

Street Names of San Francisco

by Steve Johnson, Board Member Historian



EVERY STREET IN SAN FRANCISCO HAS A HISTORY BEHIND IT, and these little histories can serve as fillers while giving a city tour. The most common streets seen on motorcoach tours will be listed, along with some with a good story.

BATTERY STREET: Named for the battery of cannons that used to be here to protect the harbor (though the smoothbore cannons were rather inaccurate when fired).

BRANNAN STREET: When Sam Brannan heard the news of the discovery of gold while at Sutter's Fort, he immediately rode to San Francisco and bought up every tool he could find, then announced the gold strike. He sold everything at triple the price and became the state's first millionaire. (He later died penniless in L.A.)

CASTRO STREET: Jose Antonio Castro was the last Mexican governor who failed to stop the Americans from taking over Alta California during the Mexican-American war. He later became the governor of the Mexican province of Baja California.

CALIFORNIA STREET: The state got its name from a novel of the 1500s describing an island of Amazons, rich with gold and ruled by Queen Calafia; Spanish explorers called this land California thinking it was here. Turns out they were right about the gold and right about Amazon.

EMBARCADERO: from the Spanish word "to embark" when this was the place where passengers arrived or departed from ships and ferries. Some still do.

FULTON STREET: Robert Fulton was the inventor of the steamship, which allowed many of those fortune hunters to get to San Francisco

FUNSTON AVENUE: Having a 13th Avenue would be bad luck, so instead the street was named after General Funston, whose troops helped fight the 1906 fire and helped shelter hundreds of homeless citizens in the Presidio

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Message from the President

by Greg Quist, President SFTGG 2024-2025

Happy New Year! And, who whudda thunk, 2025! And what a 2024 it was!

Firstly, let me say how exciting it is to witness the resurrection, Lazarus-like, of our GuidePost. The Guidepost is an enormously important component of our communications for not only the Guild membership but also our outreach to and interface with the world. A huge thank you to Nate Booth and to his wing-woman, Evonne Hopkins, for shepherding this rebirth.



This will be a quarterly potpourri of interesting morsels from past and future Guild events to book reviews to industry scuttlebutt. All Guild members are invited and encouraged to submit whatever piques their interest to Nate Booth, the editor of the Guidepost. As Nate is a relatively new member of the Guild, this will also be an opportunity for you to get to know him and Nate to get to know you. This is how communities are built.

Again, we're aflutter with anticipation awaiting the arrival of our newly published Guidepost. And, of course, its ongoing success will be entirely dependent on your interest, involvement, and contributions.

Your BOT Munchkins have been very busy and an enormous amount of productive effort has gone on behind the scenes in our Guild this past year.

The SFTGG by-laws have been revised and updated for the first time since 2008.

Our CTG-SF Coach Certification program is now ready for prime-time and will for the first time ever provide a clear path to a designation connoting professional excellence in this tour guiding subspecialty, that of a San Francisco Coach Tour Guide. This unique San Francisco tour guide designation will be followed by another which will recognize excellence in leading San Francisco walking tours.

At our Board of Trustees meeting on Thursday, January 2nd, we bid a fond farewell to BOT members Ted Bagaman and Kristen Clay, who have served our Guild admirably during their terms. We're also excited to be welcoming Joe Hanneken and Stevyn Polk to the BOT and look forward to their bright and energetic contributions to our Board and Guild during their tenures.

So, rather than running on, Happy 2025, safe, enjoyable, and prosperous travels, stay tuned, keep an eye on your calendars, and in the words of Walt Disney's Porky Pig, "That's all folks."

MISSION STATEMENT

The San Francisco Tour Guide Guild is a non-profit organization of professional tour guides and other members of the travel and hospitality industry who live or work in the San Francisco Bay Area. Our mission is to foster a standard of quality, ethics, and professionalism among our members, using means such as continuing education and certification programs, and by setting forth a Code of Ethics and Professional Standards. We advocate for the advancement of tourism and the tour guide profession, and provide a liaison between tour guides and employers.

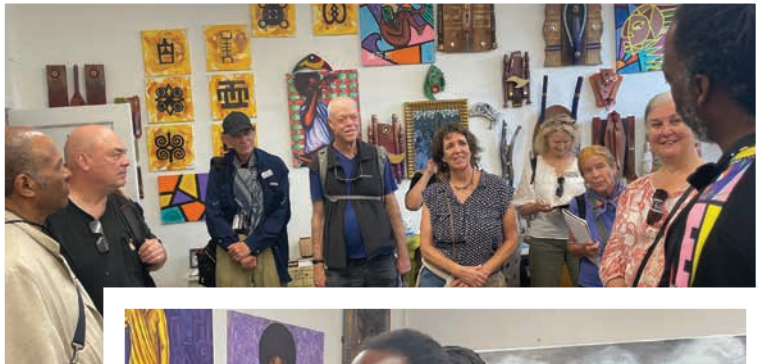


Unique Artist Neighborhood Blossoms at Hunters Point

by Alison Merrill | photo credit to Mark Leuthold

ON JULY 24 NEARLY A DOZEN GUILD MEMBERS were delighted to discover the artist neighborhood that has come to occupy the former naval shipyard in Hunters Point. Our host was Barbara Ockel, president and CEO of the “Shipyard Trust for the Arts,” or STAR. She explained some history:

Until 1940 this bay front site was used by commercial shipping companies, including for drydock work. Then in the military ramp-up to World War II, the US Navy bought it, operating it continuously until 1974, then again for a time in the 80’s, and finally officially shuttering it in 1994. Since then it has been a Superfund site for decontamination due to radiation: atomic bombs were assembled there, and vessels that had been present at experiments like the Bikini Atoll explosions were brought to the Shipyard for storage and especially long-term study in the huge radiation lab building, which is still standing. Much of the shipyards are paved over like vast unused parking lots, as the concrete, referred to as “Durable Cover,” is a barrier to contain any residual radiation.



Grassy knolls make a park setting with a sweeping view of the former shipyards and the gigantic crane that stands, unused, now a symbol of the site’s industrial past, and local artists have dressed up the park with some outdoor art. The site is considered contaminant-free enough for visitors and artists, although various snags, scandals, and bureaucracy have been holding up plans for true redevelopment.

Building 101 is the largest of several used by the artists, with about 140 artists in the classroom-sized rooms. Sculptor Jacques Terzian was the first to claim the site for artists, in 1984, and his grandson now runs the property management company overseeing the facility.





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GEARY STREET: John Geary was the city's first mayor. He stood 6 ft. 6 in, which is probably why he was wounded a total of 10 times while a soldier in the Mexican-American war and later in the American Civil War - he was a big target. He later became governor of the state of Pennsylvania.

GOLDEN GATE AVENUE: When Army Scout John C. Fremont saw the strait connecting the ocean to the bay in 1846, he saw it as the Golden Gate, opening trade between the Orient and the United States -- just like the Golden Horn in Istanbul, which also was a gateway between the East and West

GOUGH STREET: Charles Gough was a milkman who joined the 1855 street naming committee for the Western Addition, which is a good way to get a street named after you.

HAIGHT STREET: For a long time it was believed Haight Street was named after Henry Haight, a banker and city alderman. Newer research gives evidence it was really named after his wife, Weltha Haight, who helped found the San Francisco Protestant Orphanage. The orphanage was established to take care of children whose parents died during the time of the Gold Rush.

ASHBURY STREET: Named after Munroe Ashbury, a member of the S.F. Board of Supervisors 1864-1870. Both men helped to develop the neighborhood and in the planning of Golden Gate Park.

LARKIN STREET: Named for Thomas Larkin, who was the U.S. Consul to Mexican California and later helped draft the California Constitution in 1850

MARKET STREET: was given the name by surveyor Jasper O'Farrell. No doubt he got the name from Market Street in Philadelphia, where he was from. He designed Market Street to be a central and important broad boulevard, which it still is.

MISSION STREET: Named after Mission San Francisco de Asis, founded by the Franciscan priest Father Junipero Serra. It was the 6th mission founded by the Spanish in California and is both a museum and a parish church. It is the only mission whose curator is a Native Californian, of the Ohlone tribe.

Octavia Street: The next best way to have a street named after you is to be the sister of Charles Gough

O'FARRELL STREET: is named after the surveyor who laid out the city streets in a grid fashion with no regard for the hills. That accounts for the many steep streets. San Francisco is one of the hilliest cities in the world, second only to La Paz, Bolivia.

POLK STREET: Named for the 11th President of the U.S. who announced in his inaugural address that gold had been found in California, which started the gold rush. During his term, California became the 31st state, in 1850.

SUTTER STREET: Named for John Sutter, who owned the sawmill where gold was found, which started the gold rush. His properties were overrun by squatters and he ended up penniless.

TWIN PEAKS BOULEVARD: The Spanish name for the two prominent peaks overlooking the town was "Los Pechos de la Choca" - "the breasts of the Indian maiden". The two peaks are 660 ft. (200 m) apart and are the city's 2nd highest peaks.

VAN NESS BOULEVARD: Got its name from the 6th mayor of San Francisco, James Van Ness. He tried in vain to stop the Vigilance Committee from hanging two men when the city had little law and order in the 1850s.

Resources:

<https://sf.curbed.com/maps/history-names-sf-san-francisco-streets-how-named>

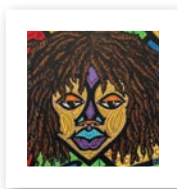


Unique Artist Neighborhood Blossoms at Hunters Point *continued from page 3*



It was a pleasure to meet several of the artists who were at work with their inner muses that day. Malik Seneferu, who grew up in the neighborhood and was mentored by STAR artists in his youth, greeted us by declaring “Welcome to the inside of my head!” We also met Roman G, who works with artists to print their art on apparel and tote bags (which could be a nice activity for custom groups – choose your art design, and Roman will print it for you on the spot). After a short walk to another building, we met photographer Sharon Beals, who specializes in birds, nests, and their habitats, intending to document their native botanical habitats before they disappear, so that we might recreate or preserve them.

Finally, we were all impressed with the Lorna Kollmeyer Ornamental Plaster studio, a true San Francisco treasure, as it maintains the only archive (and it’s extensive!!) of Victorian ornamental plasters that garnish our local Painted Ladies. They can take pieces from old homes, remove layers of paint if needed or otherwise restore any wear and tear, and make rubbery polyurethane molds. Then they can reproduce as many copies as they want, of decorative molding, ceiling medallions, or lions’ heads, and cherubs.... Whatever the 19th-century homeowners had.



Twice a year the STAR hosts “open studio” days, with a festive ambiance. The next one is October 19-20.

Check out shipyardartists.org.



**Book
REPORT**

The Sugar King of California: *The Life of Claus Spreckels*

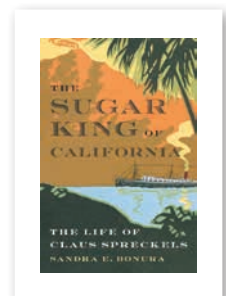
Author: Sandra E. Bonura

Contributed by Greg Quist

Claus Spreckels (1828–1908) emigrated from his homeland of Germany to the United States with only seventy-five cents in his pocket, built a sugar empire, and became one of the richest Americans in history. Migrating to San Francisco after the gold rush, Spreckels built the largest sugar beet factory of its kind in the United States. His sugar beet production in the Salinas Valley changed the focus of valley agriculture from dry to irrigated crops, resulting in the vast modern agricultural-industrial economy in today’s “Salad Bowl of the World.” When Spreckels gave America its first sugar cube, he became the “Sugar King.”

This story tells the rags-to-riches story of Spreckels’ role in the development of the sugarcane industry in the American

West and across the Pacific, triumphing in a milieu rife with cronyism and corruption and ultimately transforming California’s industry and labor. Harshly criticized by his enemies for ruthless business tactics but loved by his employees, he was unapologetic in his quest for wealth, asserting “Spreckels’ success is California’s success.” But there’s always a cost for single-minded determination; the legendary family quarrels even included a murder charge. Spreckels’ biography is one of business triumph and tragedy, a portrait of a family torn apart by money, jealousy, and ego.



Educational Programs ARE Member Benefits - Check Us Out!

A key part of the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild's mission is to foster standards of quality, ethics and professionalism among its members by offering guide training, continuing education and certification programs.

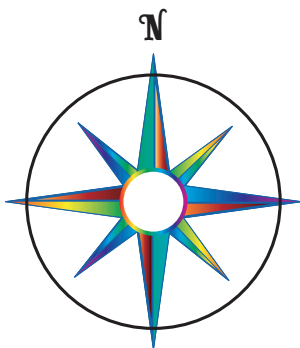
Our Programs Committee, Joe Hanneken and Greg Quist, have been working diligently to organize more fantastic events in 2025. They are always excited to have members give ideas or assist with events. Contact Joe and Greg at programs@sftgg.org to volunteer or offer suggestions.

Shown at right is a recap of the 2024 programs and a few of the coming 2025 programs. These programs have been and will continue to be a core component of the SFTGG's mission. Allow your membership to work for you and take advantage of the opportunity to attend training and networking programs whenever possible. Look for email announcements; the Calendar on our website also shows what is coming up.



Looking for new information to share with your guests?

City of San Francisco Museum (sfmuseum.org) can be a resource for you. Their goal is to bring the fabled history of San Francisco into the light of historical accuracy. They are primarily a research and educational site for scholars and the website features the interesting, the amusing, and the unusual in San Francisco's history.



guild noun

A guild is an association of people that is formed for mutual aid and organized to maintain professional standards as well as protect the interests of its members.

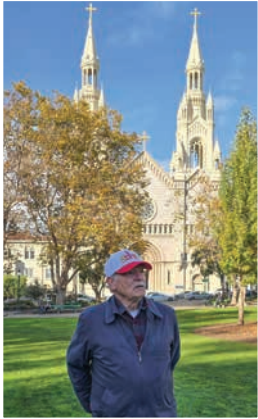
STAY TUNED... More 2025 programs are in the planning and finalization stages now!

01/04/24	Sunny LaGardo's Airport Training
01/17/24	San Francisco Coach Training Tour
02/09/24	Walking Tour with Aaron Peskin, District 3 Supervisor
02/21/24	Aquarium of the Bay
02/25/24	North Beach Tour with Club Fugazi
03/08/24	Paramount Theater Tour
03/20/24	Muir Woods and Sausalito Training Tour
04/03/24	Castro Walking Tour
04/16/24	Japantown Walking Tour
05/16/24	SFTGG Spring General Meeting 2024
06/12/24	Haas Lillienthal House
06/30/24	SFTGG Pride Parade Participant
07/13/24	Presidio Walking Tour with Steve Johnson
07/24/24	Shipyards Trust Artists' Community Hunters Point
08/06/24	Rick Evans SF Architecture Walking Tour
08/20/24	Rick Evans SF Chinatown Back Alley Walking Tour
08/27/24	Rick Evans SF Architecture Walking Tour
09/12/24	Mission Walking Tour - Dist 9 Supv. Hillary Ronen
09/23/24	SFTGG 40th Anniversary Party
09/24/24	Rick Evans SF Chinatown Back Alley Walking Tour
10/23/24	Chinatown walking tour with Isabella Michon
11/14/24	North Beach Walking Tour with Steve Johnson
11/20/24	The Original Heart of Wall St. of the West
12/09/24	Autumn General Meeting
01/09/25	San Francisco Coach Training Tour
01/18/25	Sunny LaGardo's SFO Training
01/24/25	Walking Tour of Oakland's Chinatown
02/08/25	The Valley of the Queens with Shawn Sprockett
02/18/25	SF Botanical Gardens Golden Gate Park
03/13/25	The Botanical and Bonsai Gardens at Lake Merritt
03/26/25	Sonoma Carneros Wine Country Training Tour
04/09/25	Stanford University & Silicon Valley.
04/25/25	Land and Sea to Santa Rosa and Petaluma
05/19/25	Spring General Meeting
06/29/25	SFTGG Gay Pride Participant
08/27/25	Marvelous Marvin's Dim Sum 101
06/12/25	Ferry Bldg. Walking Tour with John King
06/17/25	Back Alleys of Chinatown Walking Tour: Rick Evans
07/15/25	Downtown SF Architecture Tour: Rick Evans



Exploring North Beach: A Journey Through San Francisco's Rich Tapestry

Thursday, November 14, 2024 – by Maggie Joanidis



NORTH BEACH, SAN FRANCISCO'S VIBRANT AND STORIED neighborhood, is a place where history and culture intertwine. On a recent tour led by the incomparable Steve Johnson, our group wandered its lively streets, uncovering hidden tales of resilience, creativity, and community.

We began with the remarkable story of a ship buried beneath the Transamerica Pyramid, a relic from the city's Gold Rush days. Discovered during the

building's construction, the ship's resting place serves as a metaphor for the layers of history that make North Beach so fascinating. The pyramid itself, once a subject of heated debate, was reshaped by compromise: its height was reduced, and a serene park with towering redwoods brought in from the Santa Cruz Mountains was created alongside it.

Italian heritage defines much of North Beach's charm. Steve shared the inspiring legacy of Amadeo Pietro Giannini, who founded the Bank of Italy to serve working-class people. Giannini's innovative banking practices, from multilingual branches to empowering women in leadership roles, left an enduring impact. His vision extended beyond finance, funding icons like the Golden Gate Bridge, and the companies that would become Silicon Valley's foundation.

As we strolled, the creative spirit of North Beach came alive. City Lights Bookstore, a cradle of the Beat movement, continues to champion poetry and avant-garde writing. Nearby, the "Language of the Birds" art installation captivated us with its floating, illuminated books and scattered phrases etched into the ground—a poetic reminder of how literature uplifts us.

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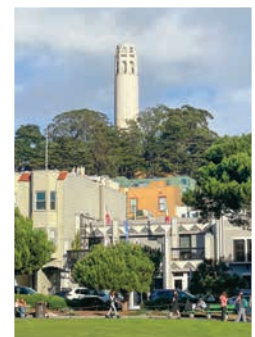
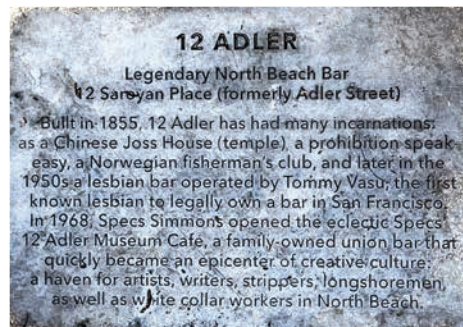
Exploring North Beach *continued from page 7*

Entertainment legends also left their mark here. We learned of the Purple Onion, a launchpad for comedy greats like Joan Rivers, and Café Trieste, where the aroma of espresso once mingled with the soaring voices of opera singers. It's said that Francis Ford Coppola penned much of "The Godfather" in this very café, adding to its mystique.

Our journey took us through Washington Square Park, a peaceful green space once threatened by urban development. Citizens rallied to protect it, and today it stands as a gathering place crowned by a firefighter statue funded by Lillie Coit, an ode to the neighborhood's unshakable spirit.

Even as the tour ended, we weren't ready to leave. A group of us lingered at Tony's Pizza, savoring slices of their iconic pies. As the sun dipped lower, we shared stories and reflected on all we had learned, basking in the warmth of North Beach's enduring energy.

Steve Johnson's tour was more than a walk through history; it was an invitation to feel the heartbeat of a neighborhood that has shaped—and been shaped by—the dreams and struggles of countless generations. For anyone looking to experience the soul of San Francisco, North Beach is a treasure waiting to be explored.



Subject Matter Experts Needed!

We have requests that the GuidePost include more articles relating to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) topics.... Past GuidePost and member training events have featured Native Americans in the Bay Area, Japanese Americans and Internment Camps during WWII, African Americans in Early California, Chinese immigrants and Chinatown. We want to continue to include information about Bay Area events/places that would be in accordance with DEIB topics and in keeping with the SFTGG's mission of fostering a standard of quality, ethics and professionalism via our educational programs and resources. Email info@sftgg.org with questions, comments or to volunteer to assist with this effort. Thanks!



Chinatown - History & Architecture with Rick Evans

September 24, 2024 – by Stephen Johnson

RICK LED OUR GROUP THROUGH THE DRAGON GATE of Chinatown, onto the main tourist corridor of Grant Avenue, later veering into the major side streets like Waverly Place and the lesser visited alleys like Spofford and St Louis Place, pointing out architectural gems along the way.

Of course, Chinatown today is not the original Chinatown. Rick pointed out how many of the buildings along Grant Avenue, built after the 1906 earthquake, simply had the pagoda-style roof elements literally tacked onto the top of the buildings. Even the Dragon Gate was a gift from Taiwan in 1970—you can still read the inscription “Made in Free China” under the male Foo Dog on the left side of the gate.

We checked out the controversial Comfort Women statue in St Mary’s Square - hidden in plain sight at the Kearny Street side of the park. Controversial to Japan that is. We found the plaque to Rose Pak hidden behind the overgrown plants at the base of her tree, and we admired Bufano’s statue of Sun Yat Sen.

Entering Old St Mary’s Cathedral, we were surprised to find in the right rear annex a statue of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph - unusual in itself to see Joseph portrayed in a statue - but also that the garments and faces were Asian. Rick explained that Chinatown has more churches than any other neighborhood in San Francisco, due to the missionary zeal of its leaders, and this part of the church is where school children were taught about religion.

We checked out the clinker brick on the Chinese Baptist Church and followed the brass plaques of the Monkey King’s footprints over to the Gambler’s Alley (Spofford) and Ross Alley with the Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory.

We ended our tour in Portsmouth Square where the American flag was first raised in San Francisco and admired the statue of the Goddess of Democracy (a copy from 1989 Tienamin Square) as well as the monument to the first public school in California.

Thank you Rick for an educational and entertaining architectural tour of Chinatown.





SAN FRANCISCO
TOUR GUIDE
— GUILD —

40 YEARS
1984-2024

A Brief Message From the First President of SFTGG

Below is an excerpt of an email from Greer Hopkins, the first President of SFTGG. In it she outlines her recollection the early days of bringing the Guild to life in 1984.



09/23/2024 - Greer Hopkins with a certificate honoring her work as a founder and first president of SFTGG.

There were 6-7 of us on the original committee. We met several hours every day for six months to get SFTGG registered as a non-profit.

Ann Meagher was a critical, active member of the original formation of organization. She died in 2023 (maybe 2022) in New York.

Maurice del Toso was a wonderful guy and believer in the goals of SFTGG. He died in a tragic bike accident decades ago.

Svend Schjoerring and AJ (Pierce?) were also part of the original team. Svend still lives in the Bay Area.

I was one of the founders, and the first president. I guided here locally. The founders and Nancy McCormick, who lives in East Bay, created the original certification tests covering SF, Muir Woods, Wine Country, airport, and Monterey/Carmel.

I divided my time between local guiding and tour management on the road. Ultimately, once my son was born, I went in-house first with Riser/Almeida, then Pacific Agenda and for almost 20 years with Mana, Allison & Associates. I continue to value the purpose and goals of the Guild and am amazed & happy it still exists.

Shahrazad Moez was also one of the founders. I have not seen her for some years, but she may still live in San Francisco.

The SFTGG Founders in 1984!

Thank you to Christine Miller for her research on this list.

Pat Alex

Egidia Bollini

Maurice del Toso

Frances Friedman

Peter Hall

Greer Hopkins

Rosary Matteson

Ann Meagher

Shahrazad Moez

Nancy McCormick

Denise Rockwell

Glen Salbach

Svend Schjoerring

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF SAN FRANCISCO TOUR GUIDE GUILD	1180137 FILED In the office of the Secretary of State of the State of California MAR 23 1984 JUDITH FONG, Secretary of State J. M. DeSantis Director
I The name of this corporation is San Francisco Tour Guide Guild.	
II A. This corporation is a nonprofit mutual benefit corporation organized under the Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation Law. The purpose of this corporation is to engage in any lawful act or activity for which a corporation may be organized under such law. B. The specific purpose of this corporation is to promote and maintain a high degree of excellence and integrity within the tour guiding profession.	
III The name and address in the State of California of this corporation's initial agent for service of process is : Ann Meagher 1341 Union St., Suite 5 San Francisco, CA 94109	
IV Notwithstanding any of the above statements of purposes and powers, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the specific purposes of this corporation.	
Dated: <u>MARCH 23, 1984</u>	<u>Maurice del Toso</u> (Signature of incorporator) Maurice Del Toso (Typed name of incorporator)



Birth of the Guild - Originally published in GuidePost Vol 9, Issue 4 (Q4 1993)

by Pat Alex

In the slow months of 1983, as in every year, the anxiety of “will we ever work again.” with time to reflect on our chosen field, and the desire to be recognized as professionals, were catalysts toward the formulation and organization of guides. It had been tried before, but with limited success.

Here is an excerpt from a letter from Ann Meagher, received 11/4/83: following previous discussions among several of us:

MEET WE DID, ALMOST WEEKLY FOR 5 MONTHS. One of the first discussions involved licensing, and to our surprise found that San Francisco did have a licensing procedure for Tour Guides— Muni Police Code— Article 555-81, Section 1295. Only qualification: a \$58 per person fee. We couldn’t even determine when the ordinance was passed, sometime between 1977 and 1981. This would mean that we would give our integrity to an agency outside of ourselves for enforcement that we would voluntarily submit to bureaucratic control, run by people who had no knowledge of our problems, needs or motivation. Hardly in our best interests—the push-pull pressure of petty politics.

As the meetings continued, **WORD WAS GETTING OUT AND EVERY WEEK THE ATTENDANCE WAS EXPANDING** and as enthused as we were with the interest we decided to stick to a core group so that we weren’t continually rehashing some issues.

Another important subject had to do with our relationship with ground operators. We had to clarify that it was not our intent to compete with them. To that end, we now have several operator members.

Overriding our discussions was our **ONGOING GOAL TO BRING A HIGH STANDARD OF KNOWLEDGE AND CONDUCT INTO THE ROLE OF TOUR GUIDING** at a local level. Hopefully, no guide would ever again tell a group that the Golden Gate Bridge (built in 1937) survived the 1906 quake. An important step was the **DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CERTIFICATION TEST.**

Many other issues were hammered out over the months: by-laws, name (of the guild), logo, health insurance, formation of the board, other issues that evolved and need attention all the time, to this day. I can remember **HOW THRILLED WE ALL WERE WHEN OUR MEMBERSHIP WAS 35!** With the continual hard work and outstanding leadership of our Board of Trustees, the membership climbing to nearly 300 persons, the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild has fulfilled our early dreams.

SFTGG Founders: Pat Alex, Egidia Bolloni, Maurice del Toso. Frances Friedman, Peter Hall, Greer Hopkins, Rosary Matteson, Ann Meagher, Shahrzad Moez, Nancy McCormick, Denise Rockwell, Glen Salbach, Svend Schjoerring
Founded March 23, 1984

Dear Pat and Peter:

Well, I finally heard from Gladys Hansen regarding inquiries to various cities on their tour guide licensing procedures. To date she has only heard from Sacramento, L.A. and New York City. They definitely have some guidelines worthy of our consideration. Other points I’m sure that are more worthy of debate and rejection. At any rate it is definitely a working document and a place for us to start.

Obviously, this becomes a legislative matter and all our interest and chatter about seeing something positive result from our casual personal discussions require more determined efforts now!

I went ahead and booked a date and time and now fervently hope that we will be able to get a few people together.

Tuesday November 15th. 7 pm.

Oh yes, please help spread the word! If each of you could find two or three people that have similar concerns to ours and invite them, we might end up with between 10 and 15 people and that’s enough for a core group to start meaningful discussions.

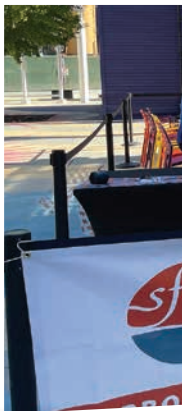
Cheers, Ann



CELEBRATING 40

1984-

On a warm Monday afternoon on September 23, 2024, more than 60 SFTGG members, families, and friends gathered to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Guild. Everyone at the party enjoyed the chance to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.



40 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE 2024

Family and friends gathered at The Crossing at East Cut at 250 Main Street in San Francisco to
up with old friends and chatting about the Guild and their amazing careers in the tourism world.



Don't Judge a Building By Its Facade: *A San Francisco Architecture Journey*

August 6, 2024 – by Sharon Traeger

GUILD MEMBERS JOINED LOCAL EXPERT RICK EVANS for his architecture tour. Everyone gathered at SF Moma (Mario Botta, 1995) for an introduction to the tour and a look at our first building, the modern art museum and its addition (Snohetta, 2016).

First, Rick advised us not to judge a building by our first impression. Withhold judgement and think about each building in the context of the neighborhood.

Consider interior spaces, and the uses for the building. This tour will show us architecture styles from 1900 to 2024. And remember that the city is always evolving.

In 2008 San Francisco created a Master Plan for parts of SOMA with the goals of adding new housing and office space while preserving some of the best of the historic architecture.

Even as the city lured developers, it attached conditions for development requiring infrastructure improvements as well as culture and beautification.

Thus, the nearby Four Seasons residences (2018) at 706 Mission was approved (43 stories) on the condition that they also renovate the 1903 Aronson building (10 stories) next door. The two buildings are connected today by a mutual lobby and the



multi-million dollar lofts in the older building sold out first.

Rick carefully chose our route to allow glimpses of architecture from multiple angles. From a dead-end alley next to SF Moma, we spot the undulating fiberglass exterior of the addition. Rick notes that there is no place to view the whole addition, as it is nestled behind the earlier brick building. However, Rick shows us a postcard with a comprehensive view. Was it taken with a drone or photoshopped?

As we walk behind SF Moma for a chance to see another part of the

addition, we spot a historic fire station (1910) and a 1970s brick building with unusual balconies, extending over the sidewalk (145 and 147 Natoma). Still in the alleyway, we see a “Ghost Sign,” a brick wall advertising its former business.

Looking up, we can see the Pacific Bell Telephone Building at 140 New Montgomery (1925) rising 26 stories, an art deco masterpiece by Timothy Pflueger and the first high-rise south of Market. Its light-colored terra cotta tile reflects the sun, and allows for decorative features such as telephone imagery, bells, phone books, and majestic eagles on the roof.



Continuing on Mission Street, we see the notorious leaning tower of San Francisco, Millennium Tower, a 59-story residential tower completed in 2009. Condominiums priced at \$1 million plus were once highly desired. Today discounted units linger on the market as engineers debate how to halt the sinking and correct the leaning.

We note the signage declaring the “East Cut.” This recent (2017) rebranding of the area once known as “Rincon” refers to

Continued on page 15



Don't Judge a Building By Its Facade *continued from page 14*

the cut made through Rincon Hill in 1869 to access the Bay. Now the "East Cut" neighborhood boasts Salesforce, LinkedIn, Facebook and other major technology companies within its boundaries.

Architecture critic John King has not always admired the office spaces south of Market. He was critical of LinkedIn's headquarters at 222 Second Street (2016), giving it "3 out of 10" and calling it "Darth Vader" because of its black glass exterior. But he has reconsidered his opinion. The overlapping glass panes offer unique patterns and reflections, and he has revised his rating to "9 out of 10." In addition, LinkedIn boasts one of the best POPOS available (Privately Owned, Public Open Space) with open access to the street, workspaces and seating, a coffee shop and art throughout the interior. To Rick, it's "10 out of 10."

Our tour continues to Salesforce Park, but before we take the elevator up to the park, we pass a striking historic structure, the Natoma Cabana (1921).

Once a printing press factory, it's now a trendy bar with a skylight and a unique black and white mural on the front. Even though it's small, it's noticeable and inviting.



Salesforce Tower (2018) at 415 Mission is the tallest building in San Francisco (61 stories) and was designed by Cesar Pelli. The metal ribbing is typical of a Pelli Building like the nearby 560 Mission, (31 stories).

Salesforce Park is a welcome addition to the neighborhood, featuring interesting plants, ongoing activities, and works by local artists. The bus terminal below will be joined by railroad and subway in the future, making it San Francisco's own "Grand Central Station." The undulating aluminum scrim disguising the bus terminal features a pattern known as "Penrose Tiling" which never repeats.

Salesforce leases space in the tower, but they own the two buildings across Mission Street, Salesforce East and Salesforce West.

Rick reminds us that "Design impacts behavior" and shares an example in the alley behind Salesforce West. Shimmering blue glass is embedded in the sidewalk with imagery of fish and sea creatures. This is where children at the nearby childcare facility line up to greet their parents at the end of each day.

There are a few remaining buildings on our itinerary, each of them unique and historic.

We cross Market near Bush to see the neogothic Shell Building (1929). Once again we see the terra cotta tile building material, this time with images of shells dominating.



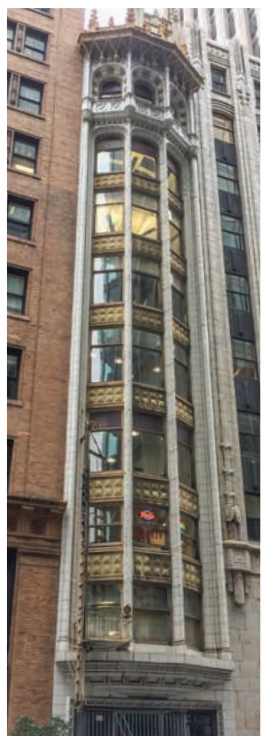
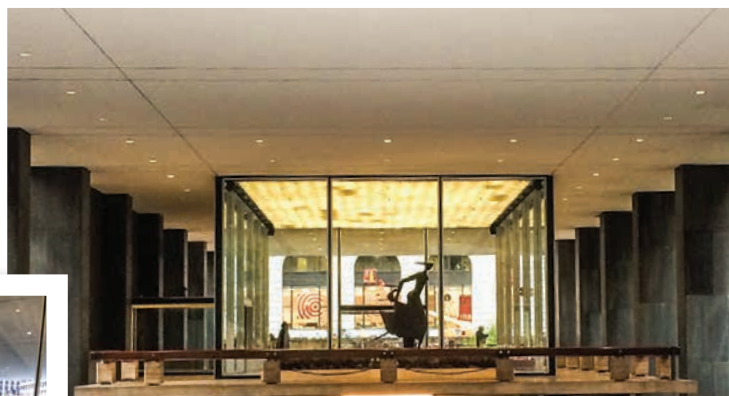
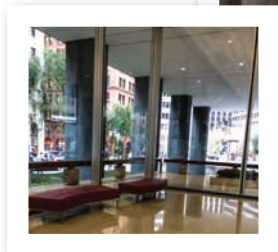
Continued on page 16



Don't Judge a Building By Its Facade *continued from page 15*

In contrast the Crown Zellerbach building (1959) is glass --open and modern. Finishes are simple but expensive. Rick asks us to imagine the differences between the lobby of the Shell Building and this one one dark and heavy, the other light and airy and open to the outside. An elevator shaft beside the building is faced with millions of mosaic tiles in shades of brown. An expensive detail that would be difficult to replicate today.

In addition, this building "wasted" valuable real estate by surrounding itself with a fountain, a moat, art, and a garden. Yet no other building has intruded on its light or its space in the meantime, justifying the exterior landscaping.



Rick claims that his favorite building is 130 Bush (1910), an extreme example of "Form following Function." This "narrowest building in San Francisco" is only 20 feet wide and 80 feet tall. Once, when it was built, it was the tallest building on the block. But note that it was narrow for a reason: it was in the business of making belts, suspenders, and neckties.

It's difficult to encapsulate this wide-ranging tour but Rick was kind enough to offer handouts with bullet points about each building and a map of the POPOS in San Francisco.

If you have the chance, I recommend taking a tour with Rick Evans – Sharon Traeger



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Pre Programme: 5th to 8th February 2026

Post Programme: 13th to 17th February 2026

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[HTTPS://WFTGA.ORG/ACTIVITIES/CONVENTION/2026-FUKUOKA-JAPAN/](https://wftga.org/activities/convention/2026-fukuoka-japan/)

**CONTACT GREG QUIST (GHQUIST@YAHOO.COM)
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING OTHER SFTGG
MEMBERS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING IN 2026.**



This Issue's Contributors!

Thank you to the knowledgeable guides who helped create this issue of the GuidePost.

Nate Booth

Guiding regional tours focused on natural and cultural history. Past roles include the historic Queen Mary oceanliner and Disney's Jungle Cruise—a graduate of Theater and Architecture. World cruise ship traveler.

Jason Cohen

Professional tour guide since 2005, after volunteering with SF City Guides and the Chicago Architecture Foundation. ITMI grad. Past President, SFTGG; currently Certification Chair. Leads over-the-road trips as well as Bay Area tours.

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Coach & walking tours in SF & surrounding regions for tour and destination management companies. 2014 ITMI graduate. Member of SFTGG since 2015. MYSF Certified - SF Travel. Certified Tour Ambassador - Sonoma.

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2019 ITMI graduate. Fluent in English, Spanish & Greek. Neighborhoods: Mission, Castro, GG Park, Embarcadero/Union Square/Civic Center. Specialize in food & brewery tours in the Mission & Castro. SFTGG member since 2019.

Steve Johnson

1988 ITMI graduate. Experienced Tour Director for Tauck Tours. Current focus on walking tours of the city. Volunteer for the National Park Service. Member of the San Francisco Historical Society and actor at the Dickens Christmas Fair.

Alison Merrill

1999 graduate of ITMI. Mostly over-the-road tours in French in Western USA, Southeast USA and student groups in California. Always glad to attend tour director conferences and SF guide FAM days!

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1992 graduate of ITMI, SFTGG Certified Guide, bilingual tour director primarily leading tours of the Southwest National Parks with French-language guests.

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Coach and walking tours in SF and surrounding regions. Specializing in Silicon Valley. 2010 ITMI graduate. Member of SFTGG since 2011. SFTGG Certified Guide.

Certification News

by Jason Cohen

IT'S BEEN ABOUT A YEAR since the Guild's updated Certification Program was adopted by the Board and rolled out to the membership. The Board endorsed the Certification Committee's recommendations on ways to make the program more relevant to today's Bay Area touring environment. Several years of hard work by the committee members resulted in the creation of a new designation, Certified Tour Guide – San Francisco.

Under the updated program, members can achieve Certification by documenting tour experience and passing exams for San Francisco by itself, recognizing that tours to other areas such as Wine Country have become less common for our members.

The Certification Committee developed an amazing 600 potential exam questions (and had great fun working together to debate the correct answers!). These questions have been divided into a series of practice exams available for everyone on the Certification section of the website. As in the past, there is also an oral commentary section to the final exam, plus a new section testing knowledge of common motorcoach routes through the city.

Although having given at least 25 city tours and passing written and oral exams may seem intimidating, and certainly does require work, we strongly believe that the process is totally achievable and worth the effort for experienced guides! Certification is a significant career achievement, showing the Certified member, their colleagues, family, friends, and the overall hospitality community that they have reached the highest level in their profession.

If you haven't yet achieved Certified status, please check out the Certification section of the website and reach out to us for assistance and direction.

In other news, the Certification Committee and the Board are now investigating the possibility of creating a new category, Certified Walking Tour Guide. If you'd like to participate in this planning process, please contact Certification Chair Jason Cohen, at jcohensftourguide@gmail.com or 510-387-9335.



Membership News...

Thanks to our new and enthusiastic Membership Chair, Stevyn Polk, who is reviewing ways to improve membership benefits and streamlining the process of becoming a new member. Contact Stevyn at members@sftgg.org for more information or to offer suggestions related to membership in SFTGG.

Be a Mentor!

The Guild is a collaborative organization with many talented members. Mentoring new members is a fun and important way to help keep our organization strong. As a mentor you get to make new friends in the profession and also help them as they learn more about the Guild's programs and activities.

Keep Your Membership Bio Updated!

To learn more about other members, check out their personal biographies on our [SFTGG.org](https://sftgg.org) website by logging in and visiting the Membership page – then click on the orange Member Search button!

New Members Who Have Joined SFTGG Since January 1, 2024.

When you meet these new members please be sure to give them a warm smile and take the opportunity to chat and welcome them to our growing membership family.

Associate Members

Seung Bang	Kathleen Bennett
Heather Cassell	Lana Fitzpatrick
Sean Hale	Curtiss Hayden
Christopher James	Dennis McCauley
Rodney Paul	Joni Rocco
Jahnine Spaulding	

Guild Friend

Corrie Conklin	Dennis Felso
----------------	--------------

Guild Membership Reminder

During the pandemic, adherence to the Guild's Continuing Education Policy was suspended. Now that the situation has stabilized, members should resume their annual continuing education requirements. Below is the Continuing Education Policy. If you have any questions, reach out to the Membership Chair or any member of the Board of Trustees.

CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICY

Certified and Associate members must complete continuing education each year as described in the Bylaws. The policy below sets forth details of how the requirement will be implemented. Two activities/programs will be required each year, at least one of which must be sponsored by the Guild.

Qualifying Activities/Programs

- Guild training tours (either attending or leading a tour)
- Guild educational seminars/workshops
- Guided tours of Bay Area locations by non-profit or for-profit organizations such as City Guides, San Francisco Heritage, and Golden Gate National Parks
- Lectures by organizations such as the California Historical Society or the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society
- Guild General Meetings (maximum of 1/year will qualify)
- Guild "good deeds," e.g., chairing a committee, if approved by the Board

Non-qualifying Activities/Programs

Members are encouraged to participate in the following activities, but they will not fulfill the continuing education requirement:

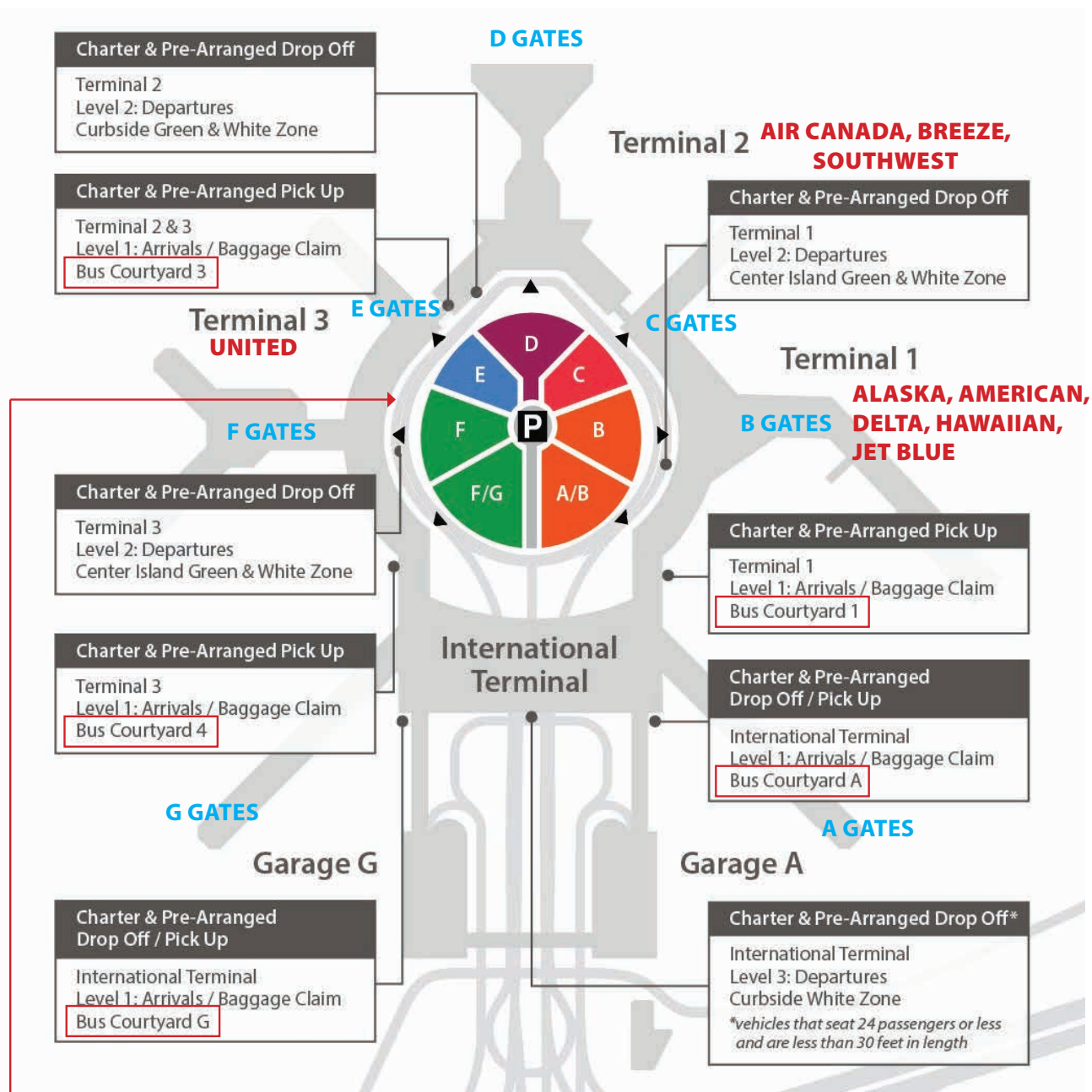
- Guild social events including holiday parties
- Non-guided activities such as visiting museum exhibitions, reading history books or watching documentaries

The Guild will issue Attendance Verifications at its qualifying programs. For programs outside the Guild, the member should have a piece of paper signed by someone such as the lecturer or tour guide, including the program name and date, and the name of the sponsoring organization.



SFO At-A-Glance For Coach Arrivals and Departures

by Evonne Hopkins



INFO VALID AS OF MARCH 4, 2025



Announcements, Accolades and Gratitude....

...For Our Departing Board of Trustees Members: Ted Bagaman and Kristen Clay

WE EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE FOR YOUR DEDICATED SERVICE and wish you continued success and fulfillment in all your future endeavors. Your efforts have elevated our organization and the hospitality/tourism community of the Bay Area. On behalf of the SFTGG community, we say simply and sincerely – Thank You!

...For Our 2025 Board of Trustees

IT IS EXCITING TO WELCOME two distinguished SFTGG members as new leaders who will serve on the Board of Trustees beginning in January of 2025: Joe Hanneken and Stevyn Polk. Board of Trustees members who remain on the BOT are Jason Cohen, Maggie Joanidis, Christine Miller, Clemencia Colmenares, Evonne Hopkins, Steve Johnson and Greg Quist.

The 2025 leadership team of SFTGG is poised to embark on a collaborative journey that will contribute to the continued success of our organization and we encourage all members to help us make a positive impact on the tourism industry. Your active participation and enthusiasm will be key to allowing SFTGG to complete its mission and be a beacon of professionalism and knowledge for the tour guide profession in the San Francisco Bay Area.

In Remembrance of Colleagues...

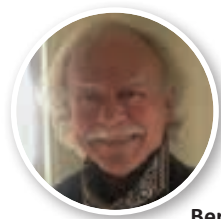
The message below is in a sym[athy card that is sent to the families of our friends who have passed away.

When you see the sun setting over the San Francisco Bay, painting the sky with hues of gold, orange and violet, may you feel a comforting warmth in the colors.

As the waves of the Pacific roll endlessly onto the shore, may their rhythm surround you with steady joy and love in peaceful remembrance.

When light dances on water or a salty breeze carries a whisper of the past, may they be gentle reminders that a cherished presence, though unseen, still lingers in familiar places.

We hope these natural wonders guide you to a quiet space to reflect on a life well lived and are a reminder that a loved one's spirit lives on in all that's beautiful and enduring.



Bert Holmberg

Bert, a longstanding member of the Tour Guide Guild, passed on March 1st, 2024 after a long battle with cancer. He loved tour guiding, engaging with all kinds of people, and dogs! He was a foreign language tour guide who spoke Spanish and French. Bert was a real "character" who could tell a good story and stand up strongly for what he believed in.



Laura Keefe Junod

Laura passed away at home in Aptos on January 8, 2025 after a courageous 2 1/2 - year journey with metastatic breast cancer. She was an ITMI alumna, loved introducing guests to San Francisco from the perspective of a fourth generation San Franciscan, and also specialized in leading international tours in Paris and the many wine regions in France.



Susan Driscoll

Susan died peacefully on March 30, 2025 at 5:40AM after a five month battle with ovarian cancer. She lived life to its fullest with a passion for travel, music, movies and the arts and will be missed. Prior to retiring, she was an active member of the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild and many of us enjoyed her beautiful photos and learning about her adventures.



New Membership Category - Member Emeritus

On March 6, 2025 the Board of Trustees adopted a new Policy that will allow our long-time members who are retiring from active guiding jobs to remain members of the Guild and contribute to its mission while also allowing them a lesser annual membership fee. After receiving input and ideas from members on how to structure this new membership type, the Trustees developed a policy to address the situation for our retiring colleagues.



Revision Number: __1__ Revision Date(s): April 15, 2025

Date of Policy Creation & Board of Trustees Approval: 06 March 2025

“Member Emeritus” Membership Policy

The purpose of this membership category is to encourage veteran members to continue their involvement with the SFTGG after they have retired from active tour guiding. These long-time experienced guides still have a lot to contribute. Many maintain their interest in the tour guide profession and wish to continue their relationship with the Guild after retirement.

Requirements/Benefits

1. The retiring guide shall have been a full time and dues-paying member of the Guild for a minimum of seven years.
2. Annual membership fee calculated as 50% of New Member category.
3. Access to all appropriate Guild programs, publications, forums and events at member rates, including General Meetings, etc.

Limitations

1. No voting rights.
2. No job referrals.





The GUIDEPOST (ISSN 1097-2285) is published quarterly by the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild, a non-profit association established in 1984 to promote the integrity of the profession through certification testing and continuing education, and to foster a standard of quality, ethics, and professionalism among guides and operators in the San Francisco Bay Area. SFTGG is a member of SF Travel.

Proofreader's Disclaimer: Obvious typos and grammatical errors have been corrected. In some cases, contributors' writing style/personality have been respected in order to better convey the article content "in their own words."

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Nate Booth Joe Hanneken
Evonne Hopkins Lucy Perdichizzi

The Presidio: Innovation & Resilience

Source: LinkedIn Page of Rich Rusnack,
Chief Business Officer at Presidio Trust

UNLIKE OTHER NATIONAL PARKS, THE PRESIDIO operates without taxpayer funding, sustaining itself through an innovative public-private partnership model. Every restaurant, retailer, school, nonprofit, startup, and venture capital firm operating here directly contributes to the park's future—not just through rent, but through capital investments that help revitalize historic structures, improve infrastructure, and enhance visitor experiences.

1. Private capital helps transform historic buildings into thriving community hubs. Businesses lease and rehabilitate former military structures, ensuring they remain vibrant, usable, and financially productive rather than falling into disrepair.
2. Every dollar spent in the Presidio stays in the Presidio. Revenue from rents is reinvested in maintaining the park's 700+ historic buildings, 80+ miles of trails, and 1,500 acres of open space, creating a virtuous cycle of sustainability.
3. A shared vision for innovation and impact. From schools that educate the next generation to companies building a strong American economy, each business plays a role in keeping the Presidio accessible and thriving for the millions of visitors who come each year.

Through innovation, resilience, and a commitment to self-sustainability, our commercial partners are shaping a living, working park that honors the past while investing in the future. We are proud to work alongside you to build something extraordinary.



View from the Tunnel Top Gardens overlooking the children's playground, Crissy Field, restored wetlands, Marin Headlands and the Golden Gate Bridge. Photo Courtesy of Evonne Hopkins



Presidio of San Francisco - Fast Facts

Source: <https://presidio.gov/about/press>

PRESIDIO TRUST®

FACT SHEET | Presidio of San Francisco

The Presidio Trust (Trust), along with its partners at the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, has guided the Presidio through an ambitious post-to-park transformation. What was once an aging military installation is now open to a diverse public as part of the largest urban national park in the United States, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The Presidio hosts a new kind of national park community that sustains the park and provides an array of cultural, recreational, and educational activities, inviting visitors to explore and connect with the rich and varied history and ecology of the site.

Fast Facts

- In 1776, the Presidio was established as Spain's northernmost outpost in the Americas. It then served as a Mexican fort from 1822 until 1846, when it became a premier U.S. Army post. Generations of soldiers passed through its gates, serving America around the world.
- The 1491-acre Presidio became a unique national park site in 1994. It is managed by the Presidio Trust in partnership with the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.
- The Presidio is a National Historic Landmark District. There are 800 buildings in the Presidio, 555 of which are historic, and hundreds of features, including a 300-acre historic forest. The Trust manages more than 30 archaeological areas that date from Native Ohlone settlements through the occupation of the Army.
- 3,500 people live in the park's rehabilitated housing and 4,000 people work at the 350 public, private, and non-profit organizations housed at the Presidio. Their rent supports the park.
- The Presidio is a model of sustainable park management, with two dozen U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified projects, the first LEED-certified neighborhood in the United States, the Public Health District.
- The Presidio's biodiversity is unusually high for an urban park, with 350 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and fish, and nearly 400 native plant species, 21 of which are threatened, rare, or endangered.
- 145 acres of relic and restored native plant communities include the Tennessee Hollow Watershed with three creeks that flow to San Francisco Bay, and Mountain Lake, one of the last remaining natural lakes in San Francisco.
- The Presidio features 24-miles of hiking and biking trails, eight scenic overlooks, and one of San Francisco's only campgrounds.
- The Presidio is home to the largest collection of British artist Andy Goldsworthy's public works on public view in North America.



Tips to Lead a Walking Tour

by Jason Cohen – These tips were first published in 2012. We thank Jason for sharing them again.

*Walking tours are great on their own, but also as a portion of a coach tour.
It takes planning and practice to lead a good walk!*



Being Heard

- Face the group, not the thing you're describing!
- Stand higher than the group if possible
- Stop talking when a truck rumbles past
- Don't walk and talk at the same time
- Consider a "waistband amplifier" (\$30-100). Future use of "Quiet Vox" devices with radio transmitters and headsets
- Look for quiet spots for stops, e.g., step into a plaza or side street.



Helping people not get lost

- Set your pace deliberately—lead the group, but don't run away from them.
- Remember they're behind you, especially in crowds
- Give advance cues as to where you're going next, e.g., "We'll stop again at the next corner."
- "Please no shopping"
- The dreaded umbrella or flag (to help them see you)
- "If you were to get lost, meet back here at xx:xx pm"



Pacing

- Great thing about walking tours is you can spend more time, answer more questions, go into more depth; but still, keep things moving—standing in one place too long is tiresome
- Since you do have more time you might be tempted to read your notecards—keywords or short phrases are OK, but don't depend on notes
- If some people are straggling because they're busy taking photos, it's not fair to everyone else. So, it's often okay to begin commentary before the final couple people reach you
- For those who are slower due to mobility limitations, you may need to slow your pace. Perhaps say to that person "I'll begin my next commentary before you've caught up to us, but I promise I won't walk away without you." Alternately, perhaps

divide the group (if more than one tour guide) into slower and faster walkers. Maybe give another option, e.g., "If you would like to skip the walk and go directly to the restaurant, please stay on the bus and our driver will take you there."



Be considerate

- Don't have a long conversation with one person while everyone else is standing there feeling left out— you may need to deflect the person, e.g., "I'd love to talk to you more about this later, but for now I need to continue the tour."
- Position the group so they don't have to face into the sun
- If possible, don't make them stand in the shade if it's chilly or the sun if it's hot
- Encourage the group not to block the sidewalk or store entrances—ask them to make room



Routing

- If you can, scout out your route in advance
- Be creative—courtyards in Carmel, hidden meadow in Yosemite, tea sampling in Chinatown
- Minimize uphill, e.g., avoid walking up to Lombard or up to Stockton in Chinatown
- Avoid jaywalking
- Look for sheltered places to stand if it's raining
- Is your route wheelchair accessible?; if not, how alter?
- As on a bus tour, plan the stops to be efficient since it takes time to move and reassemble the group, e.g., don't do a 2nd stop right across the street – combine the two



Coach interface

- Work with coach driver to establish drop off and pick up locations and time—try not to block traffic
- Really important to have the driver's cell phone number so that you can find him

