

THE TATTLEER

JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY-COLMA

GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT MARK

Many of you already know about our sister organization, the Colma Historical Association, but we thought it would be nice to occasionally shine a spotlight on similar organizations in the vicinity with which we have much in common. To that end, we are delighted to welcome Sylvia Payne as our featured speaker for the March general membership meeting. She is the president of the Historical Society of South San Francisco and is the retired city clerk of SSF. Sylvia has coordinated several projects for the society, including revising *The Once Upon A Time Coloring Book*, *Images of America, South San Francisco*, and *South San Francisco from Baden to Biotech: A Centennial Celebration*. She will show this DVD at the meeting and take questions afterward. It is worth noting that the filmmaker is Bryan Kingston, who co-produced our own Daly City Centennial DVD a few years ago.

Some changes happening in and around the museum. There will soon be a new development built on top of the old rock quarry directly above and behind our museum. The top of the cliff has been graded and the entire western face of the cliff that backs up almost directly against the museum has been covered in steel mesh, anchored by bolts driven deep into the rock. We will have new neighbors just above us, who we hope will become Guild members and visitors to the museum.



Heavy grading machinery is drastically altering the topography of the old quarry. Large dump trucks roar past the museum door coming and going to the quarry. The entire area has been dusted by the rock and earth removal and grading.

There is also a brand new public trash receptacle a few doors down from us. It replaces an old one made of concrete which had lost its top and was no longer
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EVENING HISTORY LECTURE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 7 PM

101 Lake Merced Blvd. Daly City
Doelger Center Cafe



Sylvia Payne

presents the documentary

South San Francisco from Baden to Biotech: A Centennial Celebration

by filmmaker Bryan Kingston

REFRESHMENTS: Will be provided by **Judy Hnilo, Alice Brockman, Pat Hatfield, and Mel Margolis.** Thank you to refreshment donors and to our gracious hospitality volunteers **Annette Hipona, and Grace Gonzalez.**

We would like to thank **America Copy & Printing**, 45 Washington Street, Daly City for the outstanding job they have done on our *Tattler* newsletter over the years.

650/991-0100

usable. The new one is metal and painted navy blue; it is bolted to the sidewalk and will be a much more aesthetically-pleasing and practical enhancement to the Mission Street corridor. We are in the final stages of our project to have iconic and vintage images of Daly City through the decades blown up and mounted along the upper portions of our otherwise bare walls. This creative use of space is our first major addition to the museum in the last several years. The images will serve to highlight much of the city's fabled history and local lore--we hope stimulating conversation along the way. This effort is being coordinated by Dana Smith and Judith Christensen, who have labored many hours in selecting images and meeting with the professionals who will transform these vintage photographs into larger than life icons.

Finally, as we embark on 2018, we hope to see more of our members at meetings. It's always nice to greet old friends and also meet new Guilders; please be sure to promote the Guild and invite prospective members if you believe in our mission. We constantly endeavor to preserve, protect, and promote our shared local history for one and all. The Guild is always seeking new membership and anxious to welcome new friends.

Love of history can be contagious--please help to pass it on!

REMEMBERING THE SF WARRIORS AT THE COW PALACE



Guild Secretary Algis Ratnikas sends this tidbit of sports history mentioned in the *SF Chronicle*, 2/10/18:

October 23, 1962 The San Francisco Warriors played their first game at the Cow Palace in Daly City. The game was pushed back to 9 p.m in hopes that a boxing match at Candlestick Park between Gene Fullmer

and Dick Tiger would end early. The match went a full 12 rounds. The Cow Palace was less than half full as some 5,215 spectators watched Wilt Chamberlain score 56 points and lead the Warriors to a 140-113 victory over the Detroit Pistons.

HISTORY RESURFACES



By Jeff Christner

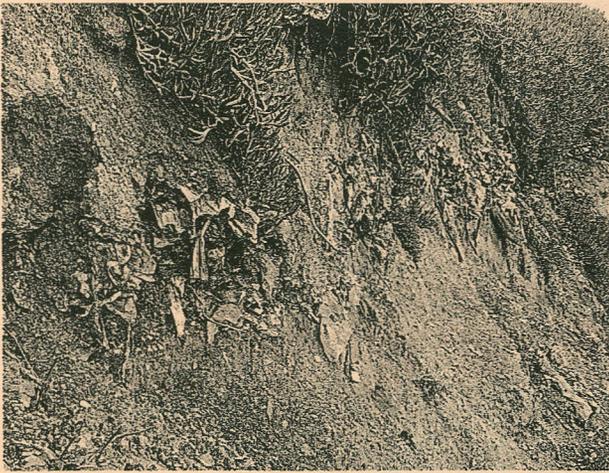
Editor's note: Jeff is a past Guild lecturer and contributor to the "Tattler". You may remember his fascinating presentation on Aviation

Archaeology and the December 5, 1943 military plane crashes in Daly City and on San Bruno Mountain. Jeff donated written documentation, enlarged photos, a squadron patch, and debris from the crash on the mountain to our museum collection. He has also recently joined as a member. In this contribution, Jeff turns his meticulous research attention to mid-century artifacts found at the Mussel Rock garbage site. It's an interesting perspective to think that toys from my own childhood (my favorite toys were plastic soldiers, cowboys and Indians, and farm animals) are now vintage artifacts that shed light on a past era.

This is the first of a series of articles dealing with the old Mussel Rock Landfill and the history that is resurfacing there as told by the items that have been recovered. As people may know, the landfill opened in 1957 and was in operation through 1978 when it was ordered closed, and rightfully so, by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Mussel Rock area was never a good area to open a landfill in the first place due to the movement of the earth from a variety of factors. Most commonly seen at Mussel Rock are small landslides or slumps that move short distances and produce scarps, a steep area of exposed earth. The slumps occur either through wave action and erosion of the toe of the old landfill or through rainwater runoff resulting in more traditional erosion, not to mention the movement of the nearby San Andreas Fault. Even though the landfill was covered with dirt and clay, when a section of earth slumps away, often the scarp exposes a compressed section of landfill debris, much of it loose due to the movement of the slump.

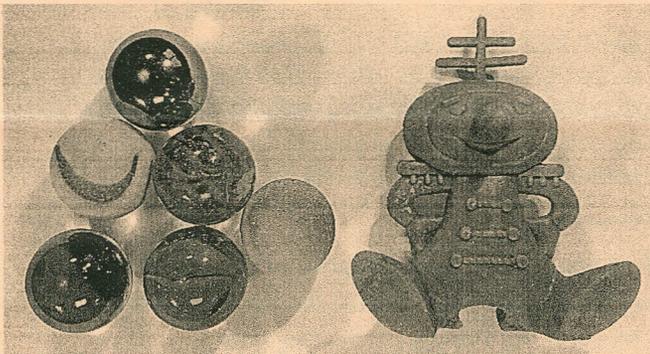
Some of these scarps are difficult to access with heavy equipment and since they are not a direct threat to the environment, they are often left alone during routine maintenance of the area by the city of Daly City or the contractors they hire to maintain the landfill area.

My son Paxton and I have been working with the Pacifica Beach Coalition doing cleanups in the Mussel Rock area for 10 years now. Mussel Rock has a unique level of trash and other debris. The rip rap or sea wall catches a lot of marine debris like ropes, buoys, and
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Seen above is a typical scarp with a horizontally exposed section of landfill.

other items washed or thrown overboard from seafaring vessels while the landfill often sheds pieces of glass, bags, or other debris, not to mention all the trash left behind by visitors to what is now known as the Mussel Rock Open Space Preserve. During our cleanups we had noticed several new slumps over the past few years, and in 2017 a large slump exposed a scarp that was one of the first sections to be filled with trash and debris in the



late 1950's. How do we know the date? Many of the items thrown away remained intact, including toys, bottles, housewares, calendars, all of which can be researched to find out when they were manufactured. Now we can't find out when they were thrown away, but when you don't find anything in a section of landfill that is older than 1960, it is a safe bet that section of landfill dates from before that year. Many of these types of items have been recovered and cleaned up and used in educational presentations by the Pacifica Beach Coalition. All the items featured in this article were found in 2017 after careful searching of the area of a recent slump and exposed scarp. During several of these searches I had to use a rope system and climbing harness as a safety precaution since one slip could lead to a 100+ drop in some areas. Pictured are a staple of 1950's toys, including marbles, along with a spaceman that is 50 mm tall. The marbles were found during different searches and likely ended up in the landfill after meeting their demise by losing a battle to a vacuum cleaner.

The spaceman took some in depth research to find out where it came from. The small cutout area on the bottom was a clue that pointed me in the right direction. The spaceman was a cereal premium that came out in 1959 in boxes of Nabisco Shredded Wheat cereal. The spaceman was named "Munchy" and it is designed to sit on your spoon hence the small cutout area. Finding one of these resurfacing from the landfill is amazing, the fact the antenna is intact is even more amazing considering how often these are seen with the antenna broken off not to mention this was sitting in the landfill for nearly 60 years. How it ended up in the Mussel Rock Landfill when it appears to be intact and unbroken, is a mystery.



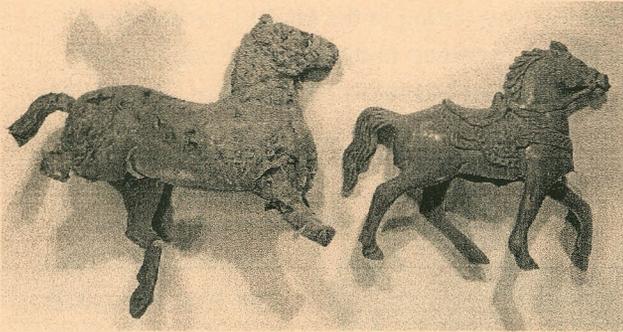
The golden age of plastic toys was brought to us by companies like Marx, Tim Mee, Lido, MPC and others. This plastic cowboy is 60mm tall and was made by MPC, the Multiple Products Corporation, sometime around the mid to late 1950's. This type of figure is known as a "ringhand"

figure. Instead of having guns, hats, belts, or other equipment molded into the figure, those accessories came separately so that kids could better customize or outfit their figures. MPC was a well-known manufacturer of "ringhand" figures. This figure does have some damage to its hand and wrist, which may have been the reason it was discarded, however, this may have happened once it ended up in the landfill.



The laying down machine gunner figure was made by Ajax in the 1950s. This figure is 100 mm long and was interesting because it was copied from the same mold used to make metal toy soldiers manufactured by
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Barclay. The Indian figure is 89 mm tall (to the top of the feather) and was made by Timm Mee no later than 1958 when they retooled and made new figures in the more commonly seen 60 mm/54 mm toy soldier size. Both of these figures, like many items that have resurfaced from the Mussel Rock Landfill, have some damage to them. On the machine gunner the tip of the machine gun has been chewed up while the Indian has a gash to his face.



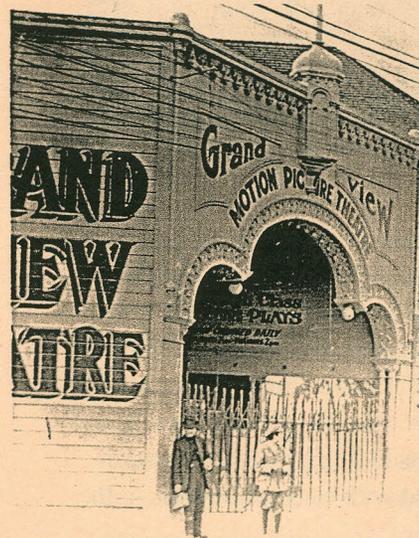
These horses were also both made in the 1950's the one on the left was badly damaged while the one on the right is nearly free of any damage. The damaged horse was made by Tim Mee for their Civil War era sets. Production of this horse began in 1957 and ended in 1972. Tim Mee horses used in their Wild West sets of the same era featured molded-in saddles. It was obvious how this figure ended up being thrown away, it was chewed up by a small animal. According to a veterinarian who examined the horse (yes, I sometimes take my research a little too far) the most likely culprit was a puppy. The grey horse on the right was made by a company called Lido and it only has a few scratches on each side of its head, certainly not enough for any kid to consider throwing it away. This horse was first manufactured in the mid to late 1950's for their Wild West sets.

Future articles will continue to look at the history that has been resurfacing at the old Mussel Rock Landfill, to include toy vehicles, dozens of intact bottles, household goods, and more.

A GREAT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - YOU CAN WORK FROM HOME ON YOUR COMPUTER

You may have checked our website with the special feature produced by Michael Rocchetta of past *Tattlers* since 1985. These editions produced by Editor Bunny Gillespie for over twenty years and by Dana Smith for the past 11 years. Most of the articles have not been published elsewhere and contain a treasure trove of local history. Unfortunately, the information is not easily accessed by researchers because we lack an index of topics. We need someone to take a group of editions and

begin an ongoing index of topics with a good deal of cross referencing so that specific information can be found on people, events, etc. You can work online from home and complete indexing as many *Tattler* editions as you have time and interest for. I can easily prep you on a format and method. Email me if this would interest you. You will no doubt learn a lot of history and you will be making an important contribution to our online archive. Dana Smith dana@vikingsmith.net or director@dalycityhistorymuseum.org



FIRE AT THE GRAND VIEW THEATRE

Researched by Mark Weinberger, from our files

The following is a first-person account from a Mrs. Rickman, who worked at the Grand View Theatre, a

nickelodeon [entrance a nickel], and witnessed a fire there, probably in the early 1900s. This transcript was undated and very little is known about the Grand View, including when it opened and closed. Clearly it was one of the earliest, if not Daly City's first theatre.

Mrs. Rickman: "May I tell the story of that fire? I was working there at the time. Where the Relish Bakery is [6356 Mission St.] I'll start at the beginning.

Mr. Hansen and Mr. Rickman [my husband] built the first motor drawn fire equipment. Ed Ford had a relation in the fire department in San Francisco when they discarded two old hose wagons. That was the time they had horses, you know. So they donated that to the Daly City Fire Department, and Company 3 took one of and Company 2 took the other. The Swede and the Dutchman got together and they said, "We're not goin to draw that thing round...we can't do it... it's too heavy!" So they went to work and they got a motor, and an old second handed motor, and they put it in the front of that thing...an old truck. And they worked and they worked till they got it to running. Well, they were all sitting around the fire house...on this Sunday, having 'coffee royals'...wishing for a fire to come in. And I walk by the fire house and I say, "What you fellas doing?" "Well, we're waiting for a fire. We want to see if this damn thing'll run!" So I just got up to the show
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house and we were all ready and all at once the whole operating room was ablaze! And we had that place half full of small children. One little boy said, "Hey, Mrs. Rickman, there's a fire up there!" I said, "Now...sh-h-h, be still!" "Well, I see it!" and I said, "Yes, but you shouldn't talk so loud, you know." And I said, "Those kind of things is what causes trouble and you can all get hurt if ya stampede!" "All right!" Well, we thought that they couldn't put it out, so young Hughey Smith, was about ten years old, I gues nine, ten years old, and I says, "Hughey, open the door, everybody out and you'll get your money back!" So Hughey up with his foot and kicked the door through and out they went.

Well, the fireman had their fire, see. So they started up with this truck they had built. They come over Miriam and they got half way up the hill. "Chuk, chuk, chuk!" and the old thing wouldn't go. They couldn't get any further. So Mr. Hansen [of course, he was very excitable], he jumps out with the fire extinguisher and the hatchet and up he runs to the top of the hill! "Where's the fire? Where's it...where's it?!" And so Mrs. Mohr says, "Well, the fire's out and we enclosed it into the operating room." You see, the operating room was sheet metal and they closed it up and it didn't hurt the building at all. So he had to go on the roof and cut a hole in it. Then they went down and they had to push their prize truck home. And they found out that some children, had been playing where this was...where they got the motor and all the equipment for the wagon and they had cotton in the line. They had put cotton in the tank and this cotton had got up in the line and that's what choked the engine so that they couldn't get up the hill!"

REMEMBERING THE GILLESPIES AND THE ANNUAL PIPE & DRUM CONCERT

I was so sorry to read about our loss of Mrs. Gillespie. I remember visiting the museum in the Serramonte Library but didn't really get to know the Gillespies until I started attending the annual pipe and drum autumnal concerts at the little church (have they disbanded now?) The band gave a free fall performance to thank the community for their support. One of the highlights of these gatherings was Ken's reading the nativity story in full Scottish brogue - the Infant Jesus read as 'the wee bairn; - wearing a crazy knit cap with a faux red air attached. As coincidence, the woman who was librarian of the JD Library when it closed is married to one of the band's drummers. I was lucky enough to be in attendance the day our Museum opened in its permanent home; that was the last time I saw the

Gillespies and so glad it was at an event they worked so hard to make happen.

- Terry Marie Counce

OTHER HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

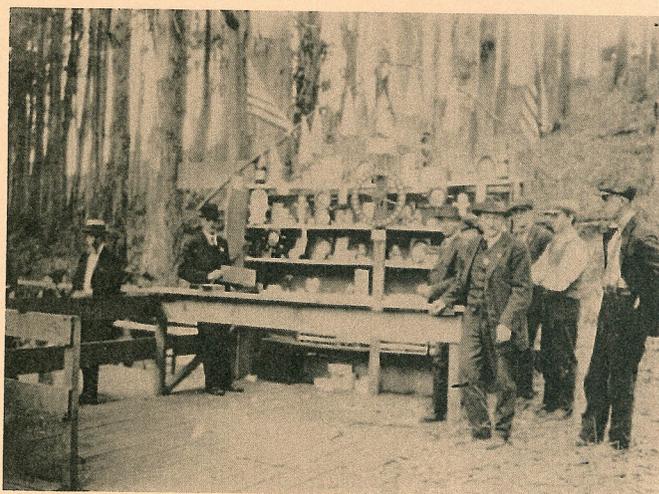
Colma Historical Association:

Saturday, April 7, Annual Fundraising Tea, Colma Community Center, 1520 Hillside Blvd., Colma. Doors open at 11:00 am. For information call 650-757-1676

Tuesday , April 24 Second Quarterly Meeting Colma Historical Museum, 6:30 pm.

San Francisco History Days: Saturday, March 4th for the general public. The Old Mint becomes a pop-up museum of San Francisco history featuring more than 75 exhibitors of local history. This event is free. The Old Mint is located at the corner of Fifth and Mission Streets in downtown San Francisco. The address of the building is: 88 5th St, San Francisco CA 94103 The main entrance is on Fifth Street, and involves a steep staircase. The accessible entrance is on Mint Plaza, on the northwest side of the building. Visit <http://sfhistorydays.org/about/> for a full schedule of events. [This is a fabulous event!]

Daly City's Women's History Month Event – featuring the film "Hidden Figures". Thursday, March 1 from 5:30-8:45, City Hall rotunda, 333 90th Street, Daly City.



1907 Picnic at Vista Grande Park. John Marchbank deeded the city the park that was renamed Marchbank Park in 1941.



THE HISTORY GUILD OF DALY CITY/COLMA

DALY CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

6351 Mission Street, Daly City, CA 94014

650/757-7177

Current Hours: Tuesdays and Saturdays from noon to 3 p.m.



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

www.dalycityhistorymuseum.org

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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, Annette Hipona, Hospitality Chair

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

**History Guild of Daly City/Colma is a
501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization
Memberships begin at \$25 per year.**

Tattler Editor & production: Dana Smith,
director@dalycityhistorymuseum.org

Thank you for your membership renewals. If you find a renewal form in this mailing, please renew now (you don't want to miss a single *Tattler*!)