

# THE TATTLER

## JOURNAL OF DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

### *Greetings from President Mark-*

I hope you all can join us for our last general membership meeting of 2025. Almost all of our original organizing members are gone now. We are very pleased to share that co-founder, former Guild officer, and our loyal friend and true Neil Fahy is still going strong at age 98 and has agreed to be our featured speaker. Join us for another captivating presentation by Neil, this one entitled How San Francisco Built a Dam in Yosemite Park. Learn how Hetch Hetchy was homesteaded, acquired by SF, and received congressional approval to be placed inside a national park. Neil will discuss the vision required to make the water system a reality--one that transports H2O 180 miles to SF without the use of a single pump! Daly City provides its residents with a blend of ground well water along with Hetch Hetchy. A geologist by profession, Neil still makes his annual pilgrimage to Camp Mather in the Sierra Nevada just outside Yosemite every summer, where he has either worked or volunteered since 1944. Good deal, Neil!

In this issue, also be sure to read how our newsletter, the Tattler got its name. Treasurer Rich Rocchetta has written a wonderful article explaining the history of the name. We often get the question: "Why the Tattler?" including from my own brother residing on the east coast. It wasn't chosen at random and there is a reason.

For our May meeting we welcomed co-authors Bruce Cumming and Nick Veronico, who presented their recent collaboration Lost Gas Stations of San Mateo County. It was a fascinating look down

*Continued page 2*

### DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM & ARCHIVE



#### HISTORY LECTURE

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> 2 PM**

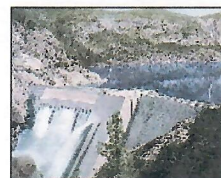
**MERCED ROOM, PACELLI GYM, WESTLAKE PARK**

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

**NEIL FAHY**

*PRESENTS*

**HOW SAN FRANCISCO BUILT  
A DAM IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK**

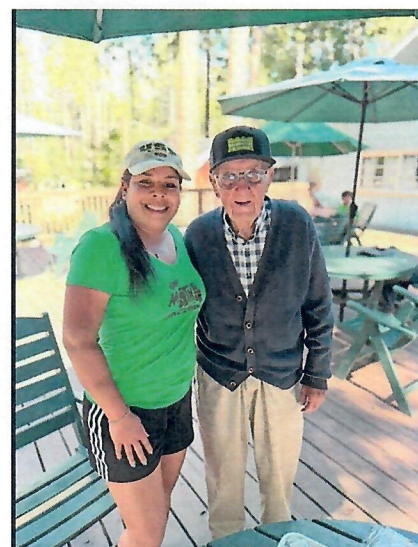


**REFRESHMENTS! REVELRY! RAFFLE!**

**FREE! EVERYONE WELCOME!**

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AT "DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM"

[WWW.DALYCITYHISTORYMUSEUM.ORG](http://WWW.DALYCITYHISTORYMUSEUM.ORG)



*Neil with Camp Mather regular Regina Aguilar*



memory lane and detailed the great many service stations that once blanketed the county from Daly City all the way to Woodside and in between. There were quite a few vintage photographs of what we once had in Daly City and on the rest of the peninsula. Be sure to order your copy today! For sale by the authors and over the Internet. The Guild does not have copies for sale.

Also, at that meeting the membership re-elected Dave Crimmen of Pacifica, who last served on our board more than a decade ago. Unfortunately, shortly after that meeting Dave and his wife Sharon were met with some unfortunate medical news, which necessitated his immediate resignation. He wishes us all the best, and I know that we too wish the Crimmens all good thoughts and prayers for overcoming their recent health challenge. While we didn't set out to replace Dave, we had the good fortune of being able to add Celeste De Martini to the board. A registered nurse by profession, she is a Daly City native who agreed to step up and has already operated the museum solo; very good next-door neighbor and fellow Guilder John Forest Bell has agreed to work with Celeste, so she isn't left opening and closing all by herself. Please join me in welcoming and thanking both Celeste and John for their service to the Guild.

The museum is overcrowded in the Archive portion, behind our partition, that is used for storage. Thanks to Secretary Perky Ramroth, we deaccessioned three large panels that once were displayed in Westlake Applebee's. When they closed many years ago, the panels, which depict Jefferson, Oceana, and Terra Nova high schools--Westmoor went missing and we never received it--were given to us yet we could never display them properly. Therefore, we have donated them to the Jefferson Union High School District. I recently brought them to their brand-new district headquarters, built on the site of the old Westmoor Park, whose land the district owns and leased to

Daly City for more than 60 years. They will either be displayed together in the lobby or else sent to the respective schools for viewing there.

We would like to thank John Bell for donating a great many office supplies to the museum, which will be put to great use. John also donated a beautiful vintage library dictionary and wrought iron display stand several months ago, which are prominently displayed in our once former public library. Thank you, John!

On July 12 I led a walk at the Top of the Hill as part of the San Mateo County Victorian Days celebration of local history. We had close to 25 folks who came from down the peninsula, the east bay and beyond. What follows is a virtual tour for those who were unable to join us. Naturally, we began at the museum and then proceeded to the site of the 1853 Knowles Ranch, now a municipal parking lot at Bepler and San Jose Avenue. It was purchased by John Donald Daly. Nearby, would have stood Justice Bepler's beet ranch. We then walked down San Jose Avenue, to view the Marchbank Building, built in 1905 and owned by Gold Rush entrepreneur and philanthropist John Marchbank. Just up the street is the 1924 building that once was a Bank of America and home to earlier banks as well. Its unique architecture is self-explanatory. Its companion sister building is the Town and Country Billiards at the other end of Mission Street at San Pedro Road. We then crossed Mission to view the remnants of Daly's rock quarry. His spur track into the quarry was in the area of the Mormon Church at Wellington and Hillside Boulevard. The Crocker Masonic Temple is at 17 Hillcrest Drive. This building was built in 1936 after its predecessor burned down. A landmark though not landmarked with protected status, the building has stood here since about 1901-1902. Originally called Knowles Hall, the building had stores on the street level and a dance hall upstairs.



Today it is the base of a fraternal organization. The "Where Daly City Started" plaque near the entrance was dedicated in 1989. It attests to the location on the surrounding hill of Daly's Ranch. It was placed through the generosity of the Crocker Lodge Masons, E Clampus Vitus Historical Association and Daly City's Historians, the late Ken and Bunny Gillespie. The plaque reads: *"Near this site, from 1868-1907 was the 250 acre San Mateo Dairy ranch operated by pioneer resident John Donald Daly. Among his philanthropic gestures was the opening of his Daly's Hill property to refugees of the disastrous 1906 San Francisco Earthquake & Fire. Dedicated by the Yerba Buena Chapter of E Clampus Vitus and Crocker Lodge #454 F&AM. April 8, 1989"*

These are about half the sites we visited. In the January 2026 *Tattler* I'll finish the tour. I want to acknowledge almost all of the narrative you just read was originally composed by Bunny Gillespie, who was responsible for conceiving this tour and thus imparting her vast knowledge of the area and its origins. I want to thank Secretary Perky Ramroth and Director Celeste De Martini for coordinating the after-tour refreshments that were enjoyed by all, and Guild Photographer Raymond Jue for capturing the various stops on the tour and giving us a wonderful visual record.

On August 5 we participated in our first Night Out at Serramonte Shopping Center. This is where the police and local community service organizations coalesce to meet residents and converse about how to keep the community thriving and safe. We did our part to promote the Guild.

The second annual Top of the Hill Festival, a family-friendly community street fair similar to the old Gateway Festival, will be held on Saturday, October 18, 11 AM - 6 PM. There will be food vendors, beer garden, car show, live musical performances, and more. The museum will have extended hours that day and an outside table. Please visit us and enjoy

the local atmosphere. Our contribution to the festival will be a recently discovered silent home movie of the 1961 Daly City Fiftieth Anniversary Parade that

also took place along Mission Street. We have furnished it to the City, and it will be looped to repeat after its initial 19-minute run. It will be viewable on a large Jumbotron-like screen located close to the museum. Please see brochure inside for more exact festival details. We are looking for volunteers to sit with us at the table for an hour or two. We'd love to have some friendly folks with whom to chat. If you care to help--please!--let me know at [president@dalcityhistorymuseum.org](mailto:president@dalcityhistorymuseum.org) or leave a message at the museum, 650-757-7177. This is voice only and not text. Thank you for your consideration.

Finally, here are the dates for our four general membership meetings in 2026. All are on Sundays at 2 PM and in the Pacelli Gym's Merced Room in Westlake Park, which is our regular meeting location. **January 11 [second Sunday due to city observance of MLK Day the following weekend]; March 15; May 17; and September 20.** Please mark your calendars accordingly as we will have a great program selection which we know you won't want to miss.

On behalf of the board, I want to wish you all a joyous, healthy, and prosperous holiday season and spectacular 2026. We look forward to us all getting together again in the new year.

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### ***WE ACKNOWLEDGE OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS***

- **ASF Electric – Cathy Lagomarsino**
- **Classic Bowl – Matt Devincenzi**
- **Daly City/Colma Chamber of Commerce – Felicia Leong**
- **Garrison Properties – Robert Garrison**
- **Pilipino Bayanihan Center – Perla Ibarrientos**



*The following article appeared in an on-line article called "History in Motion"*

## **DIGGING ROCK IN DALY CITY**

By: Jeremy Menzies

Tucked away on the northwestern tip of San Bruno Mountain, just over the county line into Daly City, was a small but productive facility that fueled the construction of San Francisco's streetcar lines for more than 50 years. Called "Daly's Quarry," this plot of land was the site of a rock mine and processing plant that produced track ballast for the city's expanding rail network.

From the time when Daly City was nothing but an expanse of farmland and empty plots, workers chipped away at the hillside, breaking off chunks of rock and passing them through a crusher to produce gravel, which was then used to support the ties and rails of streetcar lines. As the slope was removed, the mining track and building of the quarry had to be shifted deeper into the hill to access more rock. Although we have no records of it in the Archive, the quarry was likely built around 1892 by the San Francisco and San Mateo Electric Railway (SF & SM), San Francisco's first electric streetcar company. After the SF & SM was folded into the private transit company United Railroads of San Francisco (URR) in 1902, the quarry continued to churn out crushed rock until its usefulness began to dwindle around 1939.

In 1944, Muni purchased all of the assets of the URR's successor, the Market Street Railway Company, including the land and facilities of the ballast plant. At this time, Muni was transitioning away from rail-based service in favor of bus operations, so the days of the quarry were numbered. Along with many of the aged and ramshackle properties acquired with the purchase of the MSR, Daly's Quarry was sold by the city to provide revenue for Muni's operation and growth.

Today, the quarry site near the terminus of the 14 and 14R-Mission routes on Mission Street and San Jose Avenue is a far cry from the dusty, noisy operation of years past. The land is now

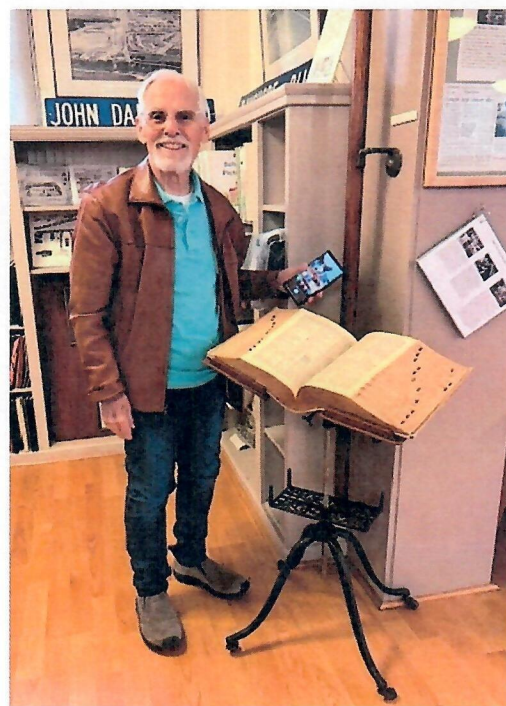
home to a Catholic church and school, just behind the Daly City History Museum.



*Looking west from the back of the quarry*

## **AN ADDITION TO THE GILLESPIE ROOM**

*Member John Bell recently donated this beautiful 1921 edition Webster's New International Dictionary and ornate stand to the Museum. The dictionary was presented to John back in 1952, and it makes a perfect addition to the "Library Corner" of the Museum. Thank you, John!*





## SAN MATEO COUNTY HISTORY ORGANIZATIONS SUMMIT

The first ever San Mateo County History Organizations summit was held on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Colma Historical Museum. The event was co-hosted by the Daly City History Guild and the Colma Historical Association and was attended by representatives of town historical associations and museums from one end of the peninsula to the other. We discussed successes, difficulties, challenges, and much more. All agreed that we will maintain the momentum and continue to work collaboratively to support one another.

Representatives attended from Belmont, Burlingame, Colma, Daly City, East Palo Alto, Half Moon Bay, the Historic Union Cemetery, Millbrae, Pacifica, Redwood City, San Carlos and South San Francisco. Many others were unable to attend but hope to when the group meets again on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting will be hosted by the Pacifica Historical Association.



*The group met at the Colma Historical Association*

### ONE VACANCY ON GUILD BOARD

We have one vacancy on the board at this time. The position of Director. If you have an interest in this position and would like to learn about their responsibilities, please contact Mark at: [president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org](mailto:president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org) or leave a message at the museum, 650-757-7177. Thank you for your consideration.

### **WHY IS IT CALLED "THE TATTLER"?**

*Recently we were asked why the History Guild's newsletter is named the Tattler. We went to our archived Tattler file and found this article in the September 1992 edition of the newsletter:*

#### **"NEWSLETTER GETS A NAME, NOW DUBBED "THE TATTLER"**

*You'll note that our newsletter now has a title, THE TATTLER. The name has an early heritage in the North County, when newspapers were being published in the mid-1890's.*

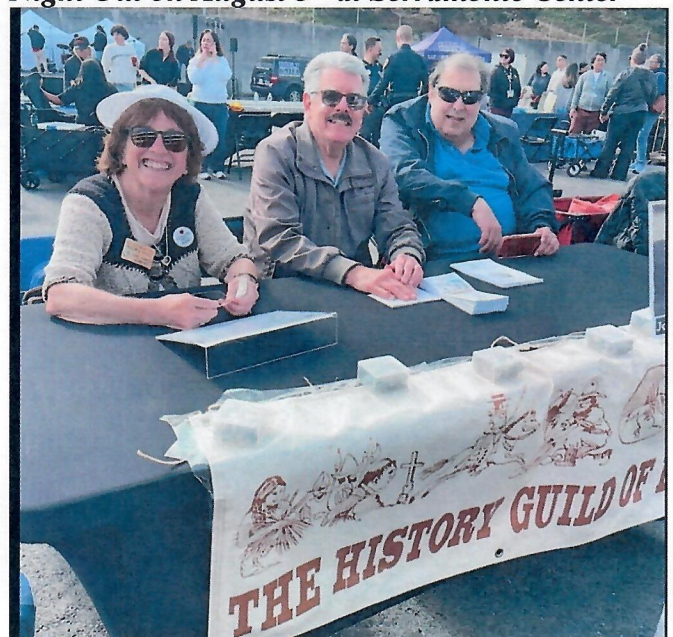
*As early as 1894, there was the COLMA NEWS, followed by the NORTH END RECORD, around 1908, then THE DALY CITY RECORD, and the COLMA TATTLER AND RECORD.*

*For a while the latter two were published as the DALY CITY TATTLER and RECORD.*

*Sometime after 1925 THE TATTLER name disappeared, and the DALY CITY RECORD continued. (note: the Record was still published in 1992). "*

*And that's why this newsletter continues with the tradition of being titled "THE TATTLER".*

*Perky Ramroth, Richard Rocchetta and Michael Rocchetta staffing the Guild's table at National Night Out on August 5<sup>th</sup> at Serramonte Center*







**DALY CITY HISTORY GUILD MUSEUM  
& ARCHIVE**

6351 Mission Street Daly City, CA 94014-2012

(650) 757-7177

OPEN SATURDAYS NOON - 3 PM.



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

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**GUILD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

**Mark Weinberger, President**, (Facebook, Programs)  
650/757-7177 [president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org](mailto:president@dalycityhistorymuseum.org)

**Richard Rocchetta, Treasurer** (Raffle), *Tattler*  
editor

**Marcus Gonzalez, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President/Museum  
Director**, (programs)

**Secretary**, Perky Ramroth

**Michael Rocchetta, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President** (database,  
mailing labels, *Tattler* set-up, coeditor)

**Director** – Celeste De Martini

**Director** – vacant

Ken Gillespie (1924-2011) President Emeritus

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.**

**Membership begins at \$25 per year.**