Outside Lands

San Francisco History from the Western Neighborhoods Project

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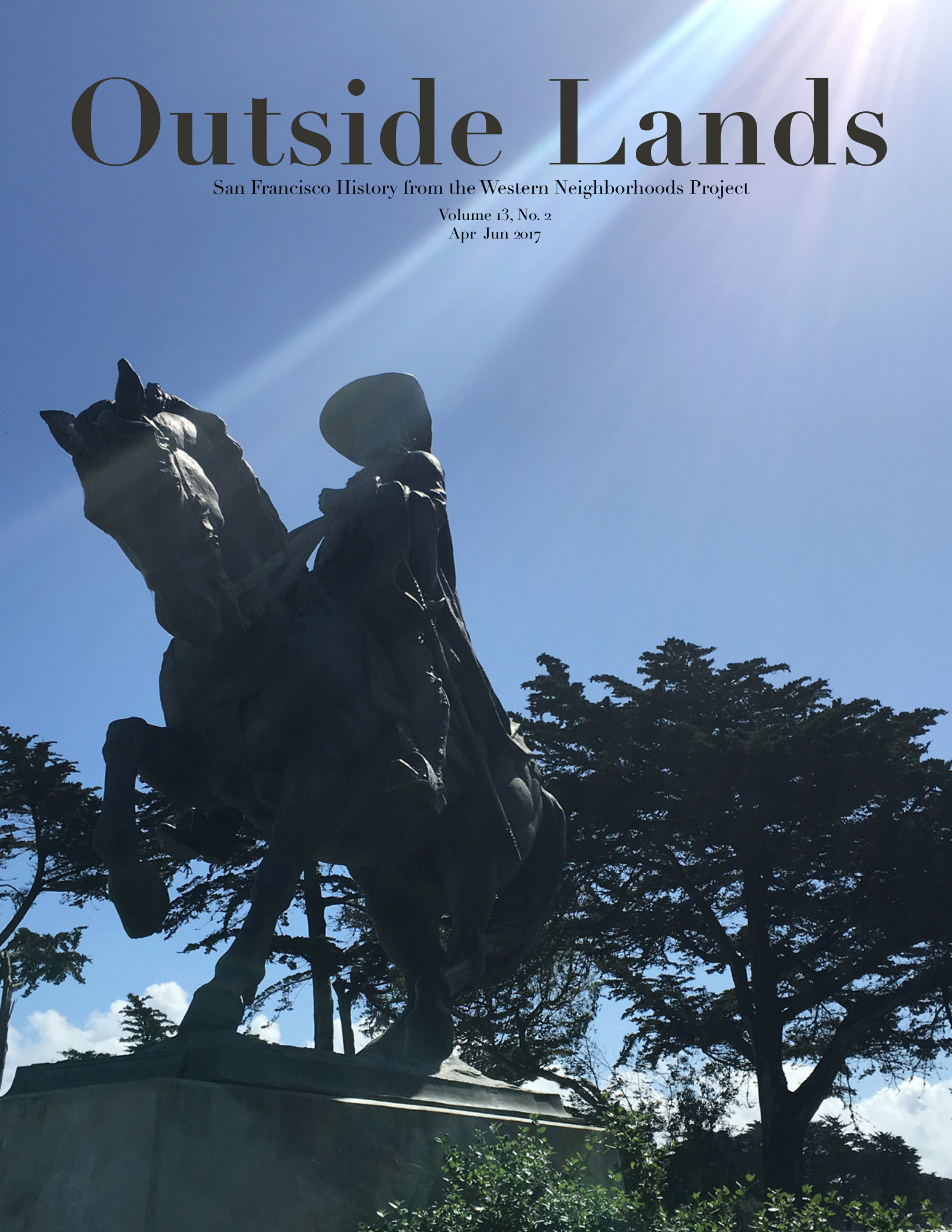

Western Neighborhoods Project
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History from the Western Neighborhoods Project
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April-June 2017: Volume 13, Number 2

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Cover:
Statue of Juan Bautista de Anza by the artist Julian Martinez at Lake Merced. Gifted to the City of San Francisco in 1967.

Opposite:
Entryway to 1301–1307 Lake Street, built in 1912 by Louis Heilmann. (William Kostura photo.)

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Inside

1 **Inside the Outside Lands**

2 **Where in West S.F.?**

3 **OpenSFHistory Highlight**
John Martini shares the story of the Hermits of Lands End

6 **Louis Heilmann, Richmond District Builder**
by William Kostura

10 **The March to Kezar for Peace**
by Arnold Woods

12 **Lake Merced History, Part One**
by Woody LaBounty

16 **Historical Happenings**
The WNP Event Calendar

18 **The Last Word**
Tiger cubs and cowboy boots



As promised, we have increased our public presence this year, getting out face-to-face with people at events to share local history. Just about everything we've done has been full to capacity, so obviously the demand is there.

Our new OpenSFHistory presentation format, which I call "picture *and* a thousand words," worked terrifically at our February 12 event at Canessa Gallery. Wonderful historians, authors, and just "regular" locals gave 5–8 minute talks on North Beach and Telegraph Hill using one to three images from our massive photo collection on opensfhistory.org. We're trying to democratize history, add a diversity of voices, and uncover the personal connections that people have with their neighborhoods. We have a shared history, so why not let history be shared by all of us?

Thanks to **Zach Stewart** and the Telegraph Hill Dwellers for hosting us, and to our guest speakers who joined the WNP crew: **Gary Kamiya, Katherine Petrin, Mark Bittner, Romalyn Schmaltz, Barbara Cannella,** and **Bruce Yelaska.** Come to our next OpenSFHistory event on Ocean Avenue on Sunday, June 11. See the Historical Happening pages in this issue for more information.

San Francisco History Days

Another year, another 6,000 people enjoy a weekend of free history at the Old Mint! Some 70 history groups came together March 4–5 for San Francisco History Days to display, present, talk, mingle, and give the public two full days of history.

LisaRuth Elliott from Shaping San Francisco did a wonderful job coordinating the event, and the WNP Board had a big role on the organizing host committee, in addition to curating an OpenSFHistory gallery (thanks **Nicole Meldahl**), creating a Summer of Love themed exhibit (thanks **Jamie O'Keefe**), and broadcasting live updates on Facebook a few times (thanks **Arnold Woods**). And thanks to all the WNP members who volunteered at our table or dropped by to say hello.

We're obviously big proponents of this event, and hope it can continue. There are some recently arisen issues of expense (renting those tables isn't free) and we need to identify new event coordinator(s), but we are working with the City of San Francisco and other groups to help as we can. Cross your fingers, or better yet, send us tips for sponsorship to keep this thing free.



Earthquake Plaque

Our friends at the San Francisco History Association are spearheading an effort to have a memorial plaque placed on the de Young building at Kearny and Market Streets to commemorate the great earthquake and fire of 1906.

Each year on April 18, a ceremony is held in the early morning at nearby Lotta's Fountain, so the location seems a natural. It costs $20,000 to fabricate and install the plaque, which will measure 74" wide by 48" tall. On it will be the history of the disaster, with a map of the burn area, and some information on the de Young Building.

Visit sanfranciscohistory.org/1906-memorial-campaign/ to learn more and to donate.

A Familiar S.F. Story?

Looks like our rent may go up 50%! At least that's what our landlord has proposed (we're negotiating). This city we love so dearly is an expensive one.

If you have a connection or a great tip on a new (permanent?) home for Western Neighborhoods Project, let us know. In the meantime, you may find a midyear donation envelope in your mailbox. Whether you can help or not, we appreciate you just the same!



David Gallagher presenting at our OpenSFHistory event at Canessa Gallery in North Beach on February 12, 2017

Where in West S. F.?



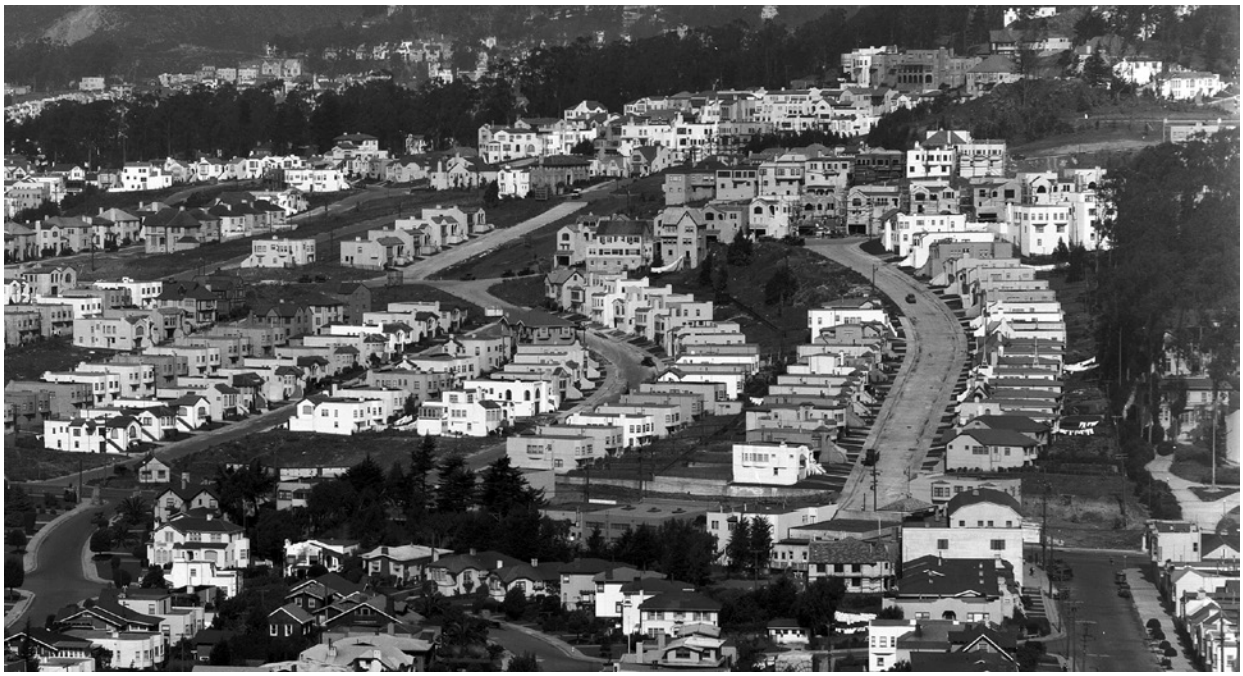
There's a lot of action going on in our history mystery image above: wires, streetcars, a bus, and some bits of business signage. Can you tell us the where and when of this shot? Feel free to add a memory or anecdote when sending your guess to woody@outsidelands.org or using the WNP contact information on the inside cover.

Margie Whitnah knew we were looking at the streets of Mount Davidson Manor last issue (she grew up there) and had the right year:

"My guess is this photo was taken in 1929, since I see the Watkins' house at 200 Kenwood Way is just being built and online info says it was built in 1929.

"Across the street the Risso's house is already built, next door to the home golfer Johnny Miller eventually grew up in. The El Rey Theater opened in 1931 and is merely open land in this photo. […] "I see that our neighbor's house at 151 Pinehurst was built in 1931 also […] Homewood Terrace Orphanage is to the right in the photo. Wish I had gotten a chance to visit a friend in my homeroom at Aptos who lived in Homewood Terrace with her brother."

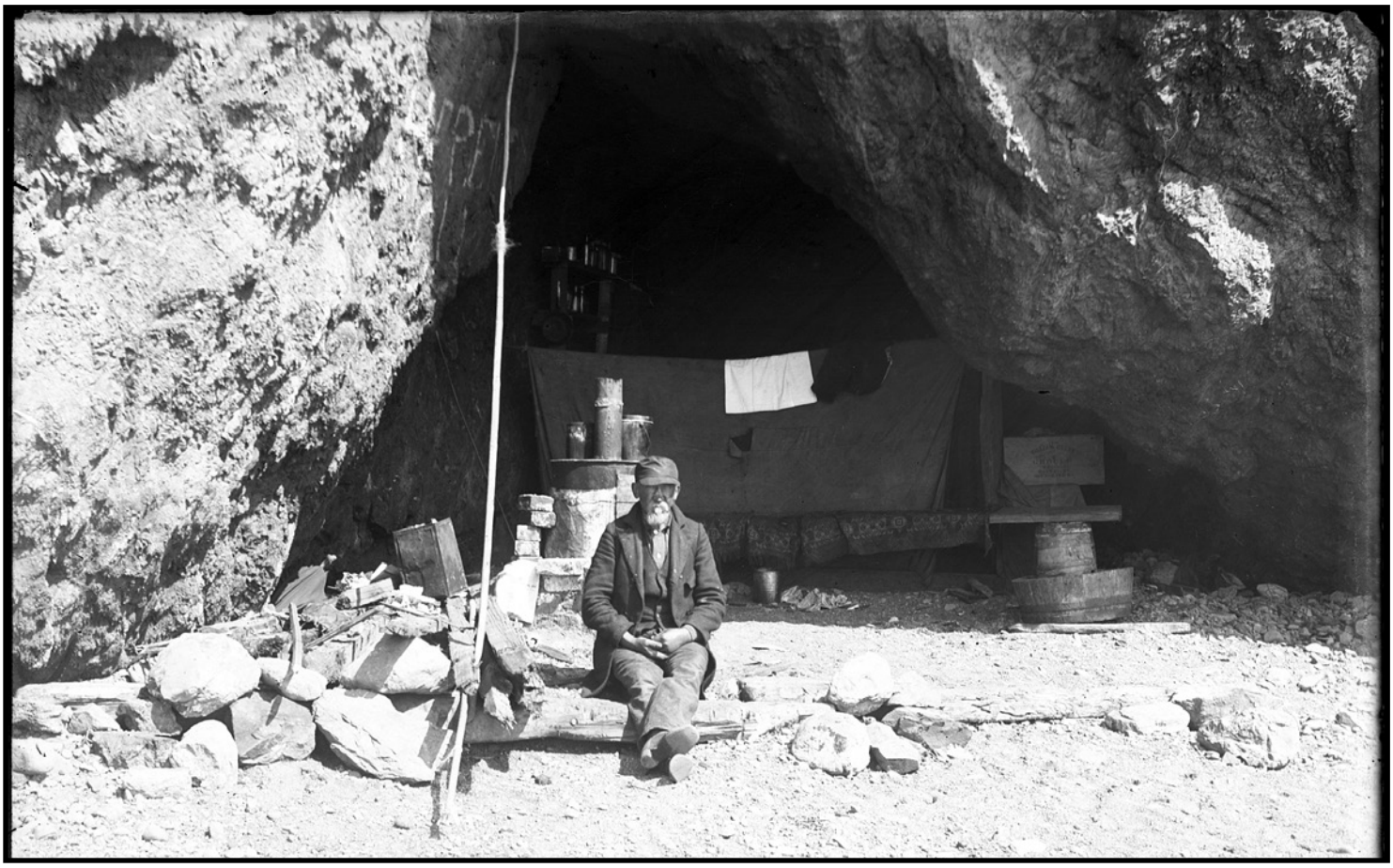
Other correct guessers were Peter Marcopulos, Alan Thomas, and David Volansky, while many others got close. This was a hard one! Good luck to all this time around.



North across Ocean Avenue and Mount Davidson Manor to Golden Gate Heights, October 18, 1929.(Department of Public Works A2212, WNP Collection, wnp26.033).

Hermits of Lands End

by John Martini



Edward Lynn at Lands End, 1896. (WNP Collection, wnp15.0009)

Retired National Park Service ranger and WNP member John Martini is a volunteer helping us process our collection of historical San Francisco images. Visit **opensfhistory.org** *to learn more and see thousands more photos.*

Lands End is a familiar name to San Francisco residents, who associate the name with the rock-strewn northwest corner of the San Francisco peninsula, an area stretching roughly from Sea Cliff to the ruins of Sutro Baths.

But few people realize that there's a geographic feature along this desolate shoreline actually called Lands End, and that over the decades it has been home to a series of Lands End hermits.

The physical feature named Lands End is a finger-like rocky promontory extending into the Golden Gate just below the Veterans Administration hospital. (The point is best known today as the site of a well-loved labyrinth built of beach rocks.)

Nestled into the windblown western face of the promontory is a small cove and pocket beach known to locals as Lands End Beach or Mile Rocks Beach, due to its proximity to both landmarks. A deep cleft in the cliff face, now mostly obscured by sand and rocks, once formed a sheltered—if damp—refuge from the elements.

Sometime in the late 1870s, despite its remoteness, a homeless man named Edward Lynn took up housekeeping in the rock cleft at Lands End Beach. He constructed a perilous trail to the cove, which he modestly named "Lynn's Beach." Beginning in 1888, he experienced an upsurge in visitors when the famed Ferries & Cliff House Railroad began running along the precipitous cliffs flanking Lands End. Not long after the line's opening, a shed-like waiting room was erected alongside the railroad tracks for hikers headed to and from Lynn's little beach.

The *San Francisco Call* ran an article about Lynn in the September 13, 1896 edition titled "Has Turned His Face Toward The Sad, Sad Sea," complete with illustrations of how he had converted the shallow cave into a residence.

"Lynn has built a bulkhead across the front which is sufficiently high to keep out the high spring tides and there is a step of rock and plank to reach the top of this, built of stray planks that have floated in. Just inside the line of this breakwater there is a rude stove, with a tall pipe, and on this Lynn cooks his meals. He was preparing a stew of beef and onions. Behind this there is a long bench on which are a washtub, tin pans and odd and ends, and immediately back of this is stretched across the mouth of the cave a black striped blanket, which shuts out from view the interior."



Lands End beach and Lynn's cave, circa 1896. (WNP Collection, wnp15.382)

Lynn had once been a trained machinist working for Fulton Iron Works, but had invested wildly and badly. He had lost his savings and his house, and then his wife died. In those pre-social-services days, Lynn was left without any financial reserves or source of support. He told the *Call* reporter, "twelve years ago, when this was all a wilderness, I came out in this section, having bid farewell to society, and for a time lived in a little cabin that belonged to Mr. Sutro and for which I paid him $1 a month rent. It was not much, still it was rent. Then I came down here [to the beach] and settled, and pay no rent."

The *Call* journalist concluded with Lynn's description of how he survived in the near-wilderness of Lands End:

"'How do I live? Well, I gather mussels and sell them, and once in a while I get a job on the [rail]road. Then there are a great many people who come down here and have lunch, and as many bring more than they can eat they hand me what is left over, and in that way I manage to get along. I do not seek the society of those who come here, nor the society of any one else, but if people address me I answer them with all the civility at my command, but no more society for me—I have soured on society.'"

No one recorded how long Lynn stayed in his cleft overlooking the beach, but a *San Francisco Chronicle* article about Lands End on December 4, 1898, relates that he'd departed mysteriously: "There is a deep cave with an arched entrance…here, many years ago, a hermit took up his residence, constructing a rude fireplace of stone beside it and closing the entrance with a bright-hued blanket…One day he disappeared, and there are none who seem to have ever solved the riddle of his fate."

Lynn's vacant cave didn't stay abandoned for long, though, and by 1903 it had another occupant: Ny Pum Chun, or "Old Tom" as visitors to Lands End beach called him. The *Chronicle* featured him in a story on October 11, 1903, titled "The Chinese Hermit of Land's End":

"Here in this weird place a Chinese has taken up his abode and has lived for many months. Except on Sundays or holidays he lives the life of a recluse. His only company are the sea birds, or the passing ships or steamers as they plow through the water a quarter of a mile away on their way in or out of the Golden Gate.

"Even on the calmest days the wind whistles and rustles past the bluff which crowns his home. Often during a storm or in the night the elements howl at his open doorway, and with but the slightest surge the waves could roll through and engulf him. Yet he lives in this place contentedly and apparently in no fear…

"And so he will continue to dream until the waves of the Pacific or the Sutro estate drive him out of his novel home."

Two years later, Old Tom was gone when the cave became the scene of a mysterious event. An unconscious Englishman, a gent named Herbert Smith, was found lying in its depths with a horrific gunshot wound to his head. According

to the *San Francisco Chronicle* of February 12, 1905, Smith's version of the events was that two "footpads" had mugged him along the train line, taken his cash, shot him in the head, and carried him into the cave. Police suspected a much simpler explanation: a bungled suicide attempt.

The story relates that a revolver had also been discovered in the cave when Smith was rescued, concealed by a plank set deeper in the cleft. Curiously, none of the gun's cartridges had been fired. How Smith could have shot himself with a loaded but unfired revolver was never explained.

The *Chronicle* story concluded with an update on the hospitalized victim's condition: "Smith is conscious most of the time but complains of terrible pain in the head." (Well, yeah.)

No additional occupants of the Lands End cave have been documented, but that doesn't mean that other hermits and homeless haven't occupied the desolate areas of Lands End. As recently as 2006, the skeleton of a man was discovered in a makeshift tree house not far from Ed Lynn's and Ny Pum Chun's former cave.

The website *SF Gate* reported on April 28, 2006, that a body had been discovered by a hiker 150 feet down a hillside "on a makeshift home woven into the lower branches of a cypress tree." The coroners' staff had a perilous time recovering the remains, using ropes to reach the 3½-by-7-foot platform made "of branches intricately woven into the tree." Nearby were blankets, two backpacks with clothing, and an identification card, which belonged to a man named Frank Pangelinan Cruz, age 63. Officials estimated he'd been dead over a year.

The story concluded on somewhat upbeat note about Pangelinan, the last Hermit of Lands End:

"Investigators said it appeared the man had made a life for himself overlooking the water and may have been living there for some time before he died.

"'It's a beautiful view from there,'" said one of the investigators who found the body."

Since the time of Old Tom's departure and Herbert Smith's suicide attempt, the promontory of Lands End has changed dramatically. It's been repeatedly blasted and excavated for trails and military construction, and the Golden Gate tides constantly rearrange the rocks and shoreline of Lands End Beach. As a result, the hermits' cave in the rocky cliff face is no longer visible, but the "tall, precipitous cliffs" and "jutting rocks against which the roiling billows break" described by nineteenth century reporters still survive.

And as the anonymous investigator observed, it's indeed a beautiful view from there.



Lands End, Mile Rock Beach looking north, circa 1910. (WNP Collection, wnp27.0967)

Louis Heilmann, Richmond



Built by Louis Heilmann in 1911, this Craftsman style house at 119 17th Avenue has an amazing staircase and porch posts of river stones. (William Kostura photo.)

If variety is the spice of life, then the builder Louis Heilmann undoubtedly provided the Richmond District with some of its most exotic flavors.

He only worked in this neighborhood for four years, from 1908 to 1912, which is not a long time. In that period, however, he applied himself with considerable energy, building at least seventy-eight houses and sets of flats—in other words, more than one and one-half buildings per month. All but three of them were in a relatively upscale part of the Richmond, the area bounded by 7th and 17th Avenues, and California and Lake Streets. It wasn't quite Pacific Heights. Heilmann's houses were aimed at upper middle class buyers who could not afford to hire their own architect and contractor to build a custom-designed home, but who wanted a house of some architectural distinction with fine interior amenities.

Maybe you could say that Heilmann built for home buyers who were a little susceptible to flamboyance. As much as any other builder in San Francisco at the time, he provided that. Newspaper writers, perhaps at his prompting, called the houses "artistic." It was a term used to cover residential architecture that was the opposite of subdued.

He bought enough street frontage at one time to build rows of eleven or more houses, and in one instance he purchased an entire block, where he built thirty-four houses and sets of flats. He liked to tell reporters that he was the architect or designer as well as the builder, but in fact he probably never designed the houses he built. After 1909, he hired anonymous draftsmen or obscure architects, and he superintended the construction of his buildings instead of having an architect do so. He saved money this way; he clearly preferred to put his available funds into desirable interior features such as built-in bookcases, hardwood finishes, and ornamental fireplaces. And elaborate exteriors.

He liked for his developments to look as if almost every house had been individually constructed by a different owner. What made his rows and clusters cohesive was the fact that all of the houses were about the same size or bulk and were similarly placed relative to the street. If you look closely, you can see that they alternate styles and surface materials in a way that is somewhat consistent. They were different, but there was some regularity to their differences. It sounds paradoxical, but there was a kind of cohesiveness in their variety.

He used these styles: Classical Revival, Mission Revival, Craftsman, Elizabethan, Dutch Colonial Revival, and Shingle. Some of his Classical houses had a strong French feeling to them. His houses with Dutch gambrel roofs possessed imitation half-timbering. Tudor arches crept in. Most of his Mission Revival houses had strong Craftsman elements. Purity of style was not a concern of Heilmann's. Lively facades were. He wanted his houses to be noticed.

He varied the surface materials, too: horizontal wood siding, shingles, stucco, and brick. The materials were usually appropriate to the styles: Classical houses had wooden siding, Craftsman houses were usually shingled, and Mission Revival houses were stuccoed. (His use of stucco was very early; the material did not become general for houses in San Francisco until a decade later.) Horizontal wood siding was usually laid flush, but might be rusticated or overlapping. Bricks were typically found in the basement level but were sometimes used in the main story as well; they might be pressed brick or clinker brick (i.e., bricks that were intentionally burned in order to be blackened or deformed). Sometimes a different siding material was used in each story. If it sounds discordant, perhaps it sometimes was, but I would say the effect was usually a happy one; most of his houses hang together quite well.

District Builder

by William Kostura

When he began building in the Richmond District in 1908 he was newly arrived in San Francisco. He'd probably had a career as a builder before then, but where is unknown. He may have done some construction work in his native Bavaria, where he was born as Ludwig Heilmann in 1878. He came to the United States in about 1900, and may have moved to San Francisco to take advantage of reconstruction opportunities after the earthquake and fire. He changed his first name to Louis, but kept the double-n in Heilmann to signify his Germanic origin.

During 1908-1909 he worked in partnership with an architect, William Koenig, also a native of Germany. Clearly, Koenig designed the houses and Heilmann did the building. Their projects included:

1209 to 1219 2nd Avenue (1908). These are three sets of colorful Mission Revival flats with pleasing brickwork in the first story.

123 to 173 7th Avenue (1908). Among these thirteen sets of flats, six are Mission Revival in style, four are Classical Revival, two have Elizabethan attics with Craftsman details, and one has been heavily altered. The most interesting of these is #155-157, in the Mission Revival style. Here, the over-baked clinker bricks in the entrance arch are so deformed, and are so haphazard in their placement, they appear to have been thrust from the earth in a volcanic action, and just happened to settle into place here.

4529 to 4551 California Street (1909). Five sets of flats. Because they are three stories in height and were built to the sidewalk, they are more urban in feeling than Heilmann's other works.

Two of these rows were in the Richmond District, and after Heilmann and Koenig broke up, Heilmann settled on the Richmond for his next three big projects. They were:

126 to 174 11th Avenue (1910). Most of these feature an enclosed porch at the top of a set of brick steps. The Classical Revival houses are the most richly detailed. A few houses have oversized Dutch gambrel roofs with wide eaves and imitation half-timbering. 158 11th Avenue has a broad, gently curved barrel-front across the second story, thick, stubby columns in the porch, and a clinker brick base.

107 to 147 17th Avenue, and **1601 and 1621 Lake Street** (1911). Most of these are restrained compared to Heilmann's other houses. 107 and 111 17th Avenue are nicely detailed Classical Revival houses. 133 and 143 on the same block are typical, though fine, shingled Craftsman houses. The tour de force is #119, with a dramatic staircase and porch supports of river stones.

107 to 163 14th Avenue, 106 to 162 15th Avenue, and **1301 to 1347 Lake Street** (1911-1912). This development of thirty-two houses and (at the Lake Street corners) two sets of flats was by far Heilmann's largest. Considerable virtuosity can be found here, as well as the strongest contrasts in elaboration and restraint. At 139 14th Avenue, note the intense French/Classical ornament and the columned porch. At 127 14th Avenue, the flared main gable is reflected in the porch roof. At #123, the porch roof takes the form of a Dutch gambrel. The gently curved bands of windows at #155 are surrounded by shingles and topped by a gabled roof with wide eaves. At 130 and 150 15th Avenue the Mission Revival parapets are an exercise in curves. In the tripartite window at #138, the surrounding classical trim, and the floral imagery within, are exquisite. The classical treatment at #126 is nearly as effective. For welcome contrast, stucco-covered houses at 115 and 159 14th Avenue, among others, have bold forms but are spare in their detailing.



139 14th Avenue (1911) is Classical Revival with French influence. The wooden siding is rusticated to convey an appearance of masonry construction. (William Kostura photo.)

The large corner buildings in this group are also worth a mention. 1301-1307 Lake Street has a hugely over-scaled entrance pediment filled with classical ornament and is

flanked by pleasing red brickwork. 1341-1347 Lake has a roof line of gabled and pointed-arched forms.

What virtuoso designed the houses and flats in these last three groups? It is known that a beginning architect named Theophile S. Boehm had the job of designing the last several houses that were built in the 14th Avenue and 15th Avenue rows. It seems highly likely that he also designed all of Heilmann's houses during 1910-1912, i.e. on 11th, 14th, 15th, and 17th Avenues, and on Lake Street. Boehm had worked as a draftsman for William Koenig in 1908-1909, when the 7th Avenue group was being built, and it would appear he stayed on with Heilmann after Koenig left. After all, with Koenig gone, Heilmann needed a designer. This is more than just conjecture. A frieze of palmettes and lions' heads on 155-157 7th Avenue (1908) is repeated at 130 and 150 15th Avenue (early 1912). It seems probable Boehm was responsible for this repetition.

After the 14th and 15th Avenue houses were completed, Heilmann left town for eleven years. In 1920, he and his wife Johanna farmed a fruit orchard in Ukiah. They might have been there the entire eleven years. In 1923, they returned to San Francisco and Heilmann returned to building. Styles had changed by then. Flamboyance was out; most people wanted something simpler, almost always in stucco.









The Mission Revival house designed by William Koenig at 155 7th Avenue in 1908 (left) has the same lions and palmettes frieze as the house at 130 15th Avenue (right), built in 1912, after Koenig and Heilmann split up. Draftsman Theophile S. Boehm may be the connection, and likely was the designer of Heilmann's houses constructed from 1910-1912. (William Kostura photos.)

Heilmann built a cluster of Mediterranean-styled houses at the southwest corner of Bay and Larkin Streets and on North View Court, to designs by an architect named Gustave Stahlberg. In 1927, he built a row of vaguely Tudor houses along the east side of Eighth Avenue, between Moraga and Noriega, by architect Angus McSweeney. Both the Russian Hill and Sunset houses are pleasant, but they quite lack the drama of Heilmann's 1908-1912 works. Stahlberg was completely unknown; McSweeney was at the beginning of his career (he later became the architect at Willis Polk and Company, several years after Polk's death). Heilmann probably did not have to pay them much.

After moving back to San Francisco the Heilmanns lived in a series of Nob Hill apartment buildings. He joined the Masons' Parnassus Lodge and also their Islam Temple. He was thought to be "in the best of health," but in November 1931, as he superintended his move to 510 Stockton Street, he had a heart attack due to overexertion and died.

His obituary did not mention any specific buildings of his, and he was quickly forgotten. Except for one mention by this writer in 2007, no guidebook lists any of his works. That's unfortunate, for his houses and flats of 1908-1912 constitute one of the most remarkable collections of picturesque or "artistic" houses of the period in San Francisco. They reward close study for their inventiveness of detail and their generous spirit. Heilmann's houses truly are a "gift to the street." Even if he did not design them himself.

Sources and credits:

The writer would like to thank architectural historian Gary A. Goss for bringing to his attention the connection between William Koenig and Louis Heilmann, and for discussing Theophile Boehm's involvement with both Koenig and Heilmann. As always, I am grateful to Gary for his input.

I would also like to thank Woody LaBounty for suggesting Heilmann as the subject of an article. When Woody explained that he lived as a child across the street from a row of Heilmanns, how could I resist?

The Spring Valley Water Company tap records (at the San Francisco Main Library and online at Internet Archive), listings in *Building and Industrial News* for 1911-1912 (searchable at Internet Archive), notices in the *San Francisco Call* newspaper (searchable through the California Digital Newspaper collection), and building permits (at 1660 Mission Street) provided information about specific buildings. City directories and census listings provide background on the lives of Heilmann, Boehm, and Koenig. Some of the more useful newspaper articles include:

"Artistic Home Building." *San Francisco Chronicle,* September 2, 1911, p. 4.

"Louis Heilmann, S. F. Building Leader, Dies." *San Francisco Chronicle,* November 20, 1931.

"Vacant Land Rapidly Changed into Fine Home District." *San Francisco Call,* July 22, 1911.

"Handsome Houses for Boulevard." *San Francisco Call,* November 18, 1911.

"Among the Architects." *Building and Industrial News,* January 21, 1911, p. 16, col. 2.



Detail of a Classical entrance arch at 126 15th Avenue. (William Kostura photo.)



158 11th Avenue, built in 1910, is a blend of Classical and Mediterranean styles. (William Kostura photo.)

The March to Kezar for Peace

by Arnold Woods

As the 1960s progressed, protests and civil disobedience—centered on the issues of civil rights, the Vietnam War, and free speech—became more prevalent. By 1967, dissent against the Vietnam War was an escalating issue. At the Human Be-In in the Polo Fields in January 1967, the organizers attempted to unite the anti-war movement with the San Francisco counter-culture movement. Although some thought this might alienate the supporters of the anti-war movement, it resulted in a big increase in the number of young people protesting the war. After the Human Be-In, others attempted to create even greater common cause among differing movements.

In early 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. announced his opposition to the war and tried to forge unity between the civil rights and anti-war movements. Because of the presence of many liberal politicians, activist groups, students, musicians, and the burgeoning hippie scene, the San Francisco area was frequently at the forefront of both civil rights and anti-Vietnam activities. These efforts coalesced to produce the then-largest protest march and rally that the West Coast had ever seen, on April 15, 1967, in San Francisco.

The peace marches that day, one in New York and one in San Francisco, were planned by a coalition of anti-war activists calling themselves the Spring Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, informally known as "the Mobe." This coalition grew out of an intercollegiate faculty group called the Inter-University Committee for Debate on Foreign Policy that had organized campus teach-ins and a national conference on the Vietnam War. In November 1966, that group reorganized as the Mobe and opened offices in New York and San Francisco.

In January 1967, the Reverend James Bevel, a close colleague of Martin Luther King, Jr., was named director of the Mobe and planning began for mass demonstrations against the war. Two protest marches and rallies were planned and came to fruition on April 15, 1967. In New York, hundreds of thousands of people marched from Central Park to the United Nations, where they heard speeches from Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Harry Belafonte.

The San Francisco march gathered on Market Street near 2nd Street in the morning. Estimates of the crowd size there were 30,000-40,000, mostly consisting of hippies, students, and teenagers. Groups of people came from all over the west to join the protest, including Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Southern California. There were some organized groups, such as "Lawyers for Peace," "Stanford Physicians for Peace," church organizations, and the "Orange County Committee to End War in Vietnam" that joined in.

Organizers of the San Francisco march signed up Country Joe and the Fish to play music for and lead the marchers from the back of a truck along the march route. The assembled crowd marched down Market Street, then up Golden Gate Avenue past the State Building, before switching over to Fulton Street to take the march to Golden Gate Park. As the marchers neared the Haight Ashbury area, many hippies joined in and passed out real and fake flowers.

As to be expected in a protest, many marchers carried signs showing their dissatisfaction with the Vietnam War. A few signs bore a picture of a mutilated Vietnamese child and stated "Our Napalm Did This." There were many "Bring the GIs Home" and "Stop the Bombing" signs, as well as the then omnipresent "Make Love, Not War" placards. Timothy Leary's hippie catchphrase, "Tune In, Turn On, Drop Out," also was displayed. Showing the multi-ethnic make-up of the crowd, one could see signs in many languages, such as Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Hebrew.

Unfortunately for the marchers, they were besieged by some egg throwers, occasional rain showers, and a short hailstorm. Some members of the American Nazi Party showed up to heckle the marchers, but were dispersed by the police. A group of servicemen also attempted to crash the parade, but the police kept them separated from the marchers. FBI agents, the Highway Patrol, and some National Guard members joined the approximate 350 police officers assigned to keep an eye on the march. Organizers of the march also employed approximately 700 monitors with walkie-talkies for the protest. The monitors wore yellow ribbons and marched the entire route, then helped seat people for the rally.

Despite these issues, most felt it was a very civil march. One of the marchers, Vivian Imperiale, then a San Francisco State student, says she felt a sense of bonding among the marchers because of their shared sense of purpose. Imperiale was drawn to the march as an opportunity to express her desire for peace with like-minded people.

The march reached Kezar Stadium about 12:30 p.m., where even more people joined the rally, filling the 60,000 seat stadium, though observers stated that Kezar was not as packed in as a typical 49ers game. A small group of people who supported the U.S. efforts in Vietnam followed the marchers into Kezar and circled the stadium on the track. Although someone asked the crowd over the public address system to ignore the pro-war demonstrators, there was a minor scuffle between the pro- and anti-war factions before the monitors escorted the Vietnam War supporters out of the stadium.

While Kezar Stadium was filling up, there were a number of musical performances, including Judy Collins, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and Quicksilver Messenger Service. After playing pied piper for the marchers, Country Joe and the Fish brought their equipment into Kezar Stadium and demanded to be allowed to play. They

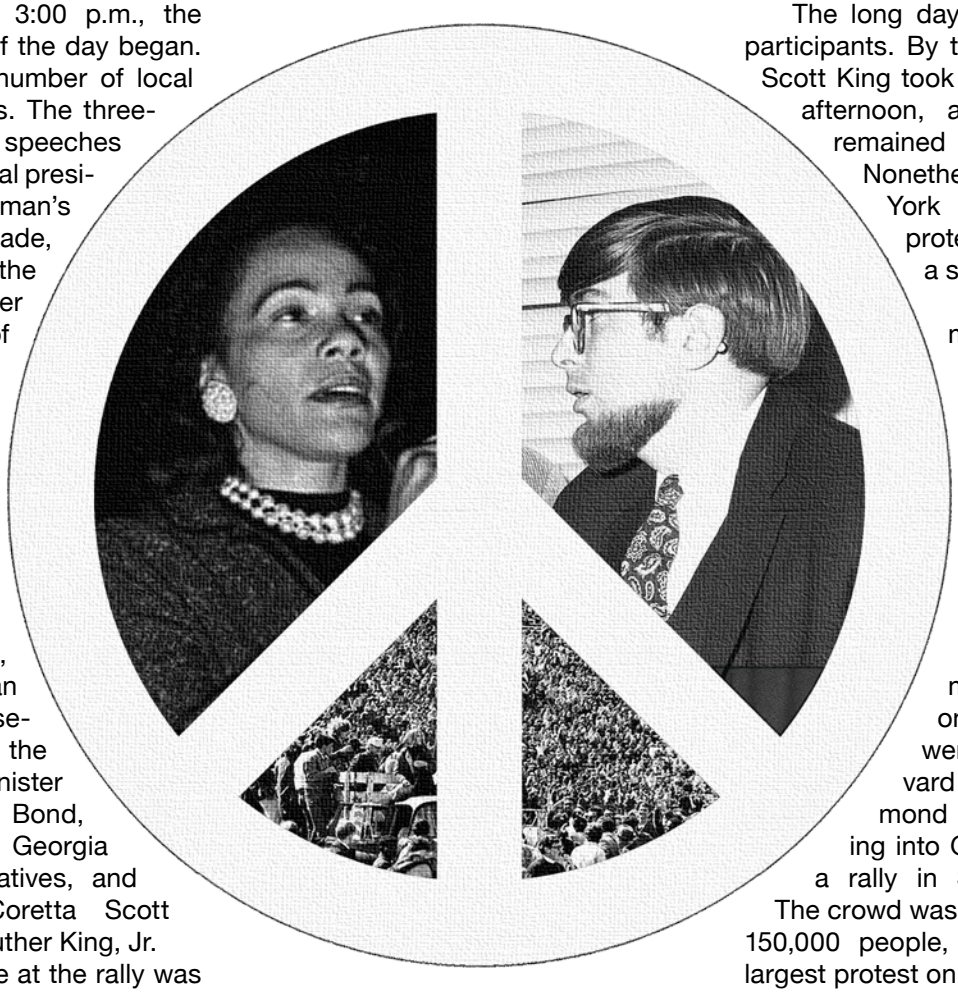
were told they could play two songs, but were cut off after one song.

The Kezar portion of the protest and rally featured a now familiar intruder. A parachutist floated down toward the stadium with the word "Love" written on his parachute. He landed just outside Kezar Stadium in a parking lot. He was the same parachutist that dropped in on the Human Be-In three months prior. He made his appearance during a pitch for donations by then-Assemblyman Willie Brown.

At approximately 3:00 p.m., the protest rally portion of the day began. The program had a number of local and national speakers. The three-hour event included speeches by Charles Duarte, local president of the Longshoreman's Union, Paul Schrade, western director of the UAW, Robert Scheer and Edward Keating of *Ramparts Magazine,* David Harris, journalist and founder of The Resistance organization, Rabbi Abraham Feinberg, who would later join John Lennon and Yoko Ono in their Bed-In for peace, actor Robert Vaughn, then star of "The Man from U.N.C.L.E." TV series, Eldridge Cleaver, the Black Panthers' Minister of Information, Julian Bond, then member of the Georgia House of Representatives, and keynote speaker, Coretta Scott King, wife of Martin Luther King, Jr.

King's appearance at the rally was the result of a meeting between her husband and a young UC Berkeley graduate, Rodney Robinson, who was active in the San Francisco chapter of the Mobe. In February 1967, Robinson attended a San Francisco Baptist Church service, the only white person in attendance, where Reverend King delivered a sermon. Afterwards, Robinson and other local Mobe leaders met with King. Robinson asked if King would speak at the Kezar rally. As King had already committed to joining the New York rally that day, he promised to send his wife in his place.

For her part, Coretta Scott King was looking forward to being at the New York rally with her husband because, despite being veterans of civil rights demonstrations, it would be their first time together at a peace demonstration. Several weeks before the rallies, her husband informed her that he had told the San Francisco organizers that she would speak there, stating "they need you out there." While disappointed that she was not able to share the experience with her husband, King found the San Francisco protest rally "extremely worthwhile."



At the rally, Scheer lamented the fact that few older, middle class, and union people joined the protest and urged greater participation by those groups. Scheer added that ending the war was not difficult as all they had to do was "just get out of there." Those remarks provoked sustained cheering. In his speech, Cleaver proclaimed "We are against this racist, vicious power structure." King asserted that President Lyndon Johnson was an "uncertain President" torn by conflicting advice, who must "for God's sake, stop the bombing." King further exhorted that "freedom and justice in America are bound together with freedom and justice in Vietnam." Keating closed the rally by encouraging all anti-war protesters to rally around Martin Luther King, Jr.

The long day took its toll on the participants. By the time that Coretta Scott King took the stage in the late afternoon, about 5,000 people remained in Kezar Stadium. Nonetheless, the twin New York and San Francisco protests were considered a success.

The anti-war movement continued to gain momentum in the ensuing years. On April 24, 1971, the National Peace Action Coalition held anti-war protest marches in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco. The San Francisco march again started on Market Street, then went out Geary Boulevard to the Outer Richmond district before heading into Golden Gate Park for a rally in Speedway Meadow. The crowd was estimated to be over 150,000 people, becoming the new largest protest on the West Coast.

50 years later, San Francisco continues to be a hub for activism of all kinds. Golden Gate Park is frequently the site for activists to raise awareness, with events such as the annual AIDS Walk and walks to raise money to fight breast cancer. However, few events brought together a coalition of such disparate groups like the march to Kezar for peace did on April 15, 1967.

Sources for this article can be found on page 15.

Lake Merced History: Part One

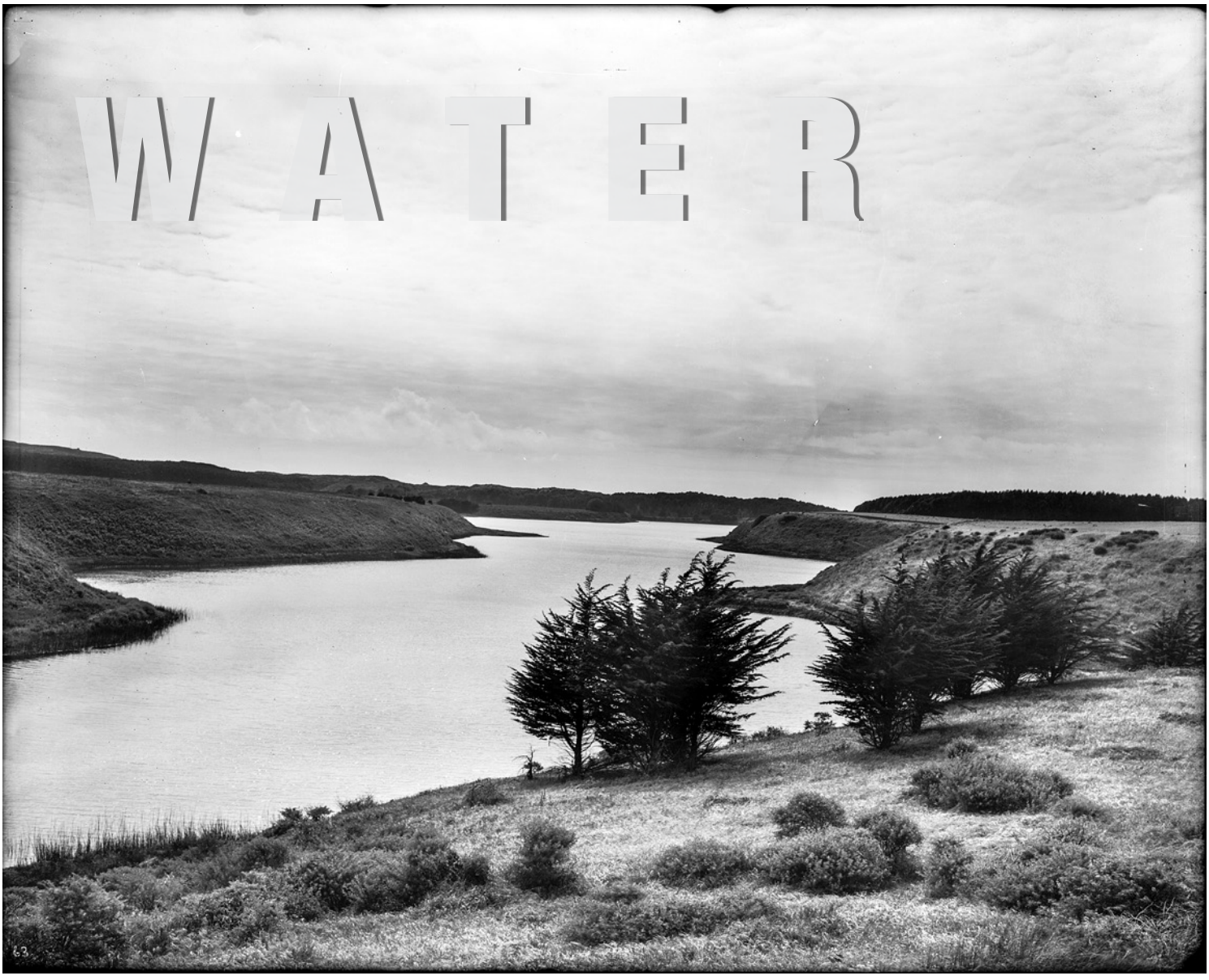
by Woody LaBounty

Thanks to a grant from the Schwemm Family Foundation, over this summer WNP will be sharing the natural and cultural history of Lake Merced See upcoming Lake Merced history events on page 16.

SCHWEMM FAMILY FOUNDATION

About three thousand years ago, what we today know as Lake Merced was a lagoon fed by small streams, groundwater, and a channel to the Pacific Ocean. As recently as the nineteenth century, a tail of the lake wound from the northwest edge, through today's San Francisco Zoo site, to Ocean Beach. Sand build-up cut off this connection to the ocean, but large storms and earthquakes occasionally broke it open. One, in 1852, reportedly dropped the volume of the lake 30 feet. A *Chronicle* reporter wrote "Our informant who left there on Thursday morning stated that the water was still rushing out with great force, and that he had no doubt but that it would soon be emptied."[1]

The lake survived, still fed by groundwater springs and seeps arising through the sandy soil from a basin of groundwater. Seasonal and underground streams flowed into the lake



North end of Lake Merced looking west, roughly from today's Lake Merced Boulevard and Winston Avenue, c. 1910. (Willard E. Worden photograph, WNP Collection, wnp.15.642)

along the paths now covered by Brotherhood Way, Sloat Boulevard, Winston Drive, and Eucalyptus Drive. The barrier separating the lake from the ocean was made permanent with fill and road construction in the late nineteenth century.

Today, Lake Merced covers 300 acres, its surface broken into four connected sections, reduced in size and volume from 150 years ago, but still the city's largest wetland habitat. Thousands of migrating birds find refuge at the lake and as many as fifty avian species—from grebes to herons to barn swallows—use it as a breeding site. The lake is home to many species of native plants and animals such as dune tansy, California pipevine, and the Western pond turtle.

Into the early twentieth century the lake's water levels fluctuated due to natural phenomena such as sand drift, severe drought, or unusually rainy years. Average height of the lake's surface ranged from twelve to twenty-seven feet above sea level. In the 1910s and 1920s, the lake dropped precipitously to just a few feet above sea level because of the diversion of storm water to prevent pollution from nearby agricultural activity and residential development, drought, and increased pumping of groundwater.

The lake surface rebounded in the 1930s, when the City of San Francisco's diverted of water from Tuolumne River as part of the Hetch Hetchy project, and ranged from 20-25 feet into the 1960s. Increased urbanization around the lake, periodic droughts, and the use of groundwater by nearby golf courses and cemeteries had once more dropped the lake level dramatically by the early 1990s. Community organizations and advocacy groups such as the Committee to Save Lake Merced and Friends of Lake Merced increased public awareness on the decline of water levels. After many public meetings, petitions, and the creation of a task force, agreements were finally reached to supplement the lake level with storm water and reduce the use of well water.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission now attempts to manage the lake in a range of 15-21 feet above sea level, and monitors the water quality and level quarterly.



Artist Louis Choris depicted the Yelamu people using a tule reed canoe in 1816. (Langlume, fl. 1822-1825, and Louis Choris. *Batau Du Port De Sn. Francisco,* Pl. IX [9]. Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University.)

For thousands of years Yelamu groups of the Ramaytush-speaking people—independent tribes of what are now commonly called the Ohlone Native Americans of Northern California—hunted, fished, and harvested tule reeds from Lake Merced.

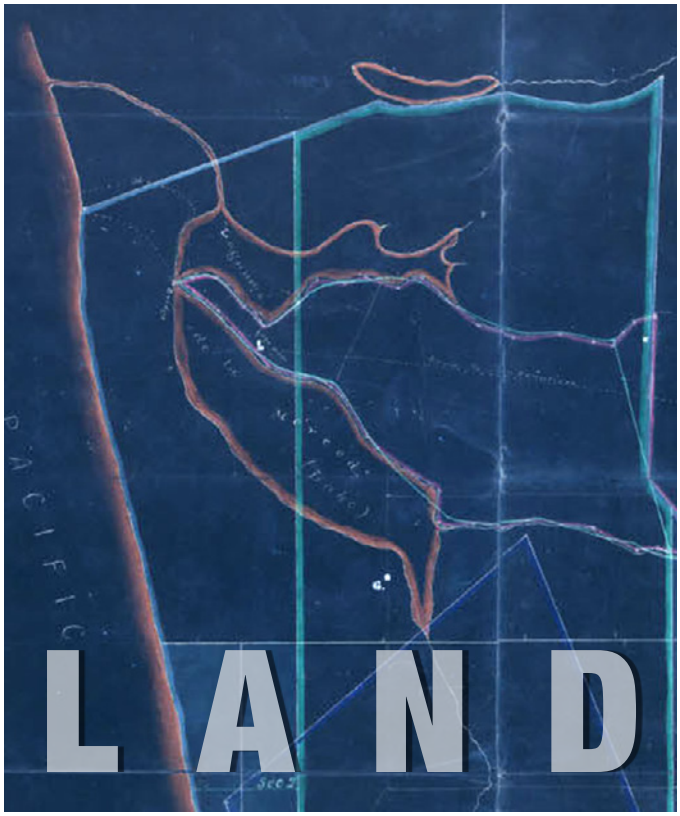
"Ohlone" are actually many separate peoples with different cultures, histories, six distinct languages, and numerous dialects. "Yelamu" likely isn't what the people who lived on the upper part of the San Francisco peninsula called themselves. The word means "the western people," and was used by native peoples of the East Bay.

The Yelamu consisted of about 200 people, which intermarried with neighboring tribes around the Bay Area. The tribe was divided into three or four village groups with each moving seasonally to different sites in its area.[2]

Physical evidence of pre-colonial Yelamu settlements are mostly found on the protected bay side of the peninsula, but archaeologists have uncovered tools and other signs of Yelamu people on the east side of Lake Merced and on the beach side where Fort Funston is today. (The names "Mitline" and "Opurome," listed in the registers at Mission Dolores, may be connected with these camps.[3]) Mussels and the native Olympia oyster were a big part of the local diet when the Yelamu camped in the high coastal dunes west of the lake. The tule in the marshes was used to make clothing and boats.[4]

The arrival of the Spanish in the 1770s would change Ohlone life forever. From a population of more than 10,000 Ohlone before the Spanish, only around a thousand native people lived in the Bay Area at the time of the Gold Rush in 1849—a true decimation in just sixty years. The Ohlone people survived while their presence and culture were repressed and ignored during the takeover of California by the Americans.

Recognition, organization, and recovery of native identity has increased greatly in California since the 1970s. Social, political, and family groups—all very different but tied together by a shared history of local life before the arrival of Europeans—exist today, from



Lake Merced used to have a connection to the Pacific Ocean. (Image adopted from a map of *Josefa de Haro et al claimant to Laguna de la Merced, 1866.* UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library.)

the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area (muwekma.org) to independent scholars, linguists, researchers, and culture bearers.

Spanish expeditions in 1769 (Gaspar de Portola's, which has been credited with the European discovery of San Francisco Bay), 1770, and 1772, probed the peninsula and the east side of the bay. In the fall of 1774, Captain Fernando Rivera y Moncada led an expedition up to what is modern day San Francisco to scout a location for a presidio and mission. The party camped just to the northeast of Lake Merced. A smaller group, sent to reconnoiter the mouth of the Golden Gate, passed a native tule raft on Ocean Beach on returning to camp, but didn't encounter any local people in the area. (On the journey up the peninsula, different native villages welcomed, provided guides, and fed the Spanish.)

Two years later, Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza led first a scouting party and then a 75-person immigrant expedition (with a mule train and almost 300 cattle) up from Monterey to found Mission San Francisco de Asis (Mission Dolores) and the Presidio of San Francisco.

Less than two months after the Spanish arrival, the Yelamu were attacked by the Ssalson people, neighbors from the south (for reasons unknown, although it seems very likely that the Spanish arrival was somehow a factor). The Yelamu retreated to the East Bay, which eased the Spanish creation and establishment of the mission and presidio.

On attempting to return later in 1776, the Yelamu had negative interactions with the colonizers and a skirmish at the end of the year resulted in one Yelamu wounded and another killed by Spanish gunfire. In 1777, religious instruction and the first baptisms of young Yelamu people took place at Mission Dolores. By the end of the year, 32 native people were part of the mission community, and ten years later the last of the local Yelamu people were baptized and in the Mission Dolores community, along with many converts added from surrounding Bay Area tribes. The traditional use of Lake Merced by native people was probably over by 1800, when 46 Yelamu people remaining in the area were recorded in residence at the mission.[5]

We have no record of what the Yelamu called Lake Merced. A Spanish priest, Father Francisco Palou, named it *La Laguna de Nuestra Señora de la Merced* (The Lake of Our Lady of Mercy) in 1775, choosing the name based on the day of the religious calendar that he left the area. By the time of the Gold Rush, the name had simply become Lake Merced.

The Franciscans at Mission Dolores used the area for cattle grazing, and it isn't until the time of Mexican governance of California, and the secularization of the Mission lands in the 1830s, that the first recorded title to Lake Merced is found.

In September 1835, the Mexican Governor, Jose Jesus Castro, granted to Jose Antonio Galindo 2,200 acres of land, including the lake. Galindo used the area for cattle grazing until he sold it to Francisco de Haro for 100 cattle and goods worth $25 in value. De Haro served as the first alcalde (or mayor) of the small bayside pueblo and port of Yerba Buena. He built a house at the southern end of Lake Merced, but frequently resided on other property he owned closer to Yerba Buena. After the death of his twin sons during the Bear Flag Revolt, de Haro retired to Lake Merced, where he died in 1849.

The end of the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848 brought a new government and an influx of settlers from the United States, and then, in 1848, gold was discovered in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Yerba Buena became the "instant city" of San Francisco, the world rushed in, and some of the newcomers looked settled and found their own kind of gold at Lake Merced.

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2. Randall Milliken, Laurence H. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz, *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and the Neighbors, Yesterday and Today,* Archaeological and Historical Consultants for National Park Service, GGNRA, June 2009.
3. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Francisco or Mission Dolores,* (Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1924.)
4. Sean Greene, "The Last Oyster," *Bay Nature,* May 20, 2014. https://baynature.org/article/last-oyster/
5. Milliken et al.

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Lorri Ungaretti Inducted into Lincoln High Wall of Fame



Our great congratulations to WNP member (and former longtime board member) **Lorri Ungaretti**, who was inducted into Lincoln High School's "Wall of Fame" on April 24, 2017.

Lorri graduated from Lincoln in 1970, and is known as the leading historian on the Sunset District. Wall of Fame inductees are recognized as "former Lincoln High students and teachers who have become outstanding members of their chosen profession." In addition to conducting history walks and talks, Lorri is the author numerous articles and five local history books on the "Outside Lands."

Take a look at the WNP store (outsidelands.org/store.php) to purchase Lorri's books, including *Stories in the Sand: San Francisco's Sunset District, 1847–1964.*

Recruit a New Member, Go to Outside Lands Festival

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love, we will be sharing counter-culture history with thousands of attendees at this year's Outside Lands Music & Arts Festival, **August 11–13, 2017.**

The WNP booth at the festival is loaded with photo albums, books, brochures, pamphlets, banners, displays, and staffers who like to talk a little west side history with the visitors. As with past years, we are looking to the membership for help in staffing our booth. Member volunteers spend two to three hours sharing history and information on Western Neighborhoods Project, and then are free to enjoy the festival.

How do you take advantage of this great opportunity? Easy! Just sign up a new member to Western Neighborhoods Project—a family member, a friend, a co-worker who you think would enjoy west side history like you do. (Forgot how to join? Just go to outsidelands.org/membership.php or call us at 415-661-1000.)

Send an e-mail to Arnold Woods at **arnold@outsidelands.org** to learn more. Arnold is the WNP booth coordinator and will schedule times for all the volunteers.

We look forward to another year with you sharing history at the Outside Lands Music & Arts Festival in Golden Gate Park.

Sources for "The March to Kezar for Peace" (pgs. 10–11)

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Historical Happenings

Thanks to a grant from the Schwemm Family Foundation, WNP is giving a series of free walks and talks on Lake Merced this summer. The North and South Side walks are similar, but cover different landmarks of the lake. Join one or both—they are free!

Lake Merced History Walk - North Side

May 13 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–Noon
June 25 (Sunday) 10:00 AM–Noon
July 15 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–Noon
August 20 (Sunday) 10:00 AM–Noon

Lake Merced is the largest expanse of wetland habitat in San Francisco. Come hear about the natural history of the lake and its use by native peoples, Spanish colonizers, roadhouse operators, and real estate developers. Meet at the statue of Juan Bautista de Anza in the northern parking lot where Sunset and Lake Merced Boulevards meet.

Lake Merced History Walk - South Side

May 20, 2017 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–Noon
June 24, 2017 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–Noon
July 23, 2017 (Sunday) 10:00 AM–Noon
August 5, 2017 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–Noon

This "guns, golf, and grebes" walk will examine Lake Merced's history as a wetland, reservoir, recreational spot, and site of California's most infamous duel. Meet at the "Penguin's Prayer" statue in the parking lot along Lake Merced Boulevard just south of Brotherhood Way on the east side of the lake.

OpenSFHistory: Lake Merced

March 17, 2017 (Wednesday) 7:00 PM–8:00 PM
Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Ave. Free.

June 21, 2017 (Wednesday) 5:00–6:00 PM
Parkmerced Clubhouse, 3711 19th Avenue. Free.

Since the 1850s, Lake Merced and the land around it has been a site of native peoples camps, roadhouses, a famous duel, farms, and recreational activities from skeet shooting to golf to dragon boat racing. Despite encroaching urbanization, watershed changes, fragmentation, and aquifer reduction, the lake remains a unique habitat supporting riparian, dune scrub, and woodland forest natural communities. Woody LaBounty will share natural and cultural history of the lake with stories of "guns, golf, and grebes" and images from the OpenSFHistory historical image program.



View west to Lake Merced, c. 1911. (WNP Collection, wnp15.989)

Summer of Love Member Walk

May 27, 2017 (Saturday) 1:00 PM

It's the 50th Anniversary of the Summer of Love. Join the Western Neighborhoods Project on a walking tour of significant places from the Summer of Love in 1967. Stops will include the site of the Love Pageant Rally, the Psychedelic Shop, the Haight Ashbury Free Clinic, the Grateful Dead house, and the Vietnam Protest March. Relive an era of hippies, music, protests, and the Haight Ashbury, with memories of how the summer impacted the western neighborhoods. The walk is free, but **limited to 20 WNP members** and their guests. RSVP via email to woody@outsidelands.org or call the WNP office at 415-661-1000. We will reply with walk details and starting point.



Summer of Love Public Walks (Members Welcome)

June 3, 2017 (Saturday) 1:00 PM
June 17, 2017 (Saturday) 1:00 PM

Can't make May 27? These walks have the same content as the WNP Member walk listed above, but are open to the public. $20 for General Public. $10 for WNP Members and their guests. Purchase details are at **outsidelands.org/events/summer-walks.php**

OpenSFHistory at CalAcademy NightLife

June 1, 2017 (Thursday) 5:00 PM–10:00 PM

Western Neighborhoods Project is teaming up with the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park to do a local history show in the Planetarium. Our OpenSFHistory images, Woody LaBounty narration, and the Academy's amazing 3D map team will make for an amazing show. Part of the Academy's NightLife Series. $12 for Academy members and $15 for Non-Members. 21+ only and ID required for entry. More information to be posted at **calacademy.org/nightlife**

OpenSFHistory: Ocean Avenue

June 11, 2017 (Sunday) 3:00 PM–5:00 PM
1970 Ocean Avenue at Victoria Street

Enjoy a lively afternoon of history, music, refreshments, conversation, and conviviality in a landmark location. Using OpenSFHistory images, local experts and neighbors will present stories of the OMI (Ocean View-Merced-Ingleside), Westwood Park, and Mount Davidson Manor neighborhoods—all in the lobby of the old El Rey Theater building. Free of charge and open to the public as part of the Ocean Avenue Association's Second Sundays.



El Rey Theater, 1942. (Courtesy of Jack Tillmany.)

The Last Word



Bessie Deskes, tiger cubs, and zoo keeper Bill Behre, December 26, 1942.
(WNP Collection, wnp28.0557)

When five tiger cubs were born at the San Francisco Zoo in 1942, their mother refused to nurse them and one died. Zoo keeper Bill Behre jumped in to bottle feed the four left (we know the names of two, Mary and Jean).

A series of publicity photographs were taken of the cubs, including the one at left on December 26, 1942. Miss Bessie Deskes, eight years old, has a turn with the bottle while Mr. Behre supervises.

There are interesting details in this shot. The newspaper on the floor reveals part of a *San Francisco Examiner* headline about a World War II battle—a reminder that a cute story about tiger cubs was probably a welcome relief in the newspapers.

And was there a party, event, or other explanation why Bessie wore cowboy boots, a holster, and a top hat for her trip to the zoo?

Western Neighborhoods Project
outsidelands.org

Not a WNP Member?

SF West History is just one of the benefits of giving to Western Neighborhoods Project. Members receive special publications as well as exclusive invitations to history walks, talks, and other events. If you like what you've read, please join hundreds of other west side fans as a member. Visit our website at **outsidelands.org,** and click on the "Become a Member" link at the top of any page.