

HISTORY GUILD of DALY CITY/COLMA

Vol. 8 - No. 2 Nov. 1989

'06 EARTHQUAKE SHACKS, WHERE ARE THEY?

Honestly, we planned the November 15th Guild meeting at least 8 months ago, and we sincerely trust that the subject, 1906 Earthquake Houses in Daly City and Surrounds, was not a portend of the unbelievable shocker of October 17th last.

To be held at Doelger Center on Wednesday, November 15th, the speaker will be Jane Cryan, founder of the Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of San Francisco Refugee Shacks.

Ms. Cryan has documented over 60 shacks in San Francisco which are still in use, her curiosity having been piqued by a dwelling across the street from her S.F. Sunset District residence.

Daly City grew out of the influx of refugees from the 1906 quake, and many of the first residences in the Vista Grande, Hillcrest and Mission tracts were refugee shacks hauled out from SF.

Some 5600 of the shacks were built following the earthquake and fire. They were placed in some 31 parks and other locations in S.F., and were all gone by August of 1907. A good number of them were drayed to the top-of-the-hill area by H.H. Smith, who became a successful Daly City businessman and civic figure (Mayor of DC, 1918-1936).

Daly City residents who might have information, pictures, etc., about any refugee shacks which are still in use in our area are urged to attend the November 15th meeting, to share their knowledge with Ms. Cryan.

Most of the refugee dwellings which made up our early DC homes have been destroyed or so well-disguised that it's a difficult task to recognize them.

Volunteers for Goodies

The following have volunteered to bring goodies for the Guild's November 15th meeting at Doelger Center. **Mary**

Hutchings will contact them prior to the meeting to see if they're still on:

Eileen Ford
Mary Redfearn
Frances Windhurst
Ford Baron
Fran Kelly
Bianca Caserza

GREAT TRIP TO YUKON!

On September 15th last, a good number of members and friends (93 by count) enjoyed a trip to the Yukon Gold Rush as presented by Guild Director Neil Fahy. The almost unbearable hardships of the gold-seekers were graphically by master story-teller Neil.

An ongoing project with Neil, the participation of San Mateo County residents in the Alaskan gold rushes has resulted in the documentation of over 100 localities who forsook the comforts of Peninsula living for the lure of gold.

The research, from journals and letters, newspaper accounts and eyewitness stories to relatives, has resulted in a beautiful, illustrated book entitled "San Mateo County Sourdoughs in the Klondike and Nome Gold Rushes of 1896-1900", published and sold through the San Mateo County Historical Association.

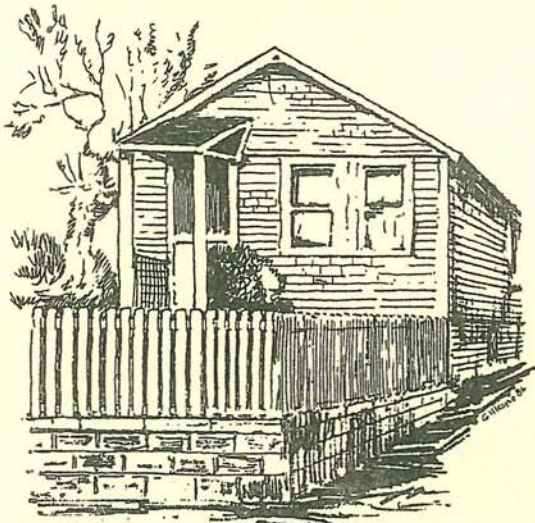
In the spirit of the program, Neil was presented with a loaf of Sourdough Bread, as were the winners of the Guild raffle, Olga Tourkoff and Jack Elliott. Olga had donated an Alaska-Sourdough cookbook, which was won by Ida Bullis. Expert ticket-sellers for the raffle were the Larsens, Aida and Leroy.

Continuing the tradition of good refreshments, Mary Hutchings and her great gang, Marilyn Olcese, Bob Williams and George Gaggero served donations from Elaine and Walter Riney, Carl and Bea Hoppe and Ida Spadarella. The goodie tables were beautifully adorned with dahlias from the gardens of Louis and Albena Ivani. Many thanks to all the willing helpers!

History, Arts and Sciences Commissioner Belva Carroll was presented with a decorated flyswatter by member and Councilman Al Teglia, this in reflector

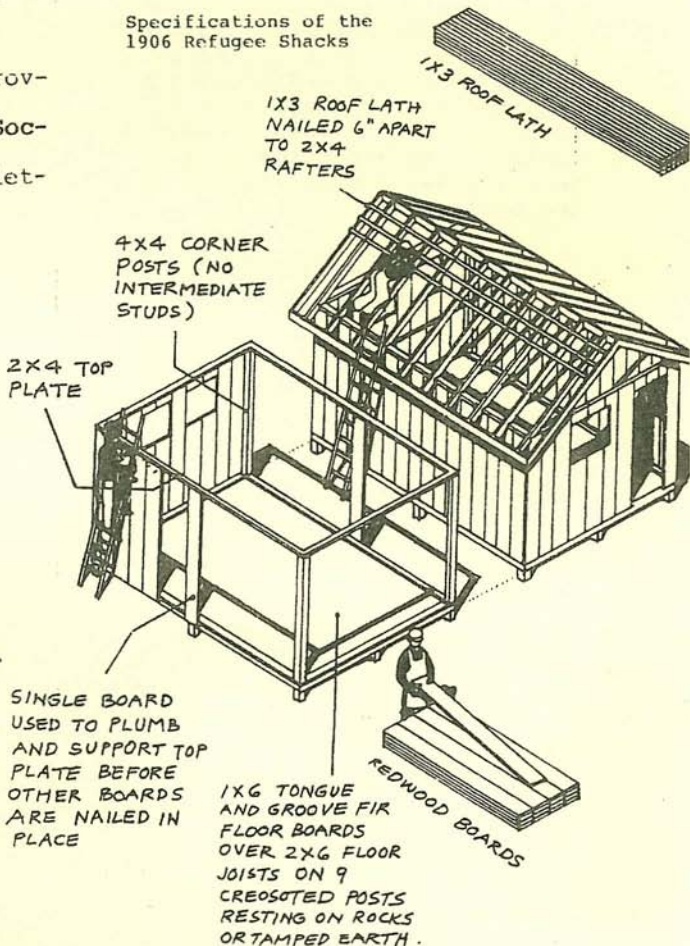
on Belva's ankle injury while chasing a fly in her bathroom with a rolled up newspaper!

Members in attendance voted approval of membership by our Guild in the Conference of California Historical Societies, a state-wide organization of local and regional historical societies, agencies and museums.



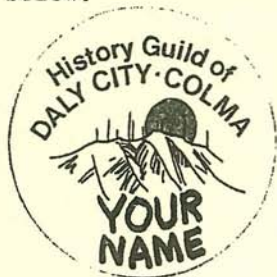
Picture of DC home adapted from original Refugee Shack

Specifications of the 1906 Refugee Shacks



WANT A MEMBERSHIP BADGE?

Members' name badges are available through Ken Gillespie (755-5123) for the sum of \$1.00, of which 75¢ goes to the Guild. A badge-making machine has been purchased by the Gillespies, which can turn out 2½" wide decorative, individualized round badges. If interested, give us a call. A picture of the badge design is below.



FUTURE PROGRAMS LISTED

Looking ahead into the Guild year, programs have been planned by Program Chair Bunny Gillespie on the following subjects:

January 21- Elio Fontana, of the Fontana & Co. Memorials, pioneer Colma firm, will reflect on life in our area through 6 generations of Fontanas in the business.

This meeting will be at Colma Town Hall, and will also be the Guild's 7th Birthday Annual Party, with special refreshments and beverages.

Held on a Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4 pm, the meeting is scheduled to avoid the Superbowl!

March 21 - Judge Jose de Larios, of the South San Francisco Historical Society, will speak on the subject of The Portola Expedition, which resulted in the discovery of San Francisco Bay in 1869. Judge de Larios is an expert on this subject and has a splendid, illustrated presentation for us.

HALT IN CATALOGUING DUE TO EARTHQUAKE

Library cataloguing of materials in the Historical Collection, which began on September 26th, has temporarily been suspended, due to extensive damage in the Serramonte Library on October 17th.

Continuance will depend on the repair schedule of the Library, which had major re-location of books and magazines on the main floor, overhead and rug damage.

Those who had been engaged in the project, under Neil Fahy's direction, are Olga Tourkoff, Yolanda Hardiman, Ed and Olive Smith, Walter and Elaine Riney and Ken and Bunny Gillespie.

Most of the photographs in the collection (over 3,000) have been catalogued, and work was progressing on the myriad clippings, letters, and other miscellany relative to the histories of Daly City and Colma.

PLAQUE TO DALY'S HILL INSTALLED ON HILLCREST

The beautiful plaque denoting the "PLACE WHERE DALY CITY STARTED" was put into position on the north outside wall of the Crocker Masonic Temple on November 4th.

Donated by Yerba Buena Chapter #1, E Clampus Vitus, with assistance from Crocker Lodge #454 F.&A.M., the granite slab celebrates the naming of the area as Daly's Hill. The dedication was part of festivities which included the inaugural usage of an elevator in the Masonic building.

Recently the name of the lodge was changed from #454 to #212, reflecting the merger with the former South San Francisco #212 in July of this year.

WHERE WERE YOU? WHAT DID YOU DO?

Of course the big question after the big quake on October 17th was, "And where were you when it hit?" We shook in the middle of history, and that history has been recorded in countless ways, most importantly in the minds of those who endured those terrifying 15 seconds last month.

Tales of the times will stay fresh forever, and, as with December 7, 1941, June 6, 1944, and November 22, 1963, the date of October 17, 1989, will forever be part of our lives. We lived through history, and our historians and geologists will want to have our individual stories written down, or tape-recorded.

Toward that end, Mitch Postel, of the San Mateo County Historical Assn., is collecting written stories of "where I was, what I did", etc. for the record. Your Guild will act as a forwarding agency for these memoirs, and we earnestly solicit their collection.

Please bring them to the meeting on November 15th at Doelger Center, or send them to:

Ken Gillespie
437 Lakeshire Drive
Daly City, CA 940115

The media coverage of the event has been extraordinary, but has focused naturally on the post-quake activities. We are virtually on a first-name basis with the brave reporters who clustered immediately to chronicle the disasters.

But the stories of countless others during the unbelievable turmoil of Tuesday afternoon must be put down on paper immediately, lest they fade in detail, or get colored in the telling.

Write it down simply...short sentences...where I was, who was with me, how severe did it appear? How your home withstood the shock...directions of damage (east-west? north-south? random?)... how well you were prepared (if at all)... did you lose power, water, gas, telephone? All these things are important.

For the record...in the Gillespie house, no structural damage - anything facing west was hurled out of cup-

boards; easterly, no effect - our Buick bounced off the ground in the garage, we were watching - the water heater's connections snapped, water all over basement - water turn-off frozen, was turned off with wrench, but handle broke - one garbage can full of broken china and bric-a-brac, a combination of the precious and the junk.

Remember that Daly City grew out of the 1906 disaster, and a few of the pioneers who walked out with their families to Daly's Hill wrote brief sentences about their early adventures.

We put on the video of the movie **San Francisco**, and found the choice line, where **Blackie Norton** (Clark Gable) asks a Salvation Army man on a wagon, "Where are you going?" The man replies, (somewhat prematurely, since there was no Daly City at the time), "Out to Daly City to get some milk!"

HISTORY-RELATED GIFTS

Several items will be on sale at the November 15th meeting which would make nice, inexpensive holiday gifts:

DC Firemen's Badges - \$3.00

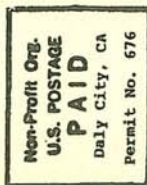
Historical stationery, 6 different scenes, with envelopes - \$2.50

"Great Daly City Historical Trivia Book", 88 pages - \$5.00

The Firemen's Badges are sold as a service to our friends in the Dept.; the stationery proceeds all go to the Guild; the Trivia Book sales present 50¢ per book to the Guild.

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