Outside Lands

San Francisco History from Western Neighborhoods Project

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100 Years of the Twin Peaks Tunnel



Outside Lands

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EDITOR: Woody LaBounty

CONTRIBUTORS: Angus Macfarlane, John Martini, and Arnold Woods

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Western Neighborhoods Project
4016 Geary Boulevard, Suite A
San Francisco, CA 94118
Tel: 415/661-1000
Email: woody@outsidelands.org
Website: www.outsidelands.org
facebook.com/outsidelands
twitter.com/outsidelandz
instagram.com/westernneighborhoods/

Cover:
Mayor Rolph driving the first streetcar out of the west portal of the Twin Peaks tunnel, February 3, 1918. (wnp15.174)

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Western Neighborhoods Project (that's us), the nonprofit with a mission to preserve and share local history, now has a public space for exhibits, presentations, and community conversations. You can read more about our new "Home for History" at 1617 Balboa Street on the back page. (And come to our open house on **February 3, 2018!)** The long-held dream of having an open, welcoming place to engage with people in history work face-to-face is almost a reality.

This all happened very quickly, and it was thanks to our great friend **Gee Gee Platt,** who believed in us enough to offer a generous grant of seed money. Our Board of Directors took a leap of faith. Then a group of WNP members quickly pledged $10,000 in support of the project after it was revealed at the November gala.

These founding history heroes, to whom we will always have the sincerest gratitude, are **Edward Anderson, Cammy Blackstone, Jaime Borschuk, Michael** & **Patricia Busk, Barbara Cannella, Pat Cunneen, Richard Feutz, Sandra Lee Fewer, Ann Green, Inge Horton, Vivian Imperiale** (in memory of **Paul Imperiale**), **Laura Isaeff, Paul Judge, Don** & **Sue Larramendy, Sherida Lembke, Lacey Lieberthal, Lourdes Livingston, Jan Meldahl, Maeve Metzger, Patrice Mulholland, Nancy Myrick, Mary Ann Orr, Katherine Petrin, Thomas Scott, Barbara Sellin, Jim Smith, Lorri Ungaretti, David Volansky, Margaret Warren,** and **Ben Zotto.** Their zeal and enthusiasm gave us all a lot of confidence to move forward.

The broader WNP membership, on hearing the news, also came through in our year-end appeal. Now the paint is on, the carpet is in, and a schedule of events is in the works. See our calendar on page 20 for what we have planned so far. I hope to see you on Balboa Street soon!

West Side Stories

Our gala on November 4, 2017 was a terrific financial success, but it was even more a social success. Old friends from the neighborhoods reconnected, but just as many strangers became new friends in sharing their love of history and of the west side of San Francisco. We were instantly asked when the next one would be. Our answer? Soon!



Do You Know Who We Are?

If you picked this up at one the big spring events, Hello! We're glad to know you.

We think of ourselves as one of San Francisco's friendliest history organizations. Go to **outsidelands.org** and **opensfhistory.org** to learn more, sign up for our monthly email news, leave a memory on the community message boards, and consider joining as a member to get this magazine every quarter and join us for member walks, talks, and conversations.

Membership Matters

Speaking of the magazine, the cost of printing and mailing it has gone up over the past fifteen years, but our membership dues have not—until now. We will now make the membership amount to receive the print magazine $50.

Don't panic! We truly consider you our history family. If you're a current member and you can't afford the fifty when renewal rolls around, just drop me a line and I will grandfather you in. We don't want to lose anyone. We just need to keep up with inflation.

Thank You Cammy!

One of our superb board members, Cammy Blackstone, has had to leave us, and we are very, very put out by it (but we understand). Thanks, Cammy, for your terrific work making WNP bigger and better.



The Board of Directors and executive director ready for the once-in-eleven-years gala, "West Side Stories." From left, Cammy Blackstone, Arnold Woods, David Gallagher, Anisha Gupta, Richard Brandi, Jamie O'Keefe, Chelsea Sellin, Nicole Meldahl, Woody LaBounty, Kyrie Whitsett, and David Chang. (Tammy Aramian photo.)

Where in West S.F.?

Many westsiders remembered the not-so-mysterious fire in our "guess where" last issue. Many others recognized the familiar southeast corner of 19th Avenue and Irving Street.

Mike Aherns: "This is the fire that took place on May 31, 1959. The picture shows the large meeting room of Jefferson Elementary School on Irving Street, between 19th Avenue and 18th Avenue. I lived at the 1200 block of 18th Avenue only a few houses from Irving where the fire took place. I actually knew the boy who set the fire. He was a few years younger than I was. He admitted setting the fire to the police as he wanted to correct a spelling test that he had submitted and instead burned the school."

Mike is right on the official story of the four-alarm blaze that destroyed the Jefferson School. The twelve-year-old boy claimed he only wanted to destroy a spelling test in which he answered "rin" for "run." But the same individual was suspected by many of setting fire to the Boy Scout Hall on 25th Avenue, and later, Sutro Baths, so perhaps spelling wasn't the real issue.

Lourdes Livingston: "I remember how shaken up I was as a five-year-old to learn that a kid burned down his school. We were always told not to play with matches. This was a very bad boy! The news was all over the TV news, radio, and newspapers. All us kids in SF were freaked out!"

Barry Pearl: "I was in kindergarten at the school. The school building at 19th Avenue and Irving Street was destroyed and replaced, but the auditorium pictured in the building was repaired and continues in use today. […] We were transferred to Francis Scott Key Annex at 42nd and Judah Street while the school was rebuilt. After three years we returned to the new Jefferson."



Jefferson School fire at 19th and Irving, May 31, 1959. (WNP Collection, wnp27.4680.jpg)

Other correct guessers included Julie Alden, Ellen Bogema, Mary Rose Cassa, Jocelyn Combs, Robert Crabill, Charles Figone, Joe Flanders, Gordon Gribble, Bill Ruck, Denise Selleck, Judy (Banks) Simmons, Wallace Stewart, Alan Thomas, David Volansky, and Loren Wilson.

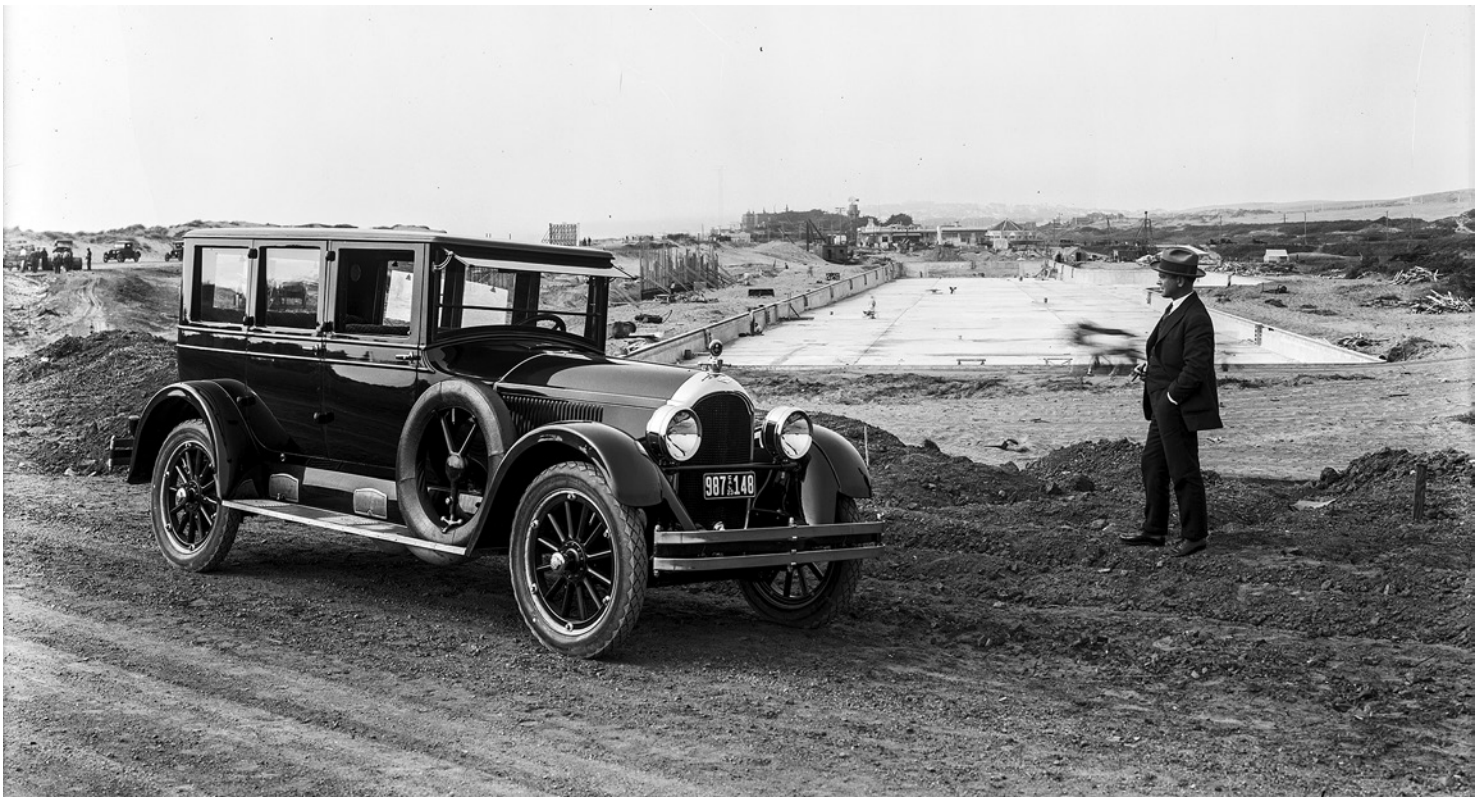
Feeling pretty cocky, eh? Well, try the photograph below. Some clues: we're pushing the boundaries of the west side and a well-known institution now stands behind that cable car. Feel free to add a memory or anecdote when sending your guess. Email woody@outsidelands.org, or use the WNP contact information on the inside cover. Good luck!



How far east does the west side go? Tell us the where, what, and when of the photograph above.

Fleishhacker Pool

by John Martini



Looking north to Fleishhacker Pool under construction in late 1923. (WNP Collection, wnp15.721.)

The growing OpenSFHistory.org collection of historic photos at has once again yielded a treasure trove of nostalgic photos, this time documenting the glory days of the late, lamented Fleishhacker Pool.

Images include construction of the pool and its adjacent bathhouse; early aerials showing the vast pool bordered by sand dunes and an embryonic Great Highway; trick divers going off a gingerbread diving platform; flappers in woolen bathing costumes posed on a 1920s roadster; and masses of happy swimmers thronging the pool as lifeguards patrol in rowboats.

(By the time I first swam in Fleishhacker's in 1966 the ambiance wasn't quite as rosy as in these historic views. But more on that later.)

The story of the design and construction of Fleishhacker Pool has been told many times, perhaps nowhere as concisely and accurately as by our own Woody LaBounty in a 2010 article for the Outside Lands website (http://www.outsidelands.org/sw8.php)*

In short, Fleishhacker Pool was the brainchild of one of the city's most generous benefactors: Herbert Fleishhacker. San Francisco had acquired sixty acres at the beach south of Sloat Boulevard from the Spring Valley Water Company in 1922, and then-Park Commission President Fleishhacker spearheaded the purchase of the land with a vision for a sprawling public sports complex that would include playing fields, tennis courts, field houses, playgrounds, wading pools, and world's largest outdoor heated swimming pool. Fleishhacker and his brother Mortimer donated $50,000 to construct a Mother's Building at the new recreation facility in memory of their mother, and Mayor James Rolph introduced a resolution to name the entire park after the Fleishhackers. Contrary to oft-told stories, the Fleishhackers didn't pay for the pool, but they were major benefactors to the evolving recreational complex, which by the 1930s would include a zoo.

First proposed in late 1922, the idea for the great pool progressed rapidly from concept to construction to grand opening in only two and a half years. (Today, the public hearings and environmental reviews would likely take at least twice that long.) Even from the perspective of nearly a century later, the pool's statistics were truly astounding. The pool measured 1,000 feet by 150 feet at its widest point, and held 6,000,000 gallons (some sources say 6,500,000) gallons of salt water piped in from the ocean and heated to a temperature of 70° Fahrenheit. Depending on which

* The most exhaustive resource for true rivet counters is the 1979 Historic American Building Survey prepared for the Library of Congress. It includes innumerable drawings, plans, and high-resolution photos of the pool and bathhouse. It can be found online at https://www.loc.gov/item/ca0642/

sources you refer to, it was either the largest outdoor pool in the world or the world's largest outdoor heated pool. An adjacent bathhouse measured 450 feet long, with locker rooms and shower spaces for up to 800 bathers. On the bathhouse's second story, a glass-enclosed restaurant overlooked the pool on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other.

In fact, the proximity of Fleishhacker's to the ocean was one of its enduring charms and mysteries, since the two were only separated by about 400 feet. Why build such a monstrously large outdoor pool so close to the vast (and free) Pacific Ocean—and then fill it with seawater? The answer seems to be that city planners wanted to offer swimmers the experience and perceived health benefits of saltwater bathing in a bracing beach front environment, but without actually exposing them to the hazards of open ocean swimming. And even though 70° Fahrenheit isn't that warm for pool water, it was considerably warmer than the waters of Ocean Beach, which average in the mid-50°s.

The pool opened to great enthusiasm in April 1925, and in the boom days of the 1920s and 1930s it drew thousands of swimmers on nice days. Muni's newly opened L-Taraval streetcar line, which terminated a few blocks away at 48th Avenue and Taraval Street, made the pool accessible from anywhere in the city. Admission was relatively cheap—25 cents for adults, 15 cents for children—and each bather received two towels, a swimsuit, and locker space. (These were the same rates charged at Sutro Baths at the opposite end of Ocean Beach.)

There were challenges. Cold and blustery weather is



Aerial view of Fleishhacker Pool, bathhouse, and play field. Poles for L-Taraval line visible at top, November 16, 1924. (WNP Collection, wnp27.3347)

common at Ocean Beach, and the weather soon took its toll on both attendance and infrastructure at Fleishhacker's. The pool never paid for itself—nor as a public park was it intended to—but its operating costs were still nearly twice that of other city-operated indoor pools.

One major factor in the increased costs was that it was full of saltwater, pumped in directly from the Pacific through a several-hundred-foot long intake pipe. Inevitably, large quantities of sand were sucked in along with the ocean water, which left grit on the pool bottom. In order to clean the pool, swimming was suspended for four or five days every six weeks. Most of the water was drained from the pool except for a "sump" at the deep end of the pool. There, the water depth was about 14 feet, even lower than the normal outfall/drain pipe, and allowed some of the muck to settle below the level of the drain. Crews brought in a portable sand pump to suck up the collected grit and emptied it onto Ocean Beach. Meanwhile, a squadron of workers hosed and brushed the pool bottom clean. The refilling operation, according to Park and Recreation engineers, took 20-24 hours. By comparison, none of the city's freshwater pools required this rigorous cleaning ritual.

Fleishhacker Pool was briefly taken over by the army in early World War II, and historic photos show it being used as a training area where troops could practice techniques in fording streams or wading ashore during beach landings. The pool apparently reopened to the public in 1943, and in the post-war years saw a brief but impressive surge in usage. When admission prices were lowered, visitation nearly doubled. According to the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) report:

"In the first forty seasons, 1925 to 1965 it was estimated that 8,500,000 people swam in the plunge. Admissions were originally 25-cents for adults and 15-cents for children. […] In 1952, all rates were reduced and admissions soared. For June 15 to 30, 1952, attendance was 10,641 and receipts $1,795.45, as compared to 5,690 persons and $1,219.20 for the entire month of June 1951. The July comparisons were also striking: July 1 to 12, 1952–7,372 people, $1,185.05; July 1 to 12, 1951–3,530 people, $813.10."

It wouldn't last, though. The mid 1950s saw the start of a long, slow decline in the pool's usage that would go on for fifteen years. Part of the change in patronage was the result of swimmers migrating to the city's newer, indoor, freshwater pools at locations like Rossi Park, North Beach, Hamilton Square, Larsen Park, and elsewhere. Also, mid-century America saw a boom in personal auto use as more and more citizens began to afford their own cars, while new highways made driving long distances more practicable and enjoyable. Fleishhacker's increasingly found itself competing for saltwater swimmers with warm-weather beach front towns like Santa Cruz and Stinson Beach.



North side of Fleishhacker Pool and the first diving tower, circa 1930. (WNP Collection, wnp14.3728.)

My first experience swimming at Fleishhacker Pool took place in April 1966, during the pool's increasingly depressing decline. I was a swimmer at St. Ignatius High School, which at that time was located at the "old school" on Stanyan Street where we didn't enjoy the luxury of our own swimming pool. Instead, we trained daily at Hamilton Pool in the Fillmore District. Most of the competitive swim meets between the city's high schools, though, were held at Fleishhacker Pool, where there was bleacher seating for spectators. On this April day we were competing against Balboa High School, I believe.

continued on page 18

ROOSEVELT HISTORY

PART ONE: THE BATTLE OF FIRST AVENUE

by Angus Macfarlane
Roosevelt Junior High School Class of 1962

2017 marked the 140th anniversary of the opening of Roosevelt Middle School's distant ancestor, Lobos Avenue School, in 1877. This year, 2018, marks the 130th anniversary of the school on the First Avenue/Arguello Boulevard site.

On August 11, 1930, 1,150 students were welcomed to a new school (Roosevelt Junior High School) and a new academic paradigm (the junior high school system). Most of them probably shared the same thought: "What's in the tower?"

The truth is the new school with the mysterious tower was not originally meant to be there. The lot where Roosevelt stands on Arguello Boulevard near Geary Boulevard was originally reserved for the California Academy of Sciences.

After San Francisco won title to the Outside Lands in 1866, one of the city's first acts was to survey the sand-and-scrub-dominated landscape west of Divisadero Street and to lay out thoroughfares and blocks.

Additional "city reservations" were set aside in the new map for schools, fire stations, parks, squares, etc. In the yet-to-be Richmond District, the Outside Lands survey of 1868 defined 23 new school lots—at the time there were 33 schools in all of San Francisco.

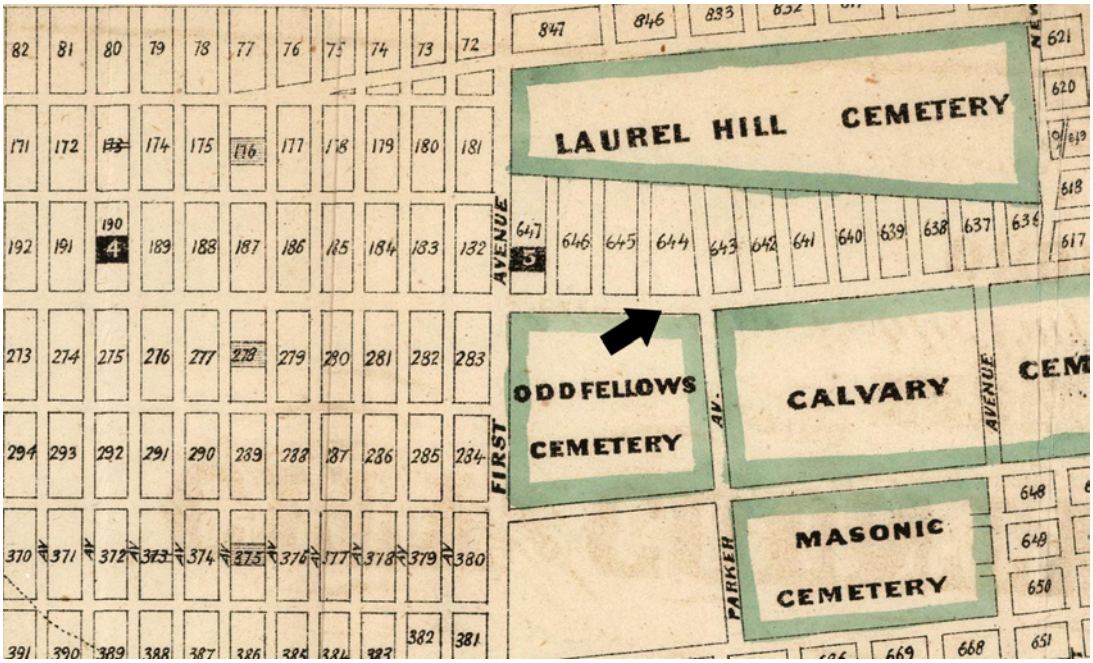
A site for a new Home for the Inebriates—to replace the facility located at Stockton and Chestnut Streets—was planned for a lot at 9th Avenue and Clement Street. The crowning jewel of the area, land for a permanent home for the California Academy of Natural Sciences, founded in 1853 and standing at Clay and Montgomery Streets in 1866, was reserved at First Avenue (Arguello today) north of Point Lobos Avenue (now Geary Boulevard).

Point Lobos School, 1871

The first of these city reservations to be developed in the Richmond District was the school lot on 18th Avenue near Point Lobos Avenue, on the site of today's Argonne Playground. The one-story, four-room, 50' x 71' school building was anticipated to hold up to 240 pupils, deemed "sufficient accommodation for this sparsely settled part of the city for several years."[1]

Point Lobos School opened on March 1, 1871, with one teacher for 37 students.[2] This was the only school in the northwest quadrant of San Francisco—north of the "work in progress" that was Golden Gate Park, and west of Scott Street. The children mostly came from the families involved with the horse racing track at 25th Avenue and Clement Street, the nearby cemeteries, the road houses set up to serve travelers along Point Lobos Road on their way to the Cliff House, and the few small dairies and vegetable farms.

Enrollment for the school's first seven years in the sparsely populated area fluctuated between 37 and 59. Until the 1876/77 school year, when attendance hit 59, and a second instructor was brought in, this was a one-teacher



Detail of 1868 Outside Lands map. City reservations for a new Home for Inebriates at 9th Avenue and Clement (4), and the California Academy of Natural Sciences on today's Arguello Boulevard (5) are marked. Black arrow points to where the first Lobos Avenue School would be built in 1877 along today's Geary Boulevard near Beaumont Street. (Courtesy of David Rumsey Collection: www.davidrumsey.com)

operation. After a move and a name change, today's Sutro School is the direct descendant of the Point Lobos School.

Lobos Avenue School, 1877

One source records that the Richmond District's second school, Lobos Avenue School, opened on September 3, 1877.[3] That conflicts with the *Daily Alta California's* (*Alta*) report of the Board of Education meeting on September 18, 1877, where it was resolved that "all pupils in the Primary Department residing west of Central Avenue to report at the opening of the Lobos avenue school for admission."[4]

At the same meeting, the Board "elected" Mrs. T. F. Oldham as a teacher and assigned her to the new school located on the south side of Point Lobos Road between Parker Avenue and today's Beaumont Avenue.[5] Bracketed by Calvary, Odd Fellows, and Laurel Hill Cemeteries in 1877, the four-room building was rented for $40 a month. (The site is now the parking lot of Mel's Drive-In Diner.)

The election of Lobos Avenue School's principal was put over to the next board meeting. Subsequently, on October 2, 1877, "after several ballots, the board elected Miss Esther Goldsmith to be principal."[6] Twenty-five-year-old Miss Esther was a ten-year combat veteran of San Francisco's educational trenches.[7] Her previous tour of duty was a five-year hitch at the Fourth Street Primary School where the student-to-teacher ratio was 672 to 10. (By comparison, the defenders of the Alamo were outnumbered by a mere 10 to 1.) Her professional dedication apparently inspired her four younger sisters Mary, Ada, Bertha, and Rose, to follow in her footsteps.[8]

Miss Goldsmith, as principal of a school of four classrooms or less, received $100 per month.[9] She also taught, in addition to her administrative duties. Mrs. Oldham, a first-year teacher, received the minimum of $50 a month. Together, they improved the minds of 115 students that year, all eighth graders.

The next year, for reasons best understood by other teachers, Mrs. Oldham was one-and-done at Lobos Avenue School. She was replaced by 21-year-old Miss Mary Traynor, who was beginning her third year in the profession. Miss Goldsmith and Miss Traynor brought a greater understanding of the world to 133 inquiring minds in grades five through eight, 81 of them eighth graders. (This was a constant theme at Lobos Avenue School: a majority, or near-majority, of the student body being eighth graders.)

In 1879, Lobos Avenue School welcomed a third teacher and instructed 160 total students in the term. Further west, at Point Lobos School on 18th Avenue, designed for 240 students, the single teacher entertained 25 scholars.

For the 1880/81 school year, Lobos Avenue School added yet another teacher, with Miss Esther Goldsmith now leading Misses Mary Traynor, 20-year-old Jennie Klink, and 21-year-old Julia Goldman. The Fab Four taught 173 students, with 87 of them eighth graders.

That year, all primary school principals had their salaries cut by 10%. Miss Goldsmith's salary was reduced to $90. Teachers' salaries were unaffected.

Over the next four years, enrollment at Lobos Avenue School rose and fell, ranging from 173 to 209 students.

As the city grew and the Western Addition pressed evermore westward, the little four-room educational beacon by the graveyards was bursting at the seams. The Outside Lands, which had once been considered an uninhabitable wilderness more suitable for the dead than the living, was now referred to as the suburbs and had become desirable—in fact, fashionable.

Between Lobos Avenue School's opening in 1877 and 1884, the number of students in the city's schools rose 19%. During the same time enrollment at the little schoolhouse doubled from 115 to 229. And it hadn't topped off yet.

The Board of Education was acutely aware of the dire space situation of the little school in the necropolitan neck of the woods, declaring a replacement for the rented building a priority. In 1884/85, $21,000 was budgeted for the purchase of land near Point Lobos Avenue for a new eight-classroom building.[10]

Between Lobos Avenue School's opening in 1877 and 1884, the number of students in the city's schools rose 19%. During the same time enrollment at the little schoolhouse doubled from 115 to 229.

In 1885/86, Principal Esther Goldsmith's salary returned to its original $100 per month, as she and her crew held forth before a record enrollment of 244 passengers on the School Boat of Knowledge. The next year the manifest was down to 225, but in 1887/88 the overloaded School Boat was almost swamped with 271 passengers. Somehow a fifth crew member was squeezed into the four classrooms.

California Academy of Sciences

The California Academy of Natural Sciences was founded in 1853 as a "learned society," housed in rented rooms on Clay Street near Kearny.

In November 1867, the Academy was looking to expand and had its eyes on the recently re-purposed Yerba Buena Cemetery, renamed Yerba Buena Square, situated at today's Civic Center. They envisioned converting this 16-acre plot of

land into a botanical garden and erecting a building to be the permanent home of the Academy and its collections. The Academy petitioned the city to grant the institution the land, but was denied by the Board of Supervisors.[11]

On December 7, 1868, the Board of Supervisors' Outside Lands Committee submitted its final report, in which the Academy of Sciences was granted 0.86 acre of land on First Avenue (Arguello Boulevard today). The Academy was the only non-civic and non-charitable organization to receive a grant. This may have been to make up for the Board's rejection of the Academy's request for Yerba Buena Square a year earlier.[12]

In January 1874, the 411 members of the Academy moved into new rented quarters in the former First Congregational Church at California Street and Dupont (Grant Avenue today).[13] Why the Academy showed no interest in its granted property on First Avenue is uncertain, but it may have been holding out for a more prestigious location promised in a will written the year before.

James Lick, California's wealthiest citizen and most generous philanthropist, drew up his will in 1873, giving the Academy an 80' x 275' lot at 4th and Market Streets valued at an estimated $75,000-$80,000. This was to be the Academy's long dreamed of permanent home. Additionally, half of the remainder of Lick's estate, after satisfying all the other bequests, was to be shared equally between the Academy and the Pioneers of California—about $200,000 each.[14]

Three years later, on October 1, 1876, James Lick died. Unfortunately for the Academy, the will was contested and the disposition of the estate held up for over a decade.

The Battle of First Avenue

In 1887, eleven years after Lick's death, the Academy still didn't have its permanent home. The desperate need for new and larger quarters for both the 325 savants of the Academy of Sciences and the 277 apprentice savants at Lobos Avenue School had them on a collision course over the same plot of land on First Avenue.

In June 1887, the Academy held a secret meeting to discuss plans to build on the Market Street property they expected to eventually inherit, hoping to borrow money from the still-contested will to finance the project.[15]

A month later, the *Alta* reported that the Board of Education was planning to build a new school on Point Lobos Avenue near Parker Avenue, but shortly afterwards plans were ordered for a six-room school to be built on First Avenue near Point Lobos Avenue. This was the first mention of the Academy of Sciences lot. There was no explanation why the Board chose this site since it was not a "school reservation."[16]

On October 3, 1887, ten years and a day since Miss Esther Goldsmith was elected principal of Lobos Avenue School, the Board of Education petitioned the Board of Supervisors for permission to build a six-room school house on First Avenue.

The Academy objected to the Board of Education's request, arguing that its current building was inadequate and that it needed the Academy of Sciences lot on First Avenue—its lot—to build larger accommodations. (The Academy had initiated suit against the Lick will and it was still unresolved.)

The desperate need for new and larger quarters for both the 325 savants of the Academy of Sciences and the 277 apprentice savants at Lobos Avenue School had them on a collision course over the same plot of land on First Avenue.

The Board of Supervisors deferred on making a decision, instead referring the matter to the City Attorney for a legal opinion on whether the Academy of Sciences or the City of San Francisco owned the lot. This didn't deter the Board of Education from seeking bids for the erection of a school on the First Avenue lot.[17]

City Attorney George Flournoy gave his opinion on November 14, 1887 that the original language and intent of the Outside Lands Committee in 1868 clearly granted the land to the Academy of Sciences. Thus the Board of Supervisors did not have the power to revoke the original dedication.[18]

Apparently uncomfortable with Mr. Flournoy's opinion, the Board of Supervisors referred the matter to the board's Outside Lands Committee for further consideration. They met November 30, 1887, at which time they received an opinion from Assistant City Attorney John T. Humphreys that the Act of Congress that added the Outside Lands to San Francisco gave the Board of Supervisors the power to make gifts of land to public institutions. However, if the Academy was not a public institution, as some had claimed, then the property could not have been legally conveyed. The same day, in a strange move, the Academy offered to rent the lot to the school department.[19]

When the Board of Supervisors met on December 12, 1887, it was affirmed that the city attorney had decided that the Board had the right to make any disposition of the lot it saw fit. It was recalled that the lot was originally given to the Academy with the understanding that a building should be erected upon it. One never was. Now a schoolhouse was absolutely needed in the neighborhood.

After unsuccessfully appealing to Mayor Edward Pond, the Academy, in a move that could be described as "better late than never," informed the Board of Supervisors that it officially accepted the 1868 dedication of the Academy of Sciences lot in the Outside Lands.[20]

A week later the city attorney reaffirmed his ruling that the lot was not reserved for, nor was it the property of the



MISCELLANEOUS.

PROPOSALS

For the Erection of a Public School Building on First Avenue.

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, New City Hall, San Francisco, March 12, 1888. SEALED PROPOSALS will be received by the Superintendent of Common Schools, in open session of the Board, on MONDAY, March 26, 1888, from 8 to 8:30 o'clock P. M., for the erection and completion of a six class-room school building on a lot on First avenue, near Point Lobos avenue, in accordance with plans and specifications which may be seen at the office of T. J. Welsh, Architect of the Board of Education, room 95 Flood building, S. W. corner Fourth and Market streets.

City request for proposals to build new Lobos Avenue School on First Avenue. *Daily Alta California,* March 15, 1888.

Academy. Instead, it belonged to the City and County of San Francisco and was reserved for public use. With that enabling opinion, the supervisors formally recommended that the Board of Education be allowed to erect a school on the lot.[21]

The same day that the Board of Education officially accepted the First Avenue property, it received a letter from the Academy which "protested against any attempt to interfere with the lot on Point Lobos avenue [sic], as the Society was determined to maintain its right to the possession of the lot."[22]

The Battle of First Avenue appeared to have ended, as a $14,400 contract for the new school was awarded. Nevertheless, the Academy's attorney continued to send threatening letters warning the Board of Education "not to cause the erection of any building on the lot as the Society has a claim to the land."[23]

On August 11, 1888, a new era in the history of the future Roosevelt Middle School dawned with the opening of a new six-room school on First Avenue under the guiding hand of Miss Esther Goldsmith as principal and teacher, along with five other teachers, and 293 students.

Coming up in Part II: the turbulent early decades on First Avenue with school name changes; trench warfare; school closures due to health and fire hazards; overcrowding; building modifications and finally the erection of the current building.

Notes

1. *San Francisco Municipal Reports* (*Muni Reports*) *1869/1870,* pg. 253.
2. *Muni Reports 1879/1880,* pg. 651.
3. *Muni Reports 1879/1880,* pg. 653.
4. *Daily Alta California* (*Alta*) September 19, 1877, pg. 1, col. 3.
5. *Sanborn Map,* San Francisco 1886-1893, Vol. 3, 1889, Sheet 88b_a
6. *Alta,* October 3, 1877, pg. 1, col. 3.
7. As improbable as this sounds, Miss Esther Goldsmith's documented biography bears this out. The 1860 US Census lists her age as 8 years old, the daughter of Isaac and Sarah Goldsmith. The 1870 census lists her age as 18 years and her occupation "school teacher." The 1866/1867 *Muni Report,* page 397, includes her among the faculty at Spring Valley Grammar School on Broadway between Larkin and Polk Streets, where she was a "Probationary Teacher 2d grade" for the 64 10th grade students. On page 400, Miss Goldsmith appears among that year's 81 newly "elected" teachers. She is listed as "teacher" in San Francisco City Directories from 1868-1878.
8. 1880 US Federal Census lists Esther's sisters Mary, Rose, Bertha, and Ada as school teachers, as do subsequent San Francisco City Directories.
9. *Muni Reports 1877-1878,* pg. 427. Monthly salaries for primary school principals were $100, $125, or $150 per month depending on the number of classes in their school.
10. *Muni Reports 1884/1885,* pg. 584.
11. *Alta,* November 19, 1867, pg. 1, col. 2; *Alta,* January 7, 1868, pg. 1, col. 1; *Alta,* February 4, 1868, pg. 1, col. 1. The *San Francisco Chronicle* of May 27, 1889 (page 8) printed a two-column article on little known facts about city property. The unattributed article contained this coprolite of misinformation: "What is known as the Point Lobos Avenue school stands on ground which was originally dedicated as an Academy of Sciences Lot…[It] was lost to the academicians because they failed to turn it to the account which the acceptance of the property entailed upon them. In the same way a fine lot was offered to the Academy of Sciences years ago on the old burial-ground, where the new City Hall now stands, but was not taken up because the then academicians thought it too far out of the city."
12. *Alta,* December 8, 1868, pg. 1, col. 2; *Alta,* February 10, 1869, pg. 2, col. 2.
13. *Alta,* January 4, 1874, pg. 1, col. 2; *Alta,* February 3, 1874, pg. 1, col. 2.
14. *Alta,* October 18, 1873, pg. 2, col. 2; *Alta,* June 4, 1874, pg. 2, col. 2; *Alta,* November 18, 1874, pg. 2, col. 1.
15. *San Francisco Chronicle,* June 17, 1887, pg. 5, col. 5.
16. *Alta,* July 17, 1887, pg. 8, col. 2; *Alta,* August 18, 1887, pg. 8, col. 2.
17. *Alta,* October 25, 1887, pg. 8, col. 5; *Alta,* November 1, 1887, pg. 1, col. 2; *Alta,* November 3, 1887, pg. 8, col. 3.
18. *Alta,* November 15, 1887, pg. 8, col. 3.
19. *Alta,* December 1, 1887, pg. 1, col. 6. *San Francisco Chronicle,* December 1, 1887, pg. 5, col. 7.
20. *Alta,* February 2, 1888, pg. 1, col. 7.
21. *Alta,* February 14, 1888, pg. 1, col. 4.
22. *Alta,* March 8, 1888, pg. 1, col. 6.
23. *Alta,* March 30, 1888, page 8, col. 4.

Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way

100 Years of the Twin Peaks Tunnel

by Arnold Woods

A longer version of this article is at outsidelands.org/twin-peaks-tunnel.php



At the foggy western portal of the Twin Peaks tunnel, a crowd mingles with pedestrians emerging from the completed tunnel on July 14, 1917. (WNP Collection, wnp15.1493)

February 3, 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the official opening of the Twin Peaks Tunnel. The first streetcar through the tunnel was a landmark event in the decentralization of the City of San Francisco, spurring development and making the city what it is today. The process of getting there, however, was far from easy.

San Francisco is divided fairly evenly in half by a set of mountains: Lone Mountain, Mount Sutro, Twin Peaks, and Mount Davidson. At the turn of the twentieth century, most San Francisco homes, jobs, and stores lay to the east of these mountains, from downtown to Hayes Valley to the Mission District. Around and north of Golden Gate Park, streetcar and train lines were built to get people to the park, Cliff House, and Ocean Beach, so small patches of development arose in the Inner Richmond and Inner Sunset Districts, but Mount Sutro, Twin Peaks and Mount Davidson prevented effective public transportation from reaching the western slopes, the vast majority of the Sunset District, and open land around Lake Merced.

On May 27, 1909, the semi-annual banquet of the Merchants Association of San Francisco was held in the ballroom of the St. Francis Hotel. The theme of the evening was "Our Civic Center and the Need of Street Railroad Development." Various merchants spoke about the need for rail improvements in the city and centralizing the various rail lines under one management. Hay merchant A. W. Scott, Jr. noted in a speech that too many people who worked in San Francisco were forced to live in other communities, despite lots of open land within city limits. Scott pointed to "the splendid home district" west of Twin Peaks. "That is a most desirable locality, but at present people cannot get there without a loss of much time and at great inconvenience."[1] Scott

proposed a subway to the area, which Merchants Association members estimated would cost $1,500,000. Scott wanted United Railroads, a private company with a number of streetcar franchises in the city, to construct the subway, but suggested that the city itself should build it if United Railroads would not.

1910 ushered in a wave of "agitation" for a tunnel west of Twin Peaks. San Francisco's mayor, Patrick Henry McCarthy, voiced his support for the project and endorsed the suggestion for an assessment district to finance it. A report done by L. V. Riddle of the Parkside Realty Company estimated that a tunnel could be bored from 18th and Douglas Streets to the Almshouse tract (the present site of Laguna Honda Hospital) for $1,500,000.

Meanwhile, various neighborhood improvement clubs took up the effort. On March 21, 1910, a meeting was held with representatives of these clubs. Speakers predicted 5,000 acres of land would be quickly settled upon if a tunnel through Twin Peaks was constructed.

An even larger convention of clubs and civic associations, with more than 600 attendees, met to discuss the idea on April 18, 1910. The economic viability of a tunnel under Twin Peaks was discussed with three different methods of financing proposed: private capital; city-issued municipal bonds; or a property assessment tax on the districts that would benefit from the tunnel. Mayor McCarthy again strongly endorsed the project and promised that he would do everything in his power to have the city get it done. Out of the convention came a permanent organization, the Twin Peaks Tunnel and Improvement Convention (TPTIC), with a directive to seek quick construction of a tunnel.

At another convention on August 19, 1910, engineers and land experts presented surveys and reports estimating that the tunnel would cost slightly more than two million dollars, but would increase city revenue by $300,000 per year. Real estate leaders believed a tunnel would lead to 4,000 acres of land purchased in the Outside Lands for homes. Beyond these reports, the convention primarily focused on raising funds for the tunnel. The assessment district plan was thought impossible because, until the tunnel was built, there would be insufficient households and businesses in the Outside Lands to be assessed. (It is also possible that improvement clubs in the assessment districts rejected shouldering the great burden of the cost.)

The private capital plan was similarly shot down on the belief that no private company would finance the tunnel for a franchise that would expire after a number of years. That left the municipal bond plan as the only viable option, and it was noted that since the tunnel would benefit every San Franciscan, it was appropriate that everyone share the burden. A resolution was adopted directing the TPTIC to petition the Board of Supervisors for a tunnel bond issue in the amount of $2,500,000.

The petition was quickly presented, but despite the TPTIC request, the Board of Supervisors preferred the assessment district method for financing. On September 18, 1911, the Board enacted a new ordinance, creating a special assessment district for the construction of a *different* tunnel, the Stockton Street tunnel through Nob Hill. Creation of a Twin Peaks tunnel assessment district was postponed until there was legal determination on the validity of this Stockton tunnel assessment district. A friendly lawsuit was started to get a decision from the California Supreme Court as soon as possible, with the Court complying by approving the new assessment ordinance early the following year.

The year 1912 also saw a new mayor for San Francisco. James "Sunny Jim" Rolph led a city government that really begin to carry the load for a Twin Peaks tunnel project. Chicago traffic expert Bion J. Arnold was hired to lead a study, and an ordinance passed on March 18, 1912 formally declared the city's intent to build the Twin Peaks and three other city tunnels (Stockton Street, opened in 1914, Broadway, not created until 1937, and Fillmore Street, which never came to fruition).

Arnold filed his report with the Board of Supervisors' tunnel committee on May 3, 1912, and recommended, without qualifications, that the tunnel should be constructed. Arnold did suggest some slight alterations to the tunnel's path so as to connect more easily with a possible Market Street subway tunnel. Despite the TPTIC's opposition to some of Arnold's proposals, including the route, the Board committee recommended the report to the full Board of Supervisors. A resolution was quickly adopted asking City Engineer Michael O'Shaughnessy to prepare plans for construction of the tunnel.

On July 22, 1912, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted another resolution declaring the Twin Peaks tunnel to be a public necessity and convenience. A further resolution asked the Board of Public Works to provide cost estimates and data using the Arnold plan.

On October 7, 1912, Bion Arnold submitted complete plans for the Twin Peaks tunnel to the Board of Supervisors. The eastern portal of his plan was set at Valencia and Market Streets. Property owners and improvement clubs advocated for the tunnel to instead begin at Eureka Street, making for a shorter length and smaller cost. The Board asked City Engineer O'Shaughnessy to prepare cost estimates for both locations of the eastern portal (the shorter length prevailed).

The end of 1912 also saw the beginning of San Francisco's municipal railway. Three years after a successful bond measure, Geary Street city-run streetcar service began on December 28, 1912, with Muni's new A- and B-Lines connecting Market Street and the Richmond District. Naturally, this increased interest for service to more areas in the city. Muni expanded tracks and lines over the next several years, including a Church Street line that opened in 1917, bringing municipal streetcar service close to the planned Twin Peaks tunnel.

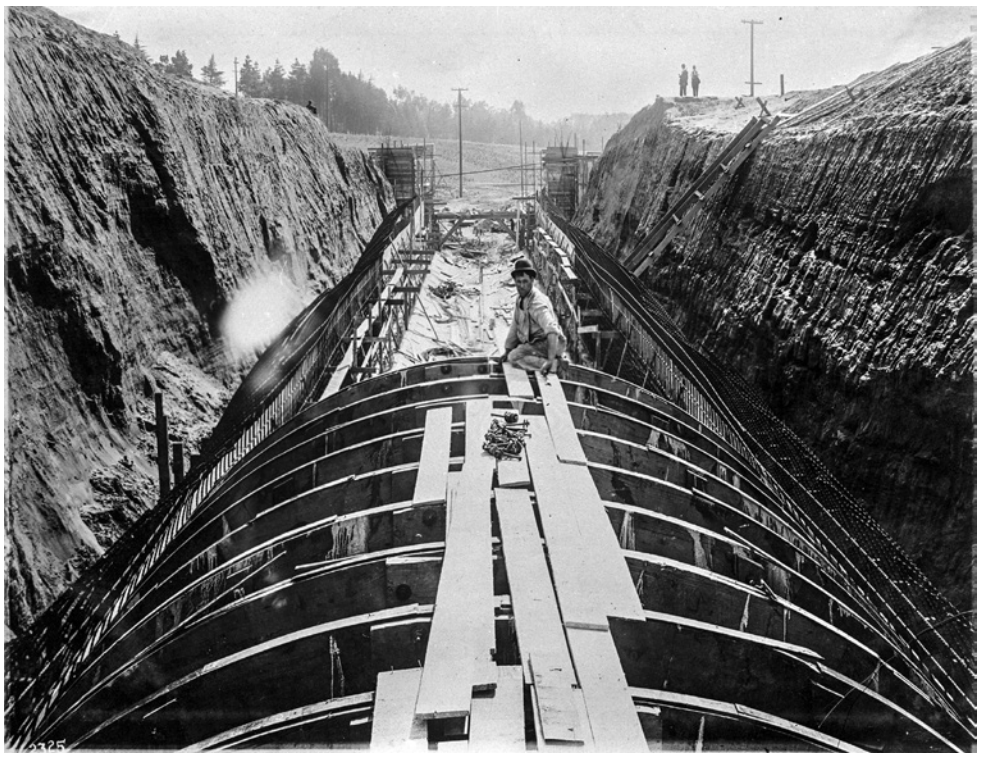
Pursuant to the city resolution signed by Mayor Rolph on March 7, 1913, City Engineer O'Shaughnessy filed on July 28, 1913 a comprehensive report regarding the tunnel, including construction plans and specifications, cost estimates, maps, and lists of parcels within the tunnel assessment dis-

trict, and a list of properties and easements to be obtained for construction. O'Shaughnessy's cost estimate was nearly $4,000,000. The proposed tunnel was to be more than two miles long with a station inside the tunnel.

After O'Shaughnessy's Twin Peaks tunnel report was released, property owners within the Twin Peaks Assessment District had a limited amount of time to protest assessments. Out of 13,187 parcels within the district, only 218 property owners filed protests. 190 of the protests claimed that they would receive no material benefit from the tunnel. The other 28 protested that their land would be condemned for the tunnel. The protesters represented about $90,000 of the $3,900,000 expected to be raised by the assessments. After the protests were heard, some protesters had their assessments reduced. The Board of Supervisors then adopted the O'Shaughnessy plan on October 20, 1913. Mayor Rolph signed the resolution, which also levied assessments, on November 6, 1913.

The next step in the process was for the city engineer's office to prepare a booklet with the specifications for project bids. After review of the specifications by the Board of Public Works, the Board of Supervisors, in a unanimous vote, approved Ordinance 2779 on June 8, 1914, which ordered construction of the Twin Peaks tunnel and authorized entering a contract for construction. The Twin Peaks tunnel job was put up for bid by the end of June 1914. The notice gave a deadline of August 19, 1914 for companies to submit bids. However, not one single bid was received by the deadline, apparently because of a concern that the money on hand from assessments was not enough to assure contractors of prompt payments.

San Francisco gave a new deadline of September 16, 1914, which was later extended to September 30, 1914, and declared that it would meet with contractors to try to reassure them. Worried that there would still be no bids received, San Francisco increased the time for the project from 600 to 1,000 days and reduced the amount of the bond required. When the deadline passed, there was only one bidder for the project, Hans Pedersen, a Seattle contractor.



Construction of western portal of the Twin Peaks tunnel looking southwest, April 8, 1915. Department of Public Works, book 11, image 2325. (WNP Collection, wnp36.00760)

San Francisco liked Pedersen's bid and was prepared to accept it. But the bid was not made out on the form required by the Board of Supervisors and it was feared this would invalidate a contract. So the city reopened the bidding with a new deadline of October 28, 1914, to allow Pedersen to properly submit his bid. This time, though, three other contractors also submitted bids, with the lowest coming from Robert C. Storrie & Co. After review, City Engineer O'Shaughnessy recommended Storrie & Co.

Finally, on Monday, November 2, 1914, San Francisco signed a contract with Storrie & Co. for the construction of the Twin Peaks tunnel. The contract amount was $3,372,000 and the company immediately began bringing equipment to sites on both ends of the tunnel. Excavation began on December 11, 1914, with work proceeding at three sites: the eastern portal near Market and Castro, the western portal near what would become West Portal Avenue and Ulloa Street, and at the Forest Hill Station at Laguna Honda. By June 1915, the contractor declared the job to be 25% completed and that the boring work was digging 30 feet per day.

During construction, curiosity was peaked in August 1916, when workers found a petrified redwood tree trunk 90 feet below the surface of the ground in sand and clay formations. Debate ranged as to whether redwood trees once graced the Twin Peaks area or whether the fossilized piece was driftwood that came ashore in a much earlier time. It is unclear if scientists ever reached a conclusion.

Nearly eight years after the idea of a tunnel under Twin Peaks was first being discussed, it became a reality. "Holed through!" was the shout on Thursday, April 5, 1917, a traditional drillers' cry when a tunnel is connected.[2] The alignment of the tunnels from the two portals was off by a mere eighth of an inch where they met, declared an engineering marvel.

A driller named Sam Campbell was the first man to squeeze through the initial narrow opening. Four supervisors, Edward Nolan, Joseph Lahaney, Cornelius Deasy, and Charles Nelson came down to the tunnel and rode "muck" cars drawn by cable to the

opening. When they had traveled as far as the muck cars would go, they got out and raced to see who could get through the opening first. Lahaney won the race, but his suit was muddied in the process.

On June 15, 1917, a delegation from City Hall drove over Twin Peaks in a fleet of automobiles on the new Market Street extension called Portola Drive. From there, they entered the western portal of the Twin Peaks tunnel and drove through to the eastern portal. It was the first and last time that automobiles made the trek through the tunnel.

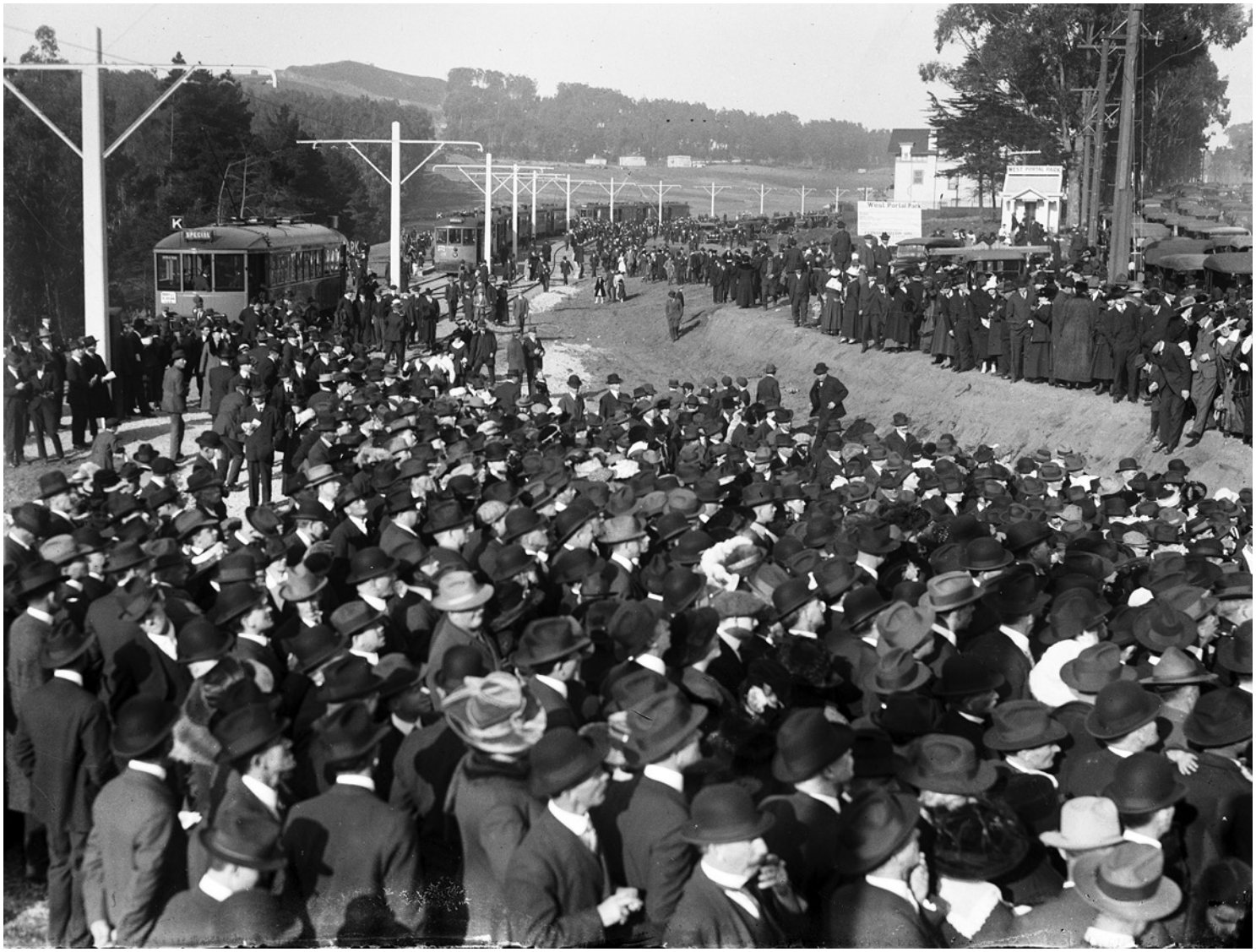
A celebration of the completion of the tunnel, four months ahead of schedule, occurred at the eastern portal on July 14, 1917. Thousands came for the ceremony, which included speeches by former and current city officials, including Mayor Rolph, who accepted the tunnel on behalf of the city. "Westward the course of empire takes its way," declared Rolph.[3] O'Shaughnessy took a few taps to get a ceremonial first spike on the tunnel streetcar tracks started before Rolph finished it off. After the ceremonies, people were permitted to walk the length of the tunnel.

Thereafter, streetcar tracks connecting with the Church Street line were laid through the tunnel, ending on the west side at Sloat and Junipero Serra Boulevards. Municipal Railway tracks all the way down Market Street to the Ferry Building would not be connected until May 1918.

The grand opening of Muni service through the Twin Peaks tunnel finally arrived on Sunday, February 3, 1918. Crowds gathered on the Van Ness Avenue side of City Hall to watch the first streetcar take off at 2:30 p.m. Inside the car were Mayor Rolph, acting as the



Mayor James Rolph addresses a rapt audience at the eastern portal of the completed tunnel on July 14, 1917. Castro Street hill in background. The tunnel would not be ready for the first streetcar for another seven months. (WNP Collection, wnp15.1491)



A line of the first streetcars through the Twin Peaks tunnel and a celebratory crowd gather at St. Francis Circle, February 3, 1918. (WNP Collection, wnp15.173)

motorman, most of the supervisors, City Engineer O'Shaughnessy, family members and guests. President Reardon of the Board of Public Works acted as the conductor. The public was invited to ride trailing streetcars, provided they paid the 5-cent fare, of course.

Hundreds of cheering people lined the tracks at the eastern portal near Castro and Market Streets. The lead streetcar of city officials made its first stop inside the tunnel at the Eureka Station (now closed) just past the eastern portal. After stopping at the Forest Hill station in the middle of the tunnel, the streetcar emerged at the western portal, where a huge throng of people awaited. The line of streetcars continued on to St. Francis Circle, where Sloat, Junipero Serra Boulevard, and Portola Drive meet, and another ceremony was held. After some brief speeches, the officials got back aboard and made the return trip to City Hall.

The effect of the Twin Peaks tunnel was exactly as planned. In the 1910 United States Census, San Francisco had a population of 416,912, of which a quarter lived in the Outside Lands and southern districts. By the 1920 census, the city's population had increased to 506,676. More than 60% of that increase was attributable to new residents in the Outside Lands and southern districts. The population made another huge increase to 634,394 by the time of the 1930 census. While it is difficult to track how much of this increase was a result of new residents to the west of Twin Peaks, city assessments showed huge increases for these areas between 1912 and 1928.

Today, 100 years after the opening of the Twin Peaks tunnel, thousands of people commute through it every day. The tunnel, an engineering marvel in 1918, has stood the test of time.

Notes

1. "Civic Center and Rapid Transit Themes," *San Francisco Chronicle,* May 28, 1909, pp. 1, 7.

2. "Bore in Twin Peaks Now Is Real Tunnel, *San Francisco Chronicle,* April 6, 1917, p. 11.

3. "Thousands Cheer Dedication of Twin Peaks Tunnel, *San Francisco Chronicle,* July 15, 1917, p. 37.

Thank You to Our Donors

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continued from page 5

We rode the school's bus from the S.I. campus down to Great Highway, then out to Sloat Boulevard where we parked at the beach lot across from Fleishhacker's. As we walked down the staircase on the north side of the bathhouse building, I had one overwhelming impression: rust. Everything metal had rusted: the cyclone fences and gates through which we passed, lamp posts and lifeguard towers lining the pool, window sashes on the bathhouse, even metal doors and their hardware. On top of the rust lay a fine coating of windblown sand and salt crust. This was the obvious and unavoidable result of being located within spitting distance of the Pacific. The place was only forty years old, but it looked as if it was from another century.

We entered the cavernous men's locker room that occupied the north half of the bathhouse. A bored locker room attendant eyed us from a screened-in booth. I guess he took admissions when regular swimmers, not high school competitions, were using the pool. The interior echoed with slamming steel locker doors, the hiss of steaming water running in the showers, the slap of wet feet on concrete, and the voices of unseen students from the two teams, obscured by tall banks of aging rusty (of course) lockers. We changed into sweat suits and went out poolside.

The pool itself was very, very big. That I had anticipated, since as a city kid I'd ridden or walked past its exterior fence innumerable times. What I hadn't anticipated was the water's color; a murky green-gray that light couldn't penetrate. At the shallow southern end of the pool, the bottom was partly visible through the water, but we were headed to the north end of the pool—the deep end—where the competition would take place. At the deep end, we might as well have been staring into the waters of the Golden Gate. No one was looking forward to jumping in.

As we sat in the bleachers awaiting our competitions,



View southwest over Fleishhacker Pool during a 1935 swim meet. Gabriel Moulin photograph. (WNP Collection, wnp14.10406)

we swapped Fleishhacker stories and lore passed down by older swimmers. Years later, when comparing notes with other high school swimmers of the era, I realized these stories were deep rooted San Francisco lore: the shark that had been sucked through the saltwater intake and found swimming in the pool; a disembodied human hand retrieved by the lifeguards; and a kitchen stove that emerged from the deep end when the pool was drained for cleaning.

We also debated the claim that Fleishhacker's was heated. If so, we speculated, the technology must have relied on a dwarf holding a candle overhead who ran through a tunnel under the pool. We never felt any warmth.

Diving into the water took your breath away. I guess some would call it bracing. I called it a shock to the system. My stroke was the backstroke, and I envied the guys who did crawl and breaststroke because, once they dove off the blocks and hit the water, they went full out with their strokes. By contrast, we backstrokers had to dive in to the pool and curl up in tucked position in the water below the blocks, letting the cold seep ever deeper as we waited for the starter's gun. Once your race was over and you got out of the water, there weren't any poolside showers to warm you up. You just toweled down, put on your sweats, and sat back down on the splintery benches that lined both sides of the pool.

The fact that the water visibility was impenetrable posed another challenge to swimmers. Most pools have lines on their bottoms so that swimmers can see when they're nearing the end of their lane and start their flip turns. No such luxury at Fleishhacker's, and without any visual reference line more than one swimmer went headfirst into the concrete end of the pool.

No swimmer I ever talked with misses competing at Fleishhacker's. Rose-tinted glasses only go so far.

The early 1970s brought the end of Fleishhacker's. In its last full season, 1970, the pool's operation cost the city an estimated $2.60 per swimmer as compared to $1.42 at the indoor pools. That year, total attendance was recorded at 56,605—a daily average to 309 swimmers as compared to 615 daily users in 1969. The final nail in the coffin was the collapse of the saltwater intake pipe in January 1971. The city's engineers made a gallant attempt to save the pool by filling it with fresh water from wells adjacent to the boiler house. The conversion and refilling took a month, but Fleishhacker's heating and filtration systems had never been designed to handle fresh water. The pool opened for one last month in spring 1971, but algae soon starting forming in the pool. As a test, the engineers tossed a 6-inch white disk into eight feet of water in accordance with the aquatic department's standards for lifeguard visibility. The disc vanished from sight. With agreement from the Health Department (the water failed to meet State standards as well), the pool was closed and drained.

The years following were heartbreaking for those who wanted to see Fleishhacker Pool restored. Estimates for repairing the intake pipe and upgrading the aging pumping and heating systems were formidable, and even if the systems could be restored, the presence of a giant wastewater management facility being built adjacent to the pool on Great Highway would severely impact recreational uses. After years of unsuccessful lobbying and even a bond measure to save the pool, the city made its final thumbs-down decision in 1977.

The official determination of the Recreation and Park Department was conveyed in "Resolution No. 10647," dated February 10, 1977, which concluded that the weather in the area was not conducive to outdoor swimming; the costs of restoration, maintenance and operation were prohibitive; other municipal pools met city needs; the land occupied by Fleishhacker Pool was not required for swimming; and "…appropriate steps should be taken to return the land to better recreational use."

And what was that "better recreational use?" A parking lot for the adjacent San Francisco Zoo. Yep, beginning in 1981, Fleishhacker's was unceremoniously filled in with demolition debris and sand. To keen-eyed observers today, though, some traces of the outline of the old pool are still visible, especially the bump-out on its eastern side where the pool widened from 100 feet to 150 feet.

But the filling project resulted in one more bit of lore associated with Fleishhacker Pool. According to hearsay from unnamed former employees, the carcass of a dead elephant was tossed into the deep end and buried with debris. As with most lore, no eyewitnesses to this unofficial internment have come forward, nor has anyone turned up any records about the unorthodox disposal of a dead pachyderm—an event that doubtless would have left a substantial paper trail.

The San Francisco Zoological Society was granted ownership of the once elegant bathhouse, but the structure too would suffer from near-criminal neglect over the next thirty years, eventually devolving into a graffiti-covered and needle-strewn homeless encampment. Various efforts to find a new use for the bathhouse, especially its upstairs restaurant with sweeping views of the Pacific on the west and the zoo's spanking new parking lot on the east, also came to frustrating dead ends. On the night of December 1, 2012, the structure was almost totally destroyed by fire. The charred ruins were demolished, and today only a wall fragment containing the three ornate entrances to the locker rooms remains to mark the site.

Perhaps the story doesn't end here. Maybe a hundred years or so from now a future generation of San Franciscans will realize that there's a buried historical treasure out there by Ocean Beach, and they'll undertake a massive archaeological excavation to reveal the remains of the one-time largest outdoor heated swimming pool in the world.

And maybe they'll even find an elephant skeleton, just to add to the mystery.

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.*

Historical Happenings

outsidelands.org/events.php

Open House: 1617 Balboa Street

February 3, 2018 (Saturday) 12:00 PM–4:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)

Join us at our new, accessible, and welcoming location. Come by and see how things are shaping up, view historical images, learn about the 100th anniversary of the Twin Peaks tunnel, and hear our plans for history presentations, exhibits, and conversations in our "Home for History."

100 Years of the Twin Peaks Tunnel WNP Member Symposium

February 15, 2018 (Thursday) 7:00 PM–9:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)

A special free member symposium on the centennial of the opening of the Twin Peaks tunnel. On February 3, 1918, Mayor Rolph drove the first Muni streetcar from Eureka Valley to West Portal. Over the next decade, the Forest Hill, St. Francis Wood, Ingleside Terraces, West Portal, and Parkside neighborhoods saw hundreds of new homes built. Was it the tunnel, the rise of the automobile, or just a booming economy?

Come hear about the conception, construction, and legacy of a streetcar tunnel that still carries thousands of Muni-riding San Franciscans on the K-Ingleside, L-Taraval, and M-Oceanview routes.

Free to Western Neighborhoods Project members, but space is limited. RSVP by emailing woody@outsidelands.org or leave a message at 415-661-1000.

Fort Funston Member Walk

February 17, 2018 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–12:00 PM
Fort Funston

Local historian John Martini leads a member history walk around Fort Funston. You will learn it is more than hang gliders and dog walkers. The now-recreational area began its history as San Francisco's most remote (some said desolate) army post in 1900. From World War I to the Cold War, the post featured barracks, massive gun emplacements, trenches, antiaircraft guns, and NIKE missiles that protected the southern approach to San Francisco Bay. Today, the remains of many of these fortifications lie buried beneath the city's last large expanse of natural dunes. Walk will cover unpaved, sandy areas.

This walk is free but limited to 30 WNP members and their guests. To RSVP, email woody@outsidelands.org, or leave a message at the WNP office at 415-661-1000 with the number in your party.

We will confirm with starting location of walk.

Get the latest event news by following our social media channels:

Facebook
facebook.com/outsidelands

Twitter
@outsidelandz

Instagram
instagram.com/westernneighborhoods



Thousands enjoyed San Francisco History Days at the Old Mint last year. Free history!

San Francisco History Days

March 3–4, 2018 (Saturday–Sunday) 11:00 AM–4:00 PM

The free San Francisco History Days at the landmark Old Mint (88 Fifth Street at Mission Street) returns. Join community historians, archivists, genealogists, archaeologists, researchers, educators, reenactors, and other history enthusiasts at this free open house, as we once again celebrate and tell the stories of San Francisco's past. (Just looking at the amazing interiors is worth the trip.) More information at **sfhistorydays.org**

OpenSFHistory: Top Ten of the Month

March 17, 2018 (Saturday) 11:00 AM–12:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)

Come to the Home for History and enjoy an illustrated presentation of the top ten historical San Francisco images scanned in the past month on opensfhistory.org. (We might have a bias for Irish landmarks, as it will be St. Patrick's Day.) Admission is only $10 (a dollar an image). Space is limited, so reserve your seat online at outsidelands.org/events.php

Jitterbuggin': The Story of One Sunset Family

March 22, 2018 (Thursday) 7:00 PM–9:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)

Join us as we host a special screening of master story-teller Ron Jones' documentary on growing up in the Sunset District in the 1950s. Archival footage, photos, and tales from a unique family from the time of swing in the 1940s to today's hip-hop. As Ron says, "It's a familiar story of children, corner grocery stores and rides in the country. It's a love story about all of us. The everyday events at the dining room table, Playland, the Fox movie theater, and Blums. It's about the unexpected: freeways to the Atomic Bomb, the Summer of Love, punks, ACT UP, Costco, www.com."

Ron will join us for a short Q&A afterwards! More about him at www.ronjoneswriter.com. Admission is $10. Space is limited, so reserve your seat at outsidelands.org/events.php

Sunset Branch Library Centennial Party

April 7, 2018 (Saturday) 12:00 PM–5:00 PM
1305 18th Avenue (at Irving Street)

WNP will help the Sunset branch of the San Francisco library celebrate its 100th anniversary with old photos, history, and a presentation about the beautiful Carnegie library building and the surrounding neighborhood. Free to all!



The Buffalo Soldiers group at last year's History Days.

A HOME FOR HISTORY



1617 Balboa Street

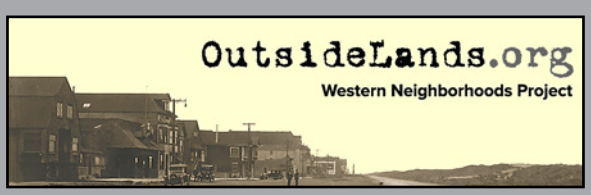
The Open House grand opening of our new "home for history" at 1617 Balboa Street (near 17th Avenue) will be **Saturday, February 3, 2018, 12:00 pm–4:00 pm.**

Drop by for a refreshment to toast the centennial of the Twin Peaks tunnel opening and see old photos, chat with history folk, and offer your own ideas about how we can make our new public location an open, accessible, friendly, and welcoming space to preserve and share history.

We plan to have exhibits, a "conversation corner" with a little neighborhood history library, and merchandise, including DVDs, new books, and a rotating table of used history books and periodicals courtesy of Beau Beausoleil from the recently-closed Overland Books.

If you can't make it on February 3rd, we plan to be open for business each Saturday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm (except for the first weekend of March, when we'll all be at History Days at the Old Mint—go there instead!) as well as other days or evenings for special events, presentations, symposiums, and conversations.

See our full schedule of member and public events inside this magazine, and at outsidelands.org/events.php



Not a WNP Member?

Outside Lands magazine 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.