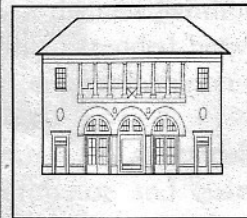


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The President's Message

Thank all of you who have so kindly sent in your subscription/membership renewal. Your kindness is appreciated and we hope you feel the same way about the Journal of Local History. You all probably recognize that putting out this journal is both a labor of love, but there is also a cost to pay the postman.

The Local History Room in the Redwood City Public Library, Middlefield Road (Old Fire Station) is where we do much of our research and we certainly hope you will visit us. Normal hours for our hard working volunteers are Monday through Thursday from 1PM to 4PM.

There are several events coming of which you should all be aware:

September 15, 2012, there will be a clean-up at Union Cemetery 10AM.

September 22, 2012, docent led tours of Union Cemetery.

President's Message continued.

October 5, 2012, there will be an author's night in the downtown library where people can purchase all my books, Janet McGovern's books and Jim Clifford's book. That event is at 7PM in the fireside room on the 1st floor. My new book "Vanished Communities of San Mateo County" will be presented, for the first time

October 12, 2012, there will be a joint annual meeting of the Archives Board, the Local History Room Volunteers and the Board of Directors of the Historic Union Cemetery Association. All members and friends of these associations are cordially invited to these events. Janet McGovern will be the guest speaker for the joint meeting with a slide show. There will be wine and cheese courtesy of Friends of the Library. Coffee and cookies will be provided by the Cemetery Association.

My sincere hope is that all of you can join us for these events; they should be fun.

John Edmonds



The Ghost at Pigeon Point Lighthouse

By John Edmonds

This lonely and beautiful sentinel that stands on hazardous rock outcropping along the south San Mateo County coastline is one of the most photographed lighthouses in the country. It stands 147 feet above normal high tide, and has provided safety and security for mariners since it was first turned on in 1872. Its story is also one of tragedy, opportunity and greed.

Pigeon Point Lighthouse is named after the *SS Carrier Pigeon* which went aground on rocks extending from the lighthouse into the sea for some 500 yards. The *Carrier Pigeon* was 175 feet long and 34 feet wide. It was 845 tons burden. She was adorned with a beautiful, gilded pigeon figurehead on her bow. After launching from shipyards in Bath, Maine in 1852, she took the waves in fine style, sailing from Boston, Massachusetts, on January 8, 1853, on her maiden voyage. Captain Azariah Doane sailed the ship south around Cape Horn and up the Pacific Coast, making very good time. On the morning of June 6, she was sighted off Santa Cruz, California, on a heading to catch sight of land in heavy, thick fog. As she sailed closer, suddenly and without anyone really having seen the shore, she came heavily upon the rocks of the 500-foot jetty that extended from the point. At that time, the bit of land jutting into the sea was known as "The Point of Whales" on Spanish maps.

This was the *Carrier Pigeon's* first and last voyage. The beautiful and graceful clipper ship was totally destroyed, never to sail again. Efforts were made to rescue her, but they met with failure, even to

the extent that the rescue ship itself had to be rescued. The misnamed "Pacific" Ocean can be merciless at times, and this was certainly one of them. On the fateful day, as a heavy fog was setting in. Captain Doane was intent to stay well out to sea, but he lost sight of land. Fog restricted visibility, so he changed course to what he felt was the fastest route.

Unfortunately the captain's new course carried him directly east, and very quickly, onto the submerged outcropping of rocks at the point that would forever be named after the ship he was piloting. It was a sudden and totally unexpected crash. The ship began rapidly taking on water and in just moments, the *Carrier Pigeon* was totally lost. Damage was so great that the new clipper ship, everything it was carrying, and all its equipment were gone forever. The crew and the captain were all able to get to the shore - so that no lives were lost, but that is literally all that was saved. A salvage ship was sent from San Francisco. When it arrived, it went on the rocks as well. That ship was saved by a second salvage ship and towed to safety, but the *Carrier Pigeon* sunk to the bottom in pieces.

Almost Ten Years Later

In 1862, a Mr. Loren Coburn purchased the land. He soon leased it for a term of ten years to Horace Templeton, a San Mateo County judge; and Josiah P. Ames, a former board of supervisors member who had built the very successful loading ramp in the North Coast (above Half Moon Bay that became a small town called Amesport); and Charles Goodall, the owner and manager of the Pacific Coast Steamship Line. The three men were also involved with the Pacific Coast Lumber Mill located three miles up nearby Gazos Creek. The men began by building a ramp to float lumber down the rather steep grade between the mill and the coast. The organization became known as "The Company." Upon the completion of the ramp, which extended out into the ocean some 100 yards, the men built a horse-drawn railroad from the mouth of Gazos Creek to Pigeon Point landing.

On the landing, the Company built another loading ramp so that they could load lumber aboard ships in the harbor. That ramp went directly out over the deadly jetty. Before it was built, the relatively unsuccessful method of loading ships was to have them sail up the point to directly between the land

and the prisoner rock, some sixty feet out into the small cove. The cable extended out to the rock, and material slid along the cable until it reached the ship; it was then unloaded and pulled back for another load. It took a long time to fill a ship.

Their efforts were very successful, and the Company was rapidly becoming quite wealthy. The landowner, Coburn, recognized this and he wanted his property back, but unfortunately, he had to wait until the lease was up, still some three years in the future. As the success of the lumber business continued unabated for those next three years, Coburn became even more desperate to get his property back.



Pigeon Point Lighthouse, the Victorian keeper's house and the ramp.

Progress Comes to Pigeon Point

Around 1868, the federal government took part of the property to build the lighthouse. Lumber came from a nearby mill, and bricks were baked at Gazos Creek beach. Most likely, the government contracted with the Company to transport completed bricks the three miles north to Pigeon Point, using its railroad for the construction. In 1872, just as the lease was about to run out, the Company incorporated its railroad, which ran across Coburn's land, an indication that they were not about to vacate the point. The business was just too lucrative. This was an "in your face" action that infuriated Coburn. The Company then brought on board the wealthy investor and mining millionaire, George Hearst. Their intention was to buy the Pigeon Point property, but Coburn would not sell. The Company informed Coburn that they would not be leaving.

The Revenue Cutter Service, the forerunner of the United States Coast Guard, had responsibility to man the new lighthouse and they built a beautiful

Victorian "keeper's quarters" near the new lighthouse. The quarters included a deck that extended between the house and the lighthouse. A telegraph station was also on the premises.

On a clear, warm day this is a spectacularly beautiful setting. The white lighthouse and quarters against the green fields behind and the blue Pacific Ocean in front make this one of the most beautiful lighthouse scenes along the Pacific Coast. It looked this way in 1872, as well as today. The first order Fresnel lens sends its beam some twenty miles to sea and is still a welcome sight for mariners.

A Loren Coburn Digression

Now a little about the mysterious Loren Coburn, one of the wealthiest men in San Mateo County, and without a doubt, the richest man in Pescadero. But he was a most unhappy man because he was largely hated by almost everybody in Pescadero. Coburn owned thousands of acres of land in the valley and on the southern San Mateo County coastside. He owned a number of properties in Pescadero, including the house in which he lived, in downtown Pescadero.

Coburn grew up in Vermont, and he was a teenager when gold was discovered in California. The adventure of the gold fields was almost mouthwatering to a young man whose family was steeped in poverty. Coburn dreamed of the riches he might acquire by moving to the gold fields. His parents, Claflin and Ira Coburn, wanted their ten children to become ministers, but his mother died after the tenth child was born. Coburn was the seventh. Ira Coburn subsequently married a widow who had two children of her own. The new Mrs. Coburn (formerly Mrs. John French) sent the Coburn boys out to be on their own. Loren found small jobs and worked at them for several years, all the time dreaming of California while learning to scrimp and save.

In 1851 he boarded the steamship *Falcon* and headed down the East Coast to Chagres near the Isthmus of Panama. He then rode a mule through the steaming jungle for sixty miles to Panama City, where he boarded the steamer *Panama* and headed up the Pacific Coast to San Francisco. He arrived on June 1, 1851. He was 25 years old.

In June 1851, the first Committee of Vigilance was being formed in San Francisco, and the city was

in turmoil. The 180 men were out searching for those who had committed murder and had started arson fires all over the city. It probably scared the young man, making him more anxious to get out of town and up to the gold fields of his dreams. He went up to the middle fork of the American River, where he found a few miners, as well as relative peace and quiet. He went to work with a pick and shovel. Over a period of two years, he made enough money to return to San Francisco and purchase a stable and start a business. Once it was going well, he set up the first steam laundry in San Francisco and continued to save money and purchase property.

During this period—the mid-1850s—Coburn met and then married Mary Antoinette Upton, a native of North Reading, Massachusetts. A year after they were married, Mary bore a son, Wallace Coburn. Loren Coburn's businesses were doing so well that he built a three-story brick home and a new stable on the east side of Stockton Street near Washington Street in San Francisco. While living there, Coburn learned of some property for sale in San Mateo County—two large ranches on the southern coastside. He consulted with Lloyd Trevis of the Hibernia Bank in San Francisco and then purchased the Ano Nuevo and Butano ranches from Issac Graham on a "Sheriff's Sale." The purchase was concluded within two hours after Coburn consulted with Jeremiah Clark, a San Francisco land grant attorney.

The Coburn family then moved from San Francisco to Pescadero, and the rumors began almost immediately. Because Coburn was so stingy, his difficulties showed up immediately: the community of Pescadero began talking about how suspicious Coburn was about his money. Rumors were that his wealth was dishonestly attained.

Pescadero was then a community of farmers and business people, ranches and hotels and small businesses. One of the primary sources of income for the town was tourism. People came for the fishing, hiking and pebble-searching at a beach about five miles south of town. Well-worn paths were established from the town, over the rolling hillside to the beach, as well as trailer and buggy tracks. The colorful pebbles were placed in glass jars and displayed on mantles and bookcases. It was not unusual for the Swanton House to be full of tourists and pebble hunters from spring through fall, taking their meals and drinks in the hotel or in the few restaurants and bars in town.

Villagers and visitors had been traveling across open country on a well-established trail to get to the "pebble beach." They felt they had a right to take this route. Since this small community was a substantial distance from any other community in San Mateo or Santa Cruz counties, the local businesses relied upon this activity.

Once Coburn noticed the people traipsing across his property and down to his beach for pebbles, he realized what a beautiful spot it would be for a hotel. He built one, and he blocked off trails and paths that came from Pescadero and crossed his property. Needless to say, this did not raise his popularity with the people of Pescadero. And, people kept coming through his property. Coburn grew increasingly angry, to the extent that he finally dug a wide ditch across the path they were taking. He killed a cow, pulled it into the ditch, and let it decompose where people would be walking.

Villagers simply dragged the cow away and continued their walk to the pebbles. Coburn was furious: he started a civil suit in Redwood City against the primary individuals involved. His popularity in Pescadero severely plummeted. The lawsuit resulted in an investigation by the court; it was not very satisfactory for Coburn. The court obviously felt the community was not damaging or depriving the litigant of anything and indicated that since Coburn purchased the property with an already existing trail, he didn't have a leg to stand on.

Back To Pigeon Point

Coburn did not improve the loading situation at Pigeon Point prior to renting it to the Company which put in the long wharf, the railroad, and their own system of getting the milled lumber from the mill to the ocean. The short length of the lease indicates that they had no intention of staying there for a long period of time. The parties of the Company were not young men; for example, Templeton passed away in 1873 in Redwood City.

In 1872, as the lighthouse lantern was being lit for the first time, the Company hired Alexander (Scotty) Rae to be the watchman for their enterprise. Scotty was a very popular young man in Pescadero; he was loved by just about everybody in town and never turned down a job when someone needed help. After being hired, Scotty armed himself with a Navy six-shot pistol. He spent most of his nights in the back

room of the telegraph office near the Victorian keeper's house.

Coburn wanted Templeton and Company off his area of Pigeon Point in the worst way. He appealed to the board of supervisors, but he received little help from that organization. After all, Horace Templeton was a superior court judge, and Josiah Ames was a former member of the board of supervisors; both men were highly esteemed and well known throughout the county.

Not satisfied with the results of his efforts, Coburn contacted his attorney and had him file suit in Sacramento. The results were that an individual was sent to Pigeon Point to investigate the complaint. That person was not able to establish the parameters of who owned what because the state owned the beach above high tide, so the Company had a right to continue operations at that point.

Coburn was told he could get them out of there as long as he accomplished it without resorting to violence. Coburn then hired three well-known thugs in San Francisco; he told them to go down to Pigeon Point and see what they could do. Coburn knew full well that these people would carry pistols and would use them since they had done so in the past. He fully expected and planned to use violence to solve his problem in spite of the court's expectation that he would not do so.



The Honorable Horace Templeton

Templeton, after retiring from his judicial position, was now giving greater time to his lumber business. At Pigeon Point, standing near a cliff and looking down at the boulders below, he suddenly fell from the

cliff and onto the rocks, hitting his head and severely injuring himself.

There was good reason to believe that Coburn pushed Templeton. The cliff was solid rock; nothing indicated that anything crumbled causing him to slip. The only two people at the lighthouse at that time were Templeton and Coburn. Templeton was taken to Redwood City to his home on Phelps Street, where he was recovering, but he died in December 1873. His death was believed to be a result of the injuries. Coburn was never accused of this murder, although everybody in Pescadero believed he had committed the crime.

Coburn Wins Possession

In 1874 the State Supreme Court finally awarded Coburn possession of the wharf. Ames and Goodall still refused to move. On a foggy night in July 1875, the gunslingers built a small wall across the wharf, primarily a breastwork to hide behind. When Scotty Rae heard the commotion, he grabbed his pistol and headed out onto the wharf. When he saw what was happening, he fired a shot over the heads of the gunslingers to warn them off. They responded with shots of their own, and down went Scotty Rae. One of the gunslingers walked over to him and put two more rounds in him to make sure he was dead.

Several Portuguese whalers observed the shooting, but they did nothing to interfere. They did observe that Scotty fired first.

When the news of Scotty's murder reached Pescadero, the city responded with intense anger and headed for Pigeon Point. There were cries to lynch Loren Coburn. The mob grabbed the gunslingers and Coburn and brought them into Pescadero and placed them in jail. They were charged with murder and transported to Redwood City, where they were lodged in a more secure jail. A few hours later, a coroner's jury was impaneled in Pescadero.

The primary witnesses in the inquest were the Portuguese whalers, who testified that Scotty fired over Wolf's head, that Wolf bowed, and that the other gunslingers opened fire. Wolf then went over to the prostrate victim and fired two more shots to make sure he was dead.

Meanwhile, Coburn and his friends were released on ten thousand dollars bail, which was posted by Coburn, who had been standing at the end of the wharf when the shooting occurred.

The first trial started in Redwood City three months later. The defendants decided they did not wish to be tried together, and they wanted separate attorneys. When the trial got started and all the defendants were together under the orders of Judge Dangerfield, the conflicting evidence resulted in a hung jury.

A second trial began several months later, and Judge Dangerfield ordered the jury to come back with an acquittal because the evidence did not support the charges. That was exactly what the jury did, proving to the community of Pescadero that Loren Coburn was above the law. The defendants walked away from the court free men.

Payoff?

The question the community asked was, how much had Coburn paid Judge Dangerfield to get him to throw the trial. Coburn's well-known history and his equally well-known bragging about such activity convinced the community that such was the case. Coburn had a reputation for bribing judges to get his way, and there was no doubt in Pescadero that Judge Dangerfield fell into this trap, but there also is no evidence that he did so.

If you go down to the Pigeon Point Lighthouse on a windy, dark night, you can well imagine a very sad Alexander Scotty Rae moaning about his treatment in this un-adjudicated murder. You may be able to imagine Judge Templeton there as well.

But we cannot stop here because, unfortunately, there was another murder involving the Coburn family some years later. This murder was also never solved, and it remains an open, but mostly forgotten, case in the archives of such things in the courts of San Mateo County.

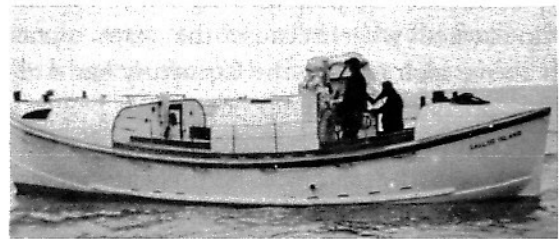
To be continued in the next issue of the journal.

An Adventure at Sea

By John Edmonds

A dark and rainy morning at 5 a.m.: the winches started pulling the anchor chain from the floor of San Francisco Bay. It was not the kind of day

that we wanted to get underway, and the wind dealt us a cold, ominous feeling. We had been at anchor off Fort Point for several days while we went ashore and did our shopping and other necessary errands. I was part of the forty-man crew of the Coast Guard Cutter *Comanche*, a sea-going tug of 140 feet. I was relatively new aboard the *Comanche*. I had been transferred to the *Comanche* from the Coast Guard Radio Station high on the hill overlooking San Bruno and Pacifica just three weeks earlier, but I had already been made radioman-in-charge. A third class radioman and a seaman apprentice were working along with me.



A 36-foot, self-righting lifeboat. In rough weather, you clip on a cable from the central structure to the aft structure and then clip onto the cable from a belt around your waist. This will hold you in if the boat goes over. You get wet, but you save lives. It's not for the faint of heart.

Our call was to go up to Humboldt Bay and relieve the ship there, which needed to sail to San Diego to degauss their compasses. When the anchor was safely tucked away in its nest, we got underway. I was in the radio shack by 6 a.m. I was able to go out on the 02 deck and see the orange spars and rigging that was the Golden Gate Bridge, as we passed underneath. As we approached Point Bonita, the white lighthouse-appearing monument that topped Mile Rock soon passed to our left. It was then broad daylight, and the open sea was beckoning us with large waves and strong winds. Soon we were in the "Potato Patch," and I was instantly reminded of a previous experience I had had in this same vicinity.

At that time I was in a 36-foot, self-righting lifeboat. I was stationed at the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station, way out at the end of the most western point of California. We kept the boat on a cart on tracks similar to railroad tracks, high up in a type of shed attached to the main quarters. When we had an emergency, we quickly put on foul weather gear and

ran to the boat. Others opened the massive doors that allowed the boat to be released to slide down the tracks into Point Reyes Bay and the open ocean. After we powered up and headed out, we went to wherever the emergency was. It was not unusual for us to have to go south into the San Francisco Bar and the area of the bar known as the "Potato Patch."

This is an area that extends out about a mile west of Point Bonita and Tennessee Cove, south of Duxberry Reef, where a number of ships, during the early sailing days, lost cargos of potatoes that were being shipped to markets in San Francisco from farms on the North Coast. It is one of the roughest areas on the Pacific Coast. The only one more dangerous is the Columbia Bar in Washington.

Now a little bit about going under and popping back up again: this happens when you get sideways in a very heavy swell. It is rare in anything but heavy storms, as the boat is really very steady. Yes, you do get wet, but it all happens very quickly, and if you get the boat back on its proper keel and course right away, you can get yourself back on your purpose for being there. Then it doesn't really bother you much.



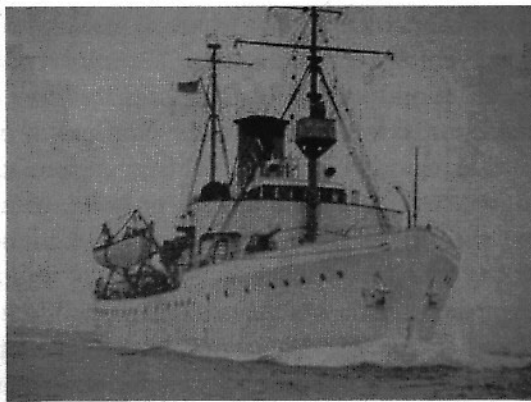
The author in younger days

Imagine pouring water through a funnel into a bowl. Then, before you pour this water, you take a bb, a pea and a small piece of cloth. You pour the water into the funnel. The water and other material go through the funnel rapidly. The bb drops immediately

to the bottom; the pea goes a little farther or doesn't drop at all. The piece of cloth stays on top until it gets saturated with water, and then it starts to fall. This is the story of the San Francisco Bar.

The creeks and streams that empty into the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers carry with them materials from the sides and bottom as they travel. During the hydraulic mining period, even the smaller placers were often carried along in this process. The rivers flow at a fairly rapid pace into the bay, where they lose most of their heavy material as the pace slows, as in the example above, but when the tide ebbs in the bay, it draws some of the material along.

The ebb tide pulls the material through the long channel between the narrow San Francisco side and the Point Bonita north side until it passes Point Bonita and Ocean Beach, where it again widens out and drops the remaining material. Because of the nature of the currents on the north side, more material is dropped, making the area within the San Francisco Bar—the Potato Patch—higher and thus, more shallow.



The Coast Guard Cutter Comanche: 140 feet long with a crew of 40 men. One lifeboat was on the starboard side. The radio shack was on the 02 deck, and the bridge was on top of the shack. There was a radio antenna on top of the main mast. Two were attached to the top of the bridge; another shorter antenna was on the back of the bridge. The quartermaster's shack was behind the radio shack. There were two portholes that did not open facing the bow. We could easily watch what was ahead of us as we traveled.

In my early career, we went into the Potato Patch and rescued a fishing boat. In the process, we did go sideways in the waves and tumbled, but we came up, got the boat in tow and took it to Point Reyes docks. When we returned, we backed onto the railroad tracks and were raised back into the boat shed and warmth.

I was sent from the Point Reyes Lifeboat Station to Groton, Connecticut, where I studied radio communication and worked as a lifeguard during the summer at the beach on Long Island Sound. Upon graduation, I was sent from the radio school to the Coast Guard Radio Station on Sweeney Ridge, behind San Bruno and Pacifica, for a year. I was promoted to second class radioman, given proficiency pay, and transferred to the Coast Guard Cutter *Comanche* for the next 18 months and the end of my enlistment. I was made radioman in charge of the *Comanche*.

Back to our original story: As we passed Point Bonita, we were already in heavy seas. The going was quite rough and very slow, and half the day was already gone. We traveled north to Point Reyes, and the captain decided to pull into Drakes Bay at Point Reyes and spend the night in the calmer waters.

We got underway again early the next morning. The storm had intensified, but we were running with the storm at that point. It took us until later that evening to pull into Humboldt Bay. Suddenly, we found ourselves high and not too dry on the sandbar inside the breakwater. We had to wait until the tide flooded to be set free. When that happened, we were none the worse for wear, and we sailed into the docks at the Humboldt Bay lifeboat station. But the grounding that evening was an ominous warning about what was to come.

The officers of the *Comanche* were Captain Salter, Lieutenant Wayne—the executive officer—and an ensign fresh out of the academy and a real rookie. I don't remember his name and that's probably not a bad thing. None of these names are the real names of the individuals except the ensigns. The reader will not hear much, if anything, about this individual in the rest of this story, as he played a pretty nonexistent role in this episode and on the ship in general.

The next morning we got orders to relieve the St. George Reef Light Station. Three young Coast Guardsmen came on board, not very excited. Captain Salter asked me to radio the light station and get the landing conditions. I did, and I was told the conditions were OK. (They wanted to get off that

rock!) Saint George Reef is about eight miles west of Crescent City. The station stands on top of a very large piece of rock, a good forty feet above normal sea level. Loading a crew on a winch to get them aboard and getting the other crew off the rock would take some real effort. I imagine this because it never happened.

We got underway from the bay fairly early in the morning the next day. As we were moving toward the jetty, I was on the bridge talking to the captain, and I could see the double red flags with black centers flying on the pole at the end of the jetty. Those flags mean hurricane winds and ocean conditions, and it is generally wise to wait until weather conditions improve. However, the captain, a very "by-the-book" type, said, "We have our orders, and we will continue."

I told him that the men on the rocks wanted to get off and that I hoped we would be able to make the transfer. The three on board said they doubted we would be able to land anybody in that weather.

Passing the jetty and the warning flags, we started north and west. Again, we were running with the swells and the wind. As we traveled, the weather continued to intensify. By the time we got to the rock and the light station, the seas were so heavy that we could not even see the rock. The waves were breaking over the top. It was absolutely impossible to land anybody.

Captain Salter was a very nice man, about 5 feet 10 or 11 inches, with sandy hair graying around the temples. He was a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. He had already survived a full and faithful career, and he had been a well-liked commander of ships and other facilities. He was highly respected aboard the *Comanche*, and he was easy to talk to and had a good personality. The executive officer was a "mustang," that is, a man who reached that great rank by coming up through the ranks. He also was a very nice officer and well liked. He made practical suggestions that worked, because he had seen it before.

On a previous run we had gone south to the Santa Barbara Islands and rescued a ship with eighty people on board. It had lost its power and was drifting toward the rocks. We were able to put a line on board and tow it into Morro Bay. There, a ship from that port came out and took our tow. We were then sent up north of the Farallon Islands, where a 400-foot Navy cargo ship was in trouble in the same

way. It was drifting toward the rocks. This time, we were running into the swells. They were fairly high, but not hurricane type. We were traveling at as high a speed as we could.

The *USS Seminole* kept radioing me that it was rough, that they were all getting sick, and would we please hurry. I reported these conversations to Lieutenant Wayne. He said we should feel sorry for those flat-water sailors.

We finally reached the Farallons and were able to put a line aboard the poor ship. We towed the *Seminole* into San Francisco Bay, where a Navy ship—an exact duplicate of our ship—came out, took our tow and pulled it to the dock. Later, we learned that ship was not allowed to go outside the bay. And they call us “shallow water sailors.”

We could not land the crew on St. George Reef Lighthouse, and the captain wanted to get the ship out of the weather. He had me radio Crescent City to see if we could get across the bar. The answer was no; they were seeing sand between the breakers. He then had me do the same thing at Humboldt Bay, and the answer was exactly the same: “You can’t get across the bar.”

The decision then was to run south toward Humboldt Bay and just try to hold our own in the extremely heavy seas. For three days and three nights, we ran at full speed south from Crescent City. I kept watching the huge waves breaking over the bow of the ship and sending copious amounts of water down the outside passageways.



The Comanche after she sailed to New Orleans and was decommissioned. You can see the towing “A” frame.

As we were moving forward, we thought we were making progress, although it was extremely rough. But then the ship took a huge dive through a forty-foot wave. I watched, as the green water grew over the top of the bridge, and I heard a huge crash to the rear of the radio shack. The ship shuddered, then stabilized.

During that episode, we lost the lifeboat and the davits that were bolted to the deck. The wave took them all out to the depths. We lost all our radio antennas and had absolutely no communication possibility. I went up on the bridge to tell the captain what had happened, and as I was standing there, I watched the roll meter showing us several times roll past the capsizing point, or “past the red line.”

Most, or all of the crew, were down below trying to stay healthy. I told the captain that I could pull out the big yellow life raft and try to set up the radio to 500 kilocycles, the Morse code emergency frequency. He had me do that. Fortunately, the storm abated a little an hour later and during the night. That night it broke.

We woke up to a beautiful, sunny day about a mile offshore and about nine miles north of Crescent City off the Oregon coastline. We were all in awe, as we could see snow all the way down to the shoreline. We could see snow at the shoreline all the way south to just south of Crescent City.

We traveled south to Humboldt Bay and off-loaded our passengers, who vowed never to sail on the *Comanche* again, then headed out to return to San Francisco and dry docks to repair the damage.

During the worst of the storm, the cook tried to bake three apple pies. Following the big wave, he found them, all upside down in the oven. The corpsman found his medicine chest literally turned upside down, with some bottles broken.

The ship was in dry dock for more than a month, as we repaired a multitude of damaged areas.

Our next assignment was to relieve the ship at Monterey so that it could go down to San Diego for compass degaussing. That sounded like a much more pleasant journey, and we enjoyed the huge amount of jellyfish surrounding the dock and boat when we arrived. About one-third of the crew was allowed to go ashore on liberty.

Two hours after the crew had left the ship, we were sent out to get the *USS Scamp*, a nuclear submarine that had water in its battery compartment, disabling the ship. We sounded the very loud siren

Who Were Woman's Club's Founding Mothers?

By James O. Clifford, Sr.

that meant "Return to ship immediately." Not all, but a majority of those who went ashore were able to run back to the ship before they got completely blitzed. We got underway soon after. We had to go directly west about fifty miles.

The ship traveled at standard emergency speeds; it was a relatively nice day, and it took us two days and two nights finally to reach the distressed vessel. As we approached, the submarine radioed me that we couldn't get within forty feet of the hull. We followed this precaution, and the boson fired a "monkey's fist" across the bow, which was attached to a four-inch hawser line. The Navy crew tied the line around the coning tower and signaled us that they were ready.

We towed the submarine up to the channel into San Francisco Bay. As we headed toward the Golden Gate Bridge, I was standing on the bridge and noticed that a submarine was passing us in the channel. It was the submarine we were towing, and we were coming in on a flood tide.

As we headed into Fort Point, we were again met by our sister ship, who took our tow. We were all somewhat incensed that we had lost our liberty in Monterey because the Navy's "shallow water sailors" would not come into the deep ocean and rescue their own submarine.

There are myriad numbers of stories that occurred while I was aboard the *Comanche*, too many to be told here. There were some very beautiful times as well, such as sleeping atop the bridge on a warm summer evening on a trip to Southern California and looking up at a sky so full of stars that reached from horizon to horizon, almost solid light. Then there was the fun of watching the dolphins swim across our bow and how they almost smiled as they were doing it.

The *Comanche* saved hundreds of lives just during the time I was aboard. For all of us who had the pleasure of working with Captain Salter and Lieutenant Wayne, it was an unforgettable experience. This article proves it, since these things I have written about occurred about fifty years ago.



Woman's Clubhouse 2012

When the Redwood City Woman's Club's building hit the century mark last year there was frequent lauding of the venerable group's "foremothers," depicted as taking a daring step at a time when women were, as one club official put it, "expected to stay in their homes and concentrate exclusively on their own family."

She might well have added "and glad of it."

Just who were the club's "founding mothers?" Researchers at the Redwood City library's history archives found that most, if not all, were privileged women with a good deal of time and money at their disposal who felt that running a home was a career.

One pioneer member, Mrs. W.H. Kelso, complained in the Redwood City Democrat that the census bureau listed busy wives and mothers "as having no occupation."

"Shall we not rise up in a body and demand that our occupation be given recognition?" she asked. "Let's tell Mr. Census Bureau to try it for a while himself and see what he thinks then!"

In the same issue, a special July 4th edition that will be detailed later, Mrs. Flora Pyle, who headed the state organization of woman's clubs, noted that critics of the clubs feared domestic life would be neglected

because women would spend too much time away from home. Not so, she wrote, insisting that the clubs "would teach the women of tomorrow the true foundation of this great science," meaning home economics. The page facing Pyle's column consisted entirely of recipes penned by club members in an era when "fast food" referred to table manners, as in "eating too fast," rather than cooking time.



Photo by Davey
MRS. C. E. CUMBERSON,
President.

Mrs. C. E. Cumberson, 1st President

The first president of the Redwood City Woman's Club was Katherine Cumberson, wife of Charles Elsworth Cumberson, described variously as a "wealthy capitalist" or "San Francisco businessman."

There were 33 initial members of the club who were told by Cumberson that they were expected to be "a subtle power behind the throne." She said women have always had such power "in the home and likewise may wield through her club for community benefit."

Decades later, Jean Cloud, who once served as chair of the Redwood City Archives Committee, wrote in the Redwood City Almanac that the birth of the club was significant because it "was independent of any men's group." She noted there were several other woman's organizations in the area, but these had "strong ties" to a male counterpart. Cloud also

pointed out that each church had a women's group that met on a regular basis.

"Women were very much involved," she concluded. The local Bonita Parlor of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, for example, stretched back to 1887 when it was founded on Main Street in Redwood City.

There was no "Ms" title in those days and all the founders of the Woman's Club went by the family name of their husband, who, by today's standards, would be in the "1 percent" or close to it.

Money, however, is no protection against tragedy, which struck the Cumbersons in 1915. In July of that year a former gardener at the family's home on Roosevelt Ave. shot Mr. Cumberson twice, burned down the house and killed himself with poison.

"All that remains as mute evidence of that night of tragedy are the two brick chimneys of the house," one newspaper reported.

Mr. Cumberson recovered and the family moved to Palo Alto. He died in 1929 at, appropriately, the Western Woman's Club in San Francisco.

Another Tragedy



Photo by Davey

MRS. H. C. FINKLER,
Treasurer.

Mrs. Henry Finkler, nee Aileen Jane Brophy of Salem, Oregon, a charter member of the club, became club president in 1915. The husband and wife

both had a keen interest in public affairs. One historian said Mrs. Finkler "though always devoted to home interests, found opportunity and inclination to extend her field of usefulness into the world around her and was long an active and energetic leader in community life."

Hailed as an inspirational speaker, she was considered a powerful factor in politics. Her resume included a stint on the Federation of Woman's Clubs national committee on child labor. She was also a member of the Red Cross, the Woman's Building Association of San Francisco and served on the Republican Party's State Central Committee from 1916 to 1918.

She became a member of a very prominent family when she married Henry, who served as senior secretary to the State Supreme Court for more than 50 years, a job he took over from his father. Finkler, who was known for his meticulous record keeping, also served as the court's statistician and historian.

The Finklers lived on land that today is Edgewood Park. Aileen's friends said she spent much of her time cooking and gardening. Every day she would cook a pot of beans to serve to the poor who stopped by. Mrs. Finkler died in 1927 after being ill for several years. The couple had no children. Three years after his wife died, Finkler shot himself in the heart and died instantly. Many claimed he was despondent over the death of his wife.

Another "true love story" connected to the club's early years involved charter member Mary Wahl Beeger, wife of wealthy Henry Beeger, who owned the Beeger Tannery. Henry lived only seven years after the last of the couple's seven children was born in 1891. Nevertheless, Mary considered herself still "married."

She went on to run the tannery until her son, Henry, a future Redwood City mayor, took over the job. In 1923, Mary, who died in 1941, built an imposing 14-room home at the corner of Hopkins and Fulton that the Redwood City Resources Advisory Committee lists under "historic properties."

The seven children included Gertrude, who was the Woman's Club's first corresponding secretary. In 1976 Gertrude, a Stanford graduate, was interviewed by the Redwood City Archives Committee. She said that her mother "did a great many early things in Redwood City," recalling that her mother and Mrs. Cumberson decided that "we ought to have a women's club in Redwood City and, all

right, they got one." The Beeger line includes Diana Kadash who described "Aunt Trudy" as a "wonderful, gentle soul." She said her great-aunt lived in the home on Hopkins until she died. "I do believe she was over 100."

Taking part in the 1976 interview was Emma McCrea who said her mother had considered joining the club but didn't.

"Ma and Elizabeth Hanson were all dressed up to go join," she said. "Half way over they said, 'Oh, if we join they'll be making us work all the time.' So they turned around and didn't go." Not a bad decision considering all the projects the club would undertake.

Many Tasks Ahead

One of the first of the club's projects to draw public notice was the flower festival held on May 11, 1912. The San Francisco Call newspaper said "everybody came to the celebration" held on the streets of Redwood City and the clubhouse grounds.

The newspaper's account of the floral parade from downtown to the club tells of a simpler time: "Little schoolboys rode bicycles or pulled toy wagons behind them, while the tiny girls trundled gaily decorated doll buggies and go carts."

The parade was organized by Miss Beeger and Mrs. George A. Merrill, whose husband was a leading San Francisco educator. Among other accomplishments, Mr. Merrill served as director of the California School of Mechanical Arts from 1894 until 1939, when he retired and went on to become mayor of Redwood City.

Mrs. Merrill, the former Sarah Elizabeth McKie of San Diego, was well read and had strong convictions, if an article she wrote for a groundbreaking edition of the Redwood City Democrat provides a clue. The issue on July 4, 1910 mainly celebrated the opening of the new San Mateo County Courthouse. It included, however, a 24-page supplement edited by members of the woman's club, which marked a first.

The newspaper told its readers that the women's efforts "would go far to convince the public that ladies know what news is and how to write it." The newspaper certainly reached that goal. Mrs. Merrill fulfilled the promise of "knowing what news is" when she wrote about the importance of America's relations with Asia. She said that in 1910

those ties seemed "a matter of small consequence." She added perceptively that "historians of a century hence will see it otherwise." (Eds Note: For more on the July 4, 1910 issue see "Redwood City 1910: Everything Up To Date" in the Winter 2011 Journal of Local History).

Zoe Fox Thorpe, who was born into a well known family, edited the paper that contained everything from brief histories of San Mateo County towns to the aforementioned recipes. In addition to editing the paper, she wrote a column on patriotism. "As the home is the most powerful factor on the child's life, let us make that home breathe, speak and think patriotism," she wrote.

Fox was born on January 15, 1870 to George and Sarah Fox. Her lineage included Benjamin Fox, who served as the first San Mateo County judge in 1856, the year the county was established. Her brother, Charles, served on the California Supreme Court from 1889 to 1891.

In 1892 she married attorney Fayette Thorpe who died in 1908 at the age of 38. The widow taught music and was remembered as charming, and, with a strong network of women friends, she was a natural pick for editor.

The special edition of the Redwood City Democrat cost ten cents and the money went toward building a clubhouse for the new organization.

"How both the newspaper and the Woman's Club made money with a total population of only 2,500 people is beyond me," wrote Aileen Foster in "This Old House," a history of the club. Foster, aka Mrs. Charles J. Foster, wrote the eight-page account in 1973 when she was the club's recording secretary.

The newspaper was not the only means used by the club to raise money for the building fund. The members also made hats and sold them, a venture that drew the attention of the San Francisco Examiner's Hazel Pedlar, who wrote the paper's "Notes For The Women" column.

Pedlar reported in the Sunday, Sept. 8, 1912 edition that Mrs. Cumberson came up with the "millinery method" of raising funds for the building. Club members used Chinese matting and bright material to create "garden hats" which Pedlar deemed a "necessity" in Redwood City. "Every one of the club members and their neighbors count a garden as part of Redwood City life," she observed.

The Clubhouse Becomes a Reality

Architect LeBaron Olive was selected to design the clubhouse, now a familiar landmark on Clinton Street. There's little in local archives about Olive, but the Santa Cruz Public Library has a newspaper published in 1889 that contained a column called "Building Notes" that reported on improvements in the coastal town during the "past five years." The column described Olive as an "architect and builder" who was the son and grandson of builders.

"He served his full time as apprentice at the carpenter's trade" and went on to develop a resume that included work in Canada, as well as New York and other major American cities. By 1889 Olive had, the newspaper claimed, accomplished so much during the past four years that it would be "impossible to record" it all in detail, but most of the outstanding accomplishments involved small shops or large residences.

A few years later, in the early 1890s, Olive's reputation had grown to the point that he was awarded a \$25,000 contract, then a considerable sum, to build the "Eastlake" bathhouse in Santa Cruz. The bathhouse "palace" had a wide, gingerbread-trimmed beach veranda and stained-glass doors opening into a two-story plunge. A balcony in the shape of a horseshoe enclosed a bandstand and bleachers. People in the bleachers could view swimmers on glass-lined slides, diving platforms or trapeze gear stationed over the pool.

The account said "the steamy air and sunny multicolored skylight made perfect conditions for the palms, flowers and vines, giving a tropical ambiance." The pool was lighted with submerged colored light and a tank at one end produced a five-foot-tall waterfall over the restaurant's observation windows. "The restaurant was dominated by an elegant fireplace and had all the gingerbread and stained glass of a riverboat ballroom," the "notes" noted, adding that a spiral staircase led to a rooftop sea view observatory.

By 1909 Olive's reputation had spread north and he designed the Portola Valley School on land donated by Andrew Hallidie, inventor of San Francisco's cable cars. Initially, Olive wanted the exterior of the woman's club building to be in Mission Revival, but he switched to wood instead of stucco. Exactly why he made the change is still a mystery.

In "This Old House," Foster, the niece of founding club member Aileen Finkler, said she was "sorry" that she failed to discover why Olive's "beautiful plan for a Spanish Mission building was eliminated" in favor of shingles.

The experience at the Portola school, however, gives a clue. Olive wanted the school in Mission Revival but decided on wood because it was less expensive. The operative part of Redwood City, after all, is redwood.

Foster said she had read Olive's plan for the club house and, except for the outside, it was clear that "the building we have is the one he designed." The interior rooms are the same as described in Olive's plans which featured a large foyer, an auditorium stage, and a tea room.

The club house was dedicated on Oct. 19, 1911 with representatives of all the civic and service clubs on the Peninsula present, along with government officials. The dignitaries included Mrs. A.P. Black, president of the California Federation of Women's Clubs.

A few days later a flower show opened that allowed area growers to display their bounty, which included carnations, orchids, roses and hot house plants of just about every color. Flowers must have been considered important to the Peninsula economy because the event lasted for three days.

Another Mystery

Why Olive changed his plan is not the only mystery. Another is what happened to the club's Well Baby Clinic? In the 1930s, the clinic's work was honored with an extensive article in the California Federation News that noted the club operated the only such clinic in San Mateo County, which, the article, said, "is justly proud of its club women to whom each and every little life is precious."

From the article, it seems the club became the site of the clinic in the late 1920s and catered mainly to poor mothers, many of them immigrants. When the clinic ceased operating is not certain. However, club records contain reports up to the 1950s. (Eds Note: Readers who have information on the clinic please contact The Journal of Local History at the library).

At any rate, the method of operation seemed to be constant. The babies were weighed, their height was measured, and a diet was prescribed. The

mothers were also advised on how to care for the infants. Doctors Adelaide Brown and Ralph Howe were mentioned in the Federation piece. Club volunteers helped the physicians.

Later, the clinic moved to Washington School where club records for 1937 show there were 354 visits by mothers who were seen by a doctor, "our own Mrs. Nelson Andrews." By 1940, Doctor Andrews was referred to as "Doctor Bertha Andrews" who by then was giving immunizations against diphtheria and small pox.

One of the more detailed reports of the clinic's activities was made in 1940 by Eleanor Poole of the club's Child Welfare Section. Poole, who volunteered at the clinic, underlined the fact that the clinic, as the name implied, was for "well children."

Any cases of illness or accident that were brought to the clinic "are immediately referred to the family physician or, if necessary, to the County Health Department,"

Poole reported that between June of 1939 and May of 1940 the clinic staff examined 697 children. There were 33 immunizations, each requiring three injections at three week intervals, as well as 4 small pox vaccinations.

The clinic's reputation drew visitors from the County Health Department, school nurses and students from "social problem classes," Poole reported.

In a few years, the nation was fighting World War II and the club's activities increased. Still, the clinic saw 678 babies during a one-year span. The club carried this out while still finding members and time to devote "over 2,000 hours a month in service work," according to a club report. Among other projects, the club provided flowers for a military hospital, took part in war bond drives, as well as helping the U.S.O. and Red Cross. The women also "met weekly to spend a day sewing or rolling bandages."

In 1950, five year after WWII ended and the Korean War started, the Well Baby Clinic, hit its peak by examining 817 children, according to a 1966 story in the Redwood City Tribune.

In 1956, polio shots were added to the clinic's services as well as interpreters who were needed because "many" foreign languages were spoken.

After this, little is known about the clinic. There is no mention of the clinic in the 1958 report by the club's president. Apparently the county had

taken over the clinic's function. A club report in 1972 said the clinic, now operating out of a union hall, was being administered by Public Health Nurses from the County Health and Welfare Department.

Declining Membership

Today's membership is down to 56, according to club officials who noted with hope that five new members were enrolled recently. This is way below the 400 to 500 figure during World War II when membership was so strong the club was able to burn its mortgage. It's not surprising that membership swelled during and after the war. Historians have noted that the post war years saw the greatest growth in volunteer activity in American history.

Americans joined "neighborhood and community organizations and took part in politics at rates that made the postwar era the 20th Century's golden age," Suzanne Mettler wrote in "Soldier to Citizens: The G.I. Bill and the Making of the Greatest Generation."

Declining membership was noted by the San Mateo Times in 1993 when reporter Heidi Van Zant wrote that only three dozen women gathered for the club's monthly meeting. At the time, there were about 100 members.

Club treasurer Jo Ridgeway said the roster was getting smaller each year.

"They're dying or going into convalescent hospitals," she said. "It's getting harder to get new members."

The Times' piece mentioned that "volunteerism is declining in many other organizations as well, as more women join the workforce and have less time for community activities."

Aileen Brian, who joined the club in 1940, recounted the glory days of the club.

"When children were small this was the thing to do," she told Van Zant. "You always dressed for the meetings. You never wore slacks."

Elaine Park, the present club historian, said "modern women are unlike our foremothers in so many ways. Our ages run from the early 40s to the late 80s. Many of us work for pay outside the home, or have retired from a career. We include single, partnered, and married women."

Still, she said, today's members are like the club founders in that they want to promote the

original mission of the organization, which is to foster "acquaintances, good fellowship and cooperation among the women of the town."

The year 1911 was a good one for women in Redwood City. Not only did they open a club house, they also got the right to vote. On Oct. 10, 1911, men approved an amendment passed earlier by the legislature. San Mateo County men, however, voted thumbs down, along with male voters in San Francisco and Alameda Counties.

Opponents could be found everywhere in the cities where the saloon and liquor trades openly opposed the measure, according to Molly Murphy MacGregor, cofounder of the National Women's History Project.

"They argued that if women had the ballot, it would be bad for business for every brothel keeper, every keeper of a dive and low saloon," she said.

MacGregor said the anti-suffrage forces warned men that if women got the right to vote prohibition would follow. They were right, but that's a different story.

Building Housed More than One Club

By James O. Clifford, Sr.

The historic Woman's Club building on Clinton Street in Redwood City has been home to more than one women's organization.

The wooden structure with the distinctive half moon driveway, which marked its 100th birthday last year, also hosted the Redwood City Business and Professional Women's Club.

Although little is known about the RWC branch, the national organization reached back to 1919 and lasted until 2009 when it "ceased to operate" but continues as a foundation, according to the California Federation of Business and Professional Women.

The Redwood City club was almost forgotten until Kathy Restaino, a volunteer at the library archives, found the papers of Lelah Butts, a mainstay of the local group that was chartered on Jan. 1, 1935 with Edith Ashley as president. Butts came to San Mateo County from Sonoma County where she was active in that area's chapter. Butts, a member of the

national organization since 1919, headed the Redwood City club in 1945.

From reading Butts' documents, it is clear that war was a key factor in the history of the club, which at one point had at least 120 members in the Redwood City chapter. In 1945, the national organization had a slogan that said there are "Jobs enough to go around," meaning women should not have to leave jobs to make way for men returning from World War II. In 1944, a year before the war ended, 80,000 women belonged to the Business and Professional Women's 1,662 chapters.

The national federation was an outgrowth of World War I when the government recognized the need for an organization to keep track of women's skills and experience. A Women's War Council was established by the War Department to organize the resources of professional women. The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs was founded on July 15, 1919, although the war was over.

In 1943, as World War II raged, the federation claimed it was the largest group of professional and business women in the world. It estimated that 33 percent of its membership consisted of educators, librarians, doctors and lawyers. Women in clerical and sales positions made up 38 percent with the remainder engaged in a variety of fields, ranging from florists and decorators to managers and executives.

Among other goals, the federation said it wanted to "eliminate existing legal restrictions against women." Listed higher, however, was the desire to provide members with "information about the recruitment and training of women for war work." Both aims would dovetail during the war. The prevalence of wage discrimination against women was "not felt until the massive influx of women," who were exempt from the draft, in to the work force. Immediately following the war, the Women's Pay Act of 1945, was introduced in Congress.

Margaret Hickey, the president of the national federation, served as chair of the women's division of the War Manpower Commission. In a speech in San Francisco just two months before the war ended, she said many women workers "fear they will be swept into the scrap heap of society" when the conflict ended.

She estimated that 15 million women wanted to remain in industry, which meant many more females would be in the labor market than before the

war, noting that many single woman would find marriage "an impossibility" because hundreds of thousands of men were killed in the war. "Some of them have dependants to support," she added.

"Women with small children who do not need to work, should not be encouraged to stay in the labor market," Hickey continued. "They will be needed in the post-war" years to help guide "American homes from wartime instabilities to a new sense of security."

In Hickey's opinion, many women would not work if they could provide for their children without doing so, but she said steps must be taken to help those who stay on the job. In a plea that could be sounded today, she called for maternity leave, day nurseries, pre-schools and improved status for domestic workers. She said such steps could lead to the day when "all American children can have educational opportunities, health protection and welfare programs."

Peninsula Hills Woman's Club: What's in a Name?

In 1956 the Golden Gate District of the California Federation of Women's Clubs asked some women in the Redwood City area if they were interested in forming a Junior Women's Club. Several younger members of the Redwood City Woman's Club favored the move, but the general membership of that organization was against sponsoring the venture. Because by-laws required a sponsor, the young women approached the Women's Club of Palo Alto, which agreed to be their advisor through the federation's district. Thus, Peninsula Hills Junior Women's Club became official. The name didn't last, however.

Club Gets "Carded"

At the time, bylaws provided that a woman could not remain a member of a junior club beyond the age of 35. In 1960 thirteen women, most of them former junior club members, formed Peninsula Hills Women's Club, submitting bylaws for State approval. In 1961, Peninsula Hills Women's Club received its

charter and was recognized as a member of the California Federation of Women's Clubs as well as a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. For a few years there were two clubs: the Peninsula Hills Junior Women's Club and the Peninsula Hills Women's Club, which essentially absorbed the younger club when members reached 35.

"There were two clubs, both federated, for many years," said longtime member Barbara Britschgi. "Not sure what year there were no 35 year olds left" but eventually "we were all former juniors and that is how Peninsula Hills really got started."

In 2011, the club celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a gala event held at the Redwood City Elk's lodge. Today, Peninsula Hills Women's Club has five members who have held membership in the organization for more than 50 years. Current Peninsula Hills Women's Club membership stands at 40.

Many Projects

The club has helped several organizations, including the archives at the Redwood City Library, which are often used by volunteers who write for this journal. In 1976 the junior club, which then had only 15 members, donated \$2,200 to the library in order to make the Richard Schellens local history collection available to the public. The money was raised through the sale of bicentennial calendars featuring scenes drawn by area students. The money was used to copy material in the collection, thus allowing public access to the research done by Schellens, who died in 1975. Schellens gathered enough information to fill 184 large loose-leaf notebooks. The project included inventorying, organizing, cataloging and supervising the use of the collection. The Redwood City Tribune praised the club in an editorial that said the effort "should be an inspiration to other and perhaps larger service clubs."

A year earlier, the club was honored by the California Parks and Recreation Society for its work in helping needy children take part in camping programs.

The club's history is filled with such projects, including one in 1969 that saw the younger chapter deliver food, clothing and toys to members of the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada.

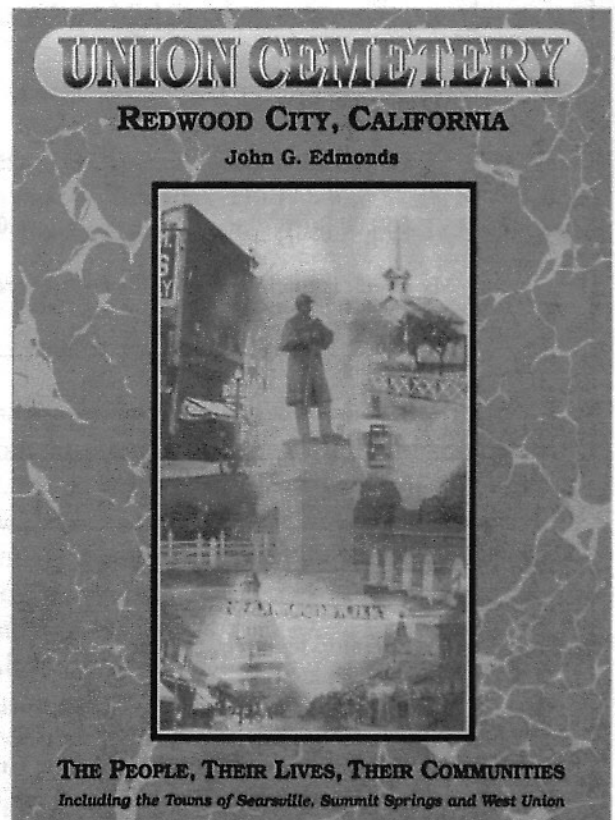
"The founding mentors had a deep desire to serve their community by charitable, educational and

service programs," reads a club recruiting pamphlet headlined "Join Now and Help us Help Others."

The club has donated to the Heifer International Project, as well as Christmas Families and the San Mateo County Historical Association. It supports several other activities, including the One Warm Coat Project, the Christmas Giving Trees and the Community Breast Health Project.

As for the current age of the members, the club literature says only that it ranges in age "from thirty something to Golden Girls."

In 2010 the club held a tea, the largest fund raiser in its history, that raised \$5,000 for the Shelter Network and \$5,000 for the Redwood City Education Foundation.



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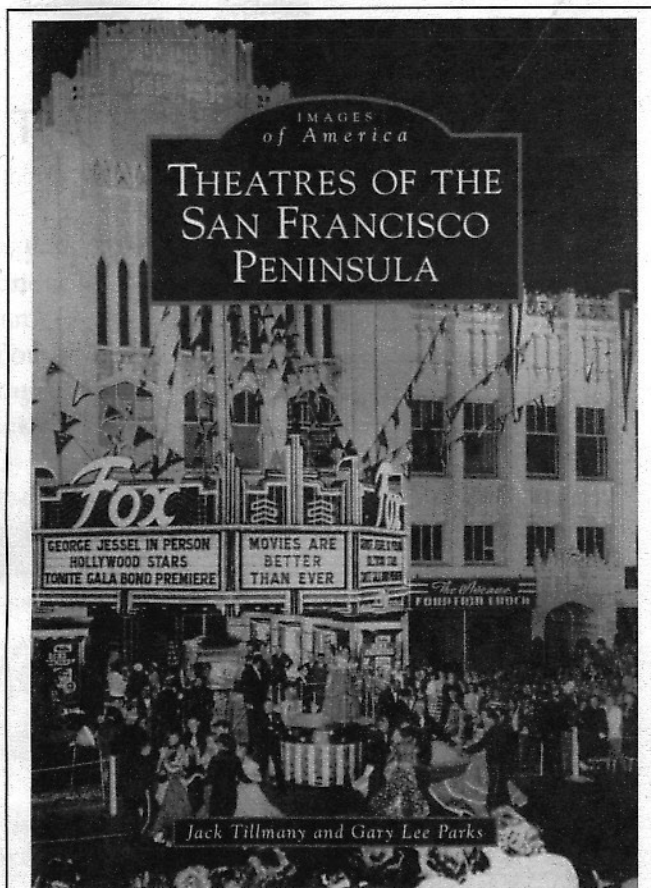
Hope you enjoy the new and improved Journal of Local History. Please send us a line at gsuarez@redwoodcity.org or call me, Gene Suarez, at 650-780-7098.

We welcome any comments or constructive criticism. Our next issue will appear in the Winter 2012. We all wish you a pleasant Fall.



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