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A Foundation Supporting the Study and Preservation of State and Regional History



Shipwrights and Sailors

Volunteers: Our Life Support System

In each fall issue of *The Californian*, Helen Riisberg, our devoted Volunteer Coordinator, reports on the activities of History Center volunteers and docents. Over the past two years, between thirty and forty foundation members have donated almost 4,000 recorded hours of work to the California History Center. Perhaps another 1,000 hours of work have been provided by students and friends of the center. In monetary terms this tremendous commitment equals at least \$25,000, a very substantial contribution by anyone's standards. But much more importantly, volunteers give real life to the California History Center.

Visitors to the Trianon almost always will find one or more volunteers hard at work. You may be greeted at the front desk by a volunteer receptionist, who answers the telephone, makes reservations for events, handles mail, and takes care of book sales and other daily tasks. If you come with a group, a docent may guide you through our current exhibit, while another may show you around the De Anza College campus. In our special collections library you may be welcomed by volunteers hard at working cataloging or shelving books, filing pamphlets and clippings, reviewing and indexing video or audio tapes, and cataloging and organizing photographs. At special events they will serve you refreshments and make you feel at home. Regardless of where you find them, you'll be touched by their warmth and excitement.

Volunteers bring a spirit of vitalism to the History Center. They invigorate everyone who knows them with their love of history and eagerness to participate in the preservation and documentation of our past. They willingly take on many daily chores which at first glance might seem routine, even dull, but somehow they transform them into challenging and absorbing activities. They bring an intoxicating passion to projects, yet also offer the soundest of insight and guidance to the staff through individual suggestions and service on committees. They make each day truly pleasurable for all of us.

Volunteering at the History Center can be a most rewarding experience, and we would like to make it so for everyone. Therefore, we will offer a new course this coming fall for volunteers, potential volunteers, and other interested community members. It will focus on the volunteer experience at the California History Center and elsewhere in the community, including a visit to another Bay Area history volunteer program. Additionally, it will trace the history of the Trianon and History Center as well as look at parts of Santa Clara Valley's rich past. If you are a History Center volunteer or think you might like to become one, this will be an ideal opportunity for you.

In the meantime, we at the California History Center salute the many volunteers and docents who have worked with us to enrich today by preserving, documenting, and presenting the fruitful stories of yesterday. You are our essential life support system; without you we truly would be impoverished.

James C. Williams
Director

Pat Jensen, top, and Mary Jane Givens, bottom, are just two of the many wonderful CHC volunteers. Photos by David Fox.



COVER:
A light breeze carries a good-sized "outside" schooner, possibly the John F. Miller, towards the Hunter's Point stakeboat at the beginning of the 1891 Master Mariner's Regatta. Photo courtesy Bancroft Library, Berkeley.

CALENDAR

The history center is open from 8:00 - noon and 1:00 - 4:30 Mondays through Fridays and 10:00 - 2:00 Saturdays.

4/6 *De Anza College classes begin.*

4/10 *Exhibit reception for "Shipwrights and Sailors."*

5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Trianon Building. Members \$2; non-members \$4. R.S.V.P. by 4/3.

4/11 *"One Man's Battle: John Muir"*

8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tour of Muir mansion (c. 1882) and discussion led by author John Duryea, followed by a walk through a virgin stand of redwoods in Muir Woods. Cost to members \$35 and non-members \$45 includes transportation, park entry fee, and honorarium.

4/25 *"From Earthquakes to Redwoods"*

7:30 a.m. - 6:15 p.m. Naturalist Lee Van Fossen explores the geologic and natural history of the south Santa Clara Valley, including an examination of earthquakes in the active Calaveras fault zone in Hollister and the San Andreas fault zone in San Juan Bautista. Visits to the historic town of San Juan Bautista, the redwoods and meadows of Mt. Madonna Park, and a tasting at the Sycamore Creek Vineyards conclude the day's activities. Cost to members \$35 and non-members \$45 includes transportation, wine tasting, fees, and honorarium.

5/17 *"The Berkeley Plan: An Architectural Tour"*

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Grey Brechin, historical architect and writer for "San Francisco Focus" magazine, conducts a walking tour of the historic buildings of Berkeley and Oakland and a discussion of architects responsible, such as Bernard Maybeck and Frederick Law Olmsted. Cost to members \$30 and non-members \$35 includes transportation and honorarium.

5/23 - 5/25 *Center closed in recognition of Memorial Day.*
No De Anza classes.

6/7 *De Anza Day.*

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CHC open house will offer a look at the current exhibit and seafaring activities at various times throughout the day. Free.

6/13 *"Sacramento By Rail"*

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. Author Paul Trimble repeats this popular visit to Sacramento via Amtrak's California Zephyr. In Sacramento you will tour the California State Railroad Museum

and have time on your own to explore restored Old Town before returning by chartered bus. Cost to members \$50 and non-members \$60 includes train and bus fare, museum and materials fees, and honorarium.

6/19 - 21 *"Indian Grinding Rock"*

A weekend exploration of native American cultures and the natural history of the Sierra foothills led by naturalist Carol Verbeeck and Fran McTamane, environmental educator and expert on California Native's culture with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Included are visits to Indian Grinding Rock State Park and the historic towns of Jackson and Columbia. Cost to members \$160 and non-members \$175 includes transportation, double-occupancy lodging for two nights, lunch and dinner Saturday, park entry, tour and material fees, and honorarium.

6/13 *Final day to view exhibit.*

6/20 *Center closed.*

6/29 - 8/31 *Center is closed for the summer.*

Of Interest to Members

Wildflower Show, Santa Cruz Museum, 1305 East Cliff Dr., Santa Cruz, April 2 - 5. 429-3773.

Silver Dream: The San Francisco - Oakland Bay Bridge exhibit, Treasure Island Museum, through September, 1987. 415 765-6182.

Treasures from the Sierra Madre: Tarahumara - Mayo Indian Tribes exhibit, Sonoma County Museum, 425 Seventh St., Santa Rosa, through June 24. 707 579-1500.

Northern California Indian Art, Vacaville Museum, through April 12.

The Founding of Allentown, California exhibit, Afro-American Museum of Los Angeles, through 1987.

World War I Posters, Forbes Mill Museum, 75 Church St., Los Gatos, through April 30. 395-7375.

Stories from China's Past, Han Art from Sichuan exhibit, Chinese Culture Foundation, 750 Kearny St., San Francisco, through May 31. 415 986-1822.

State and Regional History

The following classes are being offered by the history center during Spring, 1987. For complete details and registration information, please see the De Anza College Schedule of Classes.

The Historian and Society: *Jim Williams*

The Historian and Society is the course for you if you've ever asked the question "So what can I do with history?" Career opportunities for historians and history majors are growing rapidly, in the traditional field of teaching, in the new and fast growing field of public history, and even in the traditional business world. Taught by a nationally known California public historian, the class introduces the discipline of history and the role of historians in modern American society. Growing career opportunities for historians in public and academic history as well as in other fields will be carefully investigated, and students will study the methodology of history and historical research, using the Santa Clara Valley and California as a laboratory.

Water Transportation on the Delta: *Brian Smith*

Water Transportation on California's Delta explores the vast inland sea, which encompasses almost six hundred square miles, contains some of the richest farmland in the world and provides 1000 miles of waterway that has had a significant effect on California's history, economy and life-style. Students will study this unique area from the arrival of the Native Californian and Spanish, through the Gold Rush, into the era of the steam powered "paddle wheelers," concluding with the present day. Students will have the opportunity to explore the delta in an extensive three-day excursion by riverboat.

Los Gatos History: *Chatham Forbes*

Building Los Gatos, The Orchard and Vineyard celebrates the centennial of this foothills town. When incorporated a century ago, Los Gatos earned its livelihood from two sources: orchard crops, vineyards, grain, and associated industries; and regional marketing capability. This thriving community soon developed the largest winery, and the finest agricultural processing plant in the Santa Clara Valley. Local historians and descendants of local families will be present to discuss the early years.

North Coast Wine: *Charles Sullivan*

North Coast Wine explores the California winemaking region which includes Napa, Sonoma, and parts of Marin, Mendocino, Lake and Solano counties. Winegrowing began here in the Mission

period and the Sonoma Valley is one of the first important commercial wine producing areas in the state. The course deals with all aspects of winegrowing in this region from the earliest days to the present. A new aspect of the course is the addition of the Sierra Foothills winegrowing region to the course of study. This area was more important than Napa during the earliest years of statehood and today has seen a remarkable rebirth of the wine industry. Evaluation tastings and Saturday field trips included.

Southern Mines of the Mother Lode: *Bill Palmer*

Southern Mines of the Mother Lode presents a detailed study of California's Southern Mines region from Hangtown to Mariposa, but concentrating primarily on Amador and Tuolumne counties. This area has had an exciting past consisting of not only gold mining but also lumbering, a vigorous shortline railroad system, a world famous National Park and the renowned Hetch-Hetchy water system. An intensive weekend field study is planned.

Parks and Trails of the Santa Cruz Mtns: *Tom Taber*

Parks and Trails of the Santa Cruz Mountains provides an opportunity for the first-hand study of California's natural history. Taught by the author of "The Santa Cruz Mtns. Trail Book" and "Where to See Wildlife in California," the class will focus on the general topography, climate, plants, animals and spring wildflowers of the Western Santa Clara, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties. Saturday walking tours to Edgewood County Park, Castle Rock State Park and Fall Creek State Park.

Spring Wildflowers: *Lee Van Fossen*

Spring Wildflowers and Plant Communities of the San Francisco Peninsula presents a survey of natural communities in a cross section of the Santa Cruz Mtns. Class sessions will focus on wildflowers in grasslands, wildlife and plants in the chaparral and riparian habitats and flora and fauna in the redwood-evergreen forests. Saturday field trips to Edgewood County Park/Palo Alto Yacht Harbor, Los Trancos County Park and Big Basin State Park.

Historic Archeology: *Bob Cartier*

Historic Archeology is aimed at introducing students to the nature of archeological interpretation, recording, techniques of field survey and excavation. Special emphasis is placed on local field trips to various archaeological sites in the community. Classroom lectures and slide presentations will supplement the

field activities. Cartier, with a Ph.D. from Rice University, has taught extensively in the fields of anthropology and archaeology.

Islands in the Bay: *Betty Hirsch*

Islands in the Bay explores the history and evolution (both social and physical) of the major islands on the San Francisco Bay. Included are Alcatraz "The Rock," the oldest light station on the Pacific Coast; Angel Island, the anchorage for the first Spanish ship on the Bay in August 1775; Treasure Island, built by men to anchor the Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939; Yerba Buena Island, "Goat Island," the bay's most legendary island; Alameda Island, formerly a peninsula and now an island connected to the mainland by four bridges and two tunnels; and Mare Island, formerly an island and now a peninsula, the first Naval Base on the Pacific Coast - 1854. Two field trips included.

Drake in California: *Hugh Thomas*

Sir Francis Drake in California traces the general background of European exploration and expansion in the 16th century; the development and growth of England during the Tudor period; antagonism between England and Spain; the English privateers and the personal career of Drake, who circumnavigated the world, landing in California. One Saturday field trip to visit Drake's Bay included.

Saga of Santa Cruz: *Betty Hirsch*

Saga of Santa Cruz traces the long, colorful and always controversial history of this coastal town starting with its Mission in 1791 and the Villa de Branciforte in 1797. By the beginning of the American period, both the mission and town had almost disappeared with the town of Santa Cruz becoming firmly established in the flatlands. The resort trade began in the mid-1860s and peaked around the turn of the century with the construction of the Sea Beach Hotel in 1890 and the casino in 1904. Among the most prominent pioneers and town builders were Elihu Anthony, first businessman; Frederick A. Hihn, developer extraordinaire; and Henry Cowell, who made Santa Cruz lime world famous. Cowell's Ranch is the present site of the University of California/Santa Cruz. One Saturday trip planned.

History of Monterey County: *Kent Seavey*

A Brief History of Monterey County looks at the growth of the Monterey Peninsula and investigates the cultural transitions that have taken place over the last 50 years, which characterize the changing nature of the county. Beginning with a description of the geographic setting and overview of Native American inhabitants and their lifestyles, the course continues through the Spanish occupation, American conquest and subsequent agricultural development. The growth of Salinas and "The Long Valley," as well as the re-emergence of the coast as a viable economic area based on commercial fishing will be studied. The development of the tourist industry will also be explored. One Saturday trip included.



Do you recognize this photograph? The CHC Library has many photos that are not identified. If you can identify this photograph or any of the people in it, please call the center.

Master Mariner's Regatta . . .

by Roger R. Olmsted

On April 10 the history center will open its Spring Quarter exhibit "Shipwrights and Sailors," a wonderful collection of model ships made by members of the South Bay Model Shipwrights Club. The panels from the center's 1980 maritime exhibit will be mounted to supplement the models. The exhibit will be on display through the middle of June. In celebration of the exhibit we are printing Roger Olmstead's article on San Francisco's Master Mariner's Regatta. Olmstead's book on the scow schooners of San Francisco Bay, published by the CHC, is due out in late Spring.

The fourth of July was a great day in San Francisco during the 1870s and 80s; the whole population of the city turned out to celebrate the holiday in one way or another. Parades and speeches took up the morning, and the afternoon was devoted to picnics, watersports, or any other divertisement congenial to the participants. Explosives were more widely employed than they are today, and liquor was cheaper. A combination of the two produced a lively holiday, spattered with shooting, bombings, fires and other catastrophes. The Master Mariner's regatta was a happy addition to his medley, for it provided an afternoon spectacle for those who might wish to enjoy the fresh sea breeze from the top of Telegraph Hill.

Regular racing between large numbers of sizeable boats was unknown on the West Coast before 1867, when the Boatmen's Protective Association staged a regatta for workboats. The race was held on July fourth, and when, the following year, the Boatmen's Protective Association became the Master Mariner's Benevolent Association, the regatta became a regular Fourth of July event on San Francisco Bay. As a result, thousands climbed Telegraph Hill and lined the wharves to watch the bay and coastwise freighters take a day off to try their speed around a tough twenty-mile course.

Modern yacht racing is about as popular a spectator sport as rifle shooting, and for good reason. To watch a vast number of small craft, divided up into groups of nearly identical boats, which are quite indistinguishable from one another at any distance beyond five hundred yards, is a diversion only race committees can enjoy, and even this breed is not exempt from ennui and eyestrain.

It may be as much sport to sail a thirty-foot sloop as an eighty-foot schooner, but it is certainly not as much sport to watch one. The morning of the Master Mariner's regatta might find a five-hundred ton barkentine, complete with skysail yard and figurehead, tacking about between Alcatraz and the waterfront in preparation for the race. About her would be "outside" schooners, measuring up to a hundred or more feet in length, sixty-foot scow schooners, and little sloops no bigger than those which sail for the Perpetual Challenge Trophy on San Francisco Bay today. From the top of Telegraph Hill, one would be able to follow the course of the entire race, from Market Street to Hunter's Point, across to Oakland, and then to the Golden Gate. The last leg of the race, from the Presidio, past Black Point, and down to the waterfront, was very exciting for the spectator, as the large vessels sailed quite close to the shore. Not only was the race itself colorful, but all of the shipping in the harbor and most of the wharves were decorated with flags and bunting.

The coasting skippers who were members of the Master Mariner's Association made a special effort to have their vessels in port over the Fourth, so that they might enter the regatta, and scow and coastwise men alike saw that their boats were freshly painted, and in their best trim. The little-used fisherman staysail was broken out, for there would be more than enough crew members to handle it. Large parties went with the racing craft, and sometimes as many as a hundred ladies and gentlemen would clutter the decks of a large schooner. Beer by the keg, and a goodly supply of stronger spirits was carried to spur on the crews of the winning boats and raise the flagging enthusiasm of the losers. The committee followed the race in chartered tugs or sternwheelers, and with a load of guests and a well-stocked commissary. The Master Mariners were out for an afternoon's fun when they raced.

Yet, the competition was often very keen, for the prizes were much sought after. The vessels were divided into six classes; round-bottomed schooners, scow schooners, and sloops, of the first and second class. The first prize in each class was the coveted "Champion" banner of the Association, which was a red silk flag trimmed with gold, with a game cock in the center on a white field, and the word "Champion" emblazoned across it. Second and third prizes were similar banners, in different colors. Fourth,



Barkentine Makah racing against a scow schooner. Photo courtesy National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

fifth, sixth and seventh prizes were usually given, depending upon how many were racing in the various classes, and consisted of such items as silver goblets, marine glasses, gold sleeve buttons and cap insignia. In addition, prizes were often awarded for the fastest time in the fleet. In 1869, for instance, the harbor master offered a silver medal; the sheriff an American ensign, and a wood and coal yard operator promised the winner the choice of either a cord or a ton for the galley stove.

Considerable money was sometimes wagered on the outcome of the races, both by the competitors and by the spectators. Not only were bets made before the race, but also during the race, which again shows that they, the bystanders, had little trouble in following the various fortunes of the vessels, though they might be some distance away. While the amount of the wagers was probably not so high as those usual in these days of professional sports, the betting occasionally added an edge to the contest, as happened when the scow schooner *Champion* failed to enter the 1869 regatta. The *Champion* was considered one of the fastest boats on the bay, and the story was bruited about that her skipper, Amos Hewett, had not raced her for fear of losing. Captain Clemmens, of the scow schooner *Tartar*, upon making this observation, in a bar-room after the regatta, was challenged by Hewett to a match race the following day, with a two-hundred

dollar side wager in the bargain. The *Champion* won the race, which proved the folly of Clemmens's wager more than the speed of the *Champion*, for the *Tartar* was not a notably fast scow.

The Master Mariner's Regatta was sailed by time; that is, the minute and second was noted as each vessel crossed the starting line, and again at the finish. The entries would mill around between Alcatraz and Telegraph Hill before the one o'clock start, and when the gun was fired, they would make for the line, off the Market or Howard Street wharf. As each vessel made its own start, the competitors were strung out for about four miles. With thirty or more vessels racing, many of them measuring up to several hundred tons, it would have been extremely hazardous to start together, and although contemporary paintings show a pack of schooners rounding the mark bunched like a dinghy fleet, there would probably have been more marine disasters than there were in the regattas if such had been the case.

There were plenty of casualties, however, in this rough and ready competition. In the heat of the race, men like the scow schooner captains who fought for the right of way up the narrow reaches of Petaluma Creek with lumps of galley coal, did not always firmly adhere to the strictest rules of the road; and while protests were not unusual, disqualifications were unheard of. Added to the normal hazards of carrying a full press in San

Francisco Bay's strong summer breeze, collisions resulted in many withdrawals. During the regatta of 1871, the *Colonel Baker*, lost her topmast, the *U. S. Grant* lost her bowsprit, the *Mary Nelson* her centerboard, the *N. L. Drew* fouled a ship at anchor and tore her main, and later collided with the *Champion*. The only protest came from the skipper of the "plunger" *Champion*, who withdrew from the race, complaining that the Fort Point stakeboat was under sail. In 1877, a lively dispute took place when the crew of the schooner *Galatea* insisted that the schooner *Big River* had deliberately rammed them as they tacked, even though there had been plenty of room for the *Big River* to clear them. The *Galatea* made up for the injury by winning the next regatta, held in 1879. More immediate retribution came to the crew of the *Good Templar*, in 1872, when they stubbornly held their right of way against the *Fairy Queen*, and lost their jibboom in the resulting collision. Except in such cases of swift and impartial justice, protests were left to be settled on Judgement Day.

The course usually sailed by the Master Mariners started from the center of the waterfront and ran to a stakeboat off Hunter's Point, thence to a boat off the Oakland Bar; from the Oakland Bar to the Fort Point stakeboat was the longest leg of the course, about eight miles, and the toughest, as it was a dead beat in the usual fresh westerly. Even with the ebb tide as many as ten tacks were required, and against a flood tide, many more. The last leg, from Fort Point to a finish line off Meigg's Wharf or the seawall, was downwind. The total length of the course was about twenty nautical miles, although it might be more or less, depending upon the location of the start and finish, and the position of the Hunter's Point stakeboat, for the latter could have easily been moved a mile or two up or down the bay to provide a shorter or longer course, as inclination or the weather dictated.

The winning time was usually between two hours and fifteen minutes and two hours and forty-five minutes. The best time in the scow schooner division was, in most cases, only about fifteen or twenty minutes slower than the best time in the fleet, even though the long windward leg was certainly not to the scow man's liking. The only victory over the entire fleet ever won by a scow was in the 1870 regatta, when the scow sloop, *P. M. Randall*, A. L. Hewlett master, won a rather slow race in the time of 2:50:57. She defeated two rather notable vessels, however. One of them was the *Caroline Mills*, an "outside" schooner remarked upon for having her greatest beam at the main rigging. The

Caroline Mills had won the previous years' race and turned in the best time on the two following years. The other vessel that the *Randall* defeated was the "plunger", *Gazelle*, a sloop which compiled the most outstanding record in the history of the Master Mariner's Regatta.

The *Gazelle* was built in 1868, in San Francisco; she grossed fourteen and one-half tons, and was thirty-six feet long, with a beam of fifteen and one-half feet, and depth of four feet three inches. In the 1869 regatta, the *Gazelle* had nosed out the much larger *P. M. Randall* to win in the sloop division, only to lose in turn to the scow-hulled *Randall* in 1870. In 1871, the *Randall* did not race, but a new rival for the swift *Gazelle*, the *Challenge*, a slightly larger "plunger", of the same beam and depth, but four feet longer, had been built. As in the case of the much-copied *Randall*, the *Gazelle* was not to be beaten by an imitation. The *Challenge* withdrew from the race, and the *Gazelle* won in her class. The next year she beat the *Challenge*, which finished this time, by a good margin, in a race on which there was quite a bit of money wagered. She won again the following year, to earn permanent possession of the "Champion" banner. Not allowed to compete for the prize in 1874, she sailed away, and swept the fleet, defeating her old rival, the *Caroline Mills*, a heavy weather boat, by eight minutes in a fast race.

The scow schooner *Rosella* was the only other vessel ever to win permanent possession of the "Champion" banner. Sailed by Louis Morrill, the sixty-foot scow won in her class in 1869, 1870 and 1871. The *Rosella* and the other fast scow schooners, never equalled the time that the big scow sloops sometimes made, but they did surprisingly well. Forty years later, the *Rosella* still carried a broom at her masthead commemorating her victories in the Master Mariner's regatta. The *Rosella* always beat as many, or more, of the sharp-bowed craft as she was beaten by. The fast scow schooner *Nettie* is another example to the point. She ran only eleven minutes behind the winning "outside" schooner, the *General Banning*, a vessel twice her size, in the 1884 race. Peter Demming, who owned and sailed the *Nettie*, made the most of her speed; before the race he had her hauled out and her bottom greased, a not uncommon practice, and one which indicated the keenness of the competition. In many cases, scows defeated yachts, which sometimes entered the regattas, even though they could not compete for the flags.

Through all of the regattas that were sailed, the vast majority



The fresh westerly sweeping through the Golden Gate cost the schooner "Occidental" a foretopsail. Here she is racing between two scow schooners in the 1884 regatta. Photo courtesy National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

of the entires were bonafide cargo craft; the Master Mariner's regatta seems to have acted as a mild spur to the construction of faster vessles, to which such names as *Champion*, *Champion II*, *Master Mariner*, *Gazelle* and *Challenge* attest, but a class of "racers" was never developed. The small "plungers", which were a "yachty" type of craft, came the closest to the racing machine of the vessels belonging to the Association members. It never became necessary to develop the strict measurement rules governing entries in the regattas; the rough division into classes, with no limits to the sail carried, except in the case of square sails, was the only "rule" ever used. As a result, the members were sometimes annoyed by the entrance of yachts in the races, although, by custom, outsiders were allowed to race with the fleet. It was only when a yacht placed first that any loud grievances were voiced, however. The howls were loud in 1873, when the crack schooner-yacht *Minnie* took the honors, if not the prizes, but, on the whole, the Master Mariners found little reason to object to yachts entering the races, for the yachts rarely made the best times. It is doubtful if any yacht on the coast could have beaten the beautiful *General Banning*, for instance, or the best of her contemporaries, and in the later races the yachts were conspicuously absent.



Schooner yacht Virginia in a collision with Little Annie, in a regatta in the late 1800s. Photo courtesy National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

The climax to the regatta was the annual Master Mariner's Benevolent Association ball, during which the prizes were awarded to the afternoon's winners. The ball was a grand affair and often sported such decorative touches as the illuminated and perfumed fountain in the middle of the dance floor, the highlight of the 1874 ball. Upwards of one thousand dollar's worth of prizes were distributed every year, and nearly every crew which entered the race received some sort of prize. The large number of prizes was given partly as an award for turning out for the race, for it was the desire of the committee to encourage as many contestants as possible.

Toward the end of the seventies, enthusiasm for the regatta declined somewhat: Whereas in 1875 and 1876 forty-two vessels had entered the race, only twenty participated in 1877. No regatta was held in 1878, and after 1879, when only twenty-two entered, the race was dropped, and not revived until 1884. The 1884 regatta produced one of the best races in the history of the event, but in 1885 interest fell off again. No more regattas were held until 1891, when an untimely resurrection turned up only fourteen contestants.

Popular interest in the regatta also declined after the seventies. Not only did fewer people watch the races, but waterfront interest



The General Banning is on her way to beating the Electra by one second in the 1884 regatta. Photo courtesy National Maritime Museum, San Francisco.

in the Fourth of July as a whole declined. Less effort went into the decorations, fewer ships were decked with flags; instead, interest shifted to the rowing races, and the crowds thronged Long Bridge, across Mission Bay, instead of Telegraph Hill. It may be well that enthusiasm for the Master Mariner's regatta flickered out. For although some first-class racing and a great show disappeared from San Francisco Bay, the single-minded enthusiasm which would have kept the event alive would also have precluded the most engaging quality of the contests: their spirit of casual amateur competition, in which a "good time" was an important element of a good race.

Editor's Note: In 1965 the Master Mariner's Regatta was revived by a group of San Francisco yachtsmen led by Bill Vaughan who read Roger Olmsted's research and contacted him for advice as to how to bring the great race back to life. It was decided to move the classic race to Maritime Day, May 22nd on San Francisco Bay, and have major companies sponsor classic yachts along very nearly the same course sailed in 1884. This spectacular and lively race is once again part of San Francisco's best annual traditions.

Olmsted established himself as a maritime scholar in the 1950s, becoming curator of the San Francisco Maritime Museum in 1957. Under his direction the historic ships were restored at the Hyde Street Pier. He became editor of "American West Magazine" and director of publications for California Historical Society. Until his death in 1981, he was actively involved with historic preservation in San Francisco.

CULTURAL PRESERVATION

South Bay Model Shipwrights Club



Exhibit, South Bay Model Shipwrights' Club, February 1983. Photo by Hal Randall.

South Bay Model Shipwrights Club members share a goal: to reproduce in exact scale and detail every part of real ships. Their work is so intricate that they will devote up to two years of their spare time to produce one model.

Ships run the gamut from ancient to modern, from Spanish galleons to yachts. They can be from two inches to four feet long.

Club president and founder Jean Eckert, a 51-year-old Los Altos housewife, usually devotes 10-12 hours a week to her demanding hobby.

Last week (April 1983), sharing her living room with a superb replica of Sir Francis Drake's "Golden Hind" and a whaling boat right out of Moby Dick, she explained what goes into building model ships. "A few model shipwrights start from scratch and a plan, but most start with a kit and a plan," she said. "I work from kits and plans."

Depending on size, complexity and technical differences, a kit will cost anywhere from \$30 to \$1,000. The model builder starts by constructing the keel and skeleton of the hull and works upward, just as workers have done for centuries in real shipyards. The similarities don't stop there.

"Each plank on the deck is individually sized and laid," Eckert said. "The rigging is hand-tied - knot by knot. I use linen line for the riggings because it looks like miniature rope." Each trunnel (individual pegs used as joints for parts), ranging from one-thirty-second to one sixty-fourth of an inch thick, is fastened by hand, just as on sea-going ships.

A clue to the difficulty of constructing an accurate ship model can be found in the vocabulary shared by model shipwrights and sailors. "We have a specific name for every part of a ship," Eckert said. There are between 400 and 500 words for parts and the rigging. Extra items, such as scale-model cannons of pre-cast brass are available at kit shops.

Models are built on the "classic" scale of one-fourth of an inch equals one foot. "By comparison," Eckert said, "makers of dollhouses use a scale of one inch to one foot."

Eckert, who started the club in the summer of 1982, is one of only two women among the 50 members. The other is Roberta Alpers of San Mateo. Ages range from the 20s to the 70s. "A couple are in wheelchairs," Eckert said.

"One member does ships in bottles. His model of 'The Star of India' is only two inches long." How do you build a ship in a bottle? Eckert laughed. "Very carefully. Actually, they make the models outside the bottles. The masts are hinged so they can be flattened and the ships are slid inside. Then, the masts are raised with special tools - long and skinny," according to Eckert.

Eckert, like most club members, started building models in grade school. "I dropped off when I got married and was raising a family," she said. "But when the kids grew up, I got back at it." Now, one room in her home is her personal shipyard and tool shed.

The club welcomes beginners and experts alike. Anyone wishing to join may call Eckert at 415 964-0561.

By Stan Moreillon

Reprinted from the San Jose Mercury News, April 1983.

Models from the South Bay Model Shipwrights Club will be on display at the history center April 10-June 13.



Casper Pawley: Pioneer Labor Leader

by George Gastil

August 10 of this year will mark the 100th anniversary of the San Jose Carpenter's Union No. 316. The history center is preparing to mount an exhibit in January 1988 to commemorate this anniversary. In anticipation of the exhibit we are printing a pioneer profile on one of Santa Clara Valley's pioneer labor leaders.

Local 316, one of the first building trade unions in California, has the distinction of being the oldest union in the Santa Clara Valley still functioning under its original charter. In 1887 Casper Pawley became an early member in the union and would soon distinguish himself as a leader, not only among the carpenters but in the labor movement as a whole. In 1910 a Labor Day issue of *The Union*, a San Jose labor periodical, lauded Pawley as one who has "done more to help advance the cause of labor in Santa Clara county (sic) than any other man, with possibly one exception."

The 1880s saw a period of growth in the labor movement both nationally and in California. Under the leadership of Peter J. McGuire the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America organized in 1881, but the development of craft unions on the West Coast was still rather slow, with very little union activity outside of San Francisco and Oakland before 1887. Taking advantage of economic growth in California, in the late 1880s numerous craft unions developed all over the state with assistance from San Francisco labor leaders and the newly formed American Federation of Labor. In 1887 Local 316 consisted of 22 San Jose carpenters. They met in secret during the early years so that individuals could avoid being fired for belonging to a union.

One of this tiny group was Casper Pawley, who arrived in San Jose in September of 1887 and joined the infant Local 316 in October.

With previous organizing experience, Pawley quickly gained the respect of his peers, playing an important role in the struggle for better wages and hours. When Local 316 was formed, San Jose carpenters received \$3.00 a day for 10 hours of work. They soon got that changed to \$3.50 for a nine hour day. The struggle for the eight hour day, the top priority of many craft unions of the period, was in full gear. Because of their status as highly skilled workers, the carpenters appeared likely to be among the first unions to win that battle.

With a handful of growing craft unions in the Santa Clara Valley, several labor leaders saw the need for a central labor body. California labor historian Ira B. Cross traced the founding of such a body to January of 1888, when several San Francisco organizers met with San Jose union leaders to form the "Federation of Trades of Santa Clara County." The Typographical Union, the Cigar Makers and the Brewers and Malters were among those leading the way.

In 1890 the first Labor Day celebration in Santa Clara County was declared a big success, but the trade union movement would soon dwindle amid the economic recession of the early 1890s. The Federation of Trades officially died in 1894, and, as *The Union* noted, "the bulk of the (local) unions became a matter of history also."

With a new century the tide turned. California was experiencing prosperity, and several unions would organize to insist on their share. This time Pawley would lead the way in forming a central labor body. In April of 1900 Local 316 sent out a call to the few craft unions in existence: Carpenters, Cigar Makers, Typographical, Brewers and a re-organized Painters Union (combined membership: 112). Representatives of the above unions, along with two from the Clerks, assembled at Little Champion Hall in April and, after a few meetings, the "Federated Trades Council" was officially formed on June 20, 1900. The minutes of their first meeting show that "C. Pawley" called them to order and proved the key leadership.

With seasoned leaders like Pawley, both Local 316 and the Federated Trades Council grew tremendously. By 1901 the Carpenters had won the eight hour day, with a wage of \$3.00 a day. In 1905, Casper Pawley left the wage labor force to go into the contracting business, but he "still retained his membership in the U.B. of C. and J. of America," according to the labor press.

Gastil was a student intern at the history center from August, 1986 through January, 1987. Coming to the center from the University of California, Santa Barbara's Public History Master's Program, Gastil has done major research on the Santa Clara Valley labor movement in preparation for a CHC grant proposal.

FOUNDATION NOTES

Volunteer Profile

Volunteers provide an invaluable service to the history center and beginning with this issue of *The Californian*, we will regularly feature one of our dedicated volunteers. It is fitting that for this first article we focus on our volunteer coordinator, Helen Riisberg.

Helen came to the center as a library volunteer in February, 1984, just prior to her retirement from Granger Associates in Menlo Park. However, she began taking computer classes at De Anza in 1975 and took her first class with the history center in the Spring of 1979. She took over the volunteer coordinator job in October of 1984.

Born and raised in Brookline, Massachusetts, Helen was the only child of immigrant parents, her mother being Irish, and her father Danish. She went through school in Brookline and as a teenager studied piano at the New England Conservatory of Music and drawing/painting at the Boston Museum School of Art. She wanted to be a commercial designer, but working in credit and collection for numerous large, Eastern manufacturing firms was to be her destiny - until 1969.



Helen Riisberg started as a library volunteer for the history center in February, 1984. Photo by David Fox.

In 1969 the California climate beckoned and Helen packed her car and drive across the country. It didn't take her time to find work. She worked for National Semiconductor briefly and spent two stints at Granger, with ever increasing international credit responsibilities. But the weekends were for exploring and she set out to get to know California.

Her love of history and interest in travel is part of the reason she was drawn to the history center. The other activities that keep Helen busy the five days of the week she isn't at the history center include travel (in particular cruises, where you don't have to pack and unpack), art, gardening, music and theater.

"I've met many nice and interesting people working at the history center," according to Helen. The California History Center wants to make sure that Helen knows that the feeling is mutual.

Come One, Come All

Activities are planned for De Anza Day, Sunday, June 7, that revolve around our Spring Quarter exhibit "Shipwrights and Sailors." Modelers from the South Bay Model Shipwrights Club will be here working on models and answering questions about ship modeling. CHC member Marion Card will be demonstrating the art of scrimshaw and the singing of sea chanteys will round out our day of maritime activities. The center will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., so plan on dropping by.

Two Books in Progress

Two new CHC publications are in progress, with one scheduled to be released this spring and the other due out in early winter.

Scheduled for spring release is **Scow Schooners of the San Francisco Bay**, a history of the “workhorse” boats which plied the San Francisco Bay. Written by Roger Olmsted in 1969, and who has since passed away, the book is being funded in part by the National Maritime Museum. The book will contain many wonderful photographs and we hope to have it available for purchase for our maritime activities on De Anza Day.

San Jose resident Lois Stevens has provided funding for a book on the Pomo Indians of California’s North Coast Valleys called **Pomo Song of Dawn**. The book is based on the paintings of Grace Carpenter Hudson, who became a well-known painter of the Pomos in the late 19th/early 20th centuries. Stevens and Jewell Newburn have written original poetry to accompany the paintings. The book will contain numerous full-color plates of Hudson’s work, and should be out in December or January.



Grace Carpenter Hudson

De Anza Day Book Sale

CHC Librarian Shirley Clements has gone through the CHC library collection and pulled out books for which we have duplicate copies. These duplicate copies will be put on sale to the public on De Anza Day, June 7. However, members are invited to come into the center during the months of April and May and purchase books for their own collections prior to the public sale. There are many wonderful books to choose from including: “Ordeal By Hunger,” 1936 and “Committee of Vigilance” 1964, by George Stewart; “Saratoga’s First Hundred Years,” Florence Cunningham, 1976; “Indian Lore of the North California Coast,” Austen Warburton and Joseph Endert, 1966; “ISHI in Two Worlds,” Theodora Kroeber, 1961; “Roaring Camp,” Bret Harte; “Anza’s California Expeditions,” Herbert Bolton, 1930; “The Annals of San Francisco,” Soule, Gihnon, and Nisbet, 1854; “Luis Maria Peralta and His Adobe,” Frances Fox, 1975. In addition, we have broken series of “California Historical Society Quarterly,” volumes 29-58 and “Journal of the West” volumes 1-15. We have many more books and magazines to choose from, so come in and browse.

Project Immortality - Phase III

Thanks to CHC supporter Leo Hoffer, who bought 10 tiles in December, the next tile laying ceremony is in the planning stages. If you are interested in buying a tile to be included in the Phase III section, please contact the center by March 30. A tile in a Trianon courtyard is a wonderful way to commemorate a family member or loved one.

New Members

Supporter

Louise Thursby

Family

Spencer and Eleanor Anderson, Sharon Fingold, Susan Foden, Robert and Claris MacConnell, Gary and Sharon Remmen, Tina Starling, Rosa and Harlan Suits, James and Doris Williams.

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Individual

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Large Donors Thanked

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Leo Hoffer - Ten Tiles

Will Lester - Donation to CHC Endowment Fund,
Community Foundation of Santa Clara County

Lois Stevens - Grant funding for Pomo Indian book

Tim Walsh - 32 gift memberships in CHC Foundation

Clyde Arbuckle, right, spoke to a full house at the Trianon on Friday, January 23. Over 60 people came out to hear Clyde reminisce about the early days in Santa Clara Valley. This photo was taken on De Anza Day, 1986, when Clyde and eight other authors participated in a booksigning at the history center. Clyde is a well-known local author, historian and storyteller and was born and raised in the Santa Clara Valley. Photo by David Fox.



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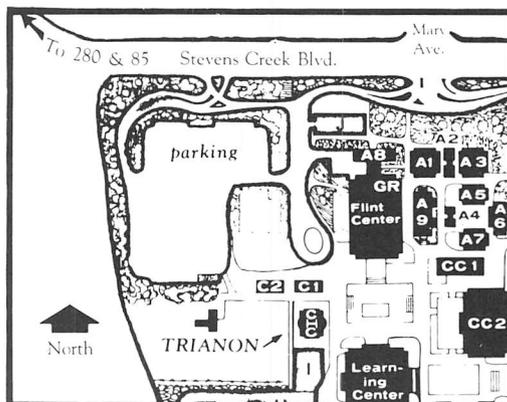
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Trianon Bldg. Hours:

Monday–Friday:
8:00 am–noon, 1:00–4:30 pm

Exhibit Hours:

Monday–Friday:
9:00 am–noon, 1:00–4:00 pm
Docent Tours may be scheduled
by calling 996-4712.



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