Outside Lands

San Francisco History from Western Neighborhoods Project

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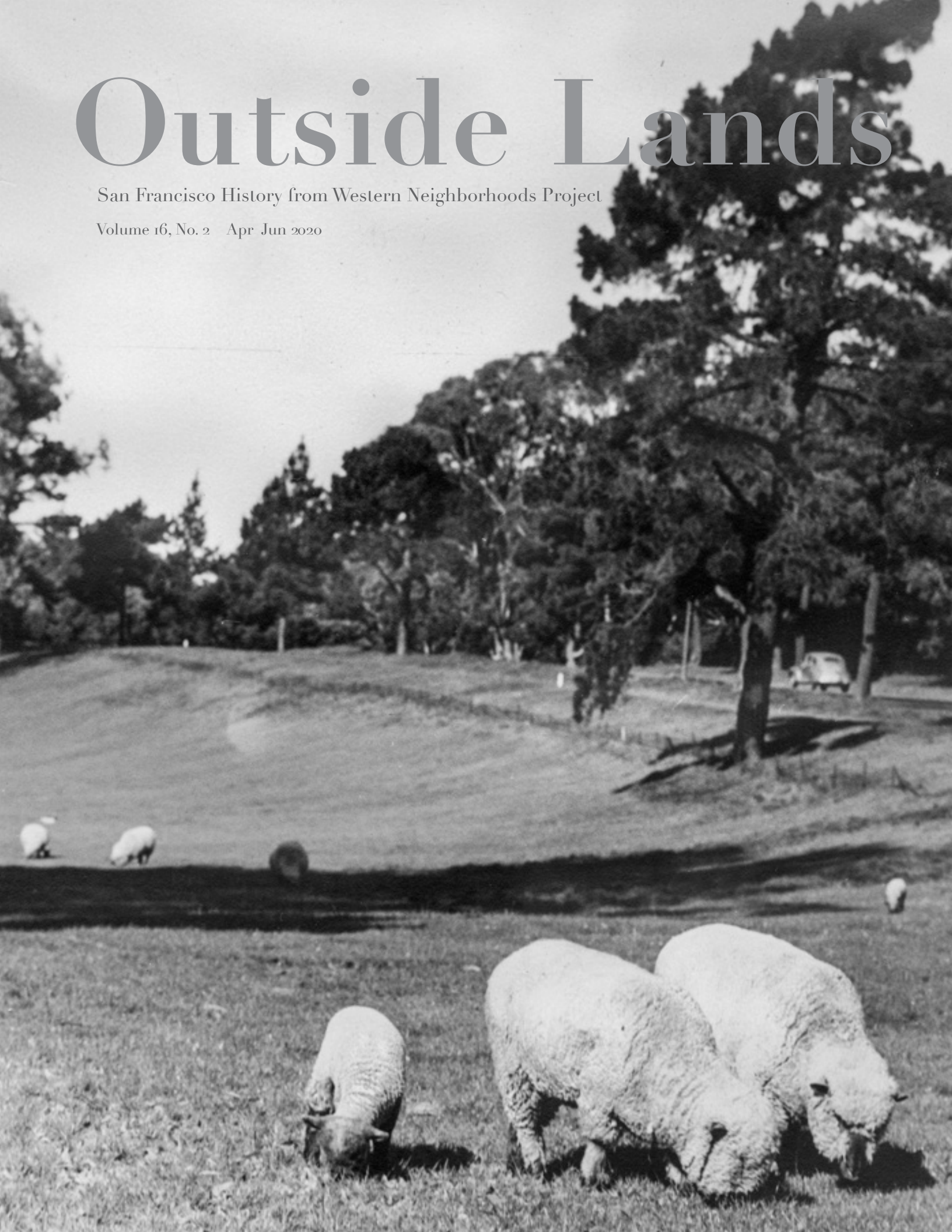



Outside Lands

History from Western Neighborhoods Project
(Previously issued as SF West History)

April-June 2020: Volume 16, Number 2

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Cover: Sheep grazing in Golden Gate Park's Lindley Meadow, circa 1943. (WNP Collection; wnp27.4417)

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Well, Outside Landers, the second quarter of 2020 is an anxious one as we all grapple with COVID-19. We kept our doors open and the lights on at our Home for History in the Richmond District as long as we could, hoping that seeing a little life in the neighborhood would help us all see a light at the end of this tunnel. It's uncertain what each week will bring and we expect periods of indefinite darkness as we await further instruction from state and local officials. What a crazy time to be alive, but at least we have each other.

The original mock-up of this issue opener announced our new office hours and an upcoming exhibition entitled "Monumental Golden Gate Park," but the face-to-face aspect of what we do is up in the air, so let's just be here now.

This entire issue is devoted to parks and recreation in celebration of Golden Gate Park's 150th Anniversary, with articles by WNP Board Member **Arnold Woods;** the inimitable Richmond District historian **John Freeman;** and **Christopher Pollock,** Historian in Residence at the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department. Hopefully, it will make your socially-distanced walks through the park a little more enjoyable. We're an official Community Partner for the city's year-long commemoration of #GGP150 and we look forward to bringing you programs on this theme soon.

And, boy, do we love and miss putting on programs. Over the last few months we've toured Mountain Lake Park with you and **John Martini;** shared stories from our OpenSFHistory archive with you; and had a blast teaching you, students and faculty members of Argonne Elementary School about local history. Seeing our calendar cleared by coronavirus means we've filled our time in different ways. We're working hard to develop and launch new digital content in place of public programs so keep an eye on our websites (www.outsidelands.org and www.opensfhistory.org) and social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) for the latest updates.



If you're able, please support this work by clickety-clickety-clacking the orange button in the upper right-hand corner on each web page or mailing a tax-deductible donation to our office at: 1617 Balboa Street, San Francisco, CA, 94121. We need your help to keep the lights on and the history flowing more than ever.

Be safe, stay sane, and, I say this with perhaps more sincerity than ever: we hope to see you soon.



Sharing history for Argonne Elementary School's centennial, February 24, 2020.

Where in West S.F.?

Nice to have an easy one, eh? As correct guessers **Vincent and Hayzen Chan** noted, "photos with streetcars are easier to identify, especially when we walk pass it almost every week!"

Our mystery image last issue looks much the same today as it did on August 21, 1958. The N-Judah line still passes this stretch of 9th Avenue between Irving and Judah Streets today, albeit with modern streetcars. The gabled building houses Arizmendi Bakery in 2020. Sunset Vita-Foods—a health food store—is gone, and the 9th Inning bar on the far right has been "The Mucky Duck" since 1996.



View south on 9th Avenue between Irving and Judah Streets, August 21, 1958. Muni N-Judah streetcars #1136 & #1166 passing each other. (James E. Sefton photograph, WNP Collection, wnp27.6669)

Alan Thomas has memories of the space between the last two businesses, a former post office:

"My father, Edward Thomas, signed on with the US Post Office in 1939. He worked during the war years at the Rincon Annex on the midnight shift. I grieved his absence as the sirens wailed in the night, alerting all citizens to extinguish lights. These were tough years on a 2–4 year old.

"In 1955 he was transferred to Fisk Postal Station, 1317 9th Avenue, the first building on the right, just behind the 1956 two-door Chevrolet. My father received a promotion to assistant station manager from tour manager, Rincon Annex. The war had been over for many years, but I recall my dad being able to finally lead a normal life on the day shift.

"All told, the photograph very much resembles today's scene of Ninth Avenue with similar buildings, streetcars but, of course, updated cars. In addition to the 1956 Chevy, also shown are a 1948 Chevy on the left and a 1954 Ford in front of Vita-Foods. The neighborhood today is not as quiet with a large population attending classes at University of California at San Francisco, generally identified as 'UC.' Its counterpart in Berkeley is just 'Cal.'

"I never knew who 'Fisk' was. I don't think there was another post office in the city named for an individual. My dad enjoyed his years at Fisk and befriended some of the customers. Then, in my teens, I even got to go 'behind the scenes' and met my father's co-workers. My father had a stable but at times difficult career with the Post Office. He retired in 1968 with 29 years' service."

Angelo Figone remembered "As a young teenager I would help a neighbor painter on Saturdays at his contracted jobs and on the way home WE would stop at the 9th Inning, John to have a 'boiler maker' and Angelo to have a 7UP!

"The two 'cream and green' Muni PCC streetcars 1136 and 1166 are recently new to Muni in this photo, probably less than a year. They came from St. Louis replacing the old 'Iron Monsters' starting in 1957, and by May 1958 were the backbone of the PCC streetcar service.

(If I had a scan of this photo and could see the number in the left window corner of 1136, I could give you the approximate time of day!)

"Amazing how tired the buildings look in this 1950s photo compared to today's Inner Sunset. We forget how many neighborhoods post-WW2 still had their deferred paint jobs (Bernal, Eureka V/Castro, Sunset, etc)."

Todd Campbell: "The tip to me growing up in the area of 4th Avenue and Parnassus was the 9th Inning sign and the flag pole next door on the Post Office. [...] There were a number of bars on Irving Street between 7th and 9th. 'Wishing Well' and 'Embers' come to mind. Business was good when the 49er' played at Kezar [Stadium] and slowed down when they departed. The 9th Inning is now 'Mucky Ducky' and I took this photo in the back [below]. A lot of interesting photos on the walls of days gone by. I enjoy your magazine, *Outside*



Lands, and listening to your podcasts. Keep up the good work."

Margaret Ostermann: "Charlie finally got a chance to trek to the mystery photograph location: 9th Ave between Irving and Judah. We only moved here six years ago so sadly have no old-time anecdotes to share. Charlie thanks you for another walk-destination adventure."

Other correct guessers included **Matthew Ayotte, Joan Cinquini, Harry Henderson, Daniel Hollander,** and **Jimmy O'Keefe.**

Time for another round. Take a look at the rakish "White Hat McCarthy" below sitting on his sulky pulled by old #4. Does the scene look familiar? Tell us the where, the orientation, and any stories you may have about this place.

Send you guesses via email to wnpoffice@outsidelands.org or using any of the other contact information listed on the inside cover of this magazine. Good luck and good racing!



Charlie posing at last issue's mystery location.



Where and when is "White Hat McCarthy"posing?

Golden Gate Park's Birthday

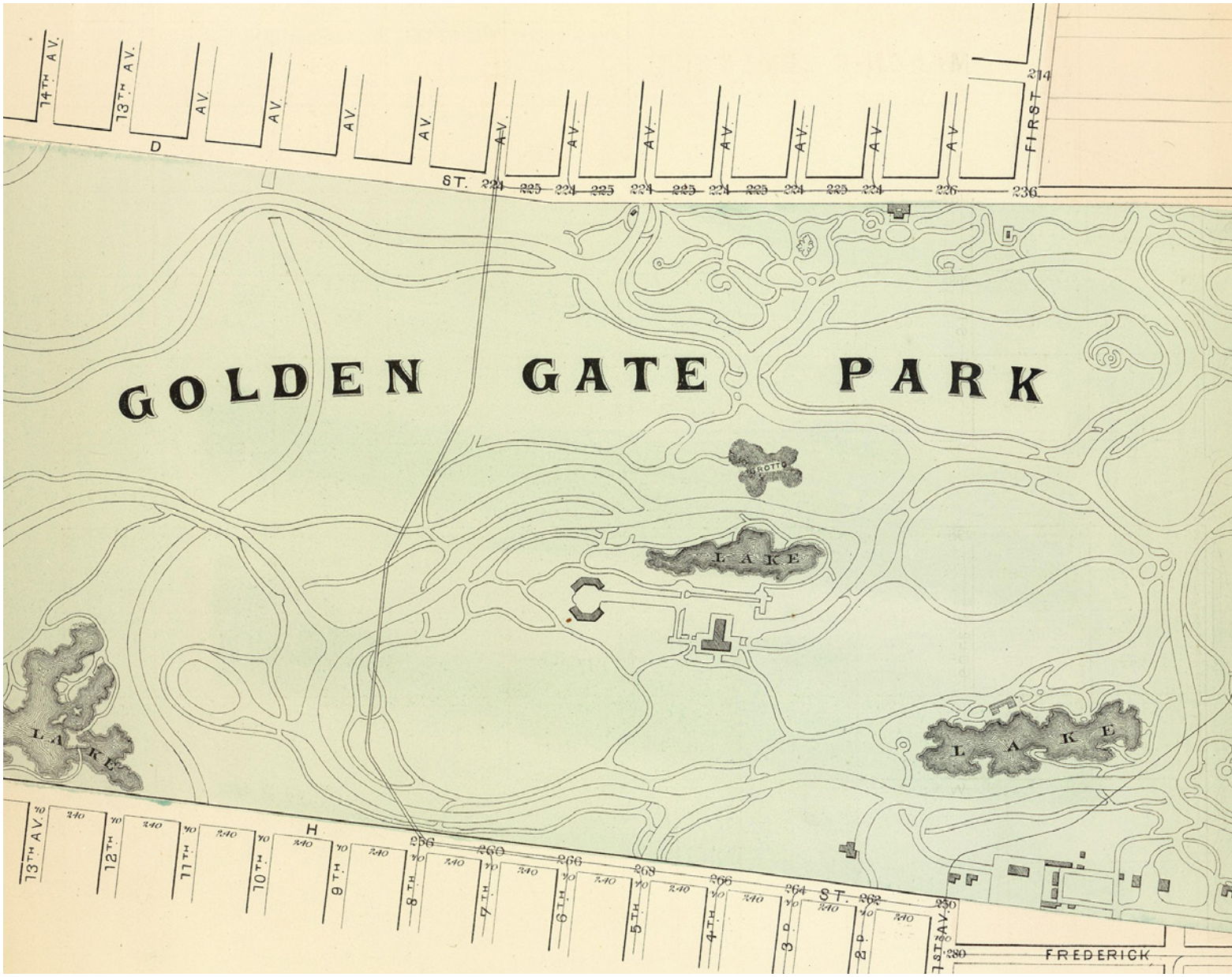
by Arnold Woods

The jewel of San Francisco, Golden Gate Park, is celebrating a huge birthday this year. The park turns 150 on April 4, 2020. However, there is some confusion over what that "birthday" represents. Did the park open for business on April 4, 1870, as can be found reported on some websites? Was the park dedicated on that day? Did the city begin turning earth on that day to make the park? Turns out it was none of those things. April 4, 1870 was the day that the governor of California signed legislation that provided for the park to be created. However, there was a lengthy process to get to that point.

Outside Lands Act of 1866

San Francisco had been planning Golden Gate Park long before 1870. The city had fought since the early 1850s a long court battle with the federal government over the Outside Lands on the west side of the city. One of the reasons why the city wanted to expand into the contested area was to build a large park worthy of a major metropolitan city. After a legal win and a Congressional Act informally known as the Outside Lands Act of 1866, San Francisco expanded from its western boundary at Divisadero Street all the way to the ocean.

The city's Board of Supervisors soon appointed an Outside Lands subcommittee to plan its expansion westward. One of the first things the subcommittee did was contract with a surveyor, William P. Humphreys, to create a map of the new city lands. The map was completed and approved by the subcommittee in 1868.



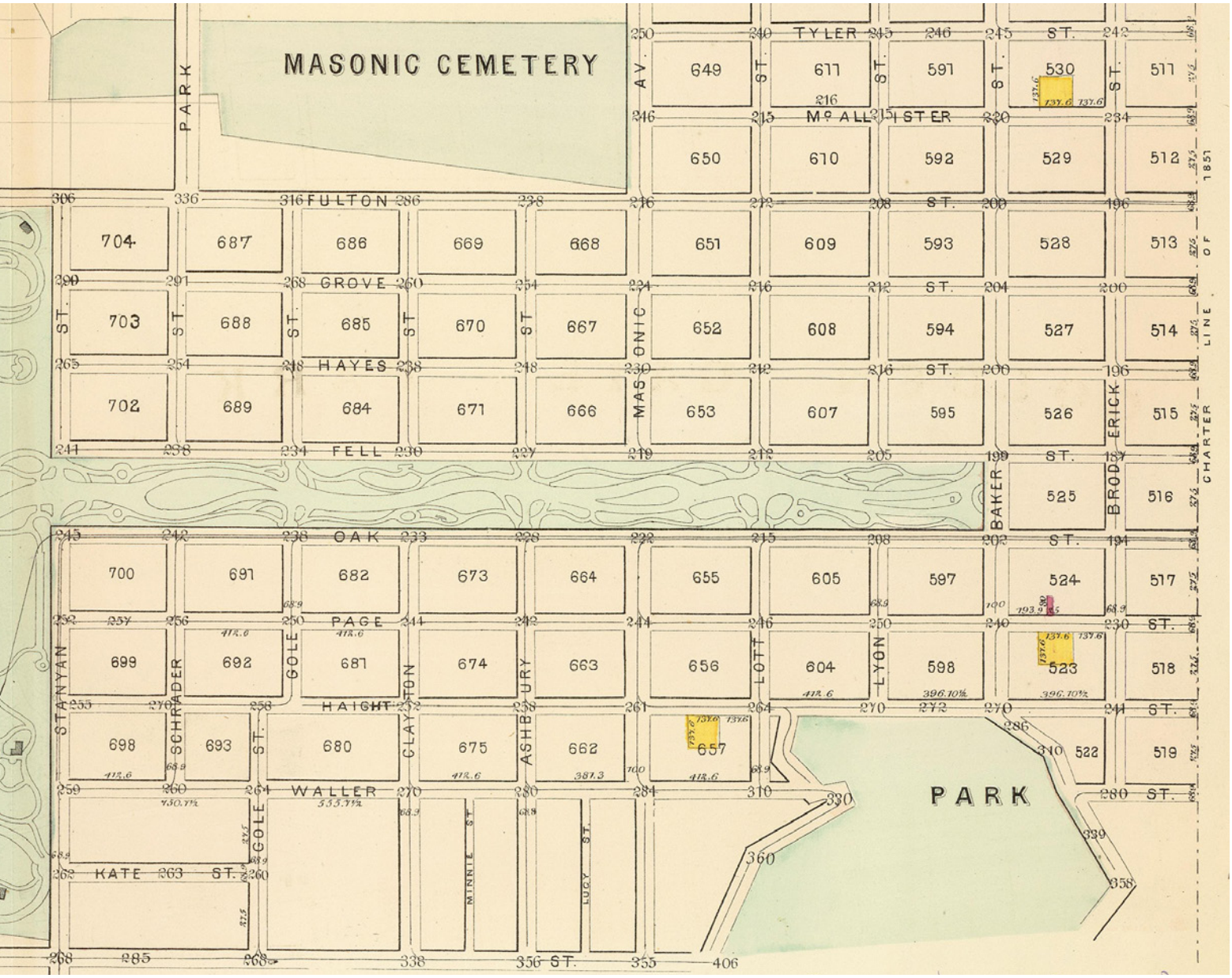
One of the major features of the 1868 map was a large tract set aside for an area that was simply listed as "Park." It extended from Stanyan Street to the Pacific Ocean between D Street (now Fulton) and H Street (now Lincoln Way) with a block-wide strip extending eastward from Stanyan to Baker Streets that we now affectionately call the Panhandle. All San Franciscans surely recognize these as being the borders of our Golden Gate Park. The city spent some time thereafter resolving claims of people who owned land inside of what would become the park. With a place for the park set aside, San Francisco needed to raise funds for its creation. This was to be done by issuing bonds and to issue bonds, the city needed state approval.

Senate Bill No. 223

John S. Hager was a New Jersey lawyer who came to California during the Gold Rush. He initially did some mining before practicing law in San Francisco. Hager was a member of the 1849 California Constitutional Convention and, after California gained statehood, he was elected to the State Senate in 1852. He served for two years, but then was elected as a judge in San Francisco, a position he had until 1861. He was elected to the State Senate again in 1865, and remained in office until 1871.

Below: East section of Golden Gate Park and panhandle, Plat 59 from an atlas by William P. Humphreys & Co., 1876. (Courtesy of David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, davidrumsey.com.)

continued next page



On December 6, 1869, the California State Senate and Assembly began their 18th legislative session, which was to last 120 days. On January 22, 1870, Senator Hager introduced a bill entitled "An Act to Provide for the Improvement of Public Parks in the City of San Francisco." This Senate Bill No. 223 was ordered printed and referred to the Judiciary Committee.[1] The bill had 16 sections, the key portions of which were the adoption of the 1868 map boundaries for the park, the formation of a park commission to control and manage the park, and a provision for tax-exempt bonds to be issued to fund the park's creation.

The Senate's Judiciary Committee reported back on February 4, 1870 with their approval of Senate Bill No. 223 with one amendment. The committee recommended the excision of the first section, which allowed certain state salt marsh and tide lands to be sold and the monies from the sale used for the park.[2] With that section deleted, the committee recommended the bill be referred to the San Francisco delegation for further action. Upon motion by Senator Hager, the senate followed that recommendation.[3] The San Francisco delegation reported back on March 11, 1870 with their recommendation for passage of the bill.[4]

During an evening session on March 25, 1870, the state senate passed Senate Bill No. 223.[5] The *San Francisco Chronicle* was apoplectic over what it called the largely Democratic senate's hypocrisy in approving a bill that included tax-exempt bonds after previously being against similar war bonds with claims they would "exempt from taxation the rich man and grind into dust the poor."[6]

When Senate Bill No. 223 got to the assembly, it found opposition to the tax-exempt bonds. Contra Costa Assemblyman J. H. Carothers made a motion to amend the bill and remove the language making the bonds tax-exempt. The motion carried by a 44-13 vote, though strangely, Assemblyman Carothers voted against his own proposed amendment.[7] The assembly then approved the bill as amended.[8] The following day, the senate considered and concurred with the amendment made by the assembly.[9]

From there, the bill went to the Enrollment Committee for proof-reading and delivery to the governor, which occurred on March 31, 1870.[10] With the legislative proceedings finished, Governor Henry Huntley Haight reported his approval of Senate Bill 223 on April 4, 1870.[11] It was the last day of the 18th legislative session. We now celebrate that day as the "birthday" of Golden Gate Park, but it would be a while before the park was actually "birthed."

Getting to Work

Pursuant to Section 3 of the new statute, Governor Haight appointed three park commissioners, S. F. Butterworth, D. W. Connelly, and C. F. McDermot. Within a few months, advertisements began appearing in the local papers for the sale of the bonds that were authorized by the statute. Once the bonds were sold, work began to create Golden Gate Park.

The park commissioners asked for bids for a survey of the park. William Hammond Hall put in a bid and was hired to survey and then design the park. Sometime later in 1870, the real work of sculpting a great park out of the fog-swept sand dunes in the Outside Lands began in earnest. Construction work began at the Panhandle first, as the area closest to where much of the city was then located.

There were problems trying to plant trees and grass in the sand dunes. A number of different soil mixtures were tried and it was eventually a mixture of sea bent grass mixed with yellow lupine that worked best.[12] A fence was also built across the west end of the park about 100 feet from the shoreline to protect the growing plants from the wind. By 1875, Hall had planted 60,000 trees in the park.

In 1871, Hall was appointed the first park superintendent. Hall went on to become California's first State Engineer in 1876. John McLaren, a Scotsman who worked as a garden designer at a number of Bay Area estates was hired as a superintendent assistant in 1887, and rose to become park superintendent in 1890. McLaren would remain in the role until his death in 1943. Hall and McLaren are largely responsible for the Golden Gate Park we see today, 150 years after the legislative process to provide funding for the Park was completed.

(Footnotes found on page 15)



Part of a stereoview "127 A Scene from Strawberry Hill," looking east to Lone Mountain in distance, 1880s. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection; wnp37.00575.)

The Gates of Golden Gate Park

by John Freeman

Where are the "gates" in Golden Gate Park? We probably don't give it much thought or laugh it off, knowing that there has never been a physical gate at the *marine* Golden Gate, only the symbolic narrowing of the land at the Golden Gate Strait that separated the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay. The park, like the waterway it was named after, has never been closed by a swinging gate either, conceived 150 years ago as a public space, open for all to enjoy. Golden Gate Park does have symbolic entry gates, memorializing long-deceased San Franciscans, but few know these names.

The earliest gate only existed as a concept, mentioned in the will of a prominent benefactor, but never built. When former U.S. senator and wealthy banker William Sharon died in 1885, his will stipulated that a large sum of money be given to the Park Commission for the design and erection of a gigantic arched monumental gate named in his honor. Its location was to be the park's main Stanyan Street entrance where it connects to the Panhandle drive.

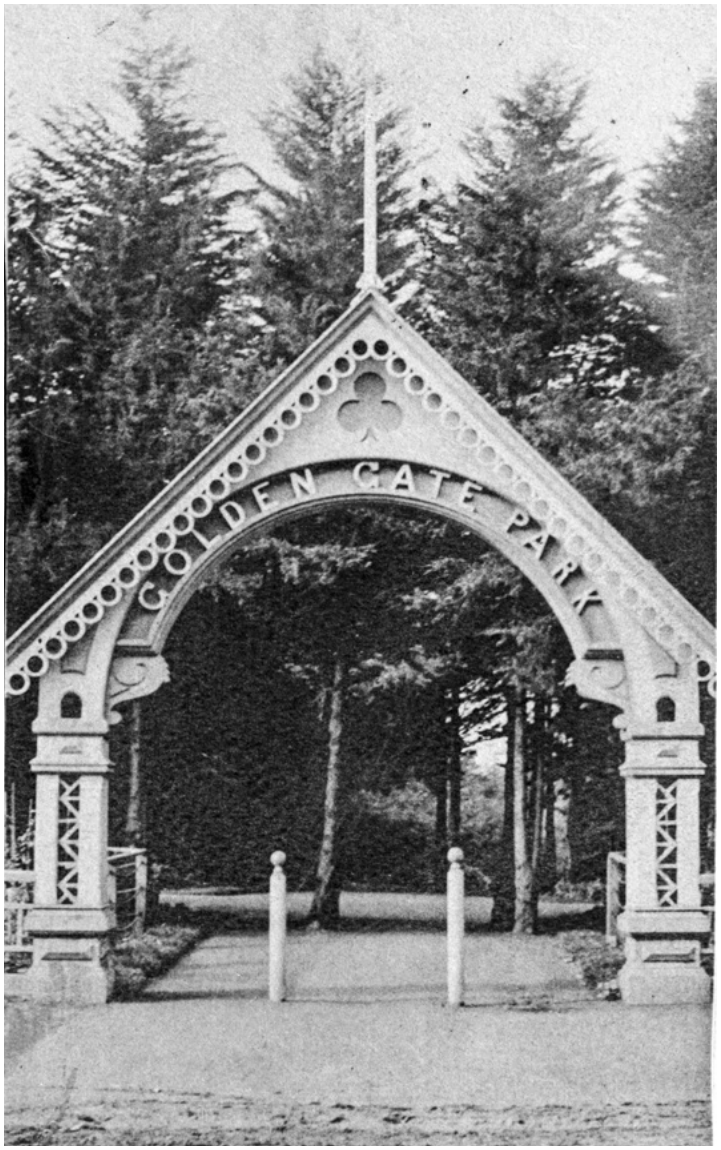
William Hammond Hall, Chief Engineer of the State of California and the former designer and superintendent of Golden Gate Park, interceded with the park commission and their lawyers to divert Sharon's money to another project of his preference: the design and building of a stone structure dedicated for the use of mothers and children. Today we know this as the Sharon Building at Children's Playground.

Page Street Gate

Three early gates were built on Stanyan Street across from terminuses of cable car lines serving Golden Gate Park. The Page Street gate was one of the most decorative. Early automobiles using the park required a use permit from the park commission, and were allowed entry only at the Haight and Stanyan Street entrance and only the use of South Drive (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive), separating the horseless carriages from the horse-powered buggies and bicycles on the main road system. Page Street gate also connected to South Drive and, in 1904, became the designated automobile-entry point. After the closure of park refugee camps created after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, auto traffic increased and the system of a designated auto road became difficult to maintain. Police instead enforced speed. No record has been found in the park commission minutes about the demise of designated-road restrictions or the demolition of the Page Street gate. The gate's roadway was converted from auto use to a paved path in 1926.

Clarke Pillars Gate

The steep entryway at Fulton Street and Arguello Boulevard is popularly called the Arguello Gate, but its formal name is the Clarke Pillars Gate. It provides the shortest walk from the Richmond District side of the park to the Conservatory of Flowers and its adjoining gardens. Once with a convenient rail stop beside it, the entry dates back to 1899.



Page Street gate at Stanyan Street, c1900. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection; wnp37.03953.)

Originally named First Avenue as the beginning street of the Richmond District, Arguello Boulevard's renaming at the end of 1909 did not instantly make the street a grand boulevard. The street was wider than the sequential western streets of the Richmond District, but only near the Presidio Gate on the north, which bordered the western-most margin of Pacific Heights. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the real estate firm of Baldwin & Howell developed Presidio Terrace on a nine-acre tract of land. The thirty-six large parcels of the elegant "residence park" could have been about 150 lots of a standard grid. The lots were configured around a central oval island, and an outer ring of lots, with access from a road off First Avenue. Entry to this exclusive enclave was through tall pillars that supported actual gates. The first residence park purchaser who built a home just inside the

gate was Crawford W. Clarke, a wealthy capitalist and mortgage lender. After his death in 1913, his wife contracted with the respected architectural firm of Bliss & Faville to design a memorial tribute to him, and link the gates of the Presidio and Presidio Terrace with Golden Gate Park. Neighborhood change was an ambitious plan that would take more than just a fine gate. Arguello Boulevard south of Presidio Terrace still had the western border of the Odd Fellows Cemetery, worker's cottages, livery stables and Chinese laundries. By the 1950s, there were nine service stations along the stretch of Arguello from California Street to Fulton Street.

Bliss & Faville were awarded $10,000 for work on the Arguello gate, and designed elegant pillars of Colusa Sandstone and terra cotta. Atop each pillar a pair of eagles supports a globe. Alongside the pillars on each side are walls originally with balustrades and topped by colored glazed terra cotta urns. Unfortunately time, weather, and neglected maintenance took its toll. The deteriorated balustrades were replaced by concrete blocks some time in the 1960s, and the lovely smaller urns were removed. Arguello Boulevard today is a more elegant street, but the once elegant Clarke Pillars have lost their beauty. The original plans have been preserved and the Recreation and Park Commission is pursuing donors to have the entire gate complex restored to the original glory when it was completed in August 1915.

Brown Gate

The pillars at the 8th Avenue entrance to Golden Gate Park are unique, but practically anonymous and clouded by a series of anomalies. The gate is named after the donor, Suzanna Brown, to memorialize her late husband Richard. The original donation for a monumental gate to be erected at the Haight Street entrance became embroiled in legal controversy in 1900, when multiple wills and estate tampering was adjudicated. The park finally got $5,000 designated in the estate, and five months after the 1906 earthquake began to discuss the project. The park commission minutes of August 17, 1906 describe a plan to use the money to build a stone wall somewhere on Stanyan Street using the abundance of available stone from the recent earthquake. At their meeting the following month, the commission decided instead on a design for the 8th Avenue park entrance (although the press reported it as 10th Avenue).

The gate was described to "consist of two large boulders of Colusa Sandstone in the rough, surmounted by a grizzly bear and a California mountain lion in bronze," approached by a curved rough wall with low seating. The theme was described as "wild natural life of California forests" and to this day is the only monument in Golden Gate Park to employ that kind of theme. The stonework was designed by Gustave Albert Lansburgh and the bronzes by noted Bay Area sculpture and art teacher, M. Earl Cummings, who has nearly a dozen works in Golden Gate Park, notably the John McLaren, Robert Burns, and Doughboy statues. To further



Clarke Pillars Gate at Arguello Boulevard and Fulton Street. (WNP photograph)

confuse the story of the 8th Avenue gate, in 1948 the road was widened to accommodate traffic and the pillars moved farther apart, using money from another donor's estate. A plaque was attached which gave the misleading wording that the Beardslee bequest paid for the original monuments.

Two Non-Gates

The Brayton Gate at 6th Avenue is more a marker with seating, leading to an entrance, than an elegant portal. It was constructed to honor the memory of a California pioneer and prominent manufacturer of waterwheels, Albert Pauling Brayton. Installed in 1952, when this was a vehicle road, since 1989 it has been a path leading to an area for recreational roller-skating.

The Beardslee estate gift was used to finance another "gate" at 30th Avenue in 1953. This simple, boxy design with bronze plaque, honors the parents of Mary Taylor Beardslee, which the will specified be at 24th Avenue and Fulton Street,



Bear sculpture on the Brown Gate at 8th Avenue and Fulton Street. (WNP photograph)

but because of the configuration of busy 25th Avenue, the park commission compromised for 30th Avenue, and used some of the money to move the sides of the Brown Gate. This site has convenient benches, but appears more like a monument with a memorial plaque, than fine pillars of entry.

Breon Gate

The only gate on the south side of Golden Gate Park is the grand Breon Gate at 19th Avenue and Lincoln Way. The other distinctions for this gate is that it is the tallest and the only gate the donor actively participated in financing and designing. It was a gift of philanthropist Christine Breon, wife of Paul Breon, a wealthy produce merchant who died in 1896. As a memorial to him and their deceased 20-year-old son, Paul Jr., Mrs. Breon had originally proposed a 90-foot-long monument, with a maximum arch height of 40 feet paralleling Funston Street across from 7th Avenue. The Park Commission rejected her idea in 1898 as too massive. Breon's second proposal of 25-foot columns and no arch was accepted and constructed at 19th Avenue and Lincoln Way.

When it was dedicated in 1923, no one foresaw how well scaled it would become when 19th Avenue was widened after the Golden Gate Bridge was completed in 1937. The gate became a complementary fit for a large auto thoroughfare.

Christine Breon's family friend, John D. McGilvray, an experienced granite construction contractor supervised the construction of a simple, but elegant design decorated with plaques, laurel wreaths and cornucopias. Guidebooks of



Part of the Brown Gate at 8th Avenue and Fulton Street with California mountain lion (John Freeman photograph).

Golden Gate Park for years directed tourists to visit the gate as an attraction. When Christine Breon died in 1930, her will gave generously to many child-centered programs, but also stipulated that $580,000 of her wealth be used to endow the Christine Breon Fund for Medical Research at University of California Medical School, serving as seed money which was added to by other donors at an initial value of $1.8 million. The fund awarded grants for medical research projects for 25 years after she died.

Each of the gates does have a name, but more important, an interesting historic story to tell.

A Zoo in Golden Gate Park?

by Christopher Pollock, Historian-in-Residence, San Francisco Recreation and Park Department

I became interested in this subject after several inquiries over the years about the zoo in Golden Gate Park. I always thought, what zoo? I was never convinced that such a thing existed, but it did—and did not.

Possibly the first "zoo" in San Francisco was started in 1856 by James Capen Adams (also known as Grizzly Adams) when he opened the Mountaineer Museum in a Clay Street basement. With a growing number of visitors he moved his menagerie to larger quarters and renamed it the Pacific Museum. The business lasted until 1859 when he lost his museum quarters to creditors.[1] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries San Francisco had commercial animal and bird exhibits in the Mission District's Woodward's Gardens, Mission Park and Zoo in Glen Park, and at the Chutes near Golden Gate Park. But a free venue developed over time within Golden Gate Park; eventually this was the nucleus of today's municipally-sponsored San Francisco Zoo.

There were a kaleidoscope of captive creatures disbursed in Golden Gate Park, but there was no unified idea of a collection, or any one given area devoted to a zoo. Over time there were three general areas where the exhibits were created. The largest was in the east end clustered between the Children's Playground and the Music Concourse, the second largest being in the park's west area around Spreckels Lake, and finally a mid-park area that is now Elk Glen Lake. The sub-areas are discussed below starting generally from east to west and are organized in chronological order within each sub-area.

The genesis of the park's captive animal collections started when the *San Francisco Chronicle* published an article in 1889 citing that the park commission needed to up their game to be on par with other similar metropolitan parks, both in the U.S. and abroad; the writer opined that a missing element was a zoo. It was noted that at the time Golden Gate Park had only a half dozen deer as animal attractions.[2] The following month a petition was presented to the park commissioners by a group of several leading citizens stating "that a zoological collection in Golden Gate Park would be a source of amusement to the public and a useful educational institution."[3] This signaled the start of captive creatures in the park; within a couple of years many birds and animals would be added to the recreation grounds in great numbers.



Golden Gate Park zebra team, circa 1926.
(WNP Collection, wnp14.4531)


Kangaroos in Golden Gate Park postcard circa 1908.
(Dennis O'Rorke Collection.)

Deer Glen

The first animals recorded were displayed in Deer Glen, a basin-shaped area (today's National AIDS Memorial Grove) that was initially called the Deer Park when it was fenced in 1888.[4] That year Alex Duncan, co-founder of the sawmill town of Duncans Mills in Sonoma County, gave the first black-tailed deer to the park for display.[5] By 1891, the glen was noted to contain a llama, donkey, and antelope.[6]

A pair of spotted deer arrived aboard the steamer *Australia* on June 28, 1893; they were the gift of Charles R. Bishop, a Honolulu banker and founder of the Bishop Museum, who also had a residence in San Francisco.[7] (He was the widower of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the last descendant of the royal Kamehameha family.) Some 25 deer of four different varieties and several elk grazed in the glen by 1894, during the period of the California Midwinter International Exposition that was held nearby.[8] Kangaroos from Australia were the topic of discussion in 1899 when the first marsupial baby was born in the park on the grassy slope of the glen.[9] A pair of one-year-old pronghorn antelope were added in 1902, a species that was noted to be on the verge of becoming rare. Called *Antilocapra Americana,* they were under a yard high in height, and were light brown with large patches of white on their sides. They were

located within the same paddock, but had their own sub-enclosure.[10] The paddock population grew further by 1910 when the annual park commission report cited the glen with a total of 35 deer including bucks, does, and fawns. Although a moose was noted in 1895, there was a more specific mention in the previously-mentioned 1910 report discussing a donation by Henry Fortmann, the president of the Alaska Commercial Lines, who gave four Alaskan moose that were placed in this enclosure.[11] A herd of a dozen other kind of deer, Axis deer that were native to India, were kept here based on a 1914 entry; it also stated that the kangaroos had multiplied and were now a quantity of a dozen.[12] Life between the species was not without incident. In 1916 a large kangaroo named Cadenza used its tail to swat a spotted deer, called Moocher, who was injured in the bout. Moocher was chasing wallabies around the paddock and got its comeuppance.[13]

Sharon Quarters for Children

The Children's Playground next to the Sharon Building was opened in 1888. The next year donkeys and goats pulled wheeled carts around the playground giving rides to the tykes.[14] Jerry the burro with his large ears was a favorite for children to ride; he spawned two foals in 1891.[15] This was immediately followed by rides that now took place within an enclosed loop course that was created to safely guide the animals and their young charges.[16] But in November 1891 a special exotic attraction in the form of two elephants arrived at the playground; they were named Baldy, age 22, and Queen Jumbo, who was age 24.[17] Baldy gave rides to the delighted children and Queen Jumbo watched on while the youngsters fed her peanuts and popcorn.[18] The two circus pachyderms were just a temporary exhibit as the following March they were back on the road in their professional lives as part of McMahon's Circus.[19] Years later in 1924 two female elephants were imported for the park; they were dubbed Miss Cleveland and Miss Yardley. The names stemmed from the Pacific Mail's liner they sailed on and the captain's surname of that ship.[20] They wore saddles known as howdahs to carry multiple children around the playground. A pair of graphic zebras named Punch and Judy were introduced in 1926; a gift of Park Commissioner Herbert Fleishhacker, they came from the London Zoo. The pair was put to duty pulling a wheeled cart in lieu of the burros or donkeys.[21] This was unusual as zebras are notoriously difficult to train.[22] They were later moved to the new zoo at Fleishhacker Playfield in 1929.[23] The last of the animals added to the playground was in a barnyard called The Farm, which also had a scaled-down barn building that was constructed in 1943. The exhibit, on the idea of a petting zoo, was a miniature barnyard that hosted smaller animals including sheep, a goat, chickens, geese, ducks, guinea pigs, and rabbits.[24] Initially, too many animals were packed into the yard, so some the animals were removed.



Monarch the Grizzly Bear, circa 1910. (H. S. Hoyt photograph, WNP Collection, wnp13.134)

Bear Exhibit

On the rise just southeast of the California Academy of Sciences was the Bear Pit. The first bear in the exhibit came from Southern California in the San Gabriel Mountains and was captured for the sensational serialized story that was printed in exhaustive detail by *San Francisco Examiner* owner William Randolph Hearst in 1889.[25] The grizzly bear's name of Monarch comes from the newspaper, which was nicknamed the "Monarch of the Dailies." He was shown initially at Woodward's Garden but, in 1891, Hearst signed the bear over to the San Francisco Park Commission and a special enclosure was created. In 1903, a silver-tipped female grizzly, hailing from Idaho, was introduced into the cage.[26] Together they spawned a total of four offspring, the first two were born in 1904, but died soon after.[27] Two bear cubs were added in 1908 after they were captured on Kings Island in the Bering Sea by a University of California professor; they were named Pall and Mall.[28] Two more cubs were born to Monarch and his mate in 1910, but he was considered decrepit by that time, and he was euthanized in 1911.[29] After a nearly fatal accident involving a child, the bars of the bear cage were doubled up in 1928.[30] With the zoo to the south now up and running for 10 years, the park commission ordered the bear pit to be removed in 1939.[31]

First Buffalo Paddock

The first bison paddock was the meadow located just east of the California Academy of Sciences and directly across Nancy Pelosi Drive (previously known as Middle Drive) from the bear exhibit; it was created in 1891. A four-year-old bison called Ben Harrison, named after the 23rd president, was introduced on February 13, 1891.[32] A pair of deer, dubbed Mr. and Mrs. Jim, was introduced into the paddock soon after in 1892. There was a fence between the two species initially but eventually they all were in one enclosure once they got acclimated to each other.[33] An 1894 park guide, published during the Midwinter Fair, noted there to be five buffalo ("the parents and three children"), reindeer, and two emus located in the "buffalo pasture."[34] The species did

well here as in 1910 the herd was cited at being an aggregate of 25 animals, of which 22 were born in the park. (After 1899 the herd was disbursed with the bulls going to the west paddock, another family near South Drive, while others remained in this spot.)[35]

Peacock Meadow

When entering the park from the Panhandle, the meadow was one of the first encountered along the north side of Main Drive. The meadow containing peacocks was established around 1892.[36] An 1894 guidebook noted there to be "a few Persian sheep" there as well.[37] Peacocks could also be seen roaming freely nearby at the Lily Pond and heard letting loose with their shrill call on occasion.

Aviaries

Another early feature was the park's first aviary that was a formal four-lobed design that was built in 1890 for $600; it housed only pheasants.[38] It was located near the intersection of Main (today's J.F.K.) Drive and Conservatory Drive West. The *San Francisco Call* had a long illustrated article in an 1891 issue that was titled "Among the Animals." It spoke of golden, Guatemala, and silver pheasants in the enclosure. As of 1892 the enclosure was noted to have other species including the laughing jackass (kookaburra) and two female Australian magpies.[39]

With the bird exhibit's popularity a new, much larger, irregularly shaped structure was constructed on the nearby hill, which opened on March 13, 1892. Today this is part of the John McLaren Rhododendron Dell. Some 300-by-165 feet, it was home to singing and exotic species, eventually becoming some 2,000 individuals in number. Built at a cost of $6,249, the giant birdcage boasted an 11-foot-wide wire mesh covered tunnel extending through the length of the giant cage so visitors could walk among the chirps, songs, and squawks of the captive inhabitants. After the turn of the century some 100 species of birds were cited to be housed within the aviary, including eagles.[40] Other mentions include specific pheasants such as golden, silvern, bronze, Reeves, and Lady Amherst, while a 1910 text talks of Alaskan ptarmigan. The Chamber of Commerce wooed out of town visitors in a 1914 pamphlet with the promise of cockatoos with their showy crests. The aviary remained until the 1930s, when interest lulled because of competition from the new Fleishhacker Zoo located to the south. The enclosure was demolished with the close of the 1930s.[41]



First buffalo paddock with elaborate gate and fence. (American Steel and Wire Co. Advertisement, 1890s)

Aquarium

A later addition to the park's live attractions was the opening of the Steinhart Aquarium in 1923 in the Music Concourse. Before entering the classically designed building, visitors encountered a courtyard where three sunken pools were designed to include cavorting fur seals, California sea lions, and porpoises.[42] The U.S. Bureau of Fisheries donated four Alaska fur seals.[43] They were caught in St. Paul, Alaska.[44] Inside the aquarium 2,000 species of live fish and water animals were housed.[45]

Menagerie: 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition

A short-lived increase in the park's animal and bird population occurred when the Midwinter Fair was held in 1894 between the months of January and July in today's Music Concourse. A host of different animals appeared in special exhibits or circus-type shows. The California Ostrich Farm from Los Angeles showed their giant birds with their highly desirable fluffy plumes used in women's hats. Exotic camels were ridden by costumed mounts among the fair's visitors as part of the ambiance of the Cairo Street quarter, and visitors could take a ride, too.[46] Sea life was represented with performing seals that appeared in the Santa Barbara Amphibia exhibit.[47] Domesticated horses appeared as part of the nostalgic '49 Mining Camp exhibit pulling a stagecoach or were mounted by a miner to give authenticity to the earlier Gold Rush days. Pack mules, also known as Sierra Nevada Nightingales for their distinctive bray, also appeared there.[48] The ursine species was represented by trained bears that performed at Boone's Wild Animal Arena. That menagerie also included the likes of monkey, gorilla, goat, dog, and bird, too.[49] An unfortunate event happened when a lion named Parnell killed lion tamer Carlo Thieman—but the show went on after his funeral was held in the packed circus tent.[50]

Elk Meadow

The area just west of Stow Lake housed the park's first pair of Roosevelt elk; Alvinza Hayward, a successful gold investor, donated them in 1890. In June of 1896 an elk was born in the park and was described as "long-legged, long-eared and lively as a cricket"—it was the first elk to be born on the park grounds.[51]

The meadow, comprised of some 30 acres, was improved in 1902 when the area's sand dunes were covered in loam allowing grass to grow.[52] The ruminants fared well here as a 1908 article in *Out West* noted there to be two herds with a total of 43 elk in the park.[53] In 1909, some 30 of the animals escaped from this paddock and were finally rounded up by being lured by food.[54] And just a year later there were a total of 75 of the ruminants in the park.[55] The McQueen Sewage Plant and its associated holding pond were constructed on the site in 1932; today this is Elk Glen Lake and the Urban Forestry Center occupies the site.

Second Buffalo Paddock

The second paddock, located just west of Spreckels Lake, was initially called Zeile Meadows, which was established in 1899; it was named for Park Commissioner Frederick W. Zeile.[56] By 1910, the park had a herd of 25 buffalo and 22 of them were born in the park. The bulls were segregated in this newer paddock.[57] Another occupant of the paddock was a flock of ostriches. As of 1916 there were 18 of the gangly plumed ostriches, but they were sold off that year.

Up until that time ostrich farms were profitable ventures due to their use in fashion, but the market's bottom dropped out and the park got the end of a business inventory. One was a scrappy male named Blicker Murphy, who was shipped to Japan with the others.[58] Life in the paddock was not always peaceful. With the year of 1920 waning, a bull elk named Hans III, sporting a new rack of antlers, took on two paddock mates of the bison named Portland and Teddy. Despite being outnumbered, Hans was the victor in the match.[59] Shades of the Wild West took place in 1924 when the entire herd of 25 buffalo broke out of their enclosure. They spread out into the neighboring Richmond and Sunset Districts terrorizing residents by trampling lawns, shrubs, and even appearing on porches. A huge bull attempted to charge a streetcar at 27th Avenue and Geary Boulevard.[60] They were on the lam all night but were eventually rounded up using automobiles. Another paddock mate was noted in 1949 when a few deer were mixed in with the buffalo.[61] The buffalo, today called by their scientific name of bison, are the only remnants of the many captive animal collections that once occupied the park. Tourists driving along J.F.K. Drive are delighted to come across the unusual sight of these beasts, a symbol of America.

Lindley Meadow

This low-lying meadow is also named for a park commissioner: Curtis H. Lindley. Located southwest of Spreckels Lake, sheep were kept here that sheared the grass, replicating President Woodrow Wilson's practice of keeping sheep on the White House lawn. This was during World War I when the custom kept the lawn shorn without manpower and provided wool to be auctioned off. The ovine lawn mowers had unusually nice circumstances: they were tended by a shepherd, enjoyed high-quality clover and bluegrass, were groomed and washed twice a week, and slept in a warmed arbor. In 1926, some 800 pounds of their shorn wool brought the park $252 from the Pacific Wool Products Company.[62] They also acted as supernumeraries in the annual Christmas Nativity tableau that was held in the meadow between 1965 and 1977. For at least the last performance the sheep were imported from a ranch in Half Moon Bay.[63]

Gifts, Trades, and Purchases

Over the lifetime of the park's outdoor creature exhibits was the issue of how they were obtained or what happened to them. Many were given to the park outright by individual citizens, while others were exchanged for another species of animals. Once the park had a sufficient number of animals, they were sold or exchanged. A review of the park commission's meeting minutes reveal that there were trades with San Diego, Los Angeles, Salinas, Yreka, Sonora, Fresno, Merced, and Portland among others. Other cities with similar collections wanted fresh blood for their animal stock and to avoid inbreeding problems. De Laveaga Park in Santa Cruz was granted just such a request in 1915.[64] Even places like Yellowstone Park received buffalo and elk from Golden Gate Park in 1916.[65] The San Francisco Zoo still carries out these practices today.

continued next page



Feeding sheep in Lindley Meadow, 1900s. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection; wnp37.03228)

Nucleus of a Zoological Garden

In 1922 the *Daily News* presented a letter to the Park Commission Board requesting the establishment of a zoo in Golden Gate Park.[66] A signal that something bigger was in the works was that written statements were presented from two other cities citing the associated costs of their zoos.[67] Park Commission President Herbert Fleishhacker outlined a program of improvements for 1922 to the Board of Supervisors. It included a ten-year lease of a sixty-acre tract of Spring Valley Water Company land near Fort Funston for use as a playground with a swimming pool.[68] Just a year later, the Board of Supervisors approved a sum of about $24,000 for leasing the property for playground purposes.[69] Fleishhacker Playfield with its enormous saltwater pool, opened in 1925. It was still noted to be leased "by the city from Spring Valley" at that point.[70] Fleishhacker widened his vision of a playground and in 1929 the San Francisco Zoological Gardens were opened as an expansion of the site.

The city purchased the Spring Valley Water Company's holdings in 1930, so leasing of the land became a moot point. Golden Gate Park's animals gradually became part of the nucleus of the new metropolitan zoo, which continues today.

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Peyser Family Visit Golden Gate Park

Snapshots taken by David Peyser that show his family, particularly his son Jefferson, enjoying the park in the early 1900s.



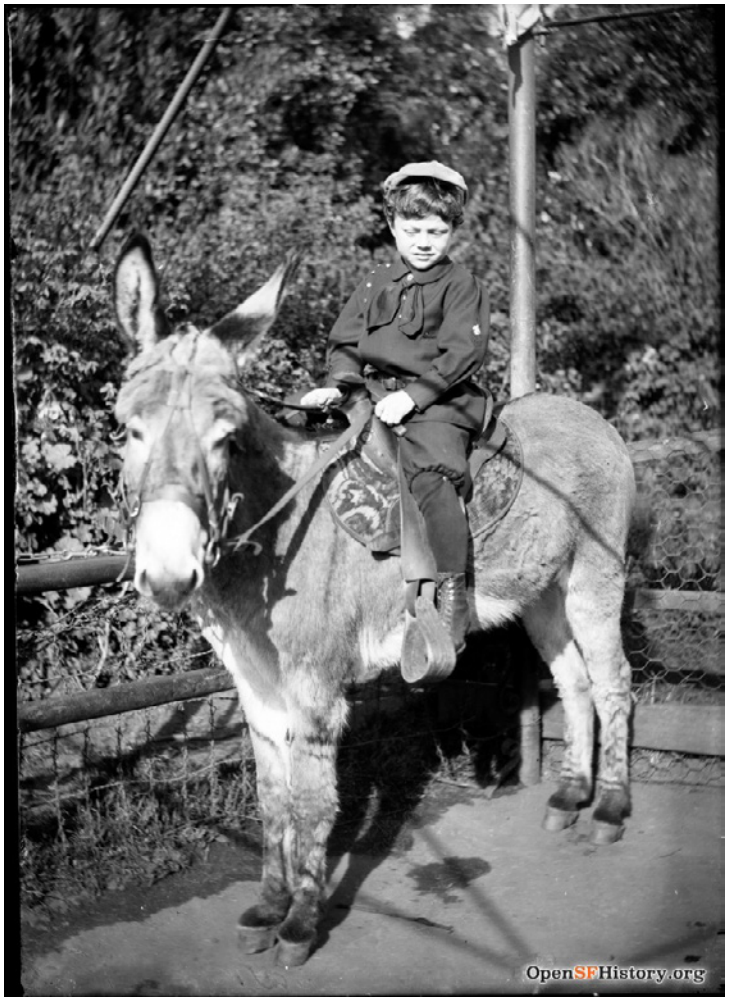
Jefferson Peyser in front of Golden Gate Park's Goethe/Schiller Statue, in its original location on the west side of the Music Concourse (current site of the De Young Museum Sculpture Garden). It would be moved to the current east side of the concourse in the early 1920s. (D. Peyser photograph; wnp14.0905)



Jefferson Peyser, posing on cherub statue in front of Spreckels Temple of Music bandshell in Music Concourse. (D. Peyser photograph; wnp15.177)



Children on Stow Lake's Rustic Bridge, circa 1903. (D. Peyser photograph; wnp14.0908)



Children's Playground, Golden Gate Park. Jefferson Peyser on donkey, circa 1905. (D. Peyser photograph; wnp15.236)



Peyser family feeding ducks, coots, and geese at Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park, circa 1905. (D. Peyser photograph; wnp15.169)

Historical Happenings

outsidelands.org/events.php



Hosting Nerd Nite at the Rickshaw Stop on February 19, 2020.



OpenSFHistory Top Ten at our Home for History, 1617 Balboa Street, January 16, 2020.

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Our thanks to the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development for its support of our spring and summer events.

Golden Gate Park Birthday Notes

1. Journal of the Senate, Eighteenth Session. p. 219.

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5. "California Legislature Report," *San Francisco Chronicle,* March 26, 1870, p. 3.

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The Last Word



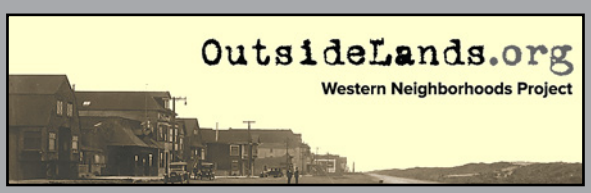
Refugees lined up in front of the Commanding Officer's office at Refugee Camp No. 5. near Children's Playground in Golden Gate Park after the 1906 earthquake and fire. (WNP collection; wnp15.1171.)

We opened this issue with pandemic and we'll close with catastrophe. As in every April, we remember the impact of the 1906 earthquake and fire that killed many, displaced thousands, and totally disrupted normal life in San Francisco.

Golden Gate Park was a refuge then as it is now. Literally home to refugees who lived in tents and sturdier shelters, this is also where they found food and other resources that fed the mind and body. I love this photo from our OpenSFHistory archive of Refugee Camp No. 5 near Children's Playground because it shows that "Everybody's Park" (as the #GGP150 public relations team likes to say) served everybody that year in ways William Hammond Hall and John McLaren could never have imagined as they created and improved its 1,017 acres.

Every generation experiences and survives unthinkable challenges, but finding common threads to the past is how History soothes me. Now, with California "sheltering in place" as I write this, the park is once again a vital nourishing space. Streets are empty, businesses are boarded up, but the park grounds are open to everyone—a reminder that we'll get through this together with Golden Gate Park by our side.

—Nicole Meldahl



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