a 15th year anniversary open house of the

museum. It was exactly 15 years ago in March 2009 that we first opened the doors to the permanent museum on Mission Street, which replaced the mini-museum in the basement of the Serramonte Library. To that end, we will have an open house with light refreshments on Friday March 15 from 2 pm to 5 pm. The museum will then be open during its regular operating hours of noon to 3 pm on Saturday, March 16 followed by our general membership meeting in Westlake park at 2 pm on Sunday, March 17, St. Patrick's Day. [No corn beef and cabbage, but probably available at Joe's of Westlake nearby.] We hope that you can join us during this festive weekend on any or all of the days of celebration. Please see full-page flyer inside this *Tattler* with all of the information provided.

The following article appeared in Everything South City on May 21, 2014. It was researched and written by Andy Howse, Founder of Open the SF Watershed. Reprinted by permission.

(Part 1)

Adventure to the Legendary Crystal Cave of San Bruno Mountain

Imagining the landscape that is the San Francisco Peninsula looked in bygone times is one of my favorite pastimes. Seeing the world from this perspective turns everyday places into historical gems that provide a view of a former landscape. They are the living clues that connect to the stories of the areas that surround them that have changed. Some are well documented, others are not, and are in need of some educated guesses. One of these latter type places is a local legend, The Crystal Cave of San Bruno Mountain.

We adventured to this hidden piece of history, on assignment of sort, for Everything South City. We were very fortunate to have an experienced miner, Roger Cain, in our company of three when we went to explore the Crystal Cave of San Bruno Mountain. I have been to the cave several times, but this was the first time that we had a person of such knowledge involved, and the first time we agreed to document our little expedition.

"These tailings indicate that this was definitely man made, probably done by hand (pick axe). Although this wasn't a large operation, there are probably records of this somewhere" Roger, our prospecting hobbyist said staring at the piles of quartz crystal infused rocks that lied outside the cave and then down the cliff to the creek below. "At some point they would have had to cut a trail clear up this valley, large enough to bring animals and equipment up" he added. Roger was not positive that they were looking for gold, but that that was his theory. He noted they may have been looking for other minerals, but he doesn't believe they found anything, as the mine was abandoned, leaving behind what is now known as the Crystal Cave. Also, had they found gold, they would have had to crush the ore on site or carry it out to a place where they could separate the gold from the rock. The cave roughly measured is around 30 feet deep and about six feet tall and hard rock all the way.

Roger explained that when miners are looking for gold they often look for quartz, that gold and quartz are synonymous. When they found a gold vein and the ore was crushed, the gold would be extracted either by panning the gold or by leeching it out from the rock using quicksilver (mercury). To this day the creeks in San Jose are polluted with mercury and there are relics of the quicksilver mines in the hills, remnants of the prospecting economy that dominated our region a little over a century ago. The Crystal Cave tells stories of a time when mining speculators were looking for gold on San Bruno Mountain.

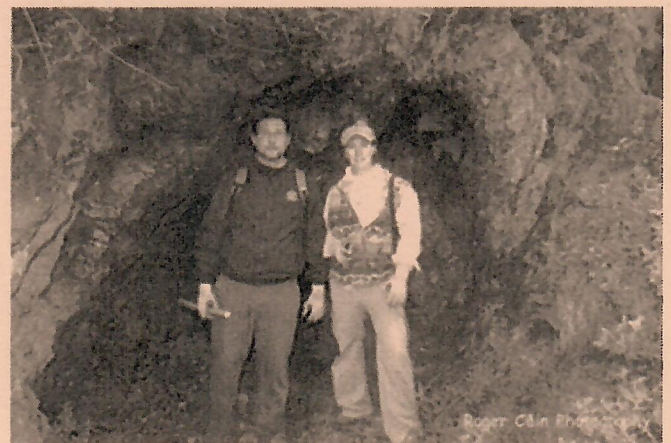
All but the trailhead to the Crystal Cave was grown over and although there was evidence of recent past human habitation (a weathered sleeping bag) it was clear that no one had ventured to the cave in months.

The trail to the cave crosses a spring led creek fed by the underground aquifer beneath San Bruno Mountain. This small waterway cut The Devil's Arroyo, the name of the valley where the cave resides. What was left of the trail was grown over by many local plants. A large portion of these plants are poison oak and stinging nettles. This proved to be a challenge for us, as was the slippery steep climbs. The trail follows the creek and then shoots up the hillside, leaving the creek behind. It was fortunate for us that adventurers in years past had



The cave measures 30' deep & about 6; tall.

Photo:
ROGER CAIN

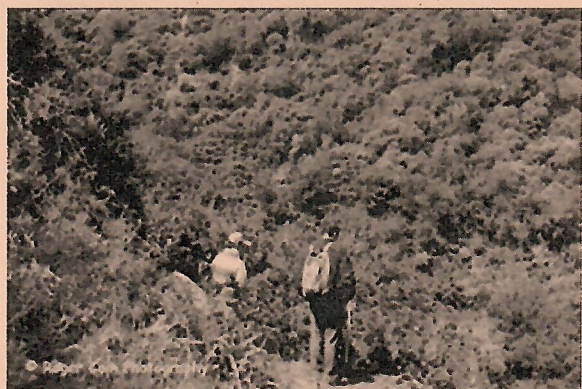


Andy & Stasai in front of the Crystal Cave

Photo: Roger Cain

installed a network of ropes to traverse the mud and rock hill, and although we brought along ropes of our own, we did not need to use them. Of all the times I have been to the Crystal Cave due to the thick overgrowth of nettles and poison oak, this was by far the most treacherous.

(Part II Continued in the May Tattler)



Overlooking the area

Photo:

ROGER CAIN



© Roger Cain Photography

Making their way by rope

Photo:

ROGER CAIN



Guild President Mark Weinberger with President Emerita Ken Gillespie and Secretary Emerita Bunny Gillespie at the Museum opening and Dedication of the Gillespie Room on March 15, 2009

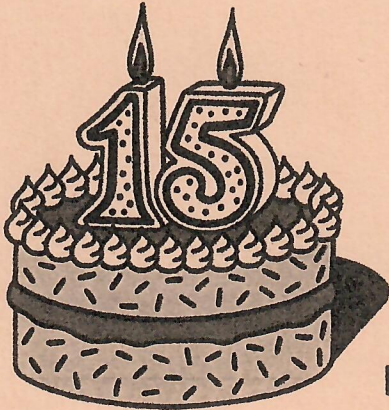


The many guests at the Museum opening

FUN FACT

The Gillespie Room of the Daly City History Museum was the original John Daly Public Library built in the 1920's. When the facility was extended three-fold in the late 1930's, the room became the "Happy Children's Room", dedicated to young readers.

Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive



Celebrate the Museum's
15th Year on Mission Street!

Friday, March 15 from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
and

Saturday, March 16 from 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.
6351 Mission St., Daly City

Open House both days with Cake, Cookies, Coffee and Conversation!
Free – all are welcome!

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Renew or join the Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive for 2024

All joining and renewing members will receive 4 editions of our 2024 *Tattler* newsletter of local history.

Member Information **Circle** your Membership donation amount \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$ _____

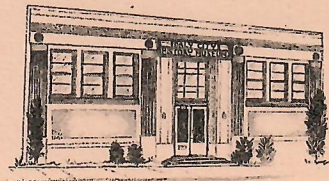
Phone: () _____ Email: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ zip _____

Please mail your check and this form to:
Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive
6351 Mission Street
Daly City, CA 94014

Make check payable to: Daly City History Guild



DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM

& ARCHIVE

6351 Mission Street Daly City, CA 94014

(650) 757-7177

OPEN SATURDAYS NOON - 3 PM.



Please visit us on Facebook at "Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive"

www.dalycityhistorymuseum.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL

IT HAPPENED 50 YEARS AGO IN DALY CITY

After 10 years in office, Bernard "Bud" Lycett was not elected to continue serving on Daly City's City Council.

Elected in the March 1974 election for City Council were William Schumacher, McRobert Stewart and Vic Kyriakis. Voter turnout was 31.5% of Daly City's registered voters, per City Clerk Anna Ohlendorf.

Police Chief Roland Petrocchi died suddenly at the age of 59 of a heart attack during dinner with his family on Easter Sunday in April 1974. Chief Petrocchi lived in Daly City his whole life, had been a member of the DCPD for 33 years and Chief since 1952.

GUILD OFFICER AND DIRECTORS

Mark Weinberger, President (Facebook, Programs)

650/757-7177 president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org

Richard Rocchetta, Vice-President (Raffle)

Marcus Gonzalez, 2nd Vice-President/Museum

Director (programs)

Perky Ramroth, Secretary

Treasurer - vacant

Director: Michael Rocchetta (database, mailing labels)

Director - vacant

Tattler Production: Board of Directors

Ken Gillespie (1924-2011) President Emerita

Bunny Gillespie (1926-2017) Secretary Emerita

Grace and Marcus Gonzalez, Hospitality Crew

Raymond Jue, photographer

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

Daly City History Guild Museum & Archive is an all-volunteer 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.

Memberships begin at \$25 per year.