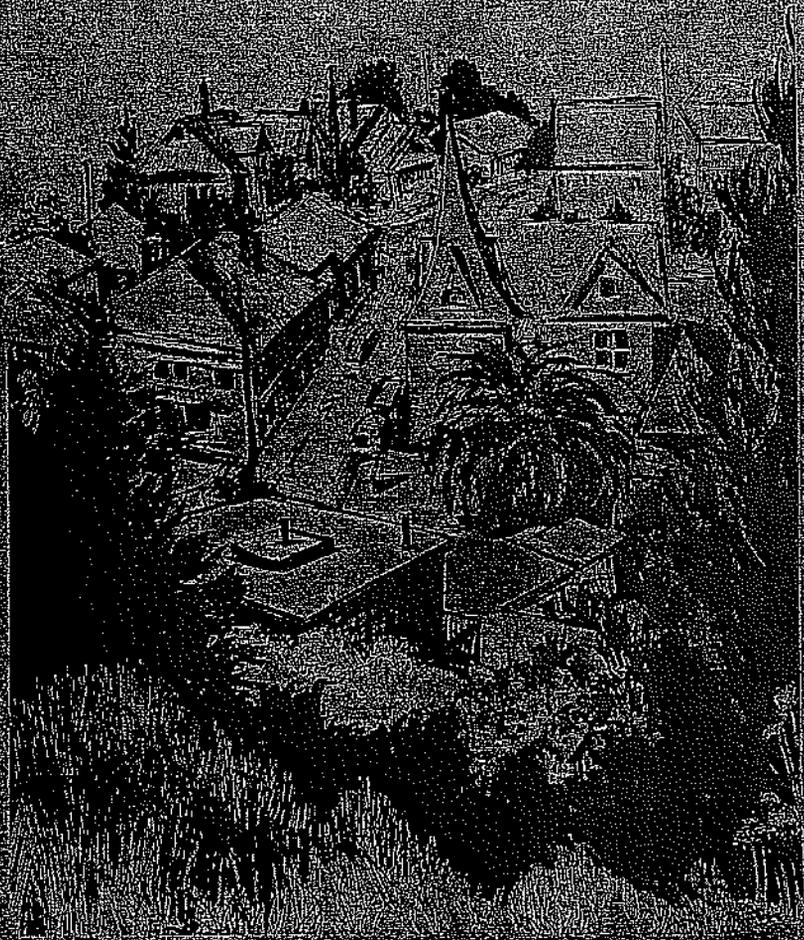


THIS POINT

in time



an historic view of Point Richmond

THIS POINT
in time

An Historic View of Point Richmond, California

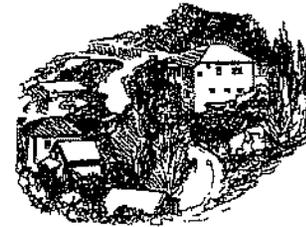
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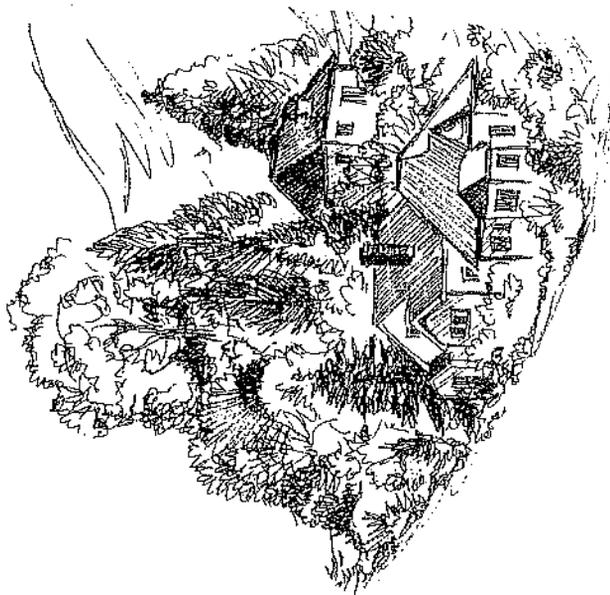
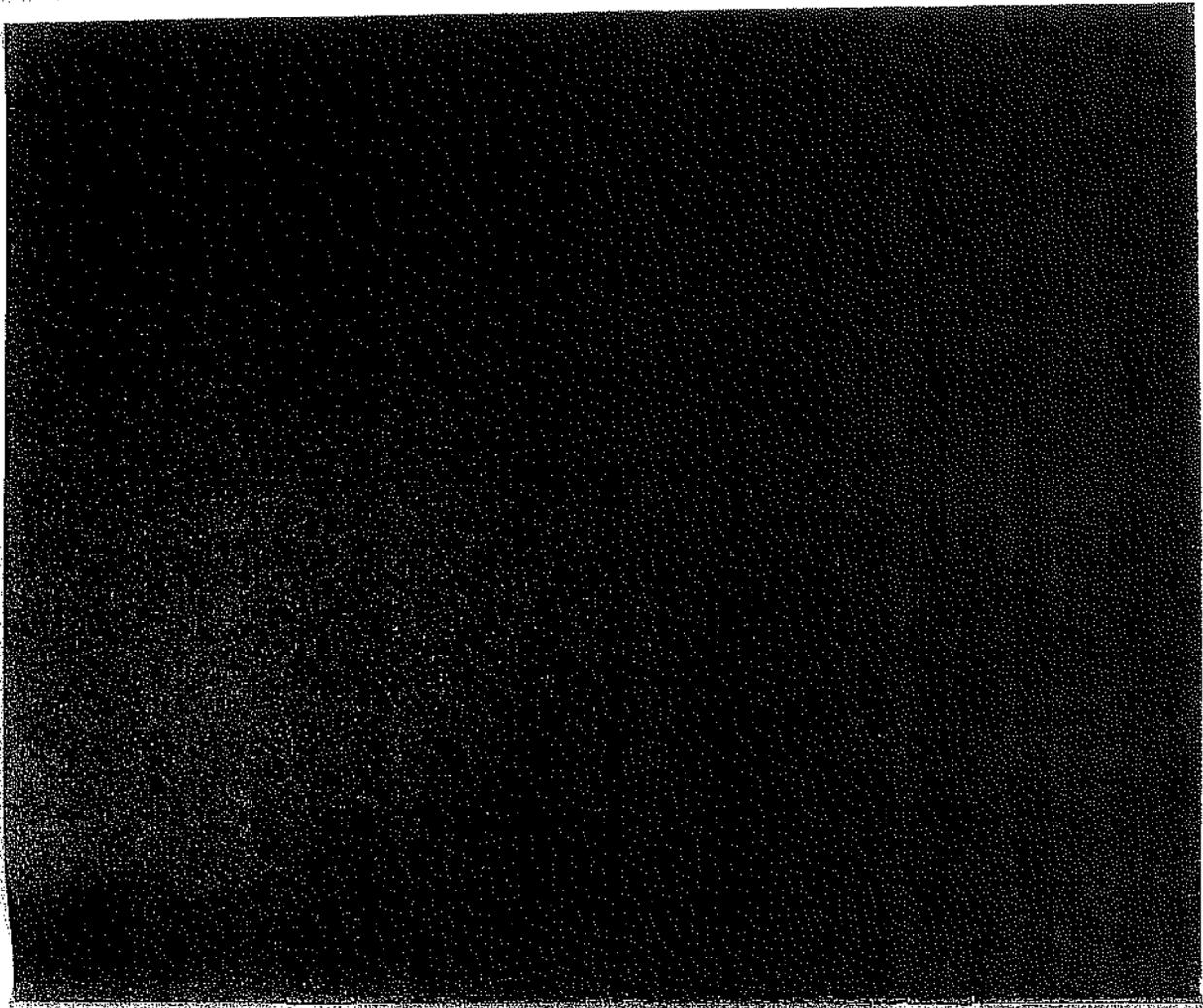
Illustrations by Donna Roselius



1980

The Point Richmond History Association

i



WINEHAVEN

Winehaven, which was the name of the entire community built in the area early in this century, contained one of the world's largest wineries, a number of company-owned dwellings, a hotel and its own school and post office.

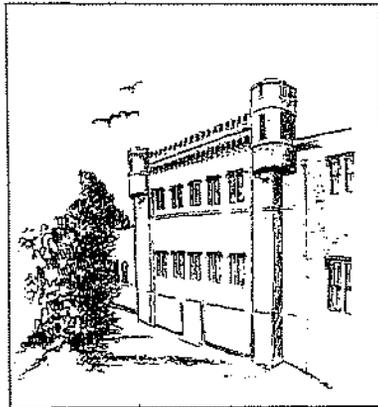
The winery was erected in 1908 by the California Wine Association. The site was chosen because grapes could be brought in by gondola cars from the San Joaquin Valley, and ships could dock here to load wines for many ports. Before prohibition, "Calwa" brand wines were shipped all over the world. Riverboats also made regular stops to load wines for valley communities.

The winery could press 25,000 tons of grapes per day. It had more than 3,000 vats for aging the wine, and an eight-million gallon warehouse. A great variety of wines and fine champagne were produced, and from one to five thousand gallons of wine were shipped out daily. A local newspaper, in 1913, proclaimed Winehaven "the largest industry in the universe" — it had increased its capital stock from ten to twenty million dollars.

In 1914, Franklin D. Roosevelt visited Richmond. He was then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and his stop here was part of an inspection tour to locate a naval base and a fuel depot. The naval base location that appealed to Roosevelt was Point Isabel (since flattened and being sat upon by the Co-op warehouse and the Bulk Mail plant), but the site chosen eventually was Mare Island. Roosevelt's choice for a fuel depot, however, did become a reality. He toured Point Molate, but accounts tell of no stop for a sip of wine. Although the fuel depot was not established until World War II, this was the spot he chose.

The Winehaven community consisted of several hundred people during its productive days. When prohibition forced it to close, according to one account federal officers knocked the stoppers out of the bungholes, dumping over half a million gallons of wine into the Bay, and for a brief period, fishermen caught fish without the need of poles.

Temporarily, the winery was converted to grape juice production, with the hope that, after prohibition production could resume. However, Winehaven never returned to its once prestigious place in wine producing circles, and with the threat of World War II, the Navy purchased the entire site, which is now called



Point Molate. Many of the original buildings, including the impressive brick winery, are still used. Several families are in residence, and the romantic little spot reluctantly handles fuel oil for the Navy instead of wine for the world. Many of the original buildings are homes for Navy personnel, and the impressive brick winery is a biological field station. The Navy still uses the romantic little spot as a fuel depot.



THE FISH REDUCTION PLANT

The Alaskan Salmon Company had plants and canneries both in Point Richmond and in Monterey. Northeastern Point Richmond was the site of large fish reduction plants owned by the Union Fish Company, and later by the Alaska Salmon Company. As the name implies, most of the fish processed were salmon, millions of which were available from the waters near Point Richmond.

In the reduction process, the fish were separated into their useable components, oil and fish meal. The oils were transferred to perfume factories, and the meal to fertilizer plants. A concrete boat brought in the catch. The vessel was large enough to transport tons of fish, plus provide living quarters for the crew. The company was forced to close when the salmon disappeared from this area. The buildings stood vacant until they were used for a whaling station. The huge whole carcasses of whales could be seen (and smelled) until, in the seventies, whaling was controlled, and that business left the Point also.

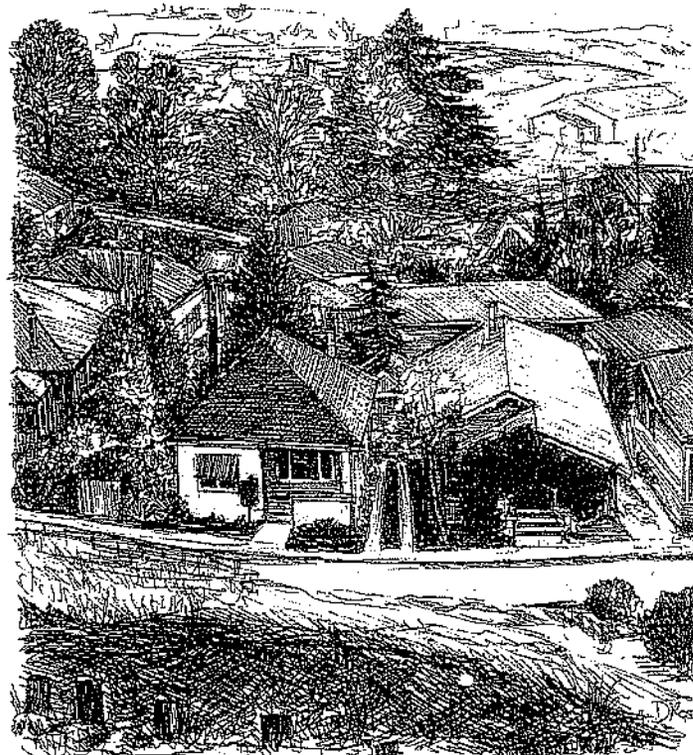
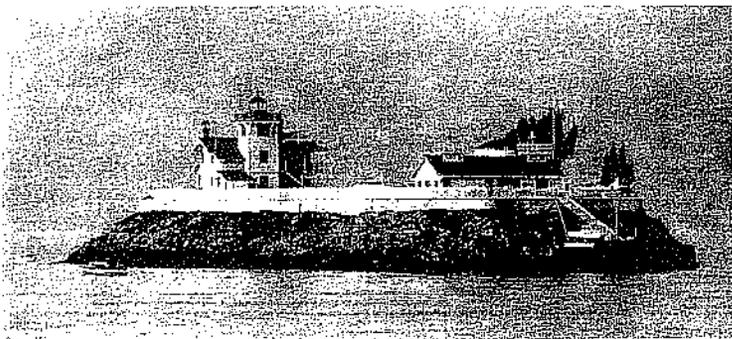
MEMORIES OF THE LIGHTHOUSE

by Don Church

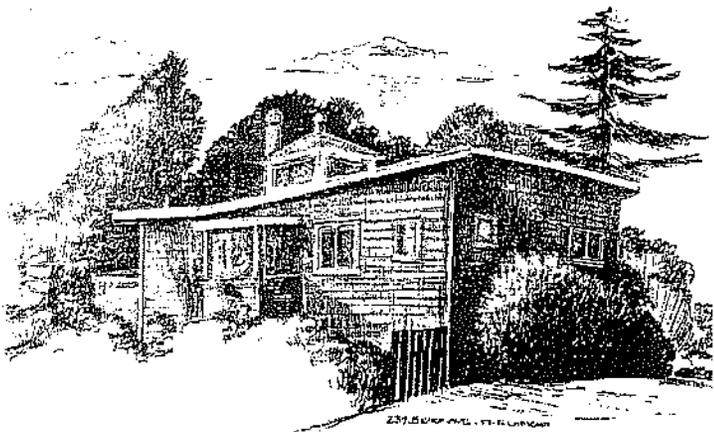
The campaign waged to save the Lighthouse brings back memories of weekend trips to the Lighthouse when I was a child. We walked to the old Standard Oil Carpenter shop to catch the train which carried workers to the Can Factory located at Point Orient. We got off at Point San Pablo wharf where Bill Bailey, the wharfinger, would grab his megaphone and call to the Lighthouse. Phillip and Folke Stenmark, the lighthousekeeper's sons, would row in and pick us up.

We played various games and fished a lot, and would go for a row when the tide was slack or the Bay calm. It was seldom that we played baseball, since every ball over the fence meant lowering the boat, rowing quite a distance, and a hard row against the tide to get back.

Captain John Stenmark, a native of Stockholm, Sweden, served as East Brother's Lighthouse keeper for twenty years, with his wife, two sons and two daughters. He became keeper of New Years Island Lighthouse near Santa Cruz as reward for his brave rescue of the Assistant Chief Lighthouse inspector when their supply boat capsized. His only contact with the outside world was the once-a-month delivery of supplies, and his rescues of capsized fishermen. As a reward for heroic service, he was placed in charge of the Brother's Island Lighthouse off Point San Pablo. At the end of his service there, the Stenmark family moved to Fifteenth Street in Richmond, and operated the Stenmark House in Richmond for several years. Captain Stenmark died in 1915.



BUENA VISTA AVENUE - POINT RICHMOND



V. THE PERIPHERY

THE SHRIMP CAMP

by Don Church

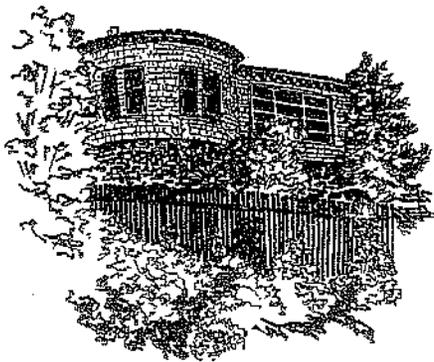
Sometime between 1865 and 1870 a shrimp camp was established on the Bay between Point Castro and Point Molate. It became the home of thirty-five to forty Chinese people until 19, 2. The large fresh shrimp were delivered to markets in the Bay Area, the smaller ones were dried and exported to China.

A photo taken in 1904 shows about thirty shacks, five wharves and ten sampans. A popular Sunday stroll included a stop at the camp for fresh shrimp to complete a picnic lunch. A large bag cost twenty-five cents. The dried shrimp lay on an area of smooth ground, about fifty by seventy-five feet in size. They were turned over daily by sweeping over them with a broom. When I was a small boy, a man delivered shrimp periodically to the Point residents. Two baskets, each weighing 75 to 100 pounds, hung from a long stick carried across his shoulders. He walked with a springing gait, so it seemed that he only felt the impact of the full load as his foot touched ground.

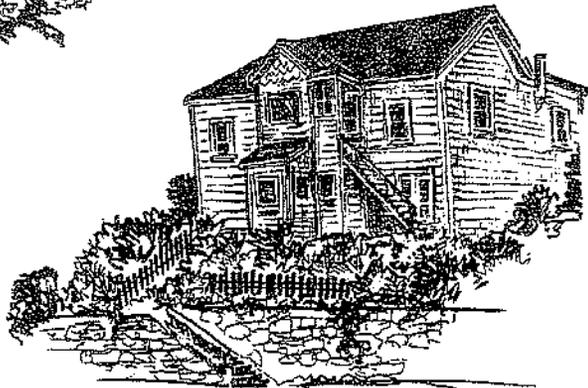
In 1912, a five-year moratorium was called on shrimp fishing, and this was the death knell for Shrimp Camp. Our Washington School graduating class of May, 1913, hiked to Winehaven, and on the way, stopped to see the only remaining inhabitant of the camp. We collected twenty-five cents among us, and offered it to the old recluse. He demonstrated his gratitude by lighting punks and praying before an idol.

Vandals destroyed much of the camp in the following years, but in 1915, the local newspaper prophesied in colorful and romantic words, the return of the camp, and reported, "Yesterday a launch containing several directors of a Chinese Shrimp Company looked over the camp with the intention of immediately commencing fishing. That the shrimp bed near the Chinese camp is overly crowded with crescent-shaped crustaceans is shown by the report of statisticians in which is recorded the notes that during the years of 1910-11 five to six hundred tons of the table delicacies were shipped to San Francisco for exportation."

Nothing more was heard about the company, but Duke Stairly, son of the Point's first banker and a commercial fisherman, would often come in with a ton of shrimp for which he received two or three cents per pound, wholesale. The supplies decreased and prices increased, though, and Mr. Stairly reported to Mr. Church in 1968 that he knew of only one commercial boat in the area, and that one was based in San Francisco.



266 Western Drive



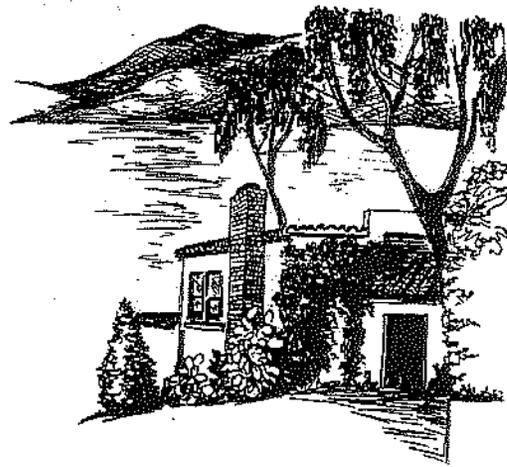
200 Bishop Avenue

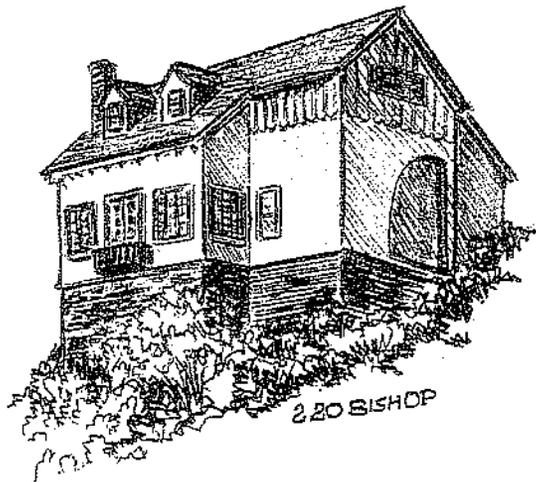


204 Western Drive

The house at 307 Western Drive was built in 1932 by Alan Gilmore. The architect was John Funk, who also helped design the later addition. The basic, 1200 square-foot, California Ranch style home was bought in 1934 by Leland Vaughan. Mr. Vaughan was head of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley. His expertise is evident in the garden which surrounds and enhances the low, comfortable lines of the house. This is a big house, but one which is so snugly set into the hill it does not appear so. It is included in "Sunset Ideas for Hillside Homes", 2d ed. 1956. A 1,000 square foot wing was added in 1941, and the entire house remodeled in 1954. All of the changes preserve the essential integrity of the intimate water view, and the flow of the landscaping, with its variety of terraces and patios designed to catch the sun, shield from the wind, and encourage outdoor enjoyment of the ever changing view.

Cypress Point is the promontory that juts farthest into the Bay along the Point's shoreline. Crouched at the end of the road, on the cliff, is Louise and Veil Hammond's house at 645 Cypress Point Road. The house is of a simple modern design, with large windows overlooking the Bay. The houses in Cypress Point are almost invisible from above, at road level. Several of the houses here have been built long enough ago to have fascinating histories. The next edition of this book will attempt to give a glance into the not-so distant history, involving some significant homes. You can catch glimpses of roof tops as you walk toward the tunnel, toward Keller's Beach and the new Regional Park, George Miller Jr. Park. The newest addition to Point Richmond is out the road past the park, at Brickyard Cove.

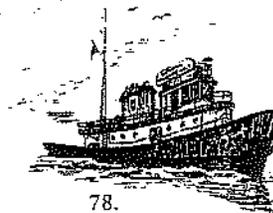




This house at 220 Bishop, was built shortly after the earthquake of 1906 by J.D. Cruickshank for Frank Palmer. Cruickshank, who was a carpenter, was probably his own architect. Palmer was transferred to El Segundo, so he rented his house to the Stanley family who subsequently bought the house. At one time the Lester Turley's rented it and rejected an offer to purchase it for \$1800. They bought three lots on Western Drive, instead. John Holman apparently paid the \$1800, and kept the house until 1937, when he sold it to Robert and Trannie Dornan. The Dornan's promptly enlarged it to accommodate their three children, Robert Betty and Dorothy. Raymond DeSanno, an architect associated with building the Berkeley Schools, was hired to remodel the house. The attic was finished, adding dormer windows; a new porch and entry hall added, and the old porch was added to the living room. The Fernauld concrete block fireplace was replaced with Richmond Reds from the Point Brickyard. Hardwood floors were laid, and French doors made to open on a small balcony, from which there is a panoramic view. The exterior was stuccoed, bricked and wood-paneled. The kitchen was not remodeled until 1965. An impressive stone wall along Bishop Avenue was built in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration. Rock from the Blake Brothers Quarry was bought by Mr. Dornan, but labor was supplied under the program. (Other stone walls were constructed in the Point by the W.P.A., and rock was free if you were willing to accept ordinary stones.) In the garden there is ample room for the flowers Trannie loves, and a basement serves as a plant house and canning room. Trannie carries on a smaller version of her husband's Richmond Supply Company.

In 1923 Eugenio and Maria Forner came here from Northern Italy and settled in a little "shack" on Richfield land where Shipyard 2 is located now. Maria was happy to find an old acquaintance, Vitoriana Bianchin, living nearby. After five years of roughing it, they were asked to leave, and both women were delighted. Their husbands took the money they had saved from their earnings at the brickyard, and bought homes on the Bay side of Point Richmond (it was less desirable then). The Forners bought a little three-room house that had the luxury of a bath, at 200 Bishop Avenue. It had been built in 1906. The depression struck the year after they bought their home, so it was not always certain they would have the one dollar per year they owed in taxes. They could have bought Kozy Kove for \$50, but that was out of the question because Eugenio was earning only four dollars per day. The Forner's sons, Luciano and Leo, grew up in the little house, and after World War II, when building materials became available, they added two bedrooms and a bath while retaining the basic style of the house. Mrs. Forner is Mrs. Buziol now, and can be seen tending her extensive garden or carrying groceries up the hill. Her son "Chano" lives on Crest Avenue, and enjoys reminiscing about the "good old days" in Point Richmond when there was an amusement park at Kozy Kove, and there was a lot more open space.

For a number of years the only house between 206 and 350 Western Drive was the house at 266 Western. It is an interesting shingled house with a heavy brick foundation, and an intriguing round-tower living room. A perky little dormer window in the east side of the roof was eliminated in an attic fire in the '30's, and a massive brick stairway, leading from the originally open brick porch to Western Drive has been replaced by wooden steps. Captain Clark built the house so that he could have a view of the Bay, and moved in with his bride in 1906. After the Clarks moved across town, a family named Finley lived at 266 for several years, and rumors were that the Finley girls held dances in their living room. Ed and Jane Bellegarde Hurley bought the house before World War II. Ed Hurley's father, a building inspector, advised them against the house because he thought it was about to fall down. The Hurley's subsequently moved, and the Fostiaks became the owners of the house in 1942. They have kept the house essentially unchanged. A garage-shop-storage area was added at the upper (Bishop) end of the property in the late '40's. Ted Fostiak, a Tug Boat Captain, and his wife Sheila, have raised their family here, and now enjoy entertaining their grandchildren in it. Sheila is widely known for her culinary successes, and for her service to Meals-On-Wheels.



This area starts at the crest of the hill and sweeps down to the Bay. Some of the oldest homes in Point Richmond are on Crest Avenue (see the Earliest Homes section), and it is interesting to note that they are all on the City side of the street. Building on the "weather" side of the hill didn't catch on in a big way until building materials permitted it. Views were not important in those days either; protection from the storm outweighed aesthetic considerations.

As you walk down Crest, Bishop, Western and Cypress Point, try to picture the goats on the hill, the extensive produce gardens and the livestock which many families kept in the early days.



Pictures of the Point in 1904 show the house at 37 Crest. It was occupied by a Mrs. Peterson at that time. In 1906 a man named Clark bought the house and lived there with his grandfather.

One of the most colorful owners was Mr. Burgermeir, who was known as the "Old Sea Captain." More recently, first Mr. and Mrs. Nick Vaughn and then the Lindenaus, lived in and began remodeling the place. Pat and Ed Hoiland bought it in 1965 "as is". It needed a foundation immediately. After putting this lovely little Victorian on a firm footing, they began opening up the interior. Ed used his architectural training to remove every interior wall that was not essential for support. The result is a long living-dining-kitchen area on one half of the first floor which opens up to a deck they added. The other half of the first floor is a large bedroom and bath. Stairs lead to the second story from the kitchen area at the back of the house. The second story is one big bedroom study area.

Unfortunately, Ed's work has lured them elsewhere. After living through the remodeling process, they and their sons Eric and Sten, have had to leave the finished product for the enjoyment of their tenants.



Hazel Collins inherited the charming little wood frame house from her father who had built it around 1904. She married John King, and they made this their home until her death. Mr. King then married Mary Page, and they lived here until March, 1964, when they moved into their new house next door. In July of that year, the Kings were killed in an automobile accident, so 27 Crest was sold to Willard Judkins.

The kitchen was increased in size in 1915, and later, Mr. King finished off the basement, and added a deck. Willard, who is a carpenter by profession, has not changed the exterior except to add a fence, but he has opened up the interior by removing a couple of walls. What was seven small rooms is five comfortable ones. He has also added a magnificent wine cellar where he makes and ages his wines. Willard, his wife Elaine, an English teacher and musician, and their daughters, Elizabeth and Susan, have created a very inviting home.

Harry Chapman, Richmond City Engineer, had a beautiful big red-shingled house built on Crest Avenue in 1916. He lived in it for a while and then rented it to the De Luna and Palmateer families.

Charles and Thekla Peterson bought it for their growing family. Charles Peterson, who had come from Sweden in 1898, was Chief Marine Engineer for Standard Oil. He helped to found the Point Masonic Lodge, and was its first Worshipful Master.

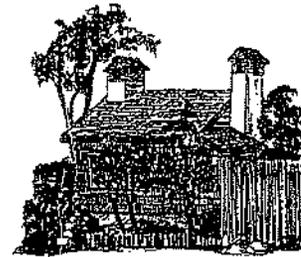
John Lindahl, a Marine Engineer for Standard Oil, and his wife, Johanna, lived in the last house near the Bay on Marine Street when they decided to build their dream house on the bluff. They raised their two children, Alice and Stanley there. After Johanna's death, Richard and Vienna Smith bought the house. Vienna Bono Smith had grown up in the house at the bottom of the bluff where Western turns. (Jerry Feagley lives there now.) The Smiths still live there. The only change in the house is the application of asbestos shingles. The Costa de Sol housing development is about to spring up in front of this house, down the bluff to the Bay.

Charles and Thekla Peterson had Fagerstrom build the house at 483 Western in 1906. The little white shingled house surrounded by fruit trees was about a block from the Bay where he tied his launch. The Petersons had six children. Karin and Maja married brothers from Crockett named Palko. The Petersons outgrew their little home and moved to Crest Avenue. They rented their house to tenants who chopped down the orchard, so they sold their former home to Lars Larson. In 1965, the present owners Doug and Penny Greiner and their family, bought the home, and have rebuilt and redesigned the place, changing the entrance, adding skylights, rebuilding walls, and making an entirely different home, and a very beautiful one.

The houses on Western Drive, as you travel south, are mostly hidden from viewing with ease. Founder of the Richmond Art Center, Mrs. Hazel Salmi, still lives in the unusually designed home that she and her husband Martin designed and built, connected to the house occupied for many years by Major Hill. Farther south, the Chiles' house is surrounded by trees and protected from the road by a wall, nestled in its own spot on the Bay. Rising up to Bishop Avenue, the house at the junction of Casey and Bishop is now owned by the Strayer family. Long the Bianchin house, the Bianchin family purchased it as a little two-room cottage with an outside "john". Their children, Bruno and Mary, grew up here. Mary Bianchin Highfill remembers the winemaking that went on under the house. She said that when the wine began to ferment, the place reeked. All Italian families made wine, each buying a different variety of grape, so that they could sample each others' wine. After Bruno's death, Mrs. Bianchin moved in with her daughter, and sold the house to the Strayers.



SOUTH CORNER
(Area 8)



Western Drive Home Equipment

Charles Perault started the house at 519 Golden Gate in 1905, but before he finished it the 1906 earthquake occurred, creating such a shortage of building materials that he had to send to Chicago for the front door, fireplace and hardware.

The street was originally level with the foundation of the house, but the City graded the street, and Mr. Perault had to built the retaining wall you see. When he did that, he also dug out the ground that had risen above the street, and created a five-room apartment under the house. The Perault home became the social center for the young people of the Point because Mrs. P. loved to entertain. Ruby, her daughter, married George Ellis in 1913, and moved to Bakersfield, but in 1934 she moved back into the family home, and stayed until hse went to live with her daughter, Marjorie Stone.

Drew McEachern and Billy Bumbaugh own 519 Golden Gate now. They are restoring it to its original beauty with such care that they are removing all of the paint from woodwork and brass door knobs.

The large house at 646 Western Drive has grown from very modest beginnings. In 1904, Sidney and Elizabeth Gnaga owned a two room house on the site. While Elizabeth was on a trip to the East Coast, Sidney and his father decided to add on to their small abode. They added a living room downstairs and created a two-bedroom second story on the house. Upon her return, Mrs. Gnaga was very disappointed because two bedrooms was hardly enough for a couple with four children. Two of the Gnaga children were born in the house: Sidney Jr. in the kitchen in 1905, and Hortense in one of the bedrooms. (Later, Hortense bore her daughter Penny in the same room—and used one of the built in redwood drawers as a basinet.) Goldy Gnaga Gebhart Shrewsbury recalls that when the '06 earthquake occurred her mother sent the children in one direction to say their prayers while their father sent them in the other direction to tend the chickens which were flying around the yard. When things calmed down a bit they all went down the hill to the end of Marine Street and watched San Francisco burn. Debris from the fire blew over them.

The Lord family bought the house in 1968. They have remodeled twice. In 1971, In 1971 the upstairs was converted from two to three bedrooms by incorporating a space where the roof slanted; a deck was added, the front porch was included in the living room, and the bathrooms were redone. In 1980 the kitchen was remodeled and a new dining room and laundry room created a new wing. Linda Wilson has been the architect for all of their work. Katherine Lord is a member of the Richmond Unified School District Board. She resides here with her two daughters, Hilary and Alison.





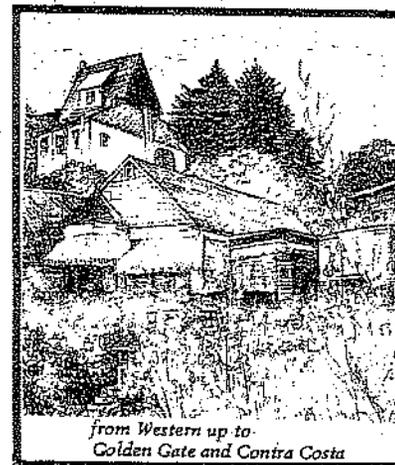
BOTTOM OF WATER STREET



423 HIGH STREET

see her from Casey Drive. The two girls thought life was awfully dull here, and they felt deprived because the kids across town made it clear that only poor kids lived out here in "goat country". Now Anita's son, Stephen Christiansen, owns and lives in the house at 423 High Street — now surrounded by new construction.

In 1908 Jacob Faber, an assistant superintendent at Standard Oil, built this house on a triangular lot between Golden Gate and Contra Costa. When he was transferred to El Segundo he sold the house to Mr. Herb Whalen and his bride, Henry Gallo, who owned Henry's Taxi, bought the place from the Whalens, and lived there until he died. The Smith family, Gracie Barnhart Purdue, and Mr. and Mrs. William McFadden owned it for periods of time before Judy and Alan Coleman bought it in 1971. It is a beautiful shingled house with a peaked roof. The first floor has a living room, dining room, kitchen and library. The second floor contains two bedrooms and a bath. Few changes have been made to this well designed house except the addition of a large kitchen. The original woodwork and fireplace are of particular interest.



from Western up to
Golden Gate and Contra Costa



483 Western Drive
(before remodeling)

After taking time to explore Arizona Street, Alvarado leads back down to East Richmond. Walking toward the harbor, the structure at 317 brings to mind an era long past. Built in 1903 by R.L. Fernauld, a contractor who developed and patented the cement blocks that adorn many homes in Richmond, this house and many others show the use of the Fernauld blocks in foundations, doorways and fireplaces.

This house has been divided into flats and has had many occupants. The current occupant is Mrs. William Keller. Many Point residents remember Keller's Beach when it belonged to Nellie and Gus Keller. A story in the section of this book on Kozy Kove mentions a law suit brought against Nellie Keller.

Turning back toward central Point Richmond, we pause at number 215 East Richmond, a bungalow style house. This home was built in 1906, when it faced the marshland and its occupants fished where Washington School now stands.

Six owners and various changes have left this house with its original quality and its feeling of serenity. Detached from the house, an old brick garage faces Nevada Street. It is now used as a workshop, but it has a cellar once used for food storage.

This property is characterized by an enchanting garden, which was originally landscaped by Adachi Nursery in the 1930's as a "model". It has been redone by the present owners. The small, well planned garden provides a sense of privacy, variety and of spaciousness for the Burmans, who have lived there since 1972.

A short walk to 205 East Richmond finds us at a large corner house that was built in 1904. Henry and Emma Morelli made their home here until the mid'40's. Originally this big house had a sitting room and a parlor, which have since been combined to make a large living room. Oneida and Jason Burtner, Evelyn and William Hogan and Melissa and Owen Archie have lived here. Zoanna Kille bought the house in 1963, and raised her five children in the house. They are recovering from a fire that occurred last October. There was evidence in several rooms that another fire had damaged the house, prior to 1963.

After visiting Oregon Street, your tour of this area of Point Richmond, where the past reaches out through old, well loved homes and friendly smiles of residents, is complete.

On May 28, 1919, Robert Dornan, West Side Supply man, arrived in time to save a foundering bovine belonging to Mohamed, who is making the old Standard School into apartments. The cow had wandered into the Standard Oil levee, which is filled with dredger mud, and only its head was sticking out. Bob got a rope and pulled the animal free.

THE NORTHWEST AREA

(Areas 6 and 7)

Areas six and seven combine to provide you with a scenic one mile stroll. Start at the top of Water Street which was the site of our first reservoir. Go down to Santa Fe and on around to Pacific Avenue where you can still enjoy an unobstructed view of San Francisco, Angel Island, the Golden Gate and Marin County. Turn up High Street and go west on Golden Gate to Marine. Peek at the Standard Oil Refinery (now called Chevron U.S.A.). It is one of the reasons our little community started when it did and grew the way it did. Turn down Marine one block and then start back on Western (heading east). At Clarence go out on the bluff and check the long wharf, where Standard receives crude oil and sends its refined products on their way aboard huge tankers. Also, look for some of the birds and ducks that frequent the shoreline in search of sea life. Then continue your return trip along Western as it dips and turns and leads you to Casey - where the walk ends.

The little five room house at the foot of Water Street seems old, but its date of origin is uncertain. Mary Blesio has lived in it with her family since 1942, and she says that the asbestos shingles had already been applied to the exterior when she arrived.

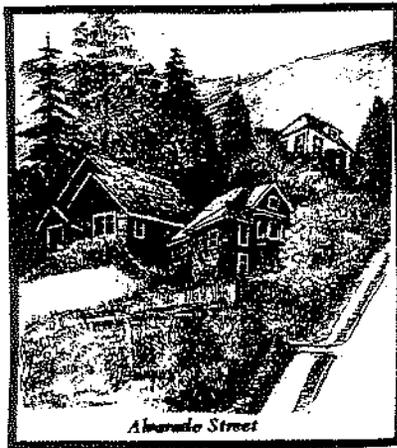
When Edward and Theresa Barra came here from northern Italy, they felt at home because Point Richmond reminded them of Ascona, Switzerland. Edward was a brick-mason at the brickworks. In fact he helped to build their kiln. He and Theresa first settled on land that Richfield had filled in at the end of East Richmond Avenue. Their daughter Anita was born there. Theresa drove her horse and buggy over the hill to Regello's grocery store on Golden Gate Avenue. The Barra's were more fortunate than most families living on Richfield land because they had a well, a washing machine, a fireplace and electricity. When Richfield asked its uninvited guests to leave, the Barra's moved briefly to one of the little identical row houses just up from Standard Oil on Marine Street, and then in 1932, they bought 423 High Street from Louis Johnson.

As a testament to the original design of the house, none of the owners have changed it except to stucco over the brick. Thea Robertson, an architect who lived in the house described it as feeling Mediterranean. It has a parlor, living room, kitchen-dining room, two bedrooms and a bath. It has lots of light, a full basement and a charming patio. Originally it sat alone on the hill with a magnificent garden and farm. There are remnants of the old garden there now.

Anita Barra Christiansen reminisced about growing up here. Before telephones, she and Mary Bianchin (now Highfill) passed messages using flag signals that they had learned in Girl Scouts. Anita would climb to the top of Water Street so that Mary could



Nevada and Alvarado



Alvarado Street

Off to the right of tree shaded Nevada Street is the old Starley house, discussed in the "Earliest Homes" section.

At the corner of Nevada and Alvarado, beside its inviting looking garden, we find a house that was moved to its present location at 315 Alvarado from Bissell Avenue, when Roosevelt School was enlarged. The first owner, John Gough, sold it to the late Carl Stender. Mr. Stender was responsible for moving the house to its present site, during the mid-thirties. The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. George Batten.

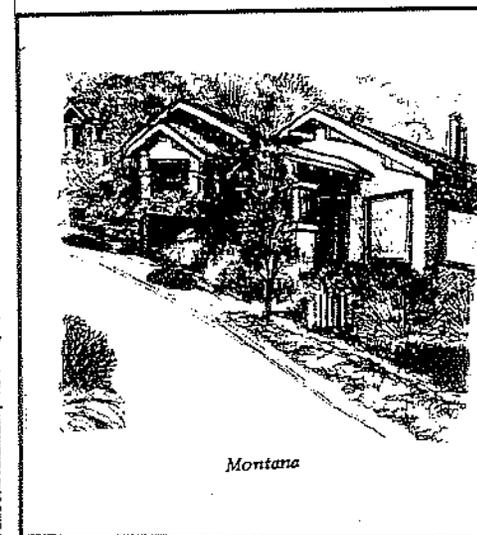
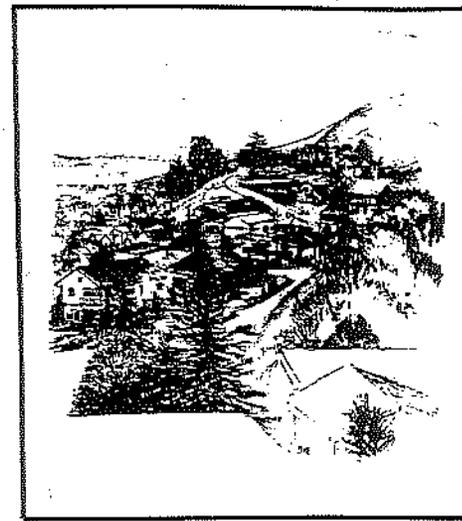
Setting our sights high, we head toward an interesting looking shingled house at the top of Alvarado Street. Surrounded by trees, 203 Alvarado draws a second glance. This Victorian style house was built in 1906 and spent many years as a duplex. At one point an elderly man lived in the upper story and a couple that lived downstairs took care of him. A ladder led to a trap door connecting the levels, so that inside access was possible. The present owner, Jean Swanson, has subsequently built an indoor staircase, in addition to other renovations.

At the end of Alvarado, backing onto lower Nicholl Nob hill is a contemporary appearing house at 215 Alvarado. The house was built in 1905 by Dick Spiersch, the second plumber in Richmond, whose shop was located where Park Place Restaurant now stands. Spiersch, who was at one time plumbing inspector for the City of Richmond, was very active in civic affairs. He lived in this house until his death.

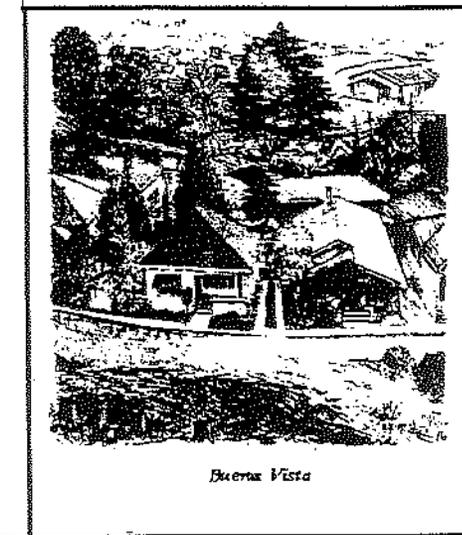
In 1962, Mr. Tom U'Ren bought the house and has worked to restore it and the grounds. He appreciates the "peace and serenity" nature offers, and considers his tree-laden grounds a sanctuary for birds.



317 East Richmond



Montana



Buena Vista

A leisurely stroll down Idaho Street provides views of many well kept residences, several of which belong to Mr. Gust J. Allyn of 22 Idaho Street. He purchased some lots and two homes from John Nicholl, who owned much land in Point Richmond at the time. Mr. Allyn came from Greece to settle in the Point in 1914, when he was seventeen. He and his wife, the former Margaret Diffin, had four children – William, Henry, Diana and Nathaniel. Three of his children were born in his present residence. Owner of Allyn's Men's Store, which two of his sons now operate, Gust has served Richmond in many capacities, from Postmaster to School Board Official to Mayor.

Across the street, at 25 Idaho, is a large two story house built in 1904. It is generally known as the old Miller house, although the Miller's were not the original owners. A family by the name of Oliphant were the home's first inhabitants. They sold it to Charles W. Miller in 1916.

Charley Miller worked at Standard Oil. He raised four children in this house, and in 1955, he sold 25 Idaho to the Wolvertons.

Several years later the house was sold to a Mr. Wentworth, who used it as a rental. In 1977 it was sold to its present owners, Michael and Michelle Brown, who occupy the house with their sons, Erik and Benjamin.

The Brown's have remodeled and opened up the spacious kitchen, which now looks out on the newly landscaped back yard. They describe their home as a warm, comfortable place in which to live and raise a family."

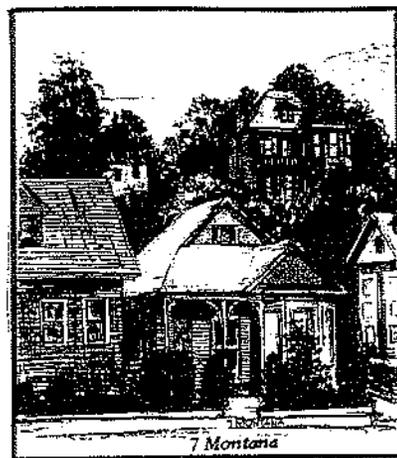


22 Idaho



25 Idaho

In 1919, the newspaper reports that complaints were received from residents, about naked children playing in the rain ponds in Point Richmond.



7 Montana

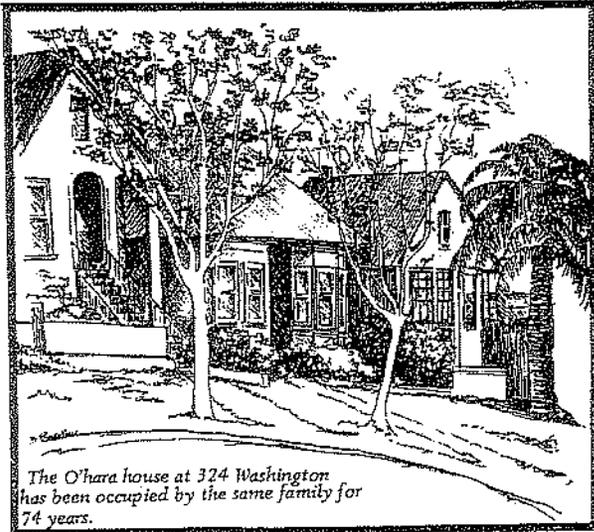


11 Montana

Turning right on East Richmond Avenue and again on Montana brings us to the house at 7 Montana, which is a charming rendition of the snug little cottages that were built at the turn of the century. It was built in 1904 by Mrs. Annie Arnold, who also built the original Post Office building. Mrs. Arnold's son, James P. Arnold, was Richmond's first Chief of Police. During World War II, Captain Theodore Beck bought the house for his daughter and family while her husband was overseas. The house has been rented for several years.

Across the street, the old Ford house at 11 Montana is beautifully set off by a vast variety of flowers, lovingly tended by its present owners. J.O. Ford, tax collector for the City of Richmond, had this house built in 1904. A member of the Richmond School Board, Mr. Ford has a school named after him. In 1932 he moved into Richmond and the Robert Dorman family rented it for \$40 per month. Later, Lt. Allen Cundy bought the house and lived there until 1939, when the Dominic Cerretto family bought it and raised their children – Henry, Margaret, Roger and Florence – in it. Mr. Cerretto was employed as a baker at Torrino Bakery on Standard Avenue, and for many years worked on the Richmond-San Rafael Ferry.

Florence Cerretto Wilson and her husband, Jim, have recently restored the house to its original beauty by stripping coats of paint from old woodwork, remodeling the kitchen and furnishing the rooms with antique furniture and Florence's exquisite handwork. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and Florence's mother, Mrs. Dominic Cerretto now reside here.



The O'hara house at 324 Washington has been occupied by the same family for 74 years.



THE SOUTHEAST CORNER (Area 5)

The southeast corner of Point Richmond, best characterized by its warm, neighborly feel, is a perfect place for an afternoon walk. This area is comprised of quaint family homes, many of which were built around the time of the San Francisco earthquake; and charming gardens which attest to their caretakers' diligence and love of beauty.

Perched high up on the side of Nicholl Nob, the old Thompson house, at 221 East Scenic, was built in 1906. Yellow with brown trim, this lovely home can be seen from quite a distance. William L. (Lew) Thompson built the house by himself with help from friends and neighbors for a total cost of \$1700. The concrete garage below the house was constructed by Lew, his two sons and some neighbors in the early or mid 1920's. The rock removed was used to reinforce and stabilize parts of Scenic Avenue.

Lew Thompson was a member of the pioneer Shaw and Thompson families, who came west with the Gold Rush and settled originally in the Placerville area. Lew's wife was Dexa Cook, whose family came west in the 1880's from Michigan and settled in Sacramento. Of the Thompson's three children, two were born in the house. Lew died in 1928, and his wife continued to live there until 1954 or 55, when the home was sold for \$6500 to the Camren family. The Camrens lived in the house until their house on Western Drive was completed, and their daughter and son-in-law now occupy the house.

The house next door at 209 Scenic was built by the Morrisons around 1914. It was partially burned about seven years later when the house next to it burned to the ground. The damaged portions were rebuilt. It is now the home of the Jeffrey Ward family.

Following the shaded wooden walkway known as Glenn Street down the hill and turning left, we reach 135 Buena Vista Avenue. This house, referred to as the Old Henry house, was begun in 1905. Its first owner was the W. E. Henry family, which was driven out of San Francisco by the Earthquake. Mr. Henry was the owner of the Kozy Candy Store. The Henrys sold the house in 1922. Several families have since lived in the house, including the families of Alexander Smith and J. Repose.



East Scenic Avenue



54 Scenic from Terrace

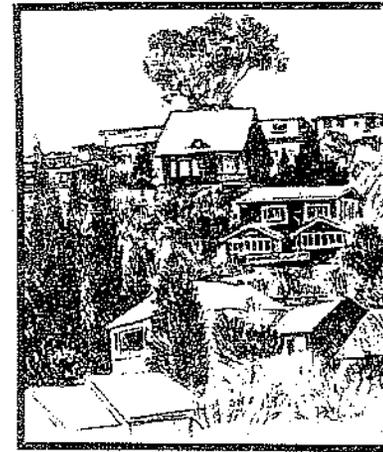


37 Terrace from Scenic

After exploring Nicholl, return to Washington Avenue and continue your ascent. Turn left on Scenic Avenue, where stately Victorians mark your progress. The Queen Anne style house at 81-83 Scenic Avenue was built around 1909. The original occupants and builder are unknown, but around 1916 August Gilg acquired the house. Mr. Gilg was the town barber. He operated a shop in the Hotel Mac for several years, until he bought the shop across the street (now the Hair Loom). The present owners of the house found several old barber supply receipts when they moved in. The Gilg's added a lower apartment to the house in the early 1920's to accommodate four nephews the Gilg's had brought from Germany over a period of years. Mr. Gilg lived here until his death in 1967. After Mrs. Gilg died, a few years later, the house passed into the hands of the Chesareck family. It was used as a rental until 1976, when Tom and Shirley Butt bought the spacious house as their family home.

The home at 54 Scenic Avenue, owned by John and Judy Spediacci, was built in 1905. The owners refer to their home's style as "Topsy", a house that just "grewed." It is said that this house was built for or by Harry Ells, Richmond's first School Board President, and owner of the Hercules Powder Works. The only evidence of the truth in this story is the discovery by the present owners of stacks of new Hercules Powder bags in the attic.

This was a single family residence until World War II, when it was converted into a boarding house for shipyard workers. After the war it was made into a duplex, and, finally, in the early sixties, it resumed life as a single family home. Later it was rented, and quickly became a "crash pad", and gained some notoriety as a commune and a



party house. The present owners say it still bears the scars of its "hippie" years.

Spediacci's bought 54 Scenic in 1976 and hope to restore it to its former beauty, a long and arduous job. Until then, says Judy, "she remains a faded beauty, to remind us of the days before the streets were paved."

Farther down the street, tucked neatly in the side of the hill is 44 Scenic. This interesting looking home belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Ward Blanchette, who bought it from the Henson's in 1960. Built in 1911, it is rumored that one of the men who built the tunnel in Point Richmond also built this house. Considering the amount of work involved, digging out and reinforcing the side of the hill, it is a credible story. The owners praise the fine craftsmanship that is evidenced throughout the house. The casement windows are particularly noteworthy.

Continuing down Scenic, a double right turn will bring you to Terrace. A striking Victorian style house, known as the old Dunlap house, stands at 37 Terrace. This reddish brown structure can be seen from many parts of town. It is charmingly surrounded by flowers and foliage. The original owners, in 1906 or 7 were Paul and Lysetta Dunlap. He was a carpenter at Standard Oil, and she was the former Lysetta Wood, town Postmistress. After their long stay here, Curtis and Leona Patterson divided it into flats. Next residents were Mr. and Mrs. Fylstra, who sold it in 1965 to Loren and Sally Rush, composer and artist, respectively, who have enjoyed living there since.

As you walk down Terrace toward Washington Avenue, you will notice some early homes that were among the first built in the Point.

SOUTH OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

(Area 4)



217 Washington Avenue



31 Nicholl Avenue

A stroll through this area gives one the feeling that they've stepped into a time machine and are in the early 1900's. Walking through the tree shaded lanes, past majestic Victorian style homes, one can imagine horseless carriages bouncing past on unpaved roads.

We begin our tour at the bottom of lovely Washington Avenue. At the edge of the business district the house at 217 Washington looks neat and serene. It was built in 1904 by Mr. Cruikshank, who was married to Miss Carpenter, a local school teacher. The Novarini family has occupied the house since 1917, and Mrs. Louise Novarini has lived in Point Richmond for 72 years.

A left turn at Nicholl and a short walk down this inviting street finds us at 31 Nicholl. Built in 1910 by Dan Kinnet, then the manager of the Richmond Power and Light, this house was called the most elegant house in the Point. The floors are solid maple half-inch tongue and groove, with inlaid mahogany. The mantle is solid white granite. Exposed beams in the ceiling are mahogany, and have never been painted. There are two large bedrooms and a smaller one, a living room, dining room, kitchen, pantry, a music room and a full basement.

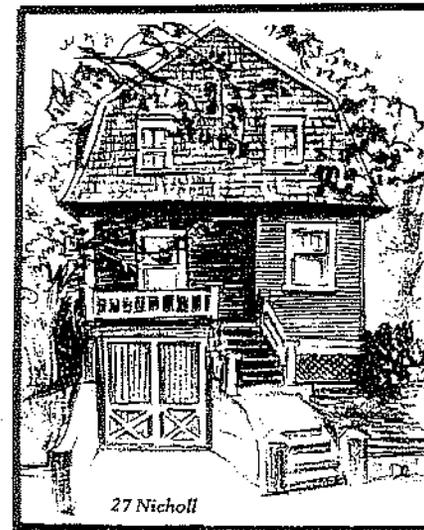
After the Kinnets moved, the house was occupied by the Eatons, the Whites and in 1949, the Malloys. The present occupants of this lovely home are the Gerald Gregg family, who bought the house in 1971.



Washington Avenue



Washington Avenue



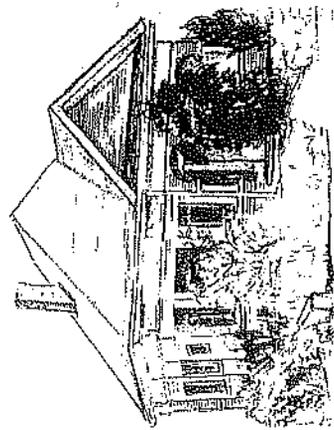
27 Nicholl



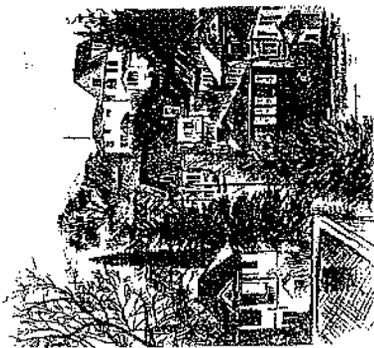
Nicholl Avenue

On Nicholl Avenue, there is a charming house built in 1905, and first occupied by Palen Church, father of Don Church who was well known as the Point's Historian. The Church family sold the house to R.L. Runyon, an engineer for the Santa Fe, who intended to remodel the house, making it one of the finest in Richmond. Jimmy Redman owned the house for several years, selling it in 1936 to the Esser's who remained there until about 1969.

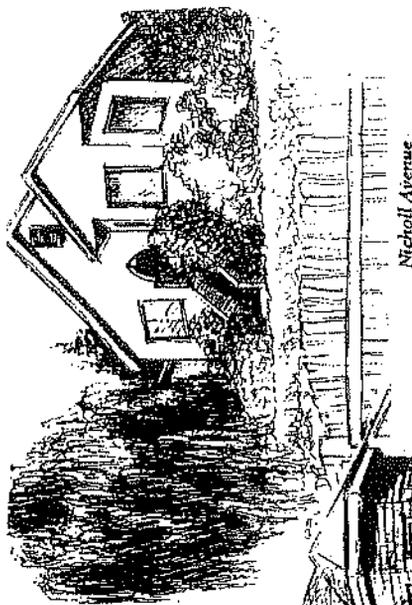
Daisy Esser, who lived in the house until her death, enjoyed the house, which is more spacious inside than its outward appearance shows. It has three bedrooms, large living and dining rooms, a kitchen, pantry and back porch. There are three garages behind the house and a flat that was built below in 1907.



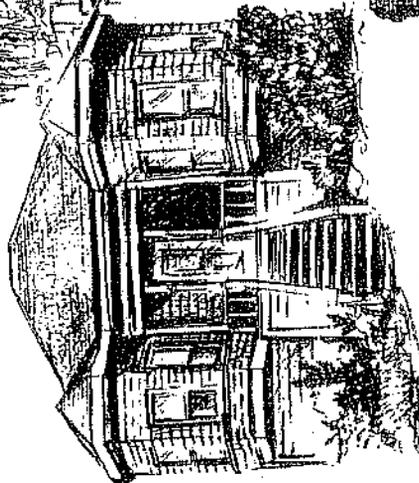
116 NICHOLL



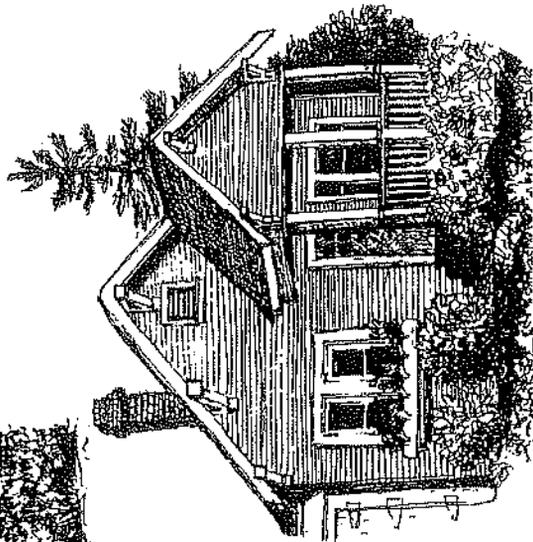
302 SANTA FE



Nicholl Avenue



Santa Fe Avenue



Fredmont Place

WEST OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

(Area 3)

This area has a feeling of stability and a comfortable unchangeability that comes with maturity. The churches of Point Richmond were all established here. Many of the people who settled here remained here for their entire lifetime.

Starting at Piedmont, one can enjoy several cozy looking old homes. There is a fine old Victorian that was built prior to 1904, and occupied originally by everyone's favorite plumbing contractor, Dick Spiersch. It seems to have always been two flats. Point Richmond's first baker, John Matson, bought the place in 1907, and lived in it with his family until they moved into Richmond in 1920. Lola Imlach then lived in the lower flat and rented out the upper. From 1966 to 1976 Bart Watson owned it and did a lot of work on the plumbing, wiring, foundation and windows. Amos Garrett and JoAnn Sidwell bought the house in June, 1980, and are in the process of shingling the outside. No major changes are planned. The interior, especially the old woodwork, is in excellent condition.



The lovely five-room house at 316 Martina was built by Mr. Louis Nougier in 1914. Its first occupant was Mr. P.E. Peterson, a Methodist Minister, who resided there until the Methodist parsonage was completed.

The Nougier family owned the house for 52 years, but they rented it out much of the time. In 1932 Mr. Nougier presented the house to his daughter, Elizabeth, as a wedding gift. From 1950 until 1952 Robert and Mildred Dornan lived there, and that is where Bob began his long and successful work with Boy Scout Troop 111. In 1966, Mr. and Mrs. Ira Clutts bought it after renting for eleven years, and they are still enjoying it. The house has two bedrooms, living room, dining room, large kitchen and pantry. The original pine flooring, china closets, book cases, window seat and woodwork have been preserved.

In 1903 Mr. Tom Conn, whose son owned Conn's Drug Store, built this five-room home at 306 Martina Street. The Conn family lived in it until 1921, when they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. John Vloeberghs.

Mrs. Viola Vloeberghs lived in the house for many years. She is remembered by many local residents as an employee of the plunge.

Lynn Huntly, sailor, potter and printmaker, bought the house in December, 1979, and moved in with her son Tom. Lynn appreciates the fact that the house has its original doors, windows and redwood woodwork throughout. She intends to upgrade the foundation, which has not been touched since 1907, and she intends to remodel the kitchen and bathroom; but she is determined to retain the character of her charming little Victorian.

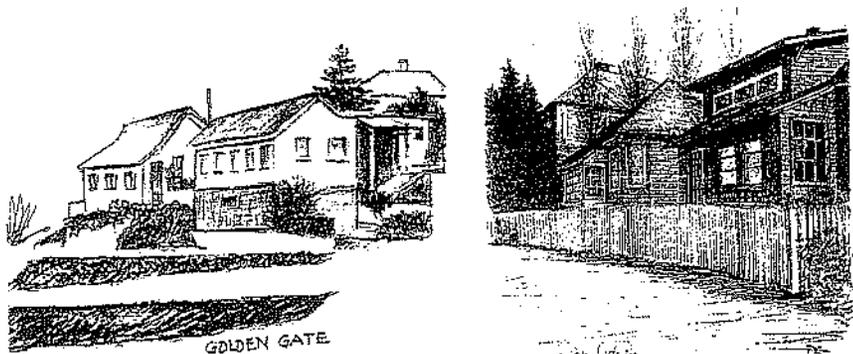
In from the corner of Martina and Nicholl is the Methodist Church parsonage. It was built in 1913, with a loan (\$1500) from a church society, and labor mostly by volunteers, and with lumber from the old frame church that had been torn down when the permanent church was built. The quality of the house is outstanding, and a tribute to the efforts and economy of the members. The Ladies Aid Society paid off the mortgage by opening a lunch room for Standard Oil employees. The ably managed business paid off the mortgage before the Standard Oil Cafeteria opened.

Rev. P.E. Peterson was the first minister to occupy the parsonage. Thirty-one families have lived in the four-bedroom home, built with the assumption that there would be large families occupying it. In the first days of the church in Richmond, Rev. Calfee, whose family was very large, joked with Father Scanlan, the Catholic Priest, that, if funds were short, Father Scanlan could be invited to dinner by his parishioners, but it was unlikely that Rev. Calfee could subsist in a similar manner.

Just beyond Marine are two more fine old homes and then Tewksbury ends at the Standard Oil property line. Stepping up Marine to Morgan Avenue are five small, nearly identical cottages. According to local rumor, these houses were moved from "smoky row", a row of houses built in 1900 where Gattard Boulevard now is. The houses were relocated when the tunnel was built.

To the right at the top of the ridge is the final block of Golden Gate Avenue, where many older homes are located. To the left are several more, interspersed with recently constructed houses. All of them have views of the Bay on one side, and of the city on the other. The Casey residence at 454 Golden Gate was built in 1905 for the Casey family. Mary Casey has lived here for 75 years. Looking down the hill, we can see Contra Costa Avenue, at this location still a dirt road, and a reminder of how Point Richmond looked in its earlier days.

At Mono is a not-so-old but interesting stucco corner house. A few steps down the hill and we come to West Richmond Avenue. On the left is what was once called Montecito Avenue. The three older homes there date from the early 1900's. Toward downtown, the street splits into Castro and West Richmond, lined on both sides with houses built before 1915.



GOLDEN GATE



Scene above Tewksbury Avenue



West Richmond Avenue



West Richmond Avenue

older homes including the house on the corner, 335 Tewksbury, one of the first house on the block, dating from before 1915. To the left we can see 129 Eddy, the huge house halfway up the street which dates from the early 1900's, now used as apartment but in 1925 used as residence and real estate office for Martha and William Bonner.

The area farther along Tewksbury was mostly vacant until recently. Near the intersection with Vacca is the little house at 422 Tewksbury that George Garrard, a foreman at Standard Oil, built for his wife Margret, and their family. When they moved Margret's sister Nettie and her husband Robert Scott, a Belfast Irishman, moved in. The Clyde Shaw family lived there for many years, and in 1955 David Howard bought the house, and since 1978 Rose Farion and her daughter have lived there.

Proceeding down the hill, there are several older homes tucked into the hillside. The house at 537 Tewksbury was built some time between 1903 and 1906 by a carpenter named Meyerheinie. He had worked on many houses built in Point Richmond. The house was subsequently bought by the Fluett family and by Mr. and Mrs. Ramey, in 1945, when Mr. Ramey retired from the Navy.

On the right is the remainder of Contra Costa Avenue which turns into Hillside, at the freeway. The construction of the freeway along Standard Avenue resulted in the demolition of many old buildings and the shortening of several streets. This area was once the site of a substantial number of homes and businesses.

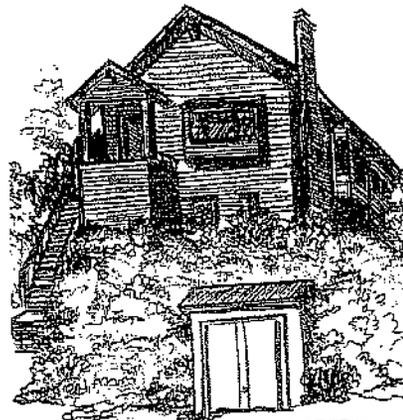
Near the bottom of the hill is a little bit of Clarence Avenue. Looking up, you can see the number 225, and hidden beyond the overgrowth of vegetation is the Dornan residence. The first building here had been a small black house, and about 1904, Arthur Blount's family lived there while building what is now the upper floor of the present house. In 1910 Pete Kelleghan, the local kerosene dealer, bought the house. He owned the first four-horse team in Richmond, and used them to help build the railway tunnel. By 1921, he and his wife needed more room for their seven children, so he finished excavating the lower level, converted the upper level into four bedrooms, and enclosed the stairwell leading down to the new kitchen, living room and dining room.

The little black house was torn down by Wendell Larson, who bought the house in 1949. Bob and Mid Dornan bought the house in 1952, and have brought up their family there. The Dornan's completely remodeled it. The house has seen many meetings - Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and church groups. The yard has grown many a flower and vegetable. The house is surrounded by a garden of trees and foliage.

On the corner at Marine is 601 Tewksbury, a quaint little house built in the early 1900's. Joe and Josephine Martin owned the home for over forty years. They were known for their wonderful flowers and vegetables. When Joe died, Josephine eventually sold the house.



601 TEWKSBURY



537 TEWKSBURY



Toward the business district at 198 Cottage, is a cottage built in 1912 by Mr. Page. He also built the house next to it, and four others on Richmond Avenue. Virgil and Blanche Fenner made their home here until the late '40's. Mr. Fenner was well known as the owner of the hardware store at 136 Washington Avenue, and he served as City Councilman from 1927 to 1933 and again from 1937 to 1949.

Other residents in this house have included Ernest Griffen, George Page, and Russell Paasch. Bruce and Nancy Noble are the present owners. They are currently restoring their home to its original character by stripping the paint from the woodwork, refinishing the hardwood floors, and replacing the light fixtures.



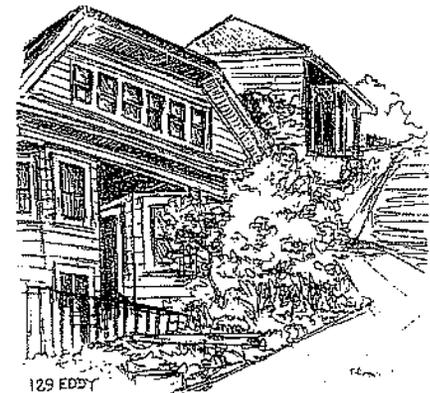
198 COTTAGE



124, 120, 116 COTTAGE

J.S. Brooks, an executive with Standard Oil, built this handsome bungalow and lived in it for several years. Next, the Adair family owned and enjoyed it until about 1919, when Michael and Reva Carey bought it. Michael was a Richmond City Councilman from 1919 until his death in 1924. The Carey children, James and Clarice (Stribley now) grew up there. After Reva Carey's death, her niece, Marion Downey, bought the house. Pat Brenner and her three sons, Don, Anton and Matthew now rent 124 Cottage.

UPPER NORTHWEST (Area 2)



Until recently the section of the Point to the north, overlooking the Standard Oil Refinery was a rather sparsely inhabited area. Between Castro Street and Marine and bordered by Hillside and Golden Gate Avenue, this region developed slowly. Many of the buildings were built within the last few decades. However, there are quite a few older homes here, many of which were occupied by Standard Oil Company employees in the early days.

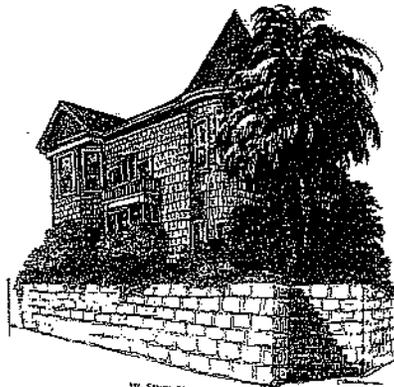
Major problems in researching the histories of these older homes have occurred because some streets were named differently than they are now, and house numbers have changed over the years. Apparently various developers would lay out streets, name them and number the lots without any consideration for surrounding parcels. At a later date the city attempted to coordinate the conflicting sections in a more logical order. For example, the portion of West Richmond Avenue between Castro and Vacca was initially named Montecito Avenue, which is still imprinted on the curb. And the corner lot at Tewksbury and Castro, now 325 Tewksbury, was originally numbered 101. The numbering was different all along the entire length of the street. Golden Gate has also had a change in house numbers. The Coleman house at 509 Golden Gate was formerly 401 and the numbering was consistently changed in both directions along Golden Gate.

Beginning at Tewksbury and Castro, we see the baseball diamond at Kenny Park. It was the original location of the Point Richmond Grammar School, a small wooden structure, in use for many years before the elegant two story school building was constructed at the site of the present Washington School. As we proceed up the hill, we pass several

After the hospital moved, Dr. Abbott re-established his practice on the second floor of the Bank of Richmond at the corner of West Richmond and Washington. A very industrious individual, Dr. Abbott served as company doctor for Santa Fe, the Pullman Shops and Standard Oil in addition to his duties as County Coroner for thirty-three years.

Continuing down Santa Fe, one passes two picture-book houses peering down from their hillside perch, and at the corner an impressive house that was originally the home of Dr. Abbott, considered to be Richmond's first doctor. He finished medical school in Chicago, and was headed for St. Helena when he received an offer from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in San Francisco to lecture there. He rented a room in San Pablo and bought the practice of a retiring Doctor for \$20. Then, he went home to Ohio and married his childhood sweetheart, Nellie Rule, and brought her here. He became founder and first president of the Contra Costa Medical Association, and for many years was the only Fellow of the American College of Surgeons to practice medicine in the County. In 1932 Governor Frank Merriam appointed Abbott to the California Board of Medical Examiners.

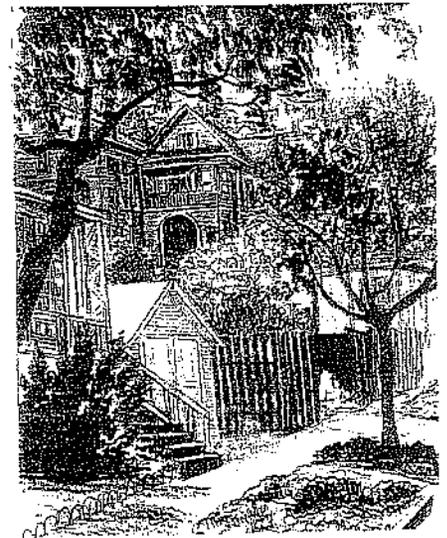
Dr. Abbott moved his office from the second floor of the Bank of Richmond into his home. The house contains a double parlor, a dining room, kitchen and sun room on the first floor. A very impressive winding staircase leads to the second floor where there are four bedrooms. Behind the house there is a lot of land. The garage was originally used as a stable and a barn.

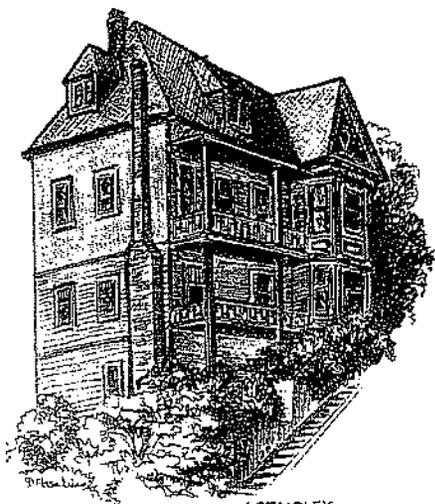


You can look down Cottage Avenue and see a lovely two-flat Victorian that was shared by two of Richmond's most illustrious citizens in the early part of this century: The first was E.J. Garrard, who was a leader in Richmond City government from the moment it was organized in 1905 until he died in 1927. He was mayor from 1914 until 1917 and again from 1921 until 1923. The second occupant was Luther Dimm who was the manager of the Standard Oil Plant from 1911 until 1917. The arrangement was so amicable, the two couples subsequently built and lived in the Dimm-Garrard flats on the corner of West Richmond and Martina.

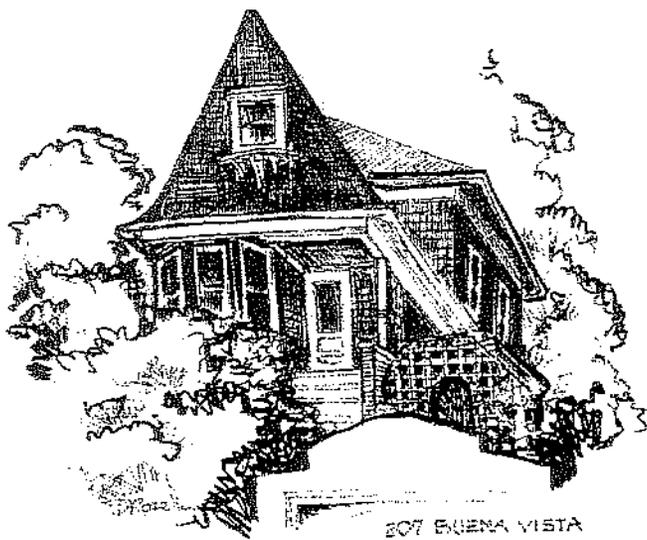
207 Cottage was built with the best of materials. The beautiful wood has been painted, and the original windows have been replaced with aluminum, and asbestos shingles have been applied to the exterior, but the grandure shows through. There are columns gracing the entrance dining rooms, and a "fainting room" is provided for Victorian women who were prone to attacks of the "vapors" presumably from their tight corsets. Each flat contains three bedrooms.

Point Richmond is full of stories of what buildings could have been bought for during the depression if anyone had the money. The price for this beauty was \$500 at that time. In 1965 it sold for \$12,500, in 1972 for \$35,000. In 1977 it sold for \$80,000, and who would venture a guess as to what it will sell for next, if and when its current owner, B.H. Shemdin, decides to sell.





1 STAIRLEY

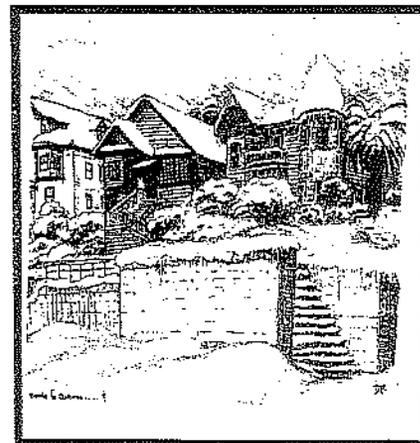


207 BUENA VISTA

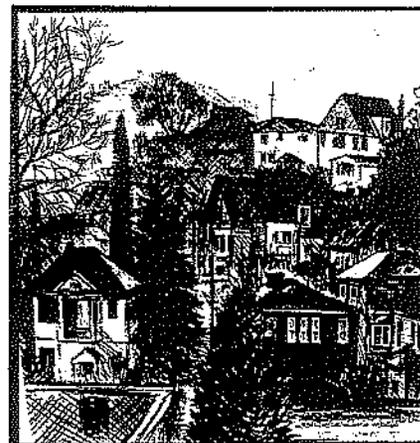
NORTH OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

(Area 1)

Many of the houses in this area of town are described in the "Earliest Houses" section. Several of the older apartment houses are located here also. Walking up West Richmond to Santa Fe Avenue, you will see a three-story apartment house, the Carroll Apartments. Originally a two-story brick structure, this building served as Richmond's first hospital, from 1908 to about 1915. While Dr. Clark Abbott was serving as lecturer in San Francisco at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, he opened an office in Point Richmond. In 1908, his cousin Ursa joined him in practice, and together they opened the Abbott Hospital. The ground floor contained a modern X-ray room, an electrical room, a supply room, minor operating and dressing rooms, consultation rooms, private offices, a library and two private rooms for patients. On the second floor was a major operating room, a sterilizing room, bathroom, kitchen and dining rooms, a men's ward and six private rooms. The hospital had a total of twenty-five beds, and cost patients \$1.50 per day. Its financial success depended on the use of student nurses on off-hours for long periods of time. When a state law passed making it illegal to use trainee nurses more than eight hours at a time, the operating costs became too great; and the hospital moved to Berkeley, where it merged with Roosevelt Hospital. The building on Santa Fe remained vacant for a few years, and in 1918, it was converted to apartments. A third story was added, and it remains much the same today.



Only twice, in this century, has there been a mention of snow in Point Richmond; if there were a snow storm, the Point might look like this.





Two other houses on Tunnel were built at the turn of the century — the Price home at 321 Tunnel, and the one pictured above at 229, built in 1901 by T. Morley. This house, although it remains externally the same — even repainted with the original colors — has been completely rebuilt by its present owner, Dolly Edwards, with the help of Point carpenter Les Crimm. A Mr. McHugh built the house, and originally another smaller house stood behind it on the property. The house stood vacant until Dolly Edwards moved in in 1967. Nine years of disuse left her with a project that she calls a labor of love. All moldings, doors and trim have been used in the rebuilding.

The houses described below are pictured on page 43.

Waverly Stairley had this singularly impressive Victorian house built in 1902. Mr. Stairley, first cashier of the Bank of Richmond, was also Richmond's first City Treasurer. In 1916, Woodrow Wilson appointed him Postmaster. Mrs. Stairley, the former Mary Ridgely Tilden, was concerned about both appearances and thrift, so she had "gingerbread" placed only on the side of her house facing the town. She lived until the age of 101. After her death, her son Marmaduke, or "Duke", sold the house.

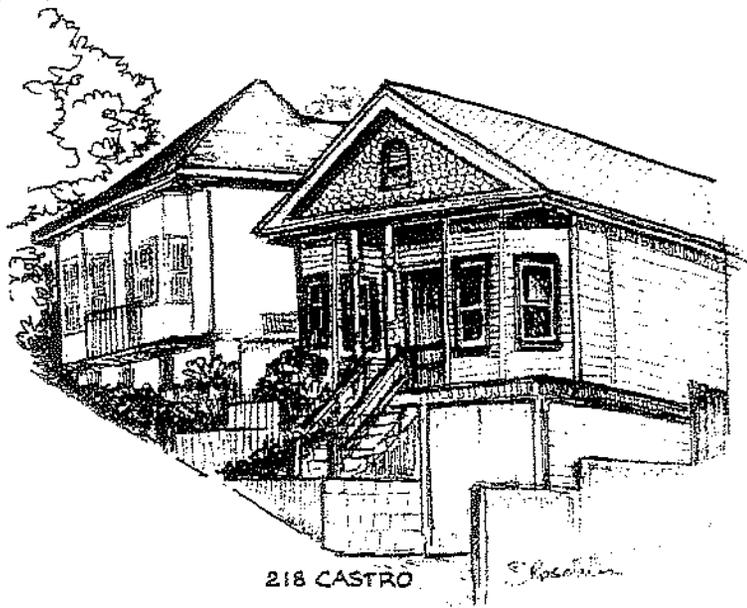
The house has the same general layout as in 1902: three rooms downstairs, four rooms upstairs, and only one bath. The Trefrey Ross family bought it in 1963 and began renovating it by adding central heating and hot water, which it had been without for sixty one years. Jay and Karen Fenton bought the house in 1969, and have continued to renovate it. They have remodeled the kitchen, replaced the brick foundation with cement, shingled the outside, rewired the interior and topped it off with its fourth roof.

Since the Fentons own "Energy Unlimited", they are proud to point out that their house is heated entirely by a wood-burning stove. The "green belt" around the house is affectionately known as "Fenton's Forest" because Jay has filled the area with pines and redwoods. In the yard near the house a lilac bush planted by Mrs. Stairley in about 1905 still thrives.

According to rumor, Duke Stairley buried treasure in his yard. Jay has found bottles with notes inside, and an empty safe deposit box in the coal chute, but no treasure yet. Karen says that Mrs. Stairley's ghost was rather cantankerous when they first moved in, causing unexplained accidents and breakdowns, but her presence now is felt only in the closet where Stairley's love letters were found — causing the door to close, and making it squeak no matter what they do.

The earliest picture of Point Richmond shows this house, under construction, in 1901. Sitting on the hillside at 207 Buena Vista, it was built by Harry Aine for the Schupbach family. They lived here until 1917, when the Davidson family bought it.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidson came originally from England in 1907. Their daughter, Caroline, still lives there, and has the original deed signed by Mr. Belding and Waverly Stairley. Miss Davidson has had the house remodeled, retaining its charm and character.



The Queen Anne style Victorian cottage at 218 Castro Street was constructed around 1901. The original owner worked at the brickyard and brought bricks home in his wheelbarrow to build the foundation. Since then the foundation has been partially replaced with concrete, and the present owners are using the original bricks for a hearth for their wood burning stove.

Over the years there have been many occupants in this quaint house. Robert C. and Linda Lee Drake bought the house from Richard and Donna Wilson in 1974. They have restored the house and have done extensive landscaping, front and back. While terracing the back yard, the Drakes found several old bottles including some old pharmaceutical bottles labeled "Point Richmond".

The Spiersch brothers built the house at 230 Castro where Gary and Susan Horst now live. It was built in 1901, and, when it was used as a rest home in the 1950's, a portion was added to the rear of the building. The front porch, brick work and front door have been added by the present owners.



In the winter of 1900, the John Nicholl Company built five houses near what was to become the downtown section of Point Richmond. One of these is the small house, at 220 Tunnel Avenue. Another just like it was built one house over and torn down a few years later.

In the early days Tunnel Avenue was a dirt path leading up the hill. Later, after this house was constructed, the street was paved and its level at the bottom of the hill raised to modify the extreme slope, making it easier for buggies to travel up the street. This made the sidewalk four feet higher than the front yard, so a small bridge was constructed from the sidewalk to the front steps.

Apparently the house was built as a rental, for there have been more than eighteen different occupants in the past eighty years. The Beckmans, residents in the '30's and '40's, lived here for the longest time. In 1975, the Albro family bought the home.

Next door, at 222 Tunnel, is the house owned by Judy and Tom Magenheimer. This house was built in 1901. It was moved from the back to the front of the lot, and a sun porch, basement and bathroom were added to it, in 1928.



54 SCENIC



123 NICHOLL



322 W. RICHMOND

Eighty-four Scenic looks as if it came from a fairytale. Pioneer contractors W.H. and Tom G. Conn built it in 1901. One family lived in the upper flat, and one below. W.H.Conn then built the O'Hara house on Washington Avenue, and T.G.Conn built the Vloebergh house at 306 Martina in 1903.

The Renacre's, who operated Renacre's Dry Goods Store moved here in 1906, and in 1909 Clarence E.Allen and his father-in-law rented the house. The Horowitz family, who also owned a dry goods store, moved in and, in the early 20's, the Ciabatari family lived here.

Another house with ghost stories is the Hamamoto house at 123 Nicholl. This ghost plays the piano. Built in 1902, Hadjik Michaelian lived here with his wife Sima and their family until 1928, when the Burton's bought it and resided here until the late '40's. For several years Ernest and Madeline Albright, who raised Shar-pei's (rare Chinese fighting dogs) made this their home.

The house is now owned by Delores and George Hamamoto and family, who have lived here twenty-three years. They have remodeled the house, carefully retaining its Victorian feeling.

Bob and Marie Peckham bought this lovely house at 322 West Richmond, and began remodeling it, adding the wrought iron fence, and making the two flats into one home. (The studio apartment is still rented.) Building began in 1900 and was finished in 1902. The house has been owned by Jim Allison, Fred Neville, R.T.Morris and J.E.Wagoner. In 1965, Wallace Darling bought the house, and it was rented until the Peckham family made it their home.

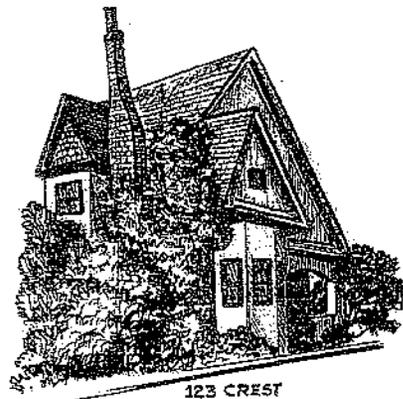


140 SANTA FE

The house at 140 Santa Fe Avenue was one of the first two on the street. At first, it had no retaining walls. Built by William Flanagan, it was bought by a family named Holt, whose daughter graduated from the Standard Avenue School in 1906. Ed Muerer, butcher at Whitesides Grocery, bought the house in the '30's, and his widow remained there after his death.

Mr. and Mrs. Tony Cramer moved into their home at 212 Martina in 1902. Lumber for the house arrived on a scow that was unloaded near the present site of Washington School. After Mr. Cramer's death, Mrs. Cramer continued to live here until her death just a few years ago. Elizabeth Cramer had the lower level converted into an apartment.

The six room house at 222 Martina was built for Mr. and Mrs. Charles Adams in 1901 by Mr. Redding. The house was originally sold for \$1,000, plus \$350 interest. Mr. Adams was the first man to settle his family in Point Richmond. Two of the Adams' four children, Uldine and Argyle, were born in the house. Uldine Adams Nickola's children were also born here. Mrs. Nickola has only recently moved out to a convalescent home in Pleasant Hill. The house is now rented to the Sydney Clutts family. The original ten-foot ceilings, doors, chandeliers, china closets and windows remain. The old front porch has been replaced three times.



"ghost house" while it was falling into a state of disrepair. Mr. Thole remodeled it by enlarging rooms, adding a garage, French windows and cement porches, and adding the stucco.

Mr. Thole came here in 1902. He will reach the enviable age of 100 on December 3, 1980. He lives in this house with his daughter Maxine Mayer, and can be heard playing his harmonica and guitar and singing in his driveway on nice days.

The charming Victorian house at 111 Crest was built in 1903, and had two owners before the McMenamins bought it in 1914. When Marion McMenammin married John Patrick Downey in 1921, they proceeded to inhabit homes on West Richmond, Castro and Washington Streets before moving to Southern California. Marion's sister, Ruth, married James McKay in the family home. The senior McMenamins and Marion's uncle stayed until their deaths. Marion moved back in 1960, and remodeled the kitchen and bath, finished off two bedrooms upstairs and added a carport. Marion is active in the Catholic Church, Club Mendelssohn and the West Side Improvement Club. If you can catch her, ask her about growing up in Point Richmond early in this century — it sounds like so much fun!

Back on Washington Avenue, there is another very early house, owned by artist Gina Green. Built in 1900, and furnished with pieces from that period, it echoes its memories of the families that lived there — the Eakle family, co-owner of the Tilden-Eakle Lumber Company next to the Santa Fe yards across from what is now the Spot — the Machado family, then the Fleming family, and now Gina Green.

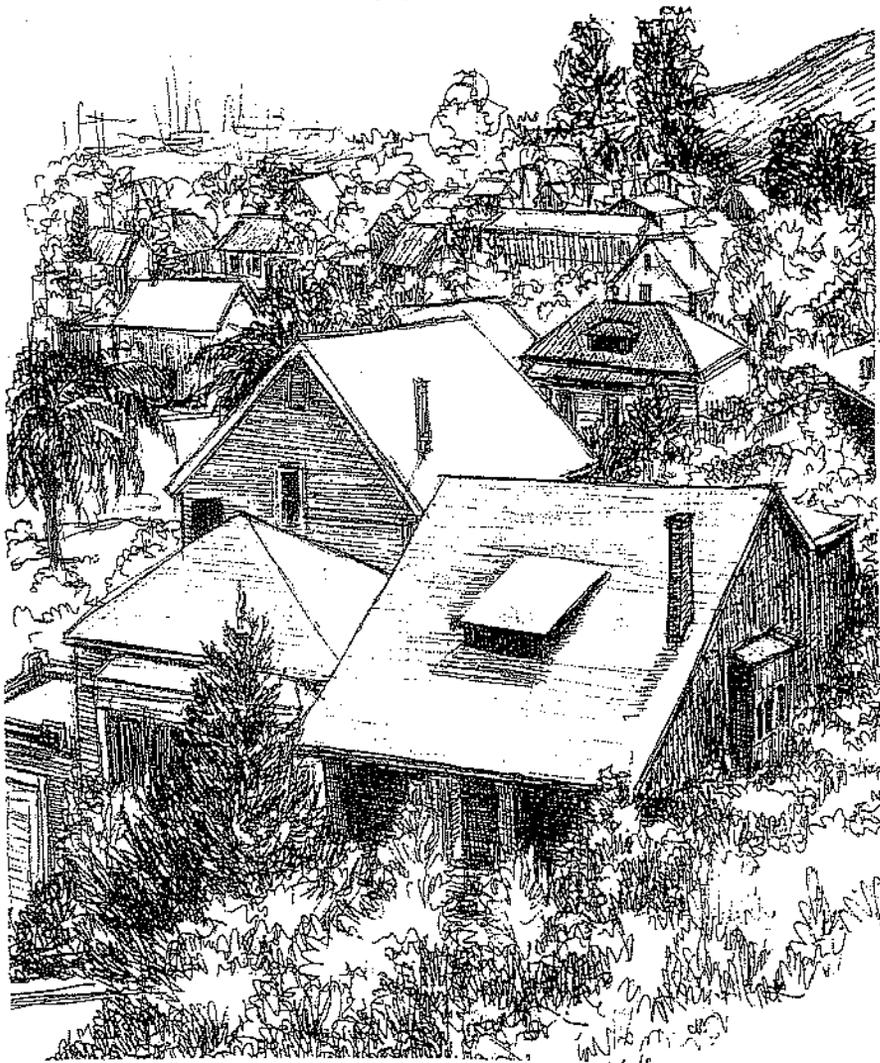


An imposing house looks down on Terrace from number 66. The house was built in 1902 by Julius Stiefvater, who had moved here from Germany. The Stiefvater's first set up a grocery and dry goods store in a freight car, but by 1906 they moved their business into what is now the Odd Fellows Hall.

The large house was well filled, even though the family had no children. They brought nieces and nephews from Germany, and to accommodate them, they added two dormers, and turned the attic into bedrooms, the lower level into an apartment for Mrs. Stiefvater's sister. This arrangement continued many years. The nieces and nephews gradually moved on, and in 1959 when Mrs. Stiefvater's sister was left alone in the huge house, she sold it. Since then four families have lived here — in 1965 the Taylor family moved in with their many children, and started to remodel the place. In 1972 James and Lynette Pease bought the house and moved in with their children Brian and Marni. They rented the lower floor out until 1975, when Lynette turned it into a child care center. In 1977 when Lynette opened the Center at the Washington Field House, the Peases gutted the bottom floor in preparation for the first phase of their extensive, carefully planned restoration. They intend to live on one floor at a time while redoing the house in stages.

Originally the house had no electricity. The Taylors removed a central chimney, to create what the children refer to as a secret passageway. Peases regard it as a ready made central heating duct. Dates of the original construction and remodeling were documented by beer bottles and other memorabilia left in the walls by workmen, so the Pease family plans to throw in a few artifacts as they go along.

IV. HISTORIC HOUSES



33.

EARLIEST HOMES

The Walter Paasch home at 509 Washington and the house across the street at 505, were the only ones visible in an early 1902 photo. The house was built for Mr. and Mrs. McHenry. Mr. McHenry was a conductor on the Santa Fe line, and Mrs. McHenry sold eggs, and was a seamstress. After their deaths, a niece rented it for a time, and in 1936, the Paasch's bought the house. It was in poor shape, rocking on a foundation of timbers from the Santa Fe railway. Gertrude and Walter remodeled the home, put it on a solid foundation, and converted a porch facing Bishop Alley into a sun room.

Mr. Paasch, who served as County Clerk for many years, and his wife, raised their family here, and Mrs. Paasch still lives here with her daughter and son-in-law. Mrs. Paasch is famous for her beautiful garden; the house is surrounded by a bed of blossoming flowers. She remembers fondly the sheets of wild flowers that bloomed on Nicholl Nob each Spring. Her husband and Katherine Lawrence were responsible for establishing residential zoning here, in the early '40's. The rumor of a fish reduction plant with its accompanying aroma being established where the present George Miller Jr. Regional Park enhances the shoreline, prompted their action.

Also built before 1902 was the house built by the three Patten Brothers at 233 Water Street. That and the one across the street at 235 were the only houses on Water Street in 1901. When the Patten's retired to the country, Bill Brown's father bought the little house, in 1917. Bill Brown still lives there. When the Tormey's moved from 235, he also purchased that house, and used materials from it to remodel 233. Madeline Cortese Williams bought 235 in the '50's, and her daughter, Arlene Hartman and her family still live there. Both houses have undergone extensive renovation.

Bill remembers the Water Street reservoir still being used in 1917, when he moved in, but it was already starting to leak, endangering houses below, and was phased out.

The big white house with green trim at 123 Crest Avenue was built in 1902 by Mr. Andrew McCracken, owner of the Hub, a men's clothing store in Point Richmond. The house was all wood, originally, but when Lawrence Thole bought it in the 1930's, he succeeded it. It had been vacant for a period of time, and had gained the nickname of



509 WASHINGTON

34.

niversary, a new electronic carillon system was installed, and the Point hears its daily announcements.

After conducting its first services at Richards Hall, the Baptist Church members built the First Baptist Church at 304 Washington Avenue. The first services were held in August of 1903, but it was not until November, 1904, that the church was formally dedicated, with Rev. A. Austin officiating. When a new church was built in the center of Richmond in 1912, some of the original congregation transferred their membership and the church's name to the new church, giving the old church its name The Point Richmond Baptist Church.

Services are still held three times a week in the beautiful chapel with its vaulted ceiling and redwood-framed cathedral windows. During World War II, the church opened its doors for USO activities, giving food, entertainment and guidance to thousands of military personnel. An early contribution to our town (for the sum of one dollar) was the corner park known as the Janice Playlot, which has been used by Point children for generations.



*The Point Richmond Baptist Church
on Washington Avenue*

SCHOOLS:

First classes here were as makeshift as the hurriedly settled community. A dedicated and fondly remembered teacher took the difficult task of instructing children of nine grade levels in the Methodist Church. Emily Boorman Axtell managed to educate the Point's first children in spite of sparse equipment and super-heterogeneous grouping. At one point, a Richmond school was to have been named in her honor, but as we who have compiled this book have found out, importance of events and people too often diminishes in proportion to the passage of time.

In September of 1901, conditions improved somewhat, when a two-room school house was built at the corner of Castro and Standard Avenue. The teaching load was divided between two teachers, and Walter T. Helms was hired as supervising principal. But no sooner had the school been built than it was also overcrowded. Plans were then made for construction of a six-room, two-story school, which was completed in the fall

of 1903. The following excerpt from an early Richmond paper provides an aside to the story, involving John Nicholl and one of his many attempted land transactions. The plot of land he offered is now known as "Fern Park" — located in the gully at the top of Montana Street. Headed "Thrifty Nicholl Turns Public Benefactor", the article states that the School Board wanted to purchase Nicholl's land at the top of Washington Avenue, for which Nicholl asked \$5,000. Nicholl's alternative was to offer "unsaleable land" at the top of smoky row, "the drainage canal of the entire mountain." The site eventually chosen by the district was on land they owned on Tewksbury Avenue. It was considered the "next best location."

According to one account, the two-room school house became, in 1907, a high school, with three teachers and forty-five students. Until that time, high school students had been commuting to Berkeley High School.

Our present school, Washington Elementary School, opened on February 22, 1913, with a big celebration honoring Washington and the school. The school cost \$50,000, (\$8,000 of this was used for further swamp filling). A kindergarten became part of our system in 1915, and by 1919 the enrollment included twenty-two kindergartners. That year, the PTA began serving milk in the Richmond Schools.

History often repeats itself. For example, periodically during the past seventy years, the PTA has attempted to do the same thing reported in a 1915 newspaper — "Parents want a gate at the railroad crossing on West Richmond Avenue, for safety of children going to and from school."



III. CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS

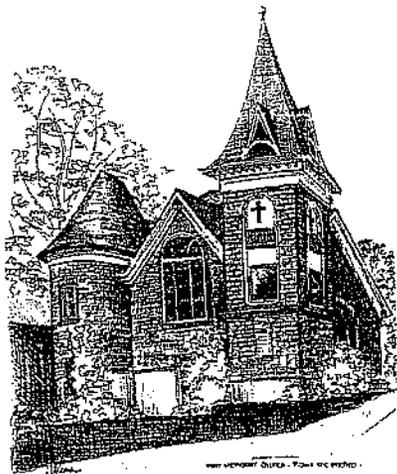
Richmond's first church services were held in 1899 in a railroad car that was placed on a side track for Sunday morning services. Soggy ground blocked off the coach in rainy weather, so worshippers moved to a "waterproof" tent on Washington and Richmond Avenues. A strong wind blew the tent away during one of the services, forcing a move to more permanent structures.

Already planning construction, the Methodists hastened work on their first church building, a small wood-frame structure built on a lot between their present church and the Catholic Church. While it was being built, Rev. Younglove conducted services in his own home. This building served also as Point Richmond's first schoolhouse, where Emily Boorman Axtell provided everything until a small school was built. She may have also conducted classes in the church's new building after 1906, since educational conditions were inadequate until 1913. The church also provided sanctuary for victims of the 1906 earthquake.

The church prospered and outgrew its first building, and under the leadership of Rev. D.W. Calfee, the church that we now see on the corner of Martina and West Richmond was built. Completed late in 1906, the building cost \$11,000. No record of an architect or designer can be found, although the design is distinguished by the beautiful vaulted octagonal sanctuary. Volunteers provided most of the labor on the redwood frame building. The veneer of Richmond Common Brick was manufactured here, at the Richmond Pressed Brick Company (located where the gun range exists at George Miller Jr. Park). Standard Oil bricklayers Harold Garrard, Harry Marland, George Connoly and John Houston laid the brick that Bob Dornan Sr. delivered free of charge by horse and wagon.

The beautiful sanctuary of the Methodist Church is almost acoustically perfect. It is lined with Douglas fir wainscoting, and adorned by carbon filament light globes that still operate. The original gaslight fixtures remain on the plastered walls, but they have been converted to use electricity. The present stained glass windows were installed in 1919.

The church basement, which members today are working to restructure, has a colorful

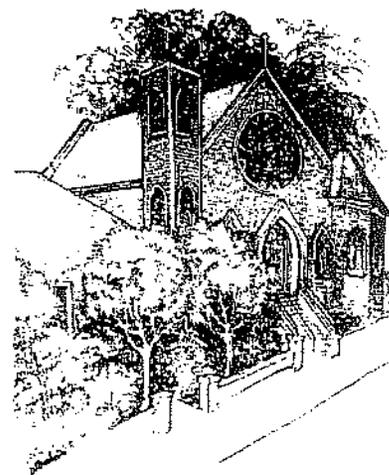


history of its own. Richmond's first Boy Scout Troop, Troop 1, was organized here, and, although its number has changed to Troop III, it is still active, and has been under the leadership of Bob Dornan, jr. for the last thirty years. Richmond's first Camp Fire Girl group also met in the church Hall, in 1913. Uldine Adams Nickola, baptized in the church in 1903, still sponsors the group, and was a charter member.

Roman Catholics in Point Richmond conducted their first services in Curry's Hall at Standard and Washington Avenues. The room was not reserved for masses, hosting roller skating, dancing and prize fighting as well. Its ground floor was a horse stable.

By the summer of 1902, a parish was established here, and Rev. Scanlan offered his first mass in September at Monte Richards Hall, at Park Place and Washington Avenue. Pat Deane, local bar owner, served as the Acolyte. The parish began work on their permanent church and rectory simultaneously, in 1903. The architect was a Mr. Higgins, and Mr. LeGault, known for his great interest in baseball for Richmond's youth, was the contractor. The estimated cost of both buildings was \$30,000. The formal dedication of Our Lady of Mercy Church was held on August 23, 1903. Its attendance in 1903-04 was approximately two hundred families, predominantly Irish. Membership was greatly expanded when refugees from the 1906 earthquake moved into this area.

An excavation was made beneath the church for a parish hall between 1909 and 1912. The large room has been host to many large luncheons and banquets. The West Side Improvement Club still holds monthly meetings in the hall. The well-kept up church had to give up its original bell, used little because of structural weakness. On its seventy-fifth an-



Our Lady of Mercy Church



The Church Rectory

teractive Resources. Tom Butt's architectural firm, occupies the upstairs.

The Baltic was built around 1904, and has always been a saloon, serving soft drinks during prohibition. It included a billiard hall, too, for a while. Upstairs ten or eleven rooms were rented out until they were combined to make four apartments. The side room at 139 Park Place has, at times, been partitioned off for rental to different businesses. The Baltic retains its original decor and atmosphere. It now serves fine Italian cuisine and features live music almost every night, and Sunday afternoon concerts.



PARK PLACE

145 Park Place was built in 1910 for Richmond's first firehouse and jail. A volunteer crew and a "night watchman" served until two devastating fires in 1901 pointed out the need for full time service. A meeting was held at the Critchett Hoel to appoint a committee to organize a fire department. Lyman Naugle, publisher of the local newspaper, was elected chairman. Fundraisers were held, and contributions came from as far away as Oakland and San Francisco. John Murray became chief, and he was followed in that position by George Hinds, William Ellis, Oliver Wylie, R.L. Adams, Dick

Spiersch and R.F. Paasch (who became the first paid Captain in 1915). A used chemical engine was purchased for \$500 from Mill Valley. On September 1, 1915, the Fire Department was put on a fully paid basis, and the first chief was Roy Lemoin. Police protection was scarce, because the constable was in San Pablo, so we received an official night watchman, Harry Stevens, in 1902. He was succeeded by A.B. Crump. In 1905, H.W. Livingstone was appointed Marshall, Superintendent of Streets, Tax Collector and Pound Master. In 1909 the Police Department really got going; just in time to move into its new building. It originally had a belltower for sounding alarms. The Police Department headquarters were there, plus four cells with double-decker bunks, a toilet and a washbasin in each. There was also a "drunk tank" which

In 1920, the Poundmaster announced an increase in fee, from 50 cents to \$1.00, since owners allow goats, cows and sundry animals to be impounded periodically just to get them well-fed.

sometimes housed as many as 60 or 70 drunks trying to sober up. As the Police Department grew, it spread into the adjoining buildings. In 1949 the Police and Fire Department headquarters relocated in the Civic Center, and we now have a fire station in the triangle across the street. The Old Firehouse now houses offices, and although its bell tower is gone, the handsome brickwork and the rear jail doors remain.

At one time the building at 151-155 Park Place was three stories high. Built before 1902 by carpenter C. Macway, it had two stores at street level and a total of twenty rooms in the two upper stories. It was originally called the Macway Palace, and later the Hoffman Lodging House. For some unknown reason, the two upper stories were removed. The storefronts were occupied by New York Furniture and John Andrews' Candy Shop in the first decade of this century. From around 1910 until 1930, Snell Photo and a restaurant shared them. Later Mr. Brewen, a carpenter, moved into 155; then it became Johnson's Shade and Linoleum Company, and later, Jeryl Parker Printing. The Westside Branch of the Richmond Public Library located here while its present building was under construction. For many years Janet Fleming operated Sophie's Emporium, a fine women's clothing store here. Now, it is offices.

157 - 159 Park Place was constructed prior to 1903. In the early days Spiersch Brothers' Plumbing was located here, but they soon moved into a building, no longer standing, on the other side of the Baltic. Later, the Elite Hairdressing Parlor and the COD Cleaners were situated here, and from the early '20's to the late '30's, the Gian-nasi's were established here — she a dressmaker, he a laborer. For a short while the City Juvenile Department occupied the building. From the early '60' to the '70's it became Le Menage Gallery, run by Pat and Pete Neufeld, and a second hand store. Finally, Wood Art (which moved to 226 West Richmond) located here. R.B. Read, the San Francisco Underground Gourmet, lived upstairs.

The building has been completely rebuilt, and a large wing added to the rear, but it has managed to retain its early day image. It is the Park Place Restaurant and Wine Cellar.

In 1913, a warning went out to the youth of the Point to stay off the streets with their roller skates, not for safety reasons, but because they were marring the new asphalt.

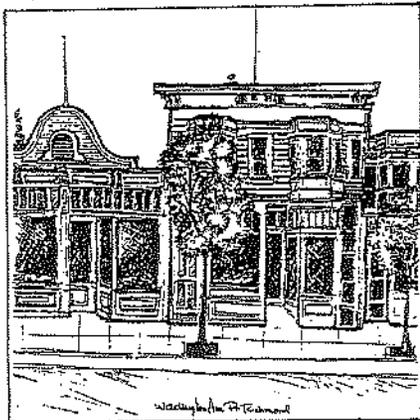
The pavement at Marine Drive and Richmond Avenue held a treasure — an 1836 gold piece was found imbedded there by George Deemer in 1933.



A bullfight was part of the August, 1902, Fiesta here. Warnings were issued by the SPCA and even the Governor, but the fights were held, anyway.

The Eddie Martin - Jack McGinnis prize-fight was held on June 20, 1902, with Martin winning in the sixth round. According to the newspaper, "No occasion of the kind has ever been honored with a more distinguished crowd."

the freeway is now, Mrs. Dwyer's Hotel catered to the transient visitor. Johnny Demire's saloon and cafe sat next to Mrs. Dwyer's, and next to that was Sam Curry's livery stable and undertaking parlor. The fourth corner is the one that remains today — a bar. And, it is from there that a convenient stroll up the east side of Washington can begin.



as was Bob Hartnyk's Clothing Store, the Gull Book Shop and the Cooperative Village Arts store spearheaded by Betty Pearson. It is now Whitney's, a delicatessen that not only serves delicious food, but has preserved the flavor of its fine old building.

The building at 39 and 41 Washington is shown on a map dated 1916, but was probably constructed well before that time. It has provided quarters for a variety of businesses including the Mint Cafe Saloon, Shapiro & Co., Inc. Real Estate, a shoe shine parlor, Lazarus Grocery and a restaurant. There were furnished rooms above. The building has been repaired and now contains offices.

The intersection at Washington and Standard was a very lively place in the early days of Point Richmond. One corner was held down by Mrs. McNally's hotel. On the corner closest to Standard Oil was DeSoto's "Hunger Home" Saloon with a long back porch which looked out on the swamp that extended to Standard Oil. A resident of that time, Bill Foster, claimed that you could shoot ducks from DeSoto's porch. On the northeast corner, where

The Spot was originally called the Richmond Bar with the Richmond Hotel upstairs. A cigar and tobacco store was located at the street level. It was owned by Tom Kenny, uncle of Supervisor Jim Kenny. The Gambucci family owned it for years after the Kennys, and it has changed hands again recently, but other than the change of name, it has remained pretty much the same.

One building that gives you the feeling of stepping back in time is at 31 Washington. James Shaw built it in 1901 for the Lang Drug Company and the Brown-Sugrue Bootery. The Andrews News Agency was located there at a later date

The Central Pool Hall building at 45-49 Washington was built before 1908. It was originally the Central Saloon, and was owned by John Kenny, Sr. The Kennys lived upstairs, and had two sons, John and James. John, Jr. was a city councilman, but was killed in World War II. Kenny Park was named in his honor. Jim then followed in his brother's footsteps by becoming a city councilman, and went on to the Board of Supervisors. Other businesses have been located in parts of the building, as: Machado & Silva Barbers, a cigar store, a tailor, Sedwick Bowling, McGlynn Watch Repair, and Joe's Shoe Repair Shop. After the Kennys moved the upstairs became the Central Apartments.

The first building on Park Place was built before 1904, and housed Matson's, the first bakery at the Point. It remained a bakery under various ownership (Richard Henrich, Frank Ketelhot, and M.E. Marten followed Matson) until the early '50's. It was a much longer building, stretching almost to Railroad Avenue to accommodate a large brick oven and a flour storage room. The front was originally a traditional high wooden storefront. From the early '50's until a few years ago the Mariner's Tavern was located here. It is vacant now.

Early pictures of the Point suggest that the 105 Park Place building was constructed prior to 1907. It was a grocery store continuously until 1955, with such names as "Fair Grocery" and "Liberty Market". Room was also made here to publish the local newspaper, the forerunner of our Independent-Gazette, called the Richmond Daily Independent. In 1955 the Richmond Community Theater Group took over the building, and it is now operated by the Masquers, one of the finest small acting groups in the area.

This charming brick building, pictured in a sketch at the beginning of this section, was built around 1912. It looks very much the same as it did originally. There have always been living quarters above and storefronts below. 109 has been a restaurant for many years, with such names as the Point Cafe and Cathy's Restaurant. It is now the Mexican Inn. For a while 113 was the Goldstone Photography Studio. It is now the Park Place Barber Shop.

Dating from around 1904, the building at 115-119 Park Place has had many uses. A brick building, now painted over, it used to be similar to the Baltic, with shops at street level and rooms (called the Viola) above. The two upstairs windows were originally bays. In its early days there were medical offices upstairs for Dr. Henry Decker, dentist, and Dr. W.S. Lucas, physician. At street-level there has been a restaurant, grocery store, a furniture store and Kenneth Janes antique and interior design studio. Little Louie's and Jack Stoddard's Real Estate Office now share the downstairs while the

From the memories of Bill Foster, who arrived here in 1903:

Pat Dean made the arrangements for the Ad Wolgast - "Batling" Nelson fight that took place here February 22, 1910. He set up an outdoor ring, and seating for 20,000 people. It poured rain the night before, and kids sold newspapers for 25 cents each for people to sit on. The fight began and the rain began again. — 42 rounds. Wolgast won, arriving at the dressing room back of Pat Dean's saloon, covered with mud.

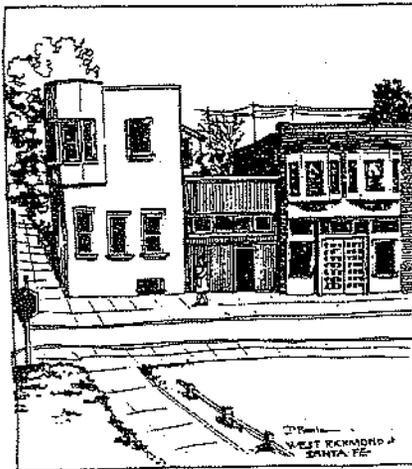
in 134 Washington, and Frank Schow was providing men's furnishings next door. Schow's was changed to Allyn's, which was located there until it moved to its present location. In the '50's, 134 was the J & M Club; then it was remodeled to be the Village Launderette we know today. There has always been lodging on the second floor. It was called the Hotel Point Richmond at one time.

Another building which probably predates 1907 because it appears in photos taken in 1907, was 136-140 Washington. 136 was a hardware store operated by City Councilman Virgil Fenner. Later C.G.Perault took over the business. In the '30's King's Cigars occupied this spot, and by the '40's the present occupants, Allyn's Men's Store had relocated here. 140 was a jewelry shop run by Mr. F.C.Dietrich who was the watch inspector for the Santa Fe Railroad. In the early '20's Ulysses G. Abell established his candy store here, and in the '30's Mr. Machado opened a barber shop. From the early '40's to the mid '50's this was the site of Palmateer's Pharmacy, and later, Alexander's Tic Toc Shop. It is now L.L. Boone's, a gift shop. The reason there is no 138 is that a second story was planned but never added on. You can see where the doorway would have been.

148-154 Washington has had a real conglomeration of inhabitants over the years: a dry goods store, a soda fountain, a music teacher, a cafe, and a used furniture store. Now, Camille Zulpo-Dane produces her unique pottery cantalope bowls in her shop called Zebra located in 148. Pottery Public with its wide variety of fine pottery, occupies the second storefront in this building.

Ron's Market at the corner of Washington and West Richmond is located where the Critchett Hotel was built in 1900. John Nicholl had given Critchett the land free for constructing a "first class mechanics hotel" on the site. It was a wood frame building with 25 rooms and a dining hall. The Critchett Hotel served as Richmond's first City Hall. It was there that the first meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on August 14, 1905. The trustees were E.J.Garrard, S.R.Curry, F.S.Babcock, Frank Critchett and John Kenny. H.L.Livingstone was Marshal; J.V.Galbraith was city clerk; and Waverly Stairley was treasurer. At their first meeting they appointed William Satterwhite city attorney and Robert Still city recorder.

By 1909 the City Government had outgrown the Critchett Hotel, so John Nicholl built 210 Washington, and located his offices upstairs while he leased the ground floor



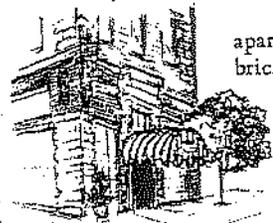
to the city for \$50 a month for a City Hall. The original building had a bell tower, a flag pole on the roof, and a well-designed exposed brick exterior. The tower was removed and the building remodeled, so that you can hardly recognize it today. The John Nicholl City Hall was in use from 1909 until 1915 when the lease ran out, and the city offices had expanded enough to require a larger building. The offices were moved to the Wall City Hall at Twentieth and Maine in 1915, but Nicholl wanted the City Hall near his property to increase its value, so he gave the city the money to build another, and the city offices moved again to Twenty-Fifth and Nevin where they remained until the present Civic Center was constructed. On January 9, 1922, the Point Masonic Lodge bought the first City Hall for their lodge on the second floor and a clubroom below. The Masons are still upstairs, and Lola's Beauty Shop was downstairs for thirty years. It is now Ruthalee's Beauty Shop.



TEWKSBURY AVENUE POINT RICHMOND

WASHINGTON AVENUE AND THE TRIANGLE

A stroll up Point Richmond's main street, Washington, would have been a lot more exciting in the old days when there were thirty-four bars in our little village, but it is probably a little safer today, and fun to imagine what it was like in the first decade of this century when the Point was a wild place.



50 Washington

At the foot of the West side of Washington Avenue, the apartment building at no. 18 was constructed in 1904. It was brick, had two storefronts at ground level, and rooms upstairs. A French laundry occupied one of the stores, and the People's Water Company had moved into the other when they had to vacate the bank building. People's was the original water company here. The water came from wells in the valley near San Pablo Creek, and was pumped into a large cement reservoir located at the top of Water Street. According to the account of Bill Foster, the water was "vile, tasting like rotten eggs, and very hard. Dead cats were found in it and sickness was on the go from it." It was some years before "good" water was piped from Oakland.

The building at 32 Washington was built before 1907. James McCracken had his fine men's clothing store, The Hub, downstairs. Upstairs, there was a rooming house called the Princeton. In the '40's, Washington Market was situated there. After considerable remodeling, The Point, a bar and restaurant, opened in the late '60's. It features well known jazz musicians on weekends.

Next door, where the Mark Farmer Doll Company re-creates dolls from the past, a number of businesses have come and gone over the years. 36-40 Washington has housed a men's store, William's Hardware and Variety, "Irrigation Technical Services", as well as a Candle Shop.

Photos dated 1910 show the large brick building at 50 Washington under construction. Built by Kate Riordan, the newspaper article announced that "it promises to be one of the finest in the country." The Colonial Hotel restaurant had a fine reputation, and George Allen, the brother of Gracie Allen, was a waiter there. It remained the Colonial Hotel until it was changed to the Mac Hotel in the '30's. (bought by a Mr. McAfee). A fire gutted the building in the '70's, but it has recently been restored to its original elegance, again serving gourmet dinners at the lower level, but the upstairs is now office space instead of hotel rooms. The stained glass windows are worth an extra minute of your time, and the bar at the street level puts you in the spirit of "the good old days."

Turn up Cottage to no. 61, where you will find the Ivy Inn. It was built around 1900, and was called the St. James. Mr. and Mrs. Ed McDuff owned and operated it for many years as a hotel, bar and restaurant. Mr. McDuff served on the City Council in 1910. Mrs. McDuff, who is Dennis Day's aunt, was kept busy working in the hotel's restaurant. After her husband's death in the mid '30's, she moved to an apartment above

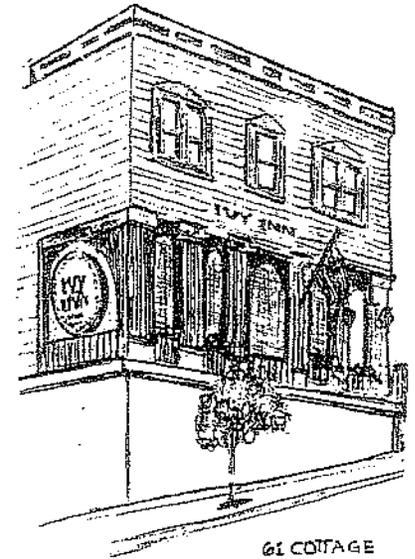
Jumbo's on Washington Avenue. She lived there until recently, when she went to stay with a niece in New York. The McDuff's added the back portion to the hotel shortly after it was built. Business must have been very good. During World War II the rooms were used as barracks for soldiers. In 1956 the Darlings bought it and renamed it the Ivy Inn. The Darlings raised their five children there while renting a portion of it out. They remodeled it in the early '70's, and then sold it to an investment group in 1979. It is now a residential hotel.

Back to Washington Avenue, the building at 100-106 was apparently built before 1907. Early photos show this building with an arcade in front, stores at street level, and furnished rooms above. 100 Washington was a saloon until 1912 when it became Blesio's clothing and dry goods store. The other storefront was King's Cigar Store. By the early '30's, 100 had become a barber shop, and remained so until the Gingham Goose occupied it. Now it is a hair cutting salon. In the mid '30's the Post Office moved into 106 from West Richmond.

Early photos show bay windows on either side of the second story at 110-114 Washington. In 1907 the National Saloon was located at 110 and next door Mr. G.K. Drew had a cigar store and billiard parlor. Although the billiard parlor changed hands several times, it remained here until the mid '30's. The Eagle Barber Shop was established in the '50's, and a barber shop remained here until recently. It

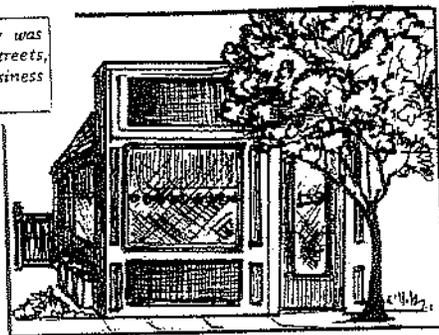
was used for a brief time by Kenneth Janes, and now it is Sepulveda Printing. It seems that a barber shop or bar was located at some time in every building in downtown Point Richmond; in this case, both. The National Saloon at 110 Washington was replaced by a barber shop around 1911. In the early '30's, a grocery store was opened here, and in the mid '40's it was remodeled for a restaurant. It was Pat's Center Cafe. Since the mid '60's it has been Jumbo's, our favorite hamburger joint.

The Standard Market, The Arcade (billiards and tobacco), and the McCord House (lodgings) were situated at 130 and 134 Washington Avenue in 1908. Later, Dietrich's cigar store with "billiard and pool parlors in connection" at 130 Washington featured "courteous treatment to all." Around 1946, 130 was remodeled into a restaurant, which it has been ever since. It has had such names as Jack's Cafe, The Steak House, The Ichthus, and now Judges and Spares. By the mid '20's Shock's Variety Store had settled



61 COTTAGE

On April 12, 1920, a new Parking Ordinance was passed, limiting the "parking" of horses to side streets, because of the "pollution" they caused in the business district.



his partner would not agree, so Dornan bought Whitesides out in 1911, and bought a truck for, "three wagons (one dump, two cargo), two teams of horses and ten dollars in gold." In 1944 the Richmond Supply Company was doing so well it expanded into the empty lot next door where "The Nickelodeon", a silent movie house had been, and the building adjacent to it at 145 West Richmond Avenue, which had been occupied by U. Sonoda, a shoemaker, and "The Apex", and a shaving parlor owned by Bill Cooper. The building at 145 West Richmond was completely renovated with new foundation, walls, and roof. Upon Mr. Dornan's death in 1966, his wife Trannie continued to run the business. This remarkable lady who boasts of an age past 85, still walks down Washington Avenue to work every morning and enjoys chatting with her many friends and customers. After the Richmond Supply Company had established itself in 145 West Richmond, Mrs. Laura Larlin opened a grocery store in 139. Then, during the '50's A.F. Dixon had a locksmith business there, and it was converted to a home. Hazel Carr bought it in the '60's, installed the large windows you see today, and opened her Point Richmond Real Estate and Income Tax Service.

The Anderson Building, the large brick building at 147 and 149 West Richmond Avenue, was built around 1910. Upstairs there are lodgings, at first called the Anderson Hotel and later, the Starr Apartments. Until the early 1950's, there was a grocery store at the street level initially named McWhorter's Grocery, then West Side Market. There have been other occupants in the store front including the Reliable Saw Works and the Point Trading Post. Jay and Karen Fenton opened Energy Unlimited in 1976, where they sell various types of wood burning stoves.

Art Whitesides, who had been bought out of the Richmond Supply Company by Robert Dornan, went to work for Standard Oil, but eventually went back into business for himself when he built what is now the Santa Fe Market at the corner of West Richmond and Washington. For many years there were several small wood frame buildings on this site, including the house built by John Nicholl Company in 1900, referred to earlier. Whitesides built his grocery store in 1916, and it has remained a grocery store and meat market continuously since that time, with various owners. Interestingly, there

was a Santa Fe Store farther up West Richmond Avenue as early as 1913. However, it sold all kinds of livestock, not food.

In 1902 the Bank of Richmond was organized and that same year work was begun on a large, prestigious building of yellow glazed brick at the corner of Washington and West Richmond Avenues. It had a well designed facade and a staircase leading from the sidewalk to the first floor. There were offices upstairs, and shops along West Richmond Avenue. In 1910 the building was remodeled - an addition was built behind the bank on Washington Avenue for the storage of books and papers. the floor of the bank was lowered to street level, eliminating the need for the elegant stairs, and the facade was changed to look much as it does now. By the mid '20's the pointed roof on the round bay in front had been removed, completing the alteration of the exterior of the building.



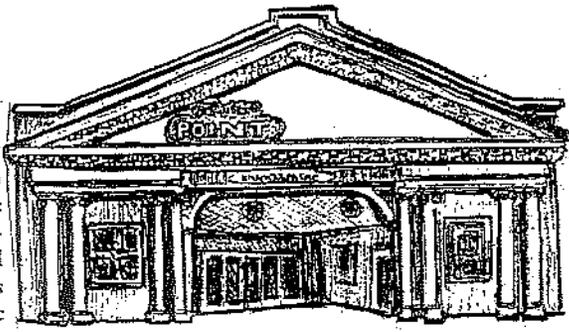
The Bank of Richmond was located here until the early '20's when it became the location of the First Richmond Branch Mercantile Trust Company, and then in the late '20's to mid '30's, the American Trust Company. By the early '40's it was a billiard hall, at one time called "Bank Club Billiards".

Over the years many different businesses have occupied the storefronts in the bank building along West Richmond Avenue, including the People's Water Company (our original version of EBMUD), McWhorter's Grocery, Pulse Brother's "Groceria", W.B. Jenkins (tailor), Wood & Wood Notions, a beauty shop, and later a barber shop.

Above the bank were offices which in 1902 housed the early phone exchange. Around 1912 the Coroner, Dr. Abbott, was located here, and in 1914 Dr. Abbott opened the Emergency Hospital over the Bank when he closed the hospital on West Richmond. In the early '20's the offices were converted to lodgings and at one time these were called the Bank Hotel, and later the Hartynyk Hotel.

In the mid '50's Bob and Sherry Hartynyk bought the building, and made the upper floor their home. They moved their variety store from the old Lang Drug Company building on Washington Avenue to the street level of this building, and Mrs. Hartynyk, who had been a buyer for Lord and Taylor, began a boutique in the rear of the store, while bringing up the couple's two children. Mr. Hartynyk died last year, and Mrs. Hartynyk continues the business, with the aid of her son and daughter.

In 1913 a great addition to our little community was established at the corner of West Richmond and Park Place — a theater, with a seating capacity of 450. Its opening provided an air of excitement for the entire town. Built by Ralph Tcherassy, its marble-line lobby had tile floors, and the interior was decorated "in the most artistic manner." A San Francisco architect, C.O. Clausen, designed



the building. One of the publicized features was a restroom for mothers and their babies, and for ladies generally. Original plans called for a ventilating system, but a snow storm on January 9, 1913 (a rare event in Point Richmond) caused Mr. Tcherassy to change it to a heating system. The theater opened on February 15, 1913 with a packed house — so much so that a second showing was held, and a total of 1200 people attended opening night. Admission on opening night was ten cents, and thereafter it was twenty cents. Not only did the audience view a "photoplay" ("The Caprices of a King"), but they were also treated to live music by a six-piece orchestra, a vocal solo by Madam Rosa Capelli, and a speech by Mayor Owens, followed by additional movies and music. Two months after its opening, the theater happened to present a movie entitled "Opportunity", filmed at the Standard Oil Refinery, and including in its cast two local celebrities: Don Church, who was selling the Oakland Enquirer at the refinery gate, and James McCann, who was working in the refinery during summer vacation.

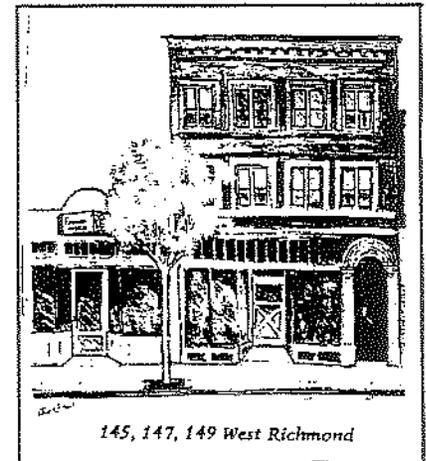
By 1956 the name of the theater had changed to the Cine Theater, and in 1957 it had become the Miracle Revival Tabernacle. It then reverted back to a theater for a short while as the Bridge. It became a gymnasium and then sat vacant, until, 54 years after the original theater had opened, it observed another grand opening; this time with its entrance facing Park Place. The Point Orient restaurant opened in 1967, to a packed house. The name "Point Orient" refers to a point on the Bay next to Point Molate beyond what used to be the Chinese Shrimp Camp.

Continuing down West Richmond Avenue, the building at 117, which is called the Odd Fellows and Rebekah Building has an interesting history. The original building was two stories, of wood construction, built in 1903 by John Murray. Mr. Stiefvater had a store at street level, where he sold groceries, produce and general merchandise. The Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall was upstairs. Sometime between 1908 and 1912, the entire building was raised and a concrete storefront was built underneath, making it a three

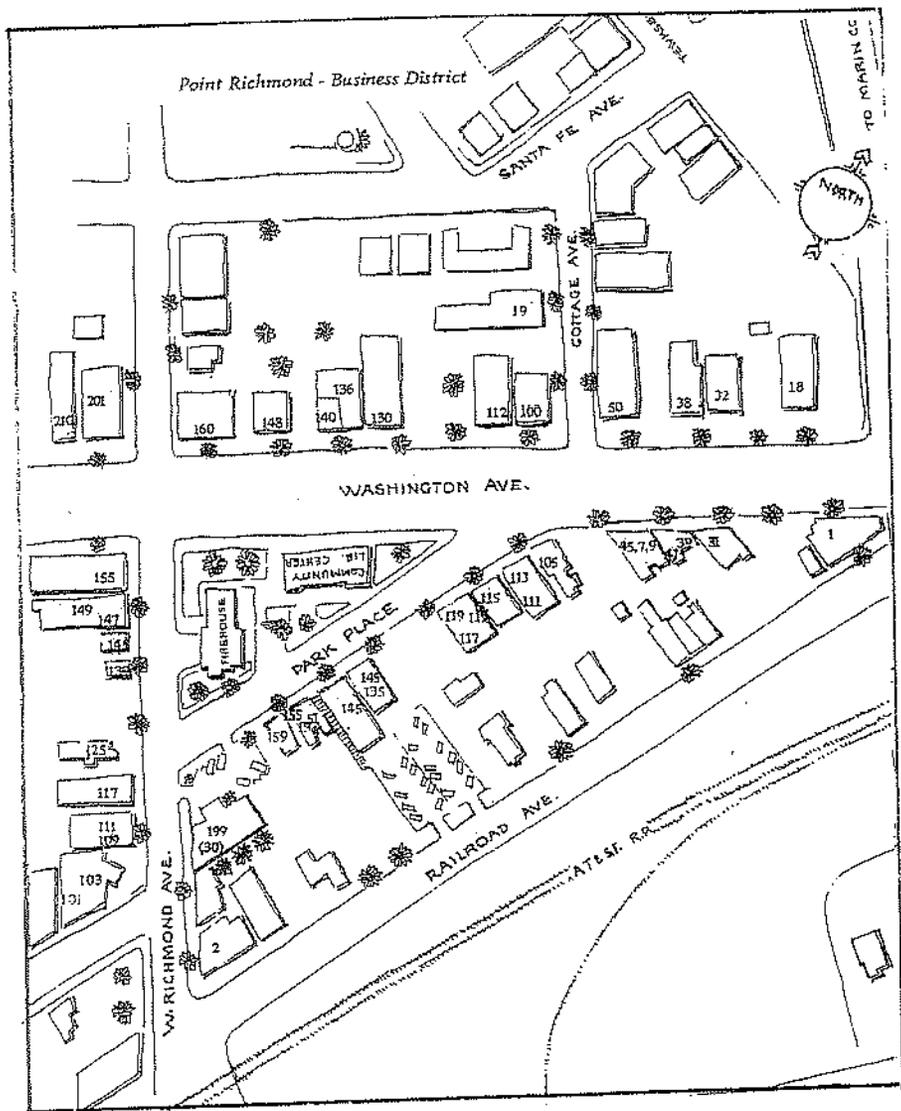
story building. Then, later, the top two stories (the original building) were removed, leaving the concrete section that you see today. Stiefvater had his store here for several years, then Richard Fer had a store at this location until the early '40's. For a short time in the '50's, Hayhurst Transfer and Storage operated out of this building. It has long been a meeting place for local fraternal groups.

The house at 125 West Richmond was built by the John Nicholl Company in the winter of 1900. There was another just like it where the Santa Fe Market is now. From the early 1900's until about 1915, Dr. Henry J. Decker, a dentist had his office and residence here. The house has had many different occupants: John G. Gerlach, manager of the Richmond Pressed Brickworks, and his wife Eliza; Emilio E. Buffi, a rancher, and his wife Angelina; H.G. Stidham, a real estate and insurance agent; Arthur Strum; Joseph Nerz; William Kooperman, a marine engineer. In 1936 Oscar F. and Naomi Huffstetter bought the building and raised their family in it. They sold it to Steve and Francis Osbourne in 1969. Another dentist bought it in 1978, Dr. Harold Kristal, who was going to locate his practice there, but changed his mind and sold it to David Vincent, Cheryl Gilboy and Pat Haven. The present owners have renovated the building extensively. The asbestos shingles were removed to expose the original redwood. The entire building was raised to allow for a new foundation, and to place it more on a level with the street. (The street had been raised several feet after the removal of the street car tracks.) The top floor is presently occupied by a school, and the downstairs contains retail shops.

The little building at 139 West Richmond was originally the home of the oldest continuing business in the Point. J.Q. Black began the business in 1903 to deliver coal, wood, hay and grain. In 1905 Robert Dornan, Sr. arrived here from Ireland at the age of 23. He had come to see an injured brother, and found work as a railroad car repairman. He became a volunteer fireman, and was given lodging in the firehouse. In 1909 he and another Santa Fe employee, Art Whitesides, bought out J.Q. Black. They expanded the business to include the delivery of household goods. The price to deliver a trunk from the train station was fifteen cents. All of their work was done by horse-drawn wagon. (Trannie, Robert's widow, still has the brass license plates from the wagon.) Johnson and Brain on Sixth Street were providing stiff competition because they owned a truck, so Dornan wanted to buy a truck, but



145, 147, 149 West Richmond



WEST RICHMOND AVENUE

Hotels and saloons were plentiful in the first decade of this century because single men were arriving daily to work in our two new industries. West Richmond Avenue reflects that situation.

If you had stepped off the train in those days you might have checked into the Maxwell Hotel at 1 - 3 West Richmond — right next to the railroad tracks. And, to refresh yourself, you might have had a drink in the Hotel bar conveniently located at the entrance. The hotel building bears the name "J.G. Gerlach", manager of the Brickworks and City Councilman from 1915 to 1921, who presumably built the place. The Maxwell became the Curtis Hotel in the '30's, and the Todd in the '40's. The wartime industries here in the early '40's produced the same need for hotels and saloons that the arrival of Standard and Santa Fe produced in the early 1900's.

If the Maxwell saloon was not to your liking, you could have purchased a libation at the Louvre which caught the people coming from the train tracks on that side of the street. It was owned by Mr. Henry Sirrenburg. Sometime before 1912 it was completely rebuilt, changing it from a wooden structure to what you see now. Sirrenburg continued to operate the bar and rent furnished rooms upstairs until the late '20's. Then for about ten years the upstairs was called the Tunnel Hotel. Many different names have graced the lower level over the years, such as: Duggan's Kitchen, Bill's Seafood Restaurant, Duggan's Diner, Mack's Tavern and the Villa Sorrento. It is now Dorothy's Corner.

The large blue building at 109 and 111 West Richmond Avenue, often referred to as the "Pink Palace" from its earlier days as a large pink building, was built in 1910 of reinforced concrete with walls a foot thick. It was initially called the Arnold Building. The local branch of the Post Office was located in 111 from 1910 until it was moved to its present location on Washington Avenue, around 1940. Next door at 109, Unji Sonoda had a shoe repair shop. Later 109 became a paint supply and second hand goods store, and then an auto supply store. From the early '50's to the mid '60's, Olsen's Press and Stationers was located here. Presently one side houses Chuck's Friendly TV, while the other side is vacant since the Karate School moved. Upstairs, there are lodgings which were called the Sunnyside apartments for many years.

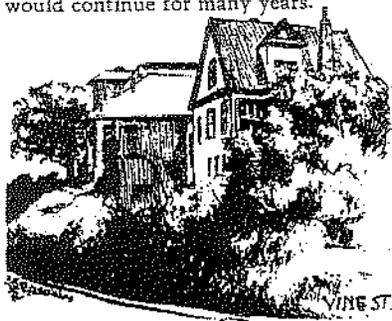


Other residents of the town became more interested in drilling through the hill than in the earth, and Nicholl's well stood in the way of the proposed tunnel that would allow easy access to the Bay. Nicholl stopped work and waited to see if the city would buy his well or change their access route. The route was changed, and in 1923, Nicholl's company gave land around the well to the city for a Natatorium.

How much did residents want a tunnel? When the Tunnel and Harbor bonds passed, (by a margin of 7 to 1), boosters including the Independent and the Richmond Industrial Committee "burned many hundred pounds of red fire on Nicholl Nob. A large bonfire at Washington Avenue and Park Place with the ringing of bells, tooting of whistles, and honking of auto horns, the boosters made merry." And, "A celebration, the likes of which this town has never known, is being planned for New Year's Eve, to celebrate the success of the Tunnel and Harbor Bonds."

Much of the celebration was for the potential harbor, but Point residents especially wanted and needed a tunnel. Many had used the railroad tunnel, and some harrowing tales resulted. Work on the tunnel began in January of 1914, and one month after contracts were signed, there was a three-week delay because of a controversy over the right-of-way to the tunnel. John Nicholl's oil well was located where the sidewalk to the tunnel was to be laid. It was June before the tunnel was bored, and the contractors announced that it would be finished in November of 1914. However, in November, the "new supervisor" announced that the tunnel would not be completed until the following February. It was not until July, 1915 that the West Side optimistically planned a Tunnel Day Celebration. The long-awaited tunnel was completed and in use on October 19, 1915.

Shortly after Nicholl's company donated the oil well land to the City, the proposed bonds for the new Natatorium passed almost unanimously, and on September 15, 1925, the West Side Improvement Club provided a gala celebration to open the Richmond Municipal Natatorium. Water from the well was mixed with salt water to provide swimming pleasure that would continue for many years.



13.

II. THE BUSINESS DISTRICT



14.

AN UPSIDE-DOWN TURNAROUND, AN OIL WELL AND THE PLUNGE

*The reply, "You can't get there from here,"
may have been felt, if not heard, by those searching out Point Richmond.*

If you have ever wondered why the roads into Point Richmond seem confusing at first, you could ask why and receive basically the same answer as if you asked why the trains block our traffic. Santa Fe's tradition seems to be consistent, and in this area it began with the construction of a roundhouse. Rumor has it that the tracing of the building plans for the roundhouse were upside down, and the buildings were constructed on a portion of Barrett Avenue. Santa Fe was required to provide another street in exchange for the one they blocked, but that too eventually became part of their yard, and, in exchange for that, they provided the street known as Garrard Boulevard.

Once you arrived here, via Garrard Boulevard, you may have wondered at the complicated intersection, as Garrard, Cutting and Richmond Avenues meet. The following account eventually explains that arrangement.



Most residents of Point Richmond believe that the Point has everything; but one thing we can be reasonably certain of is that there is no oil in these hills. John Nicholl — a name linked to many portions of the Point's past — put his faith in C.L. Cofer, who, with his "Terrestrial Wave Detector" predicted that wells here would be great producers of oil. He found great belts of blue rock, great dykes of yellow and blue oil shale, and a very large and well defined gas dome (Nicholl Nob), which was "the hand of nature pointing to her hidden wealth and which I do register with my Terrestrial Wave Detector."

Cofer's marvelous device was a "series of electrical batteries strapped tightly around his body, with an indicating instrument of his own invention." Cofer took Nicholl's

money (at the rate of fifty dollars a day), and gave him his test results in glowing detail. On June 8, 1911, the Richmond Independent announced that the statement of Cofer after examination of Nicholl properties at the Point had prompted Nicholl, together with W.S. McCracken, James Cruickshank and E.M. Tilden to form a company to drill for oil. On July 25, a half-page ad appeared in the paper, advertising stock in the company.

It took little time for the company to set up a derrick at Richmond Avenue near the Santa Fe tracks. Nicholl described it as one of the strongest derricks in the state, with a height of eighty-two feet, and a sixteen by sixteen foot base.

Great crowds were present in November, when the drilling began. Eventually, a fence had to be erected and passes required of visitors, who often stood dangerously near the operation.

One visitor, a Professor Jahnke, whom the newspapers referred to as "the Wizard of Nicholl Nob", took a small rock found at the depth of sixty feet, tested it with chemicals, and came up with a small silver nugget! He was convinced that a larger vein of silver would be discovered farther down.

When the well reached eighty feet into the earth, hard blue rock was encountered. The hills quivered for days while the drill made its way through the hard place, and into — water. An artesian well, yielding 9,000 gallons of water per minute gushed from Nicholl's well, and a cave-in caused minor difficulties. (Difficulties included sidewalk superintendents, and at this point the fence went up.)

The well reached 190 feet, and soft red shale appeared (as predicted by Cofer). Cofer didn't predict the 250 feet of granite and the water which had to be pumped off. By February of 1912, the drillers were again in the thick of solid rock. At a depth of 398 feet, they had spent sixty days in solid rock, averaging only six feet per day.

By April of 1912, The People's Water Company offered to buy the well, but Nicholl having drilled 500 feet, set his limit at 1,000 feet before giving up. Water flowed out at the rate of 250,000 gallons per day. In November, 1912, after over a year of drilling, the well was at a depth of 1,232 feet, having gone through twenty feet of promising sand.



KOZY KOVE

*From the memories of Don Church,
and information from old newspapers*

Loomis Park was provided to the public by Mr. B. E. Loomis, who owned the property from Keller's beach to beyond Washington Avenue, and from Crest Avenue to the reservoir atop Water Street. About 1905, Mr. Loomis built the concrete bulkhead and had cypress and palm trees planted in a horseshoe shape up from the beach. Atop Washington Avenue, he provided benches so that people could sit and enjoy the view of the Bay. Following the 1906 earthquake, the benches were used for a different kind of viewing — the flames that covered San Francisco, and their eerie reflection in a clear Bay.

Only two houses are visible in pictures of Loomis Park: the old McHenry home, now the Walter Paasch home, and the Eakle home at the top of Washington Avenue, directly across from the McHenry's.

An article in the Richmond Record Herald of March 23, 1914, reads: "Amusement Park to be started on the West Side. Kozy Kove Pleasure Park Company headed by Frank Agar and other San Francisco capitalists closed a deal purchasing the holdings of the Point Richmond Warehouse and Dock Company on Bay Shore Tract and will convert same into a resort. It will take over what is known as 'Loomis Park' and it will be known as Kozy Kove. The price paid is said to be \$45,000. An open air cafe and dancing pavillion will be constructed."

Work on the \$10,000 park began in April, 1914. Half a mile of shoreline had been purchased, and on it were a large dancing pavillion, 100 bath houses and shrubbery. The grand opening took place on Memorial Day. Boating, dancing and swimming were accompanied by the sounds of an Hawaiian dance band.

The idyllic pleasure "resort" lasted only one season under the management of Mr. Agar and a Mrs. Schinkel of Oakland. During her brief stay, Mrs. Schinkel made herself unpopular by bringing a suit against Mrs. Nelly Keller, widow of Gus Keller, who had been killed in the Santa Fe Tunnel. Mrs. Keller's only means of livelihood was the small wharf



KOZY
By the Sea
KOVE

POINT RICHMOND
Richmond's Refined Family Pleasure Resort

Swimming
Special Program Arranged for Sunday....

DANCING
Every Saturday Night, Sunday Afternoon
and Sunday Night.

First Class Union Orchestra....

at "Keller's Beach" adjacent to Kozy Kove, and boat rentals. Attorney Wilbur Pierce defended Mrs. Keller free of charge.

During the winter of 1914, the Point endured its worst storm in twenty years, and Kozy Kove was heavily damaged. On May 7, 1915, all equipment of the Kove was sold at auction. "Simultaneously with the sale," recalls Mr. Church, "Adolph Winters, the local florist, armed with a pick and shovel, dug up all of the shrubbery which he had planted to beautify the park."

"No more from out of its dance hall will float the syncopated airs of ragtime, no more from beneath its cypress hedges will float the love songs of the swains wooing their fair young mates . . ." but within a month, a new company was formed, and on June 3 the paper reported: "The Kove will open under the management of Benson and Jansing after a thorough overhauling and remodeling. In addition, a playground for children has been built. Electricity has been carried to every part of the grounds, which can now be enjoyed by day or night." During the week, young couples danced to the nickelodeon, and on weekends the finest dance band "ever to hit Richmond", the Lenzen-McCracken orchestra, provided the music. Lodges and other groups rented the park at times, and the Kove was extremely popular.

With the rising popularity of the automobile, Kozy Kove received less and less business, and in 1919, the Kove was offered to the City of Richmond on two different plans, one at \$22,500, and the other at \$32,500. The sale was offered by a Mrs. Elizabeth Chamberlain, so evidently Benson and Jansing had not consummated their purchase, and Mrs. Schinkel had remarried, because, in 1925 the Schinkel estate would have let the city purchase the land for only \$9,000. The city obviously took neither offer, and soon the Kove became part of the residential section of our Town.

At least one famous guest visited the Kove in its heyday. Jack London paid the City of Richmond a visit, and after being given a tour of Standard Oil and Winehaven he attended some festivities at Kozy Kove. Don Church remembered talking to Jack, when he became tired of all the attention, and escaped to talk to some young boys who were watching the party from a distance. Don remembered the stir caused by his absence, and the ladies all calling for him, as he sat there talking to the boys, and ignoring their calls. London stayed in the Point for two days, and then took off in his boat, "The Roamer."

THE INVENTOR

Information and pictures from an article in Lyman Naugle's pictorial booklet of 1902, now in the Richmond Museum.

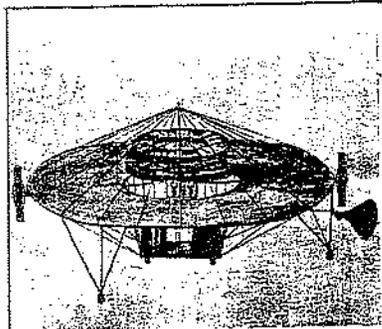
There is no building left to commemorate the man who might have made Point Richmond the site of man's first ascent in an "aeroplane"; Mr. R.H. Botts, inventor and constructor, did construct a building atop Nicholl Nob, where he worked on his flying machine. His mailing address was the "World's Aerial Navigation and Construction Company, Point Richmond, California."

The quiet little man arrived in Point Richmond sometime during the winter of 1900. About six months later, he announced his intention to build a steam powered flying machine with his newly patented improved steam engine. He announced, "I understand well the difficulties encountered in aerial navigation, and the necessity of overcoming the law of gravitation is the principle one. . . I found it absolutely necessary to obtain some extremely rapid and powerful motion, and after many experiments with various forces, I found there was nothing to equal steam, and with that end in view, I set to work to produce an engine and boiler that would be light enough and powerful enough to answer my purpose and I have succeeded perfecting both." He claimed that for every ten pounds of engine and boiler weight (they were aluminium) he could generate one horsepower. A model airship was built and displayed in San Francisco and Richmond.

By February, 1902, Botts announced that he would complete two airships by summer. He was planning an aerial expedition in June to the North Pole, to investigate "Physical conditions of the earth's surface at its northern



R. H. BOTTS
Inventor and Constructor



Botts' Flying Machine

axis." The ships were to carry four people each, along with supplies and a Marconi wireless system. To finance his construction and expedition, Mr. Botts began advertising shares in the World's Aerial Navigation Company. The May 26 demonstration of the engine at the Santa Fe yards convinced people to contribute and buy stocks. In August, Botts displayed his engine, boiler and model at the Richmond Fiesta. Photos of the machine include a flight over Point Richmond — fake, but fun.

Eventually enough money was raised to build Bott's workshop and hangar on Nicholl Nob, and the actual construction began. Many people, skeptics and supporters alike, came to the Nob to view the flying machine. Late in 1903, the machine was hauled to the top of Nicholl Nob, and poised for takeoff. A great storm swept the aeroplane off the Nob for an involuntary maiden voyage to the top of Glenn Avenue, where it landed in a heap. Botts left town in bitter disappointment, never to know whether Point Richmond and he would have taken the place of Kitty Hawk and the Wright Brothers in history, had it not been for the forces of nature and the law of Murphy.

GET OFF THE EARTH

Why not? 33,000 lbs. raised one foot high in one minute's time is a horse power, while 33 lbs. can be raised by a screw propeller direct.

One sq. ft. of canvas in an aeroplane, traveling at the rate of 21 miles an hour, will carry one lb., while at 40 miles per hour it will carry 4 pounds.

The gravity of one sq. ft. of canvas is discount is nearly equal to one lb. of weight descending at 11 miles an hour.

You might as well put legs to a locomotive as to put wings to a flying machine; therefore, the right aeroplane with advancing and ascending, neutralizing propellers, supplemented by light and very strong power, will solve the problem. Our new engines will meet this demand.

We have constructed four propellers weighing only 40 lbs. and containing 56 sq. ft. of blade surface.

Our neutralizing, lifting propeller blades, when in action, will advance over eight different currents of air, while the advancing propellers are so placed as to produce a direct lift on the aeroplane.

Our aeroplane will contain one sq. ft. of surface to each pound of weight to be carried.

The entire machine is constructed on plan of the bicycle wheel, the inner and outer rims of the aeroplane being strongly guyed to a central mast; and we challenge the world to produce a lighter construction having equal strength with less wind resistance, since our one-man machine, including 8-horse-power engine, can be built, weighing from 100 to 150 lbs.

We, as a company, propose to perfect a one-man machine first, leaving the commercial possibilities to be determined in the future, thus making no extravagant claims.

Our experiment station is located on Mount Nicholl, at Point Richmond, Cal., which is the most suitable location for experimental purposes that nature could provide.

For lowest prices on stock, and other information, address the WORLD'S AERIAL NAVIGATION AND CONSTRUCTION CO., Point Richmond, Cal.



Inhabitants of these communities were American Indians. At the time of first contact with the Spanish they were speakers of a variation of what was later labeled the Penutian linguistic stock. The Europeans called them Costanoans, along with the inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula, the East Bay and Santa Clara Valley. The people of this specific locale appear to have called themselves something which sounded like *Huchin*, *Cuchilliones*, *Juchin* or *Juchillones*. It would be inaccurate to refer to this ethnic entity as a "Tribe" since we are not certain of the nature of their social-political organization. Probably not direct descendants of original inhabitants of this area, Penutian speaking peoples appear to have entered California later than others. They may have displaced others who were Hokan speakers, such as the Pomo of Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino Counties.

Life on old Point Richmond was much like that which many of us wish to achieve today. Personal relationships were probably, as among most early Californians, warm. There was a high regard for children and for elders. Authority appears to have been based upon affection, respect and understanding, rather than on the desire for power.

The Bay provided much of their food. Mussels, clams and little Bay oysters were most common, and shell remains suggest that they were eaten in great quantities. At least ten other varieties of shellfish from marsh, rocky shores and mudflats also formed a regular part of their diet. Many fish net sinkers were found, as well as some fish spear points and a few fish hooks. Fish remains indicate a wide variety of fish.

One of the cooking methods involved wrapping the fish in wet clay and placing them in a fire. The clay removed the scales from the cooked fish and also served as a hot baked plate when its portions were separated. Fish was also boiled with acorn meal.

The number of bird bones in the debris is overwhelming. Most were marine or marsh oriented, such as ducks, cormorants and grebes. There is no clear evidence of the cooking method.

Earlier inhabitants must have done more land hunting than in the most recent thousand years. Few deer, elk or even rabbit appear in later portions of the sites. "Mainland" populations were in a more advantageous position for mammal hunting. The sea lion does appear occasionally as a food animal in all periods. The random whale bone suggests salvage rather than whaling. Other mammals represented in the bones include domestic and wild dog, antelope, porpoises, badgers, skunks and lynx. Which were used for food is not known. Interpretation of bones is complex; for instance, finding fewer of a particular kind of bone from a later period may merely represent a new butchering process, as boning at the place of a kill; a new utilization process, of grinding bones into a meal for cooking with vegetable foods; or even an increase in number of domestic dogs to carry the bones away. Further, some bones may have been collected for use in making awls, harpoon points and other tools and ornaments.

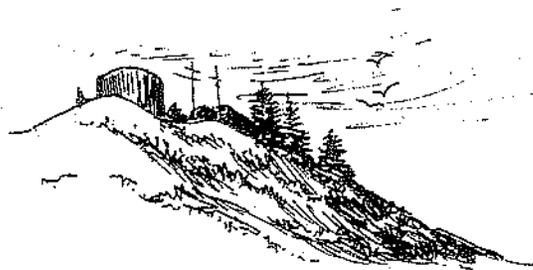
Vegetable staples included the acorn and the buckeye. Both were ground with mortar and pestle, leached to remove the acid (and in the buckeye the poison), and boiled in baskets with hot stones.

The number of non-local materials and manufactured items in the habitation debris indicate that trading relations were extensive. At least three varieties of non-local shells from the Marin-Sonoma—Mendocino coast, and obsidian from Lake County, Napa County and possibly other areas, are common. Some objects may have been imported ready-made. Other alien materials include crystals from various areas; steatite objects from Southern California, non-local pigments, and, in late portions of sites, beadstraded by Chinese, Russians and the United States are common.

Tobacco was smoked regularly in a tubular pipe usually made of steatite. Bows and arrows and the atlatl (spear thrower) were used, and there were both bone and stone cutting and piercing tools. Earlier remains include charmstones — pendants and other objects which may have had magical or religious significance. Later remains show a great variety of shell and stone bead work, along with larger ornaments of abalone shell and intricately incised bone tubes. Religious ornaments were often found in burial sites, especially in children's graves. Beads were sometimes used as sequins on jackets, as earrings and as necklaces or hair ornaments. Beads were also found on bowls or whistles.

Bodies were usually buried lying on their side in a "fetal" position. Some sites show clear directional orientation, but this does not seem to be the case locally. Special attire, ornaments and objects buried with the deceased show some relationship to age, sex and other role and status factors.

I hope with this sketchy outline you have the framework for a picture of your earlier neighbors. They knew their world and lived in harmony with it in a way that was successful for many thousands of years.



EARLY STORIES OF POINT RICHMOND

THE INDIAN

One of the questions most asked and least answered here in Point Richmond is, "Where did the Indian go?" The question does not refer to the natives who once populated this area, but to the statue who once stood proudly atop a drinking fountain in the triangle. Placed there at a cost of \$1500 in 1909, by the West Side Improvement Club (still active in Point Richmond) the bronze Indian became so taken for granted that some people who haven't been in the Point for awhile assume that he must still be there.

A storm wind and metal fatigue combined to make the red man disappear. One day in 1942 he was toppled, and broke to bits on the pavement. City crews cleaned up his remains, and he was used (since the Second World War created metal shortages) to hold parts of our city together.

He was cremated, and instead of throwing his ashes to the wind, city workers saved his zinc and used it as solder flux. Thus he is scattered, but his remains hold other things around here together.



Photograph courtesy of Richmond Museum

IN THE BEGINNING . . .

A brief and very simplified statement on the early inhabitants of Point Richmond for "Point Counterpoint"

by George Coles, 1969

As you probably know, Columbus didn't discover America. To compound the cliché, I might add that Santa Fe Railroad didn't discover Point Richmond.

I won't attempt to name the discoverer, nor will I attempt to say just when. It is enough to say that people were here at least 1,000 years before the "Golden Age" of Greece, at least by the time of the first construction at Stonehenge, and perhaps thousands of years before that. Such a statement is unsupported by direct evidence, but since my wife, Corinne, and I have spent a major portion of time in research, in the past years, I will try to give a general picture, though some of what I say may come back to haunt me later.

Point Richmond is part of what was essentially an island, separated by an expanse of shallow water and marshland from the alluvial fan upon which most of Richmond is located. In the last century, ships going to Vallejo went behind this island rather than face the rigors of San Pablo Straits. Its island-like position probably played a significant part in the way of life of its people.

In this area, known as Potrero San Pablo, and at Brooks Island and Ellis Landing, physical evidence exists of more than twenty communities. It is probable that four or five others were obliterated by early construction.

There was one village near the present site of the sewage disposal plant, another in the area of the old brickyard; three more between Santa Fe pier and the tunnel, one in the area west of Cypress Point, and another fairly large village on the Bay covering a large portion of what is now Ocean Avenue, near Marine Street. There is no way of knowing if these were all occupied at the same time, for most of the materials which could lead to this determination have been vandalized.

Three have been obliterated by recent construction: a community which bordered the present Point Molate beach; one approximately under the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge; and a larger one once at Winehaven's Naval Fuel Depot. Major archaeological remains still existed about one hundred yards east of the fuel facility at Point Orient.

Near the old whaling station there was another community; and at the Standard Oil Rod and Gun Club, there were three more: One west of the Boat Harbor, and two more nestled against the lee side of the hills.

The Ellis Landing site was on Tenth Street at the Bay. Two more fairly large communities were on Brooks Island, about 800 yards from Point Richmond. It is hoped that these will become part of an interpretive center when Brooks Island becomes a functioning portion of the East Bay Regional Parks System.

INTRODUCTION

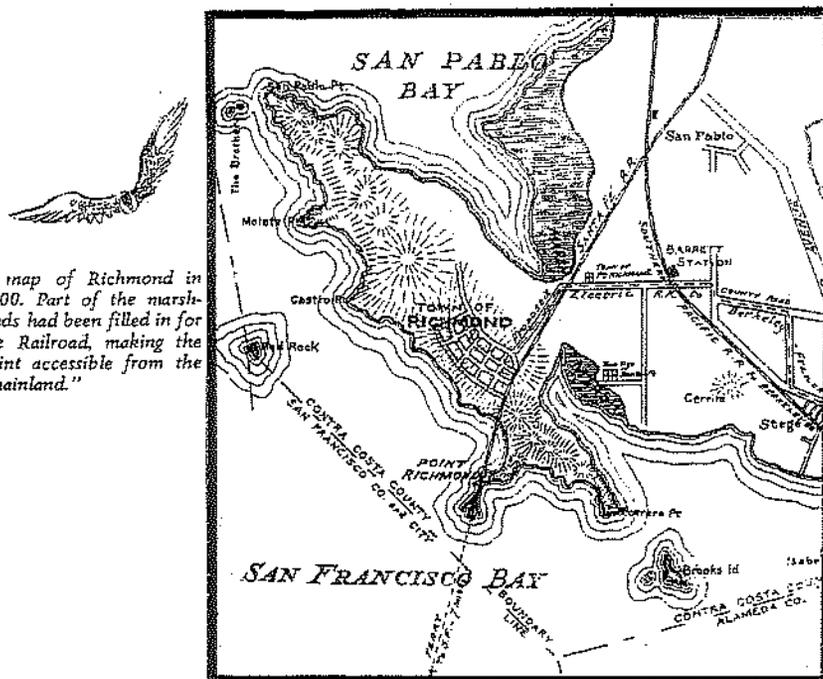
A walk through Point Richmond today offers a glimpse of Bay Area history. The structures and scenes reproduced in this book help to form a link with our colorful past. Many of the original homes and commercial buildings have been carefully refurbished to function in the modern world, while retaining their original charm.

Early in the 1800's Point Richmond was part of the 1700-acre Rancho San Pablo, a thriving cattle and hay ranch owned by Don Francisco Castro. After his death in 1831, the lands were divided among 148 people, opening the way for eventual industrialization and settlement of the community of Point Richmond.

Like many of the world's inventions and discoveries, Point Richmond was "discovered" accidentally. Augustin S. Macdonald recounts, in 1910:

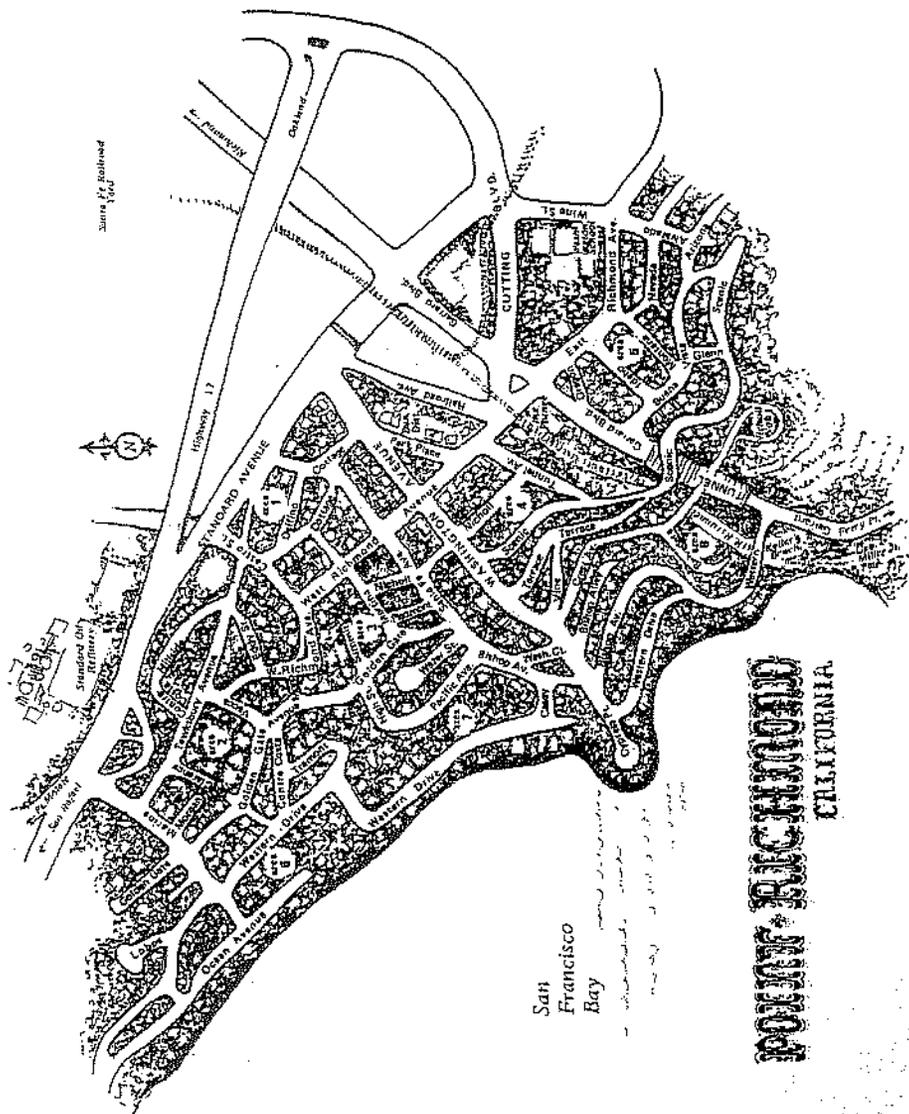
"One November evening in 1895, I drove out from Oakland bound for the San Pablo marshes on a duck hunt. Leaving San Pablo Avenue, we passed the old Nicholl homestead and came to what is known today as Twenty-third Street. Here the country road turned to the north and then west again along Richmond Avenue. The only house on that road at the time belonged to Mrs. McGann, whose daughter was the first Postmistress of Richmond. It was a muddy, treacherous road from her place to the Potrero, used only by a Swiss dairyman, a tenant on the Tewksbury place, residing about where the Standard Oil Company office now stands. Leaving our team at this place, we walked out at the mouth of San Pablo Creek. It was a perfectly beautiful morning, sun shining brightly and not a breath of wind; consequently no ducks were flying, and after sitting five hours without a chance shot, I concluded to quit, walk over the Potrero hill and explore the Bay shore. On reaching the summit of the hill, a magnificent view greeted my eyes—Mt. Tamalpais looming up to the right, Berkeley to the left, and, seemingly just across the way, San Francisco, without a sign of life to disturb the quiet and peaceful scene. I wondered why such a delightful spot had been neglected for either pleasure or profit, as not alone its beauty but also its commercial possibilities appealed to me at once, and I determined to investigate."

Investigate he did, finding that the government survey map showed the water to be sixty-five feet deep, and finding that the Southern Pacific Company could save twelve miles if they sent a ferry out from the Point instead of from Oakland's Peralta Street slip. He also presented his "scheme" to Santa Fe Railway Company, when he heard of their intention to reach San Francisco. However, in 1897, the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railway purchased 57 acres of Point Richmond and adjacent land from Claus Spreckles for \$80,000, and built the railway. Santa Fe bought the completed project and, in 1900, started work on its Richmond terminus. In 1901 the Pacific Oil Company, which soon became Standard Oil, began construction of its refinery here. By 1902, Standard's pipeline from Bakersfield had reached Point Richmond, and its refinery was completed late that year. Company families formed much of this community, and many of them and their descendants remain in Point Richmond.



A map of Richmond in 1900. Part of the marshlands had been filled in for the Railroad, making the Point accessible from the "mainland."

Surrounded by Bay and marshes, Point Richmond was too small to accommodate the expanding growth of an industrial community. The swamps were gradually filled in, and growth expanded east into Richmond. Augustin Macdonald was instrumental in moving the City offices to Richmond proper, thus allowing the Point to retain its historic character. Buildings that remained vacant in the post-World War II period were not torn down, but awaited loving restoration by residents appreciative of their historic value. The older section of town is now a part of the National Register of Historic Places. And, although this status has only recently been attained, the late Don Church, known as our local historian, started the move toward Point Richmond's recognition in 1968. A letter to him appeared in the "Point Counterpoint" weekly of January 26, 1968, from the Alameda County Historical Society, thanking him for his research of this area, and suggesting that "efforts be made to enact legislation to preserve it 'as it is'." The bond between past and present can be felt keenly in illustrations and commentaries in this book.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our research and writing was greatly assisted by those thoughtful people who filled out questionnaires and offered additional information. Especially helpful were the memories of Mrs. Trannie Dornan and Mary Casey. Posthumous assistance from late Point Historian Don Church was invaluable, as well as the written accounts of the late Robert C. Friend. Barbara Quien's research and writing as well as the article by George Coles were very helpful. The original research and writing was done for the first "Point Counterpoint". ('66-'70)

Assistance in the form of physical and mental labors were contributed by Michael Brown, Roz Bury, Doug Corbin, Rev. Glenn Miller, Jodi and Ronald Roselius and by the Point Richmond printer, Claudia Beall of Sepulveda Printing; as well as others who helped later than we could acknowledge in print.

The following people delivered questionnaires throughout the Point: Jeffrey Albro, Teresa Albro, Chandra Brown, Michelle Brown, Diana Corbin, Jeffrey Corbin, Rosemary Corbin, Clare Doherty, Kenneth Fong, Kevin Fong, Siras Greiner, Heidi Hartman, Donovan Henwood, Tom Huntley, Hilary Lord, Jason McGill, Jack Prine, Ryan Russell, Catlin Spediacci and Dominic Spediacci.

We are grateful to the Richmond Museum for the photograph of the Indian statue, as well as verification of dates, times and addresses.

Dates were also ascertained with the help of "A History of Richmond," by Joseph E. Whitham.

Anyone wishing to add information for future editions may send information to : Mrs. Robert Dornan, 225 Clarence, Point Richmond, CA 94801.



TERRACE AVENUE, POINT RICHMOND

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