When Bebop Filled the Night

By Art Peterson

In 1951, while I was a high-school student, my girlfriend and I would make trips from Berkeley to the corner of Turk and Hyde streets in the Tenderloin. Here, at the legendary jazz club, The Blackhawk, we would be ensconced behind a chicken-wire barrier that separated underage patrons from their hipster elders. It was from this ‘cage’ that we would ‘dig’ the energizing sounds of Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan and other jazz greats.

Entrée to the club by underage fans continued for a couple more years until Mayor George Christopher put the cabbott on such access, claiming in an unfortunately worded statement, “One of these nights, a young girl is going to be raped in the parking lot outside that club, and who are they going to blame for that act? — the mayor of San Francisco.”

Ten years later, on returning to the Bay Area, I was able to drink with the big boys at The Blackhawk, but the jazz scene had shifted to North Beach, specifically to the Jazz Workshop, where the center of the action was at 473 Broadway. The Workshop was owned by lawyer Art Auerbach, who loved jazz but did not pro-fess to be the sharpest of businessmen.

Up the block from the Workshop at 401 Broadway was Basin Street West, the site of the now defunct Crowbar, where according to one report, “Duke Ellington held court between sets in his underwear and a silk robe, blowing air kisses to the ladies gathered there as he worked on his score for the Concert of Sacred Music to be performed at Grace Cathedral.”

Down Kearny, on what is now “porno row,” was the Off Broadway, where a not particularly sympathetic listener claimed “your deaf Aunt Agatha could have tuned in on the music of Stan Kenton from three blocks away.”

Across the street from the Workshop was Sugar Hill where Carmen McRae was a regular. On one occasion she was joined by Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Mingus and Thelonious Monk. (I was at one of these Monk performances and witnessed him walking up and down Broadway between sets talking to himself and violently waving his arms. As a young admirer of the great man’s music, who had never heard of bipolar disease — a term that had probably not yet been invented — I was quite disoriented myself.)

Perhaps the Workshop’s star attraction during these years was Cannonball Adderley’s spiritual and relatively accessible music was a hit with the fans. In 1959, one reviewer wrote, “when the group finished ‘He- Fly’ — its closing number after a four-week engagement — the audience cheered, whistled and clapped for 15 minutes.”

On one evening during this run, Russian composer Dimitri Shostakovich was in the audience for his first experience with American jazz. He made no comment, smiled appreciatively several times and applauded vigorously on occasion. One commentator noted, however, that Shostakovich and his entourage were probably the only audience members during those four weeks who did not move a muscle in time with the band.

While the Workshop, “whose small space,” according to Fadlock, “was hardly able to contain the great music performed there,” drew large crowds that often spilled onto the street, running a jazz club, as Auerbach found out, was not an easy business. Not untypical was the case of John Horton Cooper as his house pianist, who, it was said, was able on a slow night to play piano and make chess moves at the same time.

Most of these places featured musicians in the modernist bebop mode, but in 1958 when Richard Hadlock (who hosts the amazing Annals of Jazz show on KCSM Sunday nights) came west to write jazz criticism for the Examiner, he was surprised at how eclectic the jazz scene was in the city compared with New York. Traditional jazz was still very much part of the scene. “Turk Murphy had opened Easy Street and the Tin Angel and the Kewpie Doll, in North Beach, also featured New Orleans-influenced music.”

Yet the Workshop remained central to the action. Between 1961 and 1964, a number of “Live at the Jazz Workshop” albums were produced; most of them are still available. These performances featured artists such as James Moody, Barry Harris, Cannonball Adderley Charlie Mingus and Thelonious Monk. (I was at one of these Monk performances and witnessed him walking up and down Broadway between sets talking to himself and violently waving his arms. As a young admirer of the great man’s music, who had never heard of bipolar disease — a term that had probably not yet been invented — I was quite disoriented myself.)

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PRESIDENT’S CORNER

By Jon Golinger

We live here because Telegraph Hill is a special place in this special city. Some 105 years ago, when the great quake and fire of 1906 ravaged most of San Francisco, it surrounded Telegraph Hill and threatened to engulf it. Brave residents and firefighters banded together and fought for the Hill. They fought for it because they loved it. Together, they saved it.

Today, Telegraph Hill and North Beach remain an oasis for residents, visitors, merchants, artists and so many San Franciscans when sometimes the whole world seems to be coming down all around us. While life on the Hill comes with its challenges, we live here because we love it. That’s why, for 57 years, residents have banded together as members of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers to celebrate, beautify, improve and protect this neighborhood we love.

In setting our priorities for the year ahead, the THD Board looked to our members for input, insight and ideas. Thanks to the dozens of THD members who so generously took the time to fill out the 2010 THD member survey last fall, we now have a wealth of valuable information to supplement what we already know is important from talking to our neighbors everyday. Some highlights from the results of the 2010 THD member survey:

QUALITY OF LIFE

91 percent of survey respondents said that “neighborhood character” is the most compelling reason why they live here. The next highest reasons were “proximity to downtown” (69 percent) and “bay views” (66 percent).

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION & LAND USE

91 percent of survey respondents support the 40-foot height limit for buildings in North Beach, on Telegraph Hill and on the northeast waterfront.

49 percent of survey respondents support the Port of San Francisco’s proposal to build a cruise ship terminal at Pier 27, while 21 percent object to the proposal.

76 percent of survey respondents chose “parks/open space” as their top choice for what should be built on the northern waterfront seawall lots, should they be developed. The next highest choices were “active recreation” (47 percent) and “playground” (38 percent), just 7 percent said they would like to see the seawall lots remain parking lots.

56 percent of survey respondents object to the proposed 8 Washington St. luxury condo project, while 25 percent support the project.

LOCAL BUSINESSES

83 percent of survey respondents selected “hardware store” as the top neighborhood business they would like to see added in the neighborhood. The next highest choices were “full-service grocery store” (50 percent), “shoe repair store” (47 percent) and “meat & fish market” (41 percent).

42 percent of survey respondents said they would subscribe to the creation of a neighborhood co-operative grocery, while 28 percent said they might participate.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

26 percent of survey respondents strongly support the San Francisco Public Library’s plan to build a new library on “the Triangle” at 701 Lombard, while 25 percent strongly object to the plan. 21 percent of respondents somewhat support the proposal, 4 percent somewhat object to it, 7 percent are neutral and 12 percent need more information.

48 percent of survey respondents said they attend the annual North Beach Festival, while 48 percent said they do not attend the North Beach Festival.

PARKING, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION

80 percent of survey respondents own a car. 66 percent of survey respondents said they regularly ride Muni.

22 percent of survey respondents strongly support the pending 1.7 mile central subway extension into Chinatown, while 31 percent strongly object to the plan. 18 percent somewhat support the plan, 3 percent somewhat object, 7 percent are somewhat neutral and 10 percent need more information.

For complete results of the THD 2010 member survey, please visit www.thd.org.

Thank you to all of the THD members who took the time to complete the survey and to those who donated their time to coordinate, distribute and compile the survey results. Special thanks to Greg Chiamous and Termez Yehgiazarian.

I also want to recognize two people who exemplify the best of THD.

We owe a debt of gratitude for the invaluable contribution of Immediate Past THD President Vedica Puri. Vedica gave years of service and hard work as an outstanding president of THD. As all good presidents do, Vedica left THD a better organization than she found it, steering THD through difficult times while remaining poised and professional.

Vedica, thank you.

Finally, THD is nothing without the continued dedication and support of its members. We celebrate our new members, but we absolutely adore those who have continued to support THD over the years, through thick and thin. Vera Ransom was a member of THD at its inception and she has remained a member for each of THD’s 57 years of existence. Vera turns 99 on June 11 and recently renewed her THD membership for yet another year. From all of us on the Hill, Happy Birthday Vera. You make us proud to call ourselves Telegraph Hill Dwellers.

CELEBRATE LIFE AND SUPPORT THE SEMAPHORE

Beginning with the next issue of The Semaphore readers will have the chance to honor special events in the lives of people they care about. If you want to celebrate a birthday, an anniversary, a graduation, or share an uplifting idea that you want your neighbors to know about, for $45 you can place a business-sized announcement in The Semaphore that will proclaim your happiness to the world. Eighty dollars will get you a larger ad. Contact us at carol@carolpeters.net or 415-956-7817.

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“Anything can be fixed except a fallen soufflé.”

307-1205
On March 16, more than 100 people gathered in the auditorium of the historic San Francisco Art Institute to participate in the first in a series of THD-sponsored community forums about issues affecting our neighborhood. Entitled “San Francisco’s Northern Waterfront: Past, Present and Future,” the forum was held in two parts. The first, on the Port of San Francisco’s rich and colorful past, was led by architectural historian Michael Coburn, author of the new book “Port City,” and Mike Buhler, executive director of San Francisco Architectural Heritage. The audience was treated to a series of rarely seen photographs of historic piers and the people who built, fixed, and worked on them for more than 150 years.

The second part of the forum focused on events surrounding the upcoming America’s Cup race and allowed neighbors to ask questions of city officials involved in its planning. District 3 Supervisor David Chiu spoke about the opportunities the event will provide for the city to gain revenue and bring people to the waterfront. Port officials and Mike Martin, the city’s America’s Cup project manager, answered questions about the likely impact of America’s Cup on the waterfront and the neighborhood. Jennifer Clary, of the America’s Cup Environmental Council (ACEC), discussed the challenges the America’s Cup poses to the city’s residents, infrastructure and the bay.

The ACEC, a coalition of 20 environmental organizations, transportation advocates and neighborhood groups, including THD, is committed to a successful and sustainable America’s Cup. THD and the ACEC support the world-class America’s Cup as an opportunity to showcase San Francisco Bay and its ecosystem. The city’s Planning Department is preparing an Environmental Impact Report for the event as required by state law. Both THD and the ACEC submitted substantial comments focused on creating a carbon-neutral or carbon-negative event, thoroughly assessing its local, regional and global impact, including fiscal issues, protecting natural resources around and within the bay, developing mitigation programs that protect neighborhoods as well as historic and natural resources, identifying programs and mitigations that will assure that the America’s Cup is a benefit for neighborhood and the environment in the short and long term, and requiring that any waterfront development anticipated by the Host and Venue Agreement be subjected to rigorous public scrutiny.

The draft America’s Cup environmental study is expected to be released in July. For more information please visit www.acec.org.

NEW THD BOARD MEMBERS ARE VARIETY PACK

Tom Noyes, Treasurer

Tom, who is employed as an software engineer at Salesforce.com, has been a member of THD for the 13 years he and his wife, Mary, have lived on Vallejo Street, just above the neighborhood-supported Vallejo Street gardens. Known for his prowess as a bridge player, Tom, who has earned dual-citizenship as an Italian, takes pride in working tirelessly at being a “nonno,” that’s Italian for grandfather.

Lucie Faulkner, Board Member

Lucie, a San Francisco native who has lived in neighborhoods as varied as the Sunset and Cathedral Hill, found her home on Telegraph Hill two years ago, where the light and weather, among other ingredients, suit her just fine.

With a background in arts management, she has produced a documentary film on a neighborhood in New Orleans titled “Faubourg Treme,” which was produced a documentary film on a neighborhood in New Orleans titled “Faubourg Treme,” which was for the city to gain revenue and bring people to the waterfront. Port officials and Mike Martin, the city’s America’s Cup project manager, answered questions about the likely impact of America’s Cup on the waterfront and the neighborhood. Jennifer Clary, of the America’s Cup Environmental Council (ACEC), discussed the challenges the America’s Cup poses to the city’s residents, infrastructure and the bay.

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WHERE HAVE ALL the LONGSHOREMEN GONE?

By Dick Boyd

My interest in longshoremen and what they do goes way back. I was a kid in the 1940s, working as a lumper in the produce district by the Embarcadero. I’d often eat meals at the Eagle Café, then at the foot of Telegraph Hill, but since moved to Pier 39. The place was always filled with longshoremen.

These men could be easily identified as they had a uniform of sorts that distinguished them from other laborers. It consisted of very sturdy black pants, called “Frisco Jeans,” and “Hickory Shirts,” that were white with black pin stripes that made them appear pale blue. The workers sported white flat caps, called “West Coast Stetson,” garnished with union buttons. There was a reason for the white hat. Safety. When workers were in a ship’s hold, which was often poorly lit from the open hatch, the winch operator, who controlled slings loaded with cargo, had a better shot at seeing and avoiding hitting their heads.

San Francisco was the busiest port on the West Coast then and workers I met at the Eagle were proud and confident men, qualities that their union inspired. The longshoremen’s union owes a great deal to Harry Bridges, its founder and long-time leader. Before the bloody, but successful, 1934 strike, working on the waterfront was hard, dangerous, low-paying work that often involved nepotism and/or kickbacks in the hiring and assigning of jobs. The work entailed fruitless hours and days waiting in a degrading “shape-up,” in which guys gathered on the waterfront hoping to get hired. Company tactics involved speed-ups, which had bosses forcing the workers to work faster and faster. If they couldn’t keep up, they didn’t get picked to work the next shift. Sometimes a shift lasted 30 hours or more with no overtime pay. Accidents were frequent. There were also “black listings” if you were caught trying to organize fellow workers. Like in the later witch-hunts of the McCarthy era, those who were blacklisted could not find work.

The company-controlled union was responsible for all these abuses. But then, in the early Great Depression years, two new unions rose to present a challenge: The International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) and the Marine Workers Industrial Union (MWIU). The MWIU had had ties to the Communist Party. Bridges, its founder and long-time leader. Before the Bay Bridge and working piers in San Francisco, 1948.
ELVIS CHRIST

By Miriam Owen

I first encountered what I would come to call street poetry shortly after I arrived in North Beach. I found it in large concentrations in a few locations. I first saw it at Green and Columbus. The poems are written on one-inch-wide masking tape with a black felt-tip marker. The lettering is artful with red, orange, green, pink or blue detailing in the open spaces of the letters. The lettered tape is affixed to the sidewalk with deliberate care. To anyone with affection for words, the effect is striking and playful. The words also can be profound, the inner workings of a mind that doesn’t miss a beat. The attitude is anti-establishment and that suits me just fine. They are clever in a wonderfully original way.

I have a fetish for taking photographs of my feet in my red shoes and rainbow socks read: “Illogical Phenomenon My Red Shoes.” That was in 2006. Now, five years later, I have finally met the poet, Elvis Christ. I have encountered him at work on Grant and Union on several occasions. That seems to be his favorite place these days.

He let me interrupt him one morning as he was carefully coloring in the finished wording of a vertical poem affixed to the wall of Ali’s Attire which read: “Just when you think you have the rat-race beat faster, rats blast past yer inanitus ass.” He dropped his tape, pens and scissors onto the street and gave me his full attention.

He said he’d been away for three weeks and I asked him where he had been. He replied: “Whenever I fart, they think its Hiroshima.” I said, that’s a good one to anyone with heir inanimate ass.” He dropped his tape, pens and scissors onto the street and gave me his full attention.

He asked me for a couple of bucks, which I gave him. I asked him if he recalled the “Illogical Phenomenon is Good” statement and he said he didn’t. Things passed through; words are ephemeral for this North Beach poet.

Longshoremen

when management and government officials later tried to discredit Bridges, who became the union’s “public face” for four decades, the longshore leader’s sympathy for the left came back to haunt him. Eventually he beat all the charges against him, but the battle took 20 years.

The brewing conflict on the waterfront led to the maritime strike of 1934 and the bloody events of July 5th, known ever since as “Bloody Thursday.” Two strike supporters were killed and dozens wounded by police.

These events touched off a citywide General Strike in support of the ILA and its allied marine unions that led to a union victory.

Three years later, West Coast longshoremen left the ILA and took on a new identity as the International Longshoremans’ and Warehousemen’s Union (ILWU), and for many years both the union and the waterfront prospered.

So what happened to the bustling San Francisco waterfront? The answer is containerization, that is, the use of standard intermodal containers that can be loaded mechanically onto ships. San Francisco’s port presented some obstacles to containerization. First, there was a lack of space along the waterfront to store containers. Second, there was the lack of easy access to east-bound trains and trucks. The solution to these problems lay across the bay. Oakland had ample waterfront space, excellent proximity to cross-country trains, easy access for trucks to major highways and the ability to employ a new shipping concept called “intermodal.”

Intermodal simply means a container that would fit on trucks, trains and ships. Most give credit for the use of containers to trucking magnate Malcolm McLean of North Carolina. He understood the concept and need for the use of the intermodal system and experimented with the idea. Our west, about 1959, Matson Lines in San Francisco experimented with containerization, but didn’t actively pursue the process.

Bridges, however, did grasp the idea. He knew containerization was going to be the way of the future. He realized that the traditional “break bulk” (hand-worked freight) and steam-winched cargo loading was going to be a thing of the past. So, in the late 1950s, he negotiated the Mechanization and Modernization (M & M) contract with the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), which was the employers’ bargaining agent.

The results of this contract allowed employers to adopt the use of containers without disruption by the ILWU in exchange for some critical workers’ benefits. There was a pension fund that encouraged early retirements. No one was pushed out of a job. Today, there are still older ILWU retirees enjoying their life because of the M & M contract. The productivity on the Pacific Coast ports, if not San Francisco, increased dramatically as a result of the M & M contract. Shipping costs declined dramatically. A container ship carrying 3,000 containers needs only a crew of 20 and can unload and reload with a 24-hour turn around.

The system also allowed for cheaper labor to be used overseas. Before containers, shipping costs were too high to make overseas labor markets practicable for U.S. manufacturers. By making shipping cheaper, the pace of globalization accelerated. Factories could be moved overseas where there was cheap labor, low rent

continued on page 4

continued on page 7

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A Saloon Keeper’s Tales by Dick Boyd
Foreword by Marj St. James

Issue #194 • Spring 2011

5
A t 6-foot-7, John Duggan is an enthusiastic, imposing man who looks like John F. Kennedy Jr. He is also the great-grandson of the man who established Original Joe's on Taylor Street some 73 years ago.

I met with him one recent afternoon because I had heard that Original Joe’s was moving into the vacated building on the southwest corner of Stockton and Union streets that, before the demise of the not much lamented Joe DiMaggio’s, had housed the historic Fior d’Italia. We met on the premises and John was accompanied by his Director of Operations Trish Herman, an old family friend who had agreed to step in when John needed help with the operation of the new restaurant. This perky, smart, blond seems as excited about Original Joe’s as John does.

John says his great grandfather knew his way well around our neighborhood. “His name was Tony Rodin, a Croatian immigrant, who came to the U.S. in 1937. He worked at Lucca and New Joe’s, both restaurants in North Beach. He used to hang out at a few of the old bars like Tony Nikas that are still in the neighborhood. Then he opened Original Joe’s on Taylor Street in the Tenderloin.”

Original Joe’s might still be on Taylor Street if it weren’t for a disastrous fire about four years ago. “The damage was so severe,” said John, “we couldn’t even rebuild. It took us two years just to get all the insurance issues settled and then there was the issue of where we were going to locate. We wanted to come into a real neighborhood, where we could retain our soul and character. North Beach seemed the perfect fit. We also saw what Tony did across the street and it was very impressive. That raised the game that we would have good neighbors.”

In addition to John and Trish, the “we” includes John’s father, his sister, Elena and his mother Marie, who will be the hostess just as she was on Taylor Street. “She is the reason many people come back to Joe’s. She was known as the Queen of the Tenderloin,” says John. “When Joe DiMaggio’s came open, we had the opportunity to take a taste of Taylor Street to the DiMaggio site. It is a large, comfortable landmark spot in which to bring our landmark restaurant.”

And what has given Original Joe’s this landmark status? “We have maintained a consistent approach to comfortable food,” said John. “Our menu is always the same . . . Look, we’ve been a success for over 70 years, so why mess with it?”

So all of the Original Joe’s traditions will remain intact. “Many of our employees, who worked at Joe’s for many years, will be back at the new location. Our wait staff will wear tuxes as they always have. We’ll still have the exhibition kitchen along the back wall, with stools for people to eat at the counter. It has always been our trademark. We have around 17 chefs and prep people that work in the kitchen and they will be wearing their traditional tall white hats. The main dining room is right off the kitchen. We are having our old booths from the restaurant recovered and installed. It will be like you are at Joe’s.” Trish told me, “The exterior of the building will be painted the Joe’s original color and have the same tile work as Taylor Street. We have a loyal following and they wouldn’t have it any other way.”

But there will be changes to the DiMaggio building and floor plan. “The first thing we decided to do is change the front doors. We want them to be welcoming, so we are taking out the big wooden doors and putting in glass doors, with a transom window at the top. Also in the front there will be small tiles on the entrance floor with Original Joe’s embedded in it. We will have a lighted Joe’s sign surrounding the cornice.”

“There’ll be new windows on each side of the building that we will open on a sunny day. This will really open up the interior and make it much lighter. As you walk in to the right, we are having a café facing the park, and we want people to feel comfortable coming in and having a cup of coffee or meeting friends for lunch. Right behind the café, we have space for a banquet room that should accommodate around 30 people. We are having a large door installed that slides into the wall, so the room can be private or not. We also have a very private meeting room in the back that will be available for meetings or anything.”

“How about the bar?” I asked John. In my view, it’s been one of the best bars in North Beach.

“We love the space, but we will take out all the granite and turn into a Joe’s bar, with wood and even an old clock. We’ll have beer and wine on tap, with a two-bartender station. By the way, did you know my grandfather had wine on tap at Joe’s in the ’60s?”

“He was ahead of his time,” I commented.

As John and Trish escorted me to the front door of the restaurant, there was a man sitting in the entry. John introduced me to his father, who is every bit as charming as his son. Of course, I wanted to know what he thought of the move.

“Sensational!” he said. “I am so excited to see my son and daughter carrying on their grandfather’s tradition, especially since it is in North Beach where his roots were planted when he first came to America. Also, it will be very easy for our customers to find us here. I also love the location because as an Irish Catholic, I can look out the window of our restaurant and see SS Peter and Paul’s Church. It can’t get much better than that.”

Readers may wonder if Original Joe’s has any connection to Marin Joe’s or any of the other Joe’s. To that query John has a succinct reply. “No, my great-grandfather got a trademark for Original Joe’s and that is who we are, the one and only!”

**ORIGINAL JOE’S COMING to NORTH BEACH**

By Carol Peterson

![Original Joe’s exterior at its old site in the Tenderloin.](image)

![Original Joe’s plan for renovation, facing Washington Square along Union Street.](image)
of Miles Davis, who in 1964 was supposed to play a two-week gig at the Workshop. Davis' drummer was 18-year-old phenom Tony Williams. As California law did not allow minors in clubs that served liquor, Auerbach suspended his liquor license for the length of the engagement, charged a $2 door charge and served soft drinks. Davis then failed to appear on several nights, once claiming he had a tooth pulled. On some other nights he just didn't show up. Auerbach had to refund the door charge to the disappointed audience members.

Davis was very much his own man. Hadlock tells of running into him at the Blackhawk and mentioning that tenor sax player Hank Mobley was playing at the Jazz Workshop. Davis, intrigued, told Hadlock, "Let's go." One problem, however, was that the Blackhawk owner, who had always tried to avoid charging a cover, had found it necessary to add a $4 door charge to pay for the Davis run. That detail didn't stop Davis who left with Hadlock and stayed the rest of the night at the Workshop, not saying much other than commenting in his raspy voice on drummer Art Taylor. "AT never could keep a beat," he said.

Another musician who figured prominently in the Jazz Workshop scene was Charlie Mingus. A fierce and often scary showman, Mingus would sometimes throttle the guy. 'That fan was one of my instruments,' he said. And it made me think, as someone who wanted to be an artist, that you had to pay attention all the time to everything that was going on, because everything was of potential use, if you could see the potential."

Not all the neighborhood jazz during these years was on Broadway. Green Street, off of upper Grant, was also a hub. The Anxious Asp at 528 Green — now Tatoos Bogaloo — had on its juke box the largest collection of Charlie Parker records west of the Mississippi, as well as the pages of the Kinsey Report posted as restroom wallpaper.

Down the street at 576 Green, a drab doorway now marks the entrance to what was once the Cellar, now between Caffeé Sport and Citibank. The Cellar became a famous venue for poetry read to jazz. A groundbreaking LP recorded at the Cellar, featuring poets Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Kenneth Rexroth, became a de rigueur part of every hipster's record library.

The unsung heroine of the Cellar was poet Ruth Weiss, who worked as a cocktail waitress there during these years, but performed with great musicians such as Brew Moore and Ben Webster on Wednesday nights. "She says," Ferlinghetti and Rexroth were poets who read over jazz; but jazz was apart of me; I swung." Weiss came to San Francisco in 1956 and took up residence at 555 Montgomery, an address later famous as the location where Allen Ginsberg composed "Howl." Like Richard Brautegan, she sold little chap books of her poems for 20 cents each on the streets of North Beach. After a shift at the Cellar, and maybe a trek out to Bop City and the other Fillmore neighborhood clubs, she would return home to the roof of her Montgomery Street residence and shower in the building's only facility for that purpose as dawn emerged over the starlit city.

Today, as "gentlemen's clubs" proliferate, dance palaces provide hook-up venues for the young and libidinous, and cops square off with would-be gangbangers on Saturday nights, the neighborhood jazz scene from 40 years ago seems ancient history. Those of us of a certain age, however, recall well enough the cramped and smoke-filled rooms where Brew Moore's five chorus improvisations on 'All the Things You Are' were never enough.

Ruth Weiss' latest book is "Can't Stop the Beat" published in May by Divine Arts Press (www.divineartsmedia.com). Local jazz legend Larry Vukovitch contributed to this story.

I told Elvis that I had shown his poems to a friend who said, 'get that man some more tape.' As it turned out, Elvis had just run out of tape. I gave him $20 and he was overjoyed. He said he could now buy some new pens as well. The next morning I saw new colors and thick black ink lettering.

**YOU ARE HERE**

North Beach
By Chris Stockton
The first in a series on the best of North Beach.

Passing by Biordi Art Imports without pausing to look in the window is close to impossible. The shop, which features majolica ceramics — Italian pieces with an opaque white glaze and painted in bright colors — always has something new, bright and exquisite. The pieces have been crafted from all around Italy. Some designs date to the 12th century while others are inspired by recent artists such as Pablo Picasso. Many of these works would not exist were it not for shopowner, Gianfranco Savio, who nurtured their birth with individual craftsmen whom he has befriended.

Savio came to San Francisco in 1974, settled in North Beach, and married Carol, who he had met in Florence in 1969 while she was perfecting her Italian and he was finishing his master’s degree in political science. Soon he was giving Italian lessons, but in 1975 he took a job selling pasta machines, espresso makers and other merchandise at Biordi Art Imports, a general Italian imports store founded by Emilio Biordi in November 1946. Within a couple of years, Savio acquired Biordi and began to introduce more ceramics into the store’s offerings.

In the ensuing 20 years, he spearheaded the growth and appreciation of Italian majolica in the states by traveling to Italy two or three times annually, meeting with more and more craftsmen and importing a vast range of classic ceramics. Biordi is a small space, but the shelves and tables are packed with majolica, with colors and designs that have been handed down from father to son, some for centuries. Each year, Savio’s catalog expands. It now reaches loyal customers from Canada to Mexico; more than 40 percent of his business is mail order. Walk by on a December afternoon and note the piles of packages destined for homes across the country.

Savio still returns to Italy once or twice a year, seeking the finest ceramics and often finding something new to set along side old favorites, such as Della Robbias, produced near Florence and inspired by the mid-14th century designs of Luca Della Robbia.

One morning his daughter, Sonia Savio, told me about her favorite dinnerware designed by Franco Mari, who was challenged by her father to develop colorful geometric and rich organic borders. Originally, borders were the training ground for young ceramicists; Franco Mari’s
artistry made them sing; Eugenio Ricciardelli, a student of Mari’s, has now created 65 stunning full border patterns.

When you visit Biordi, look for Mari’s and Ricciardelli’s dinnerware, and also:

- the Della Robbias and Contrade plates and bowls. Look for an austere design with black borders and sitting deer from Deruta. It is a reproduction of a 13th century marble inlay in the Duomo of Siena.
- A series of plates and pasta bowls carefully monogrammed in any one of 14 original patterns, from the Cama studio in Deruta.
- A skillfully rendered pattern, also from the Cama studio, which features a stylized dragon designed by Raphael in the 16th century.
- A swirl of sardines encircling a mirror from the Vignoli studio in Faenza; each fish glistening as though suddenly struck by the light of the sun.
- A colorful tangle of pears and grapes sketched around a jar for biscotti, from the Pardi studio in Castelli, Emilio Biordi’s hometown where pottery has been produced since the 13th century.
- An extraordinary array of blue Carnation dinnerware and serving pieces from Faenza, where the Carnation shops line the streets, and from which Savio has selected the best from Bruno Brolli of Rimini for its clean color and very fine craftsmanship.

For Italians, the rooster is a symbol of good luck and prosperity. Perhaps the next time you pass by Biordi, you’ll spot a rooster, standing tall in glorious color, chasing around the rim of a bowl, or drafted on a plate by ceramicists in Deruta with green leaves and green feathers, motifs dating from the 13th century. May Biordi Art Imports always have a rooster at this location where they have been for the past 65 years.
When in the mid 1950s, after graduating from Stanford and serving a stint in the Army, 26-year-old Jeffory Morshead moved to Telegraph Hill, the neighborhood was undergoing a kind of bargain-basement gentrification. The artists, poets, craftsmen and bohemians who had long been central to the scene were still around, but the landscape was also dotted with young men in suits and pert girls in hats.

Like Jeffory, these young professionals walked down the Hill each day to their jobs in the Financial District. But to hear Jeffory tell it, work wasn’t at the top of their agendas. What interested them most was each other, young men and women feeling their way into intimacy in the years before the sexual revolution.

Telegraph Hill, especially the area around Union and Montgomery and Alta Street (where the “Duck House gang” lived), was a magnet for these 20-somethings. According to Jeff, for a young person, getting a place in this increasingly popular neighborhood wasn’t easy. He and his potential roommate Louis Nohl, a Stanford fraternity brother, couldn’t find anything for less than $100 a month. “After a month or so, Louis called me and said he had signed us up for a near place at $60 a month. I was furious. It was just like Louis to go off and obligate me for $60, when I was making only $530 a month as a credit clerk at Pacific National Bank.” However, when Jeff calculated half of $60 was $30, he decided he could do it.

“The building, 220 Union, owned by Guido Lenzi, is no longer there. Lenzi had taken an old narrow wooden house and carved out four units. Our apartment had one room, two beds, a partition that came down to separate the kitchen from the living area and a tiny shower and bath.”

But when Jeff and Louis walked onto their deck, they had vistas to rival those seen from the diggers of the city’s most hoity-toity of San Francisco socialites. “We had a view of the waterfront from the Bay Bridge to the far tip of Treasure Island. We had a poster of all the ships funnel markings and kept track of them coming and going below us. We nailed a wooden ladder to the deck and put a mattress on the roof where we could have cocktails, enjoying an even better view.”

Spediacchi (later Speedy’s) Grocery was just up the street. “He allowed us to charge. I think our bills got paid eventually.”

Across the street from Jeff’s apartment was the Compound, an infamous hang-out of small apartments that opened onto a flat roof.

“Oh Friday nights, payday, we would gather at the Compound with our dates and barbecues chops and steaks.”

In one of these apartments resided Bob McNear, perhaps the most desirable and notorious bachelor on the scene. Jeff’s friend, Ann Seidel, told him of how she had arranged with the driver on the 39 bus to make a sudden stop at a certain intersection just so she could fall back into a seat next to Bob McNear and get acquainted.

Accordingly getting to know Bob wasn’t a particularly difficult task, as he was no shrinking violet. “At one time, Bob McNear invited the shah of Iran to cocktails at the Compound and we really expected him to come, as Bobbi unde had been ambassador to Iran. But two nights before, an envoy came down to check the place out. Then the day the shah sent his regrets. We had a party anyway.”

Bob, Jeff and Steve Hord, who still lives on the Hill, were all members in good standing of the “Tuesday Downtown Operators and Observers Club.” According to Jeff, the club consisted of about 20 bachelors who prowled the Financial District on the lookout for a girl who met their high standards.

“We would then invite our latest discovery to join us for lunch at the Canterbury Hotel, as the only female guest. It was considered an honor to be invited, so much so that even lower ladies than we could have accommodated lay claim to having been invited. There are no records.”

Jeff had his own way of establishing himself with young women. “I would make fold-down bars for the ladies to replace the fold-down board separating the kitchen from the living-bedroom in those small Telegraph Hill apartments. My bar customers would pay me by giving me dinner while I worked. The bars could become quite elaborate with shelves and bamboo sidings and wheels, sometimes taking me as many as four or five nights — and dinners — to finish.”

When Jeff would get a date with one of these young women, the evening would go something like this: “I’d suggest dinner at a nice restaurant. We’d have martinis at my 220 Union place, then walk a block to the Shadows on Montgomery where, at this hour, I could count on an hour’s wait. I would make no reservations, so I’d say, as if thinking of it for the first time, ‘Hey let’s skip this and head for the Old Spaghetti Factory for more of a fun evening.’”

This brought the evening’s cost down from unaffordable to an All You Can Eat family-style price tag, and, in fact, it was more fun.

Embedded in Jeff’s account of young lives on the hill in the 50’s is this story which says a lot about the physical longings of the young in pre-’60s America: “How lucky could I get! The girl of my dreams (this week) invited me over to her place for dinner. Instead of the usual lobbing and wearing, she simply said, ‘Come to bed, I can’t wait.’ Surprised — after all, she was from the east coast — I began fumbling about, but the really surprising thing was that I thought that this young lady was the sometimes girlfriend of the previously mentioned great lover, Bob McNear. Of the all the foxy ones when they arrived on the Hill. But believe me, at the moment I wasn’t complaining. It was mid-afternoon, the daylight streaming in the window, and two of us were wrestling this way and that. ‘Oh, Jeffory,’ she said in a voice suddenly devoid of passion. That was the signal. Out of the closet, highball glass in hand, emerged a smiling Bob McNear.

‘Cheers,’ he said.

Steve Hard, right, still a Hill resident, stirs his bachelor stuff.

With this issue of The Semaphore we begin a new feature, "Semaphore Classics," which will allow us to reprint some of most engaging and well-received articles from past issues.

**The Family Service Agency**

By Paul Gibson

There is Andre. He is 4 years old now. He came to Family Service Agency of San Francisco when he was 3. Before his first birthday, he had a heart transplant and the only early childhood program that could address Andre’s health needs was FSA’s Family Developmental Center.

There is Ming. He is 81 and suffering from multiple health conditions that limit his mobility. His family can no longer afford to live in San Francisco, so FSA’s Family Developmental Center has become quite elaborate with shelves and bamboo sidings and wheels, sometimes taking me as many as four or five nights — and dinners — to finish.”

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Beyond the Neighborhood

With this issue of The Semaphore we begin an occasional feature calling attention to worthy organizations outside our neighborhood that deserve our respect. Please let the editors know of other groups you would like to see featured.

**The Semaphore**

**Issue 174 • Winter 2006**
By Art Peterson

The photo of the Transamerica Building as seen from Telegraph Hill that graces the cover of our new format Semaphore is the work of photographer Craig Fonarow. He is among the artists who have recently taken gallery space in our neighborhood.

Here is a roundup of some of them:

**CRAIG FONAROW PHOTOGRAPHY**

527 COLUMBUS AVE.

Craig found a home in San Francisco in 1991 after decades of being on the move, which took him to New York City, San Antonio, Los Angeles and numerous other cities.

While visiting street fairs in San Francisco, he noticed that few of the photographic works on display were of the city. So he began to make the local scene his subject, selling his work in a kind of garage-sale format in front of his Leavenworth Street residence. Eventually, he began selling his art at street festivals and at outdoor venues such as Justin Herman Plaza.

Giving up the itinerant artist’s life for a permanent home on Columbus suits Craig just fine. Even though many of his photos are of local subjects, Craig says 50 percent of his trade is with locals.

His business is doing well, he says. But don’t come looking for him on Tuesday. He is one of the holdouts who have recently taken gallery space in our neighborhood.

**FOCUS GALLERY**

1534 GRANT AVE.

Jon Perino, the owner of the Focus Gallery, situated on an art block of upper Grant between Aria and Macchiari, seems a perfect fit for our neighborhood. A young art student at the Art Institute, he sees his space as a place where local art and literature meet. So, for instance, recent shows have featured the painting of poets Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Jack Hirshman.

Perino has traveled to many locations to take photographs, most recently in Latin America and Budapest, Hungary. Along the way, he has picked up an eclectic collection of art, some of which one sees on the walls of the gallery. “I like to think what I have represents something of a history of modern art,” he says.

He has been the proprietor of Focus Gallery, where he also does framing, for about a year, since moving from Polk Gulch. Business is not bad, he says. “This neighborhood is a little bit like Budapest. The more well-to-do folks, who live up the hill, come down to support us.”

**GALLERY 28**

1228 GRANT AVE.

Owner Ethel Jimenez began taking photographs when she was 16, but took a long-term professional detour into a career as an insurance broker. Two years ago, when her business dried up, she decided to take a daring move and acquired a gallery space on Grant. “Right in the depths of the recession; smart business move,” she says. But the gallery has survived as a location for Ethel to show her photographs and for local artists to display their work. Upcoming is her second annual competitive exhibition.

Since coming to the neighborhood, Ethel has very much become involved in community good works. Her gallery has been the site of two fundraisers for North Beach Citizens, one a display of decorated skateboards by local artists and the other, “Vinyl Transformations,” in which artists were challenged to transform a vinyl record into a piece of art.

Recently, Ethel was seen at another North Beach Citizens’ fundraising event — busing tables at the organization’s annual dinner.

**GALLERY 454**

454 COLUMBUS AVE.

Anyone who has a doubt that Christopher Jernberg’s Gallery 454 is not your generic whatever-the-tourists-want kind of place need only glance in the gallery’s window where a life-size military tank fills most of the space. The tank, created from wood products by curator Nick Flatt, was constructed in the gallery in four months and can be purchased for $100,000. In case the piece does not sell in San Francisco, Flatt, an Academy of Art alum who also creates portraits in the Chuck Close style, will disassemble it and move it to a Los Angeles gallery where perhaps money for cutting-edge art flows more freely.

Jernberg’s space, but relies on a stable of local artists whose work he has featured. In June, they will be celebrating their first anniversary with a show featuring 16 local artists whose pieces they believe deserve to be seen.

**MODERN EDEN**

403 FRANCISCO ST.

This gallery is owned by a young couple, who live a few doors down the street, jeweler Kim Larsen and painter Bradley Platz. Platz’s paintings might best be described as “academic surrealism.” He’s created, for instance, a realistic crucifixion scene, which takes a startling twist that is more appropriately viewed than described.

The gallery’s name suggests the combination of old and new art that the couple brings to its curated shows. For instance, the work of Sergio Lopez in the gallery’s current exhibit features classic nude. But the gallery has survived as a space, but relies on a stable of local artists whose work they want to showcase. In June, they will be celebrating their first anniversary with a show featuring 16 local artists who have pieces they believe deserve to be seen.

Visitors to this event’s opening may also be entertained by the couple’s dog, Dozer, who on the occasion of my visit was living up to his name.

**ARATA FINE ARTS GALLERY**

450 COLUMBUS AVE.

Next door to Gallery 454 is a space owned by Geri Arata, another Academy of Art student, but one with a very different focus. After Geri graduated in the 1980s with an art degree from San Francisco State, she took up other media, creating everything from ceramics to jewelry to porcelain dolls. For 10 years she operated the successful Village Crafters in Castro Valley that featured the work of local artists. In the meantime, she returned to painting, but is now focusing on the techniques of the Old Masters. She took intensive workshops in Texas and found instructors at the Academy of Art with skill and respect for academic art.

“I noticed that painters trained in classical techniques don’t really have the venue they should have in San Francisco,” she says. So when a space opened up on Columbus Avenue at a price she could afford, she decided to change that. She features artists who make use of the techniques of the centuries old Italian greats. Her work reflects not only their techniques, but often their subjects. Where else can one go to find a large painting of Hercules and the Golden Apples without irony?

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Montgomery Street stone pine
After being bashed again by a garbage truck, the beleaguered stone pine finally has its vertical support in place, with a chicane curving around it. Traffic has to slow down, not only because of the chicane, but because of the fire hydrant with its curb build-out on the sidewalk opposite the tree. There isn’t much clearance between these two new curbs. ADA ramps have also been installed on the sidewalks.

The project took much longer and was much more expensive than anticipated, but none of that was the tree’s fault! The city chose to install ADA ramps and build a build-out around the fire hydrant, but then a worker dropped a tool down the hole that broke a water pipe, torrential rains delayed progress, etc. Now, finally, it’s done.

In addition to the five trees donated by THD, the Friends of Washington Square will donate another three michelia (flowering trees in the magnolia family) and a mayten, which will replace the Italian stone pine that fell over after heavy rains, crushing a bench, but happily no people, in the southwest corner of the park. That stone pine had been crowded for many years by the encroaching street trees, and had been forced to grow only on one side. Thus, it was side-heavy, so when the rains soaked the soil in that corner, which is already a marshy area, it fell. The problem in this case was jurisdictional: the street trees are the responsibility of DPW, and the park trees are the responsibility of Rec/Park.

Ken Maley of FOWS (Friends of Washington Square) did get DPW to prune their ficus a few months ago, but it was too late. The mayten will be happier than the stone pine in that corner near Columbus and Union.

By Judy Irving
Washington Square Large Tree Donation: Jack Early Bequest

Five large evergreen trees will soon be planted in Washington Square, thanks to a bequest from the late Jack Early, whose motto was “Keep the Hill Green!” Craig Heckman, working with Rec/Park staff and gardeners, recently selected locations for the big trees: two Italian stone pines along Stockton, two deodar cedars in the northeast corner and one Canary Island pine in the northwest corner. As soon as exploratory holes are dug and it is determined that the locations can handle large (48 inch) trees, Craig and a representative from Rec/Park will choose the best specimens at Valley Crest, California’s largest tree nursery.

Rec/Park has agreed to stage a planting celebration with THD, which should happen before the end of May, if all goes well. We will e-mail news of this event as soon as it’s scheduled. Just as Ken Maley did for the Friends of Washington Square planting in February, I will purchase a few bottles of champagne for this event, which will be on ice at Café Divine for imbibing after we plant the trees. Can’t wait!

You, too, can participate in keeping Telegraph Hill green: make a gift or bequest to the Telegraph Hill Dwellers’-affiliated nonprofit land trust, the Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, at 470 Columbus Avenue, Suite 211, San Francisco, CA 94133.

These trees are BIG! And beautiful. See photo.

One of five new trees to be transported to Washington Square.

The following letter was sent by THD Board member Judy Irving to the Board of Supervisors Land Use Committee, chaired by Supervisor Scott Wiener, in advance of the committee’s May 2 hearing on historical preservation as a city priority.

I live in the last artists’ compound on Telegraph Hill, the cluster of pre-1906 earthquake cottages known as the “Heslett Compound.” Two other compounds have been razed and replaced by bland, featureless condos that enriched developers, but not the neighborhood. One is on Union Street near Calhoun Terrace, the other on Greenwich Street opposite Julius’ Castle.

In 2001, the Heslett Compound was put on the market. At the time, I was living with Mark Bittner, who was caretaker of one of the cottages, and we’d both fallen in love with the place. Rather than admit defeat and move away, I decided that we were meant to be here because we’d made “The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill” next door, and it felt right that we should stay on the Hill. I put together a group of people to make an offer on the seven dilapidated cottages and three lots on the Greenwich Steps.

Alas, a developer bested our offer and we were given eviction notices. At the end of the eviction waiting period, the developer lowered his offer, saying the cottages could not be saved; he would remove them and build condos. His lower offer reflected his need to spend money on demolition and new construction. Our group, which included a freelance writer, filmmaker and architect, came back to the seller with a final offer, just a tiny bit above the developer’s lower bid. To make a long story short, the artists got the compound.

We agreed that we wanted to fix up the old cottages, rather than destroy them. Built between the 1850s and the 1880s, they’d been rented by cannery workers, artists and longshoremen and had been owned by sea captains, a dancer and a graphic designer. All the cottages felt special, despite needing repairs and paint. We agreed not to expand any cottage’s footprint or envelope. No building is more than two stories high, and there is open space in and around the compound. I worked out an agreement with our neighbor, who purchased the lot with no cottages on it, to have a conservation easement donated to a garden conservancy, so the property would remain a garden forever. Please visit 235-237 Greenwich Steps and see for yourself: without city support or tax breaks, we have preserved the Heslett Compound. Why? Because it’s a lovely place to live and a lovely way to live.

Historic preservation is not just about rules and regulations. It’s what many of us want and strive for because we value the quality of life in San Francisco: We want to live in a unique, human-scale, beautiful place. Quality of life is worth more than money.
DAUGHTER of a SUNSET SCAVENGER

An excerpt from the THD Oral History Project’s Interview with Ines Belli

By Audrey Tomasselli

There was a time when hiring a moving truck at the corner of Union and Columbus was about as easy as hailing a cab today — maybe easier. All around Washington Square, draymen parked home and cart, looking to carry the next load. Around 1918, the mother of Ines Belli took advantage of this convenience when she decided her boys — who were later to become a judge and a lawyer — were being blamed in their Lombard Street neighborhood for vandalism they didn’t commit. “We’re moving,” said Rose Molinari.

“What about my wine?” said Ines’s father, Giovanni. “I don’t care about your wine,” said Rose. “We’re leaving tomorrow.”

So Rose went to the square and hired the movers who transported the family to 948 Union, a property that Ines’s father had built for income, and where Ines Belli has now lived for all but three of her 88 years.

Ines Belli told this story, and many others, as part of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers’ Oral History Project. Reading these interviews, one enters a North Beach time warp, where AT&M machines and cellular-phone stores don’t exist; instead, there are the shops and businesses of a bustling turn-of-the-20th-century immigrant community.

You’re transported to a world where one purchases a funeral wreath at the Azzaro Flower Shop — site of the current day Caffe Roma. Or you cross the street to the Lippis Brothers, now La Boulangerie, to shop for dinner at the “most gorgeous vegetable store you ever saw. You’d go there and they’d wrap everything in a piece of newspaper. You’d get your carrots, your beans and anything that went into minestrone.”

Ines and the other contributors to this project are tangible links to North Beach’s past. They know, for example, that the word ANCHOR, spelled out in tiles at 515 Columbus (in front of the U.S. Restaurant), come from a drug store by that name that was once at that address. And they know the real estate business of getting the young folks married to an immigrant community.

Ines’s father went to work as a garbage man for the Torres company. He soon bought his own horse and wagon, and founded the Scavengers’ Protective Union. That eventually became the Sunset Scavenger Co. To this day, one of Ines’s sons remains involved with the company.

The Immigrant Ethnic

Like many others from immigrant families, Ines has stories of honesty and hard work paying off. “There was a store on Geary called Nathan Dorman, and they had all beautiful crystal and dishes, and Papa had them as a customer. And one day Papa saw this big box outside, and he looked and saw what he thought was glass (he didn’t know anything about crystal). Papa told Mr. Dorman about it, and Mr. Dorman never forgot his honesty. Whenever Papa asked for a raise, he gave it to him without question.”

Buried Treasure?

“Balilla was some kind of Genovese hero, who killed someone with a slingshot. The men had their meetings down in Garibaldi Hall on Broadway between Columbus and Kearny. It was very exclusive. There were only 30 or so members. And new members only got in when someone died.”

Of course, there was the important community business of getting the young folks married to an Italian-American. Typically, a lot of these pairings were sparked at weddings. “That’s how you met people: at weddings.” Ines’s two oldest boys met their wives [who are sisters] at a wedding, and Ines met her future husband, Rino, the same way.

For the whole story of Ines Belli as well as other personal dramas collected by the Oral History Project contact Audrey Tomasselli at 391-1792. Members of THD may borrow these transcripts for a week. Copies are available at the San Francisco History Center at the Main Library.

Thanks to Susan Goldstein of the S.F. Main Library History Center, who put me in touch with Harry Schwartz. This story would not have been possible without the support of Mr. Schwartz, author of ‘Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU’ and curator of the ILWU Oral History Collection at the union’s San Francisco headquarters.

Longshoremen continued from page 5

and/or local taxes.

So, other than those longshoremen enjoying retirement, where are the San Francisco dock workers today? Thanks to work by ILWU members is done in relation to arriving and departing cruise ships. If a cruise ship docks 2,000 passenger and embarks 2,000, some 35 longshoremen will be used on the job.

About three cruise ships come in each month. There are a couple of docks equipped for containers to the south of AT&T Park. Beyond that, San Francisco longshoremen will be traveling, for the foreseeable future, to work in Oakland, Benicia, Crockett and Richmond.

Meanwhile, the discussion of new uses for our once booming waterfront continues.

Most everyone on the block where Ines lived came from the small towns around Chiavari, Italy, and none of them left much behind worth hanging onto. The Molinari family came from hill country. After all, Ines says, “What can you grow on a hill?” In 1929, the Molinari, now prosperous, returned to Italy to examine the property still owned by the family. Ines’s oldest brother looked at the land and told her father, “Whatever you do, don’t leave it to me.”

“It was like that,” says Ines.

For the most part, the early arrivals were single men. “At first,” says Ines, they came to make money and go home, “but then, when my father’s generation came, their idea was to stay.”

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THE ALFA NOSE

By Kathleen Cannon

Sping has sprung, and the Alfa Romeo Spider 77 pops its top and seeks new pastures.

Native American Poetry
Beats the Drums in North Beach

On March 11, Tony Serra’s office on Broadway hosted the Poets’ Gallery (organized by Philip Hackett) in which the theme was Native American poetry. The event was a rich tapestry of Native American poets, storytellers and musicians, many of whom traveled a great distance to deliver vivid memories and tales of childhood, family and friends. The audience was enchanted by the poets’ works on their ancestors. In “Bush Ghost,” Geoffrey Todd Lake (Nest Pierce) told of his mother, who worked for the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. Linda Noel of Ukiah recited from “Mountain Sinich.” Lake stole the show with his poetry, prose and humor. “What do you call a poet without an ‘old lady’? Homeless.” Or was that Luke Warm Water? They were all great, but the law offices were so jammed the poets were hard to track.

Showcasing S.F. Bay, Native American Poetry

By Kathleen Cannon

event, how the great number of tourists (some 250,000) were the projects to be completed prior to the 2013 result of the America’s Cup deal. Of foremost concern “There would be no highrises on the waterfront” as a members were guaranteed impromptu highrises were the northern waterfront. The finger piers were based on and the influences that formed the development of the all great, but the law offices were so jammed the poets earthy world. The new rector, the Rev. Gregory Coiro, ordered letterhead envelopes that declared the North Beach church, “The Heart of San Francisco.” Entrance to the Porziuncola is through the gift shop, on the Columbus Avenue corner.

Grant Avenue at Vallejo

Move down, move down. When the Porziuncola moved back into St. Francis, Al’s Attire took the Grant Avenue corner space, and a Semaphore ad, grazie! A Mediterranean blue taqueta opened next door. Next to it, is a storefront with no name, where three young, entrepreneurial partners sat on a church bench left over from the St. Francis gift shop and discussed their concept: T-shirts and what to call their store. Grassroots local merchandizing, but T-shirts in North Beach? Worth watching.

Boat Days and Nights at the Dolphin Club

Every Tuesday evening from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., volunteers gather in the Dolphin Club boathouse to hammer, sand and varnish boats under the guidance of boat builder Jon Bielinski. Workers used to be treated to pizza until Connie Wellen changed the menu. Now the boat nights offer a hearty and good healthy dinners prepared by member volunteers. Herbs come from Wellen’s garden plot at Fort Mason. Some nights there are 20 diners. Other nights, such as when the volunteers moved the historic barge Wieland, there were 60. What is the difference between the Dolphin Club and the South End Rowing Club? Very little, other than that they were established four years apart[1877 vs.1873]. The South End holds its boat night on Thursdays. Both clubs are open to the public during certain hours for a small stipend. Membership offers a lot. Check their websites. Connie notes that during the summer, sailing on the historic scow schooner Alma is available to the public at www.maritime.org. The historic clubs offer good company, a chance to hone carpentry skills and a unique view of historic San Francisco from both shore and bay. When the America’s Cup work begins along the waterfront, the barge may offer an answer to transportation — row to work and back.

BOOKS ON THE HILL

Join other books lovers in a lively discussion of books read in com-
mon. We meet the first Monday of each month at the home of one of our members. CALL CAROL PETERSON, 956-7817.

WATERFRONT COMMITTEE

THE NORTHEAST WATERFRONT COMMUNITY VISION BEGINNS A DIALOGUE

By Andy Katz

THD Waterfront Committee chairperson

In February 2008, District 3 Supervisor David Chiu requested that the Port of San Francisco work with the city’s Planning Department to analyze and develop appropriate uses for the seawall lots along the northeast Embarcadero. The Northeast Embarcadero Study Design Recommendations and Urban Design Guidelines were the result of this collaboration. Many neighborhood residents, who attended meetings to solicit public input for the northeast Embarcadero study, became frustrated that the planning process did not take their comments and community needs to heart. To them, this was not a truly comprehensive planning process, and comprehen-
sive planning was the least that could be expected when the jewel of our waterfront was involved.

The Northeast Waterfront Community Vision was partly born out of this frustration. More important, it was an attempt to begin a true community-based dis-
cussion of the use of the seawall lots on the inland side of the Embarcadero from the Ferry Building to North Point Street. Friends of Golden Gateway (FOGG), the Telegraph Hill Dwellers (THD), the Golden Gateway Tenants Association (GGTA), and the Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association (BCNA), and other resi-
dents and local merchants, came together to brainstorm at summer and fall workshops to achieve a consensus based on community input and needs. The resulting plan was prepared by Asian Neighborhood Design and planning consultant Brad Paul.

The vision for the northeast waterfront was articu-
lated as follows: “Community members see the devel-
opment of the northeast waterfront as a necklace of intimate green spaces, between a low-rise mix of commercial, residential, cultural, and recreational uses that honor the waterfront’s history and topography, connected to the city’s neighborhoods through strong pedestrian-friendly streets.”

Community members wanted not only to preserve, but also to expand active recreation space and parks. They articulated a desire for better connections between Chinatown, North Beach and the Embarcadero. To

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Community members wanted not only to preserve, but also to expand active recreation space and parks. They articulated a desire for better connections between Chinatown, North Beach and the Embarcadero. To make this possible they recognized the need to improve pedestrian, bicycle and transit access to and from the neighborhoods to the Embarcadero. They also wanted to more efficiently utilize existing parking rather than build large and expensive parking garages.

Neighborhood residents wanted to come up with alternatives for the port’s seawall lots that the commu-
ity could not only support, but that were also eco-
nomically feasible and politically palatable.

Now that San Francisco is involved in intense planning stages for the America’s Cup, we can look to the Northeast Waterfront Community Vision as a blueprint to advocate proposals already articulated for the northeast waterfront. We have strength in numbers knowing that many neighborhood groups, including THD, are working to push for this vision.

“A Community Vision for San Francisco’s Northeast Waterfront” can be viewed on the THD website at www.thd.org.
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THD Committees Need You
Get involved in our neighborhood and make a difference! Contact a THD committee and help keep the Hill a special place to live.

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PARKING & TRANSPORTATION: Supports efforts to ease congestion, optimize neighborhood parking, and enhance public transit.

PLANNING & ZONING: Co-Chairs Nancy Shanahan & Mary Lipian. Reviews and monitors proposed development projects for consistency with applicable laws and neighborhood character. Contact Nancy at Nancy.Shanahan@thd.org or Mary at Mary.Lipian@thd.org

SOCIAL & PROGRAM: Co-Chairs Lynn Sanchez & Merle Goldstone. Organizes neighborhood social events, group dinners, and quarterly membership meetings.

Contact Lynn at Lynn.Sanchez@thd.org or Merle at Merle.Goldstone@thd.org

WEB SITE = www.thd.org

Visit the THD website to explore a wealth of neighborhood history and get the latest information about what’s happening on the Hill.

TELEGRAPH HILL Dwellers
Schedules of Committee Meetings
Planning & Zoning: Last Thursdays. Call for time and location. 986-7070, 563-3494, 391-5652

Look to the THD website for information on THD events. Log on to http://www.thd.org

The winner of the Semaphore Picture Caption Contest will be announced in our next issue.

THD Welcomes the following new members and members who have rejoined, March-April: New members: Halli & Robert Celi, Ibby Clifford, Cynthia Crisalli, Lynn Sanchez, Susan Snow, and Donald Yates. Former members who have rejoined: Anne Buchanan, Jane & Neal Lozins, and Bill Thornton.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

For a Voice in Your Neighborhood Join Telegraph Hill Dwellers.

Sign Up or Sign a Friend Up as a member of Telegraph Hill Dwellers. Complete and mail to THD, PO Box 330159, SF, CA 94133

NAME: __________________________
ADDRESS: __________________________
CITY: __________________________ STATE: _______ ZIP: __________________________
PHONE __________________________ EMAIL: __________________________

CHECK ENCLOSED FOR 1-YEAR MEMBERSHIP

Individual $30__ Household $45__ Senior (age 65 and over) $20__ Senior Household $35__

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THE SEMAPHORE # 194 Spring 2011

FEATURES

When Bebop Filled the Night .................. 1
THD Is More Than Politics ................... 1
THD Hosts discussion on America’s Cup and the Waterfront .......... 3
New THD Board Members Are a Variety Pack .... 3
Where Have All the Longshoremen Gone? ...... 4
Elvis Christ ................................... 5
Original Joe’s Coming to North Beach ........... 6
Board Art Imports ................................ 8-9

Semaphore Classic:
Bachelors on the Hill, circa 1955 ............ 10

Beyond the Neighborhood:
The Family Service Agency ..................... 10
New Galleries Signal Art Renaissance in North Beach .............. 11

One Vote for Preservation .................... 12
Semaphore Classic:
Daughter of a Sunset Scavenger ............. 13

COLUMNS

The President’s Corner ...................... 2
From the Desk of Supervisor Chiu .......... 4
Parks, Trees & Birds Committee Report .... 12
The Alfa Nose ................................ 14
Waterfront Committee Report .............. 14

THD BUSINESS

Board Motions ................................ 2
Board of Directors .......................... 15
THD Committees ............................ 15
Membership Info ........................... 15

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