

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, INC.

# The Industrial City ECHOES

Newsletter No. 172 - December 2025

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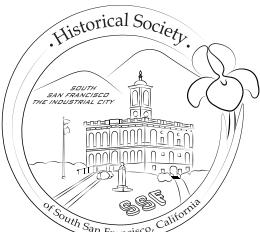
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## 2026 Calendar

January 26 .....	Board Meeting
February 23.....	Board Meeting
March 16.....	General Meeting
April 20.....	Board Meeting
May 18 .....	Board Meeting
June 15.....	General Meeting
July 20.....	Board Meeting
August 17.....	Board Meeting
Sept. 14 .....	General Meeting
October 19 .....	Board Meeting
Nov. 16.....	Board Meeting
Dec.14.....	General Meeting

Members are welcome to  
Board Meetings.

Members and non-members  
are welcome to General  
Meetings.



## Holiday Program for December General Meeting

Monday, December 15 at 6:00 pm

(Please note time is earlier than usual )

Roberta Teglia Center (Magnolia Building)  
601 Grand Avenue, South San Francisco



Back by popular demand, this year's entertainment will again feature **GenenTonix, formerly known as the Genentech Carolers**, a group of musical enthusiasts from across all departments at Genentech who get together every holiday season with the mission to spread cheer throughout campus via carols and holiday songs. In addition to creating some non-holiday musical projects over the past few years, they've also started to branch their musical performances out into the local community.

*This program is free and open to members and non-members.*

*Cookie Reminder: Any sweets that you can contribute for our holiday party  
will be much appreciated!*



*It's Time  
to Renew  
Your  
Membership!*

**We have made it very easy for you!**

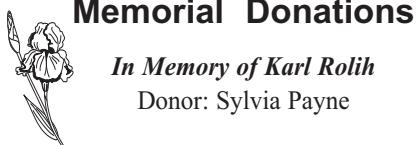
Just fill out the envelope provided in this newsletter, enclose a check, mail, and you're done! You will continue to receive the Historical Society Newsletter and help to preserve the storied history of South San Francisco. Also...Please consider buying a gift of membership for a relative or friend for the holiday season....best bargain ever!

Enjoy a visit to the  
Historical Society  
Museum  
80 Chestnut Avenue  
and  
The Plymire-Schwarz  
House  
519 Grand Avenue  
Both open on Saturdays  
from 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Check out our website  
[www.ssfhistory.org](http://www.ssfhistory.org)



Facebook and Instagram!  
[@ssfhistory  
\[@ssfhistorymuseum  
\\[@plymireschwarzhouse\\]\\(https://www.instagram.com/plymireschwarzhouse\\)\]\(https://www.instagram.com/ssfhistorymuseum\)](https://www.instagram.com/ssfhistory)



## Memorial Donations

*In Memory of Karl Rolih*

Donor: Sylvia Payne

## Plymire-Schwarz House Donations

Carol Goodrich

Kendra Langer

## Museum Acquisitions

**Joanne Gordon:** Monte Verde and Avalon School class photos and memorabilia

**Rich and Elaine Garbarino:** "A Guest of the Emperor" World War II Memoirs

**Jeanette Acosta:** SSFHS yearbooks, SSF memorabilia and scrapbooks, vintage handmade linens.

**Steve and MaryLou Wald:** John's Men Shop ashtray, Frank Garbero's Windbreaker's drum and sticks and photo, South City Pool Hall matchbook, grammar school photo.

**DeGranano Family:** Family wedding dress, family photos, SSFHS yearbooks

**John Penna:** "Lost Gas Stations of San Mateo County" book

**Joe Regalia Family:** SSFHS yearbooks and block sweater, Parkway block sweater, SSF memorabilia and various vintage household items.

## Plymire-Schwarz House Acquisitions

**Amparo Jimenez:** Hand painted china teacups for the Annual Tea as well as a decanter, ice bucket, glassware and miscellaneous other collectible items for the Boutique.

## NEW MEMBERS

ROSE MARQUEZ

ANDREA N. SWINFARD & FAMILY

JAMES WALD

MICHAEL WALD

DR. STEVE & MARY LOU WALD

## Message from Historical Society President

*Jingle, jingle, jingle, the holidays are almost here and your Historical Society will be ready decorating our Plymire-Schwarz House on Grand Avenue and rearranging the museum on Chestnut Avenue to reflect our city history. Both have much to see especially with our new attractions. Keep in mind that we have had continuous occupation beginning with native Americans over 5,000 years ago at Sierra Point and at China Camp beginning in the 1870-80's along the bay trail. Learn how your Historical Society works to preserve our rich history. Did you know that Charles Lux was the first of the San Francisco millionaires to move to the peninsula and build his mansion on Mission road by the 12 mile house in 1860. You will never guess that our ideal weather gave rise to a thriving farming industry. Anyone who visits will enjoy and learn of who we are and where we originated to appreciate what we have. We wish you all a good and happy holidays.*

John Penna



PLYMIRE-SCHWARZ HOUSE  
519 Grand Ave. - So. San Francisco  
[www.plymirehouse.org](http://www.plymirehouse.org)

## Extended Hours!

South San Francisco's very own Plymire-Schwarz House and Gift Shop will be open with Saturday extended hours:

Saturday, November 29

through

Saturday, December 20

12:00 - 4:00

*Holiday sparkle has arrived! Our Boutique is restocked with beautiful treasures you won't want to miss. The House is looking festive and bright for the season - come and take in the magic.*

*Admission is FREE!*

*Co-Sponsored by  
SSF Department of Parks & Recreation*



*Halloween Fun at the Plymire-Schwarz House*



*The Historical Society's*  
**PLYMIRE-SCHWARZ HOUSE**

## Halloween Fun at the Plymire-Schwarz House

Over 200 trick-or-treaters lined up at the Plymire-Schwarz House this Halloween for candy and community fun. While the historic home stayed closed for tours, families enjoyed a fun stop along their Halloween route, making memories in the spirit of the season. We made sure everyone left with a smile (and a sweet treat or two).

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers for keeping the Halloween spirit alive!



## Garden Champagne Party Welcomes Fall

Our annual Garden Champagne Party was a wonderful success! Guests gathered under sunny skies to enjoy delicious appetizers, sparkling libations, and great company. The garden provided a serene and lovely setting, perfect for conversation and enjoying the day. Adding to the afternoon's

ambiance, **Megan** offered personal tarot card readings, which were a highlight for many, while **Rose** welcomed guests warmly in period attire, lending a delightful historical flair. Many visitors also took the opportunity to browse the Boutique where special treasures found new homes.



We are thankful to everyone who attended and helped make the afternoon so memorable. It was the perfect way to welcome the fall season together!



## A Delightful Halloween Drop-In



We had some festive visitors this month. A group of neighbors enjoying a Halloween tea party at their lovely Victorian home, strolled over to the Plymire-Schwarz House for a special tour. Dressed in costume and full of seasonal cheer, they explored the historic rooms, learned about Dr. Plymire's life and practice, and shared some fun and interesting stories of their own. Our newest volunteer, **Rose**, who also leads ghost tours in San Francisco, joined in and even led a fun, light-hearted "ghost hunt" around the house—much to everyone's delight. It was a wonderful reminder of how our local history continues to bring neighbors together.

*P-S House Articles by Julie Chimenti  
 Treasurer/Social Media Manager*

## Fundraiser a Success!

We are pleased to share that our recent fundraiser for the Plymire-Schwarz House window restoration project was a wonderful success. Thanks to the generosity of our members, friends, and community supporters, we raised over \$21,000 towards plumbing repairs and replacing the aging aluminum windows while preserving the original leaded glass that makes the House so special.

Your contributions help ensure that this historic landmark remains a welcoming place for generations to come.

Thank you for helping us protect our history.

### *With special appreciation to our top contributors:*

♦ Caroline DeNardi ♦ Ron Raquel ♦ Susan Rolih (*In Memory of Karl Rolih*) ♦ Bill and Jo Zemke

With deepest appreciation to ♦ Karyl Matsumoto whose exceptional support helped carry us within reach of our goal.

### *We gratefully acknowledge our donors:*

- ♦ Karen Aeschliman ♦ Mary Andersen ♦ Rosemary Armanino ♦ Louis & Barbara Boccaleoni (*In Memory of Evelia Boccaleoni*) ♦ Jacqueline Buckley
- ♦ Dave & Margie Casagrande ♦ Alan & Julie Chimenti ♦ Ron & Marie Derenzi (*In Memory of Derenzi & Monastiere Families*)
- ♦ Carrie Gordon (*In Honor of SSFHS Volunteers*) ♦ Jackie Kious ♦ Robert & Linda Leggero (*In Honor of Bobby Leggero*)
- ♦ Diane Martin (*In Memory of Norma Lombardi*) ♦ Michael & Marcia Meloni ♦ Jack Muray ♦ Marianne Petroni (*In Honor of Jeanette Acosta*)
- ♦ Catherine Rancatore ♦ Sylvia Raquel ♦ Lois Severi ♦ Valerie Sommer ♦ Andrea Swinford (*In Memory of James F. Swinford*)
- ♦ Ginny Tilton (*In Honor of Plymire-Schwarz House Events Committee*) ♦ John Witherspoon (*In Memory of Nathan & Jessie Adler*) ♦ Marie Yoschak

## Welcoming New Volunteers

We are pleased to welcome **Rose Kilgore** and **Miranda Lee**, whom we met as customers at our rummage sale that was held earlier this year. Their enthusiasm for local history and community spirit quickly shone through, and they've since joined our volunteer team.



Originally from Richmond Virginia, **Rose** is an emerging art historian completing her BA at San Francisco State University this past spring. Her passion lies in the art and history of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Outside the historical society, she splits her time between assisting in the charity group United Way, leading historical ghost tours, and helping with art auction previews at Bonhams in downtown San Francisco. **Rose** has become an active volunteer, assisting with cataloging the museum collection, serving as a docent at the Plymire-Schwarz House, and joining the Events Committee.



**Miranda** is a visual designer and artist whose creativity has been evident since the day she first picked up a crayon. Born and raised in Daly City, she spent many weekends of her childhood in South San Francisco and still jokes that she's a bit jealous of the city's sunnier weather compared to its northern neighbor. Her longstanding connection to the community made volunteering with the SSF Historical Society a natural fit. **Miranda** helped develop our new Ohlone exhibit at the Museum. She has found pleasure in supporting the Society's work—whether through events, museum care, or community programs—and feels fortunate to contribute to an organization driven by such evident dedication.

We're so happy to have them on board and look forward to all the wonderful ways they'll contribute to the Historical Society.

## Museum News

Our museum continues to greet visitors on Saturdays, giving them insight into this part of California and answering questions on our city's history. The new exhibit on the Ohlone tribes is especially interesting and informative. Our recently donated Lions Club "clown" car is also now on display.

A big thanks to *Julie, Megan, Rose, and Miranda* for their work in refreshing the exhibits inside our museum. One other volunteer that I would like to thank is *Robert Corbett* who has assisted me over the last few years in maintaining the outside landscaping.

Come in and check-out our new exhibits!

Bill Zemke

## Trunk or Treat at Orange Memorial Park

Our “Skeletons Enjoying High Tea” display was a spooky hit at this year’s Trunk or Treat in Orange Memorial Park! Visitors loved our elegantly eerie table setting—complete with teacups, cobwebs, and a few bony guests enjoying their afternoon brew.



Special thanks to **Lynn, Jo, and Denise** for creating the delightful decorations and bringing our theme to life. Lynn and



Denise also kept the fun going by handing out lots and lots of candy to excited trick-or-treaters all afternoon!



Donated - Lions Club "clown" car

## *Opening of New Hospital in This City*



Last evening several prominent citizens and doctors of this city and elsewhere inspected the new South San Francisco General Hospital at the corner of Grand and Spruce Avenues, as invited Guests of Dr. H. G. Plymire.

The hospital had been started by him. Its equipment is of the highest standard. The male wards and private rooms are on the first floor and those for females on the second floor. The operating room is also on the second floor. The hospital is for the general use of other physicians and surgeons as well.

At the close of the inspection the guests departed for Uncle Tom's Cabin where a splendid collation was partaken of. Many deserved compliments of ability were extended to the host who modestly responded. The members of the party left for their homes at midnight.



## *Splendid South City Hospital*

One day last week the editor of the Record visited the South San Francisco General Hospital that was recently established by Dr. H. G. Plymire, and through the courtesy of that genial gentleman was shown the institution.

Perfect neatness, the most essential thing in a first-class hospital, was noticed in every detail. The operating room, the wards, private rooms, dining room and kitchen, all showed perfect order, including the well arranged office and reception room.

While not familiar with such things, the equipment such as X-ray apparatus, surgical instruments, sterilizing facilities and all else that seemed essential, were unquestionably first-class and the very best that can be procured.

Dr. Plymire is naturally very proud of this hospital and well he may be, for it equals anything in San Francisco. In fact, it has many advantages over the large hospitals in the insuring of better care and is more reasonable in price.



*Dr. Plymire*

### **THE PLYMIRE HOSPITAL**

**401-403 Grand Avenue**

Open to all Reputable Physicians

**DRS. PLYMIRE & PLYMIRE**  
**SURGEONS**

**South San Francisco**

**San Mateo County, Cal.**

**RESIDENCE: 500 GRAND AVENUE**



## The Industrial City ECHOES

Historical Society of South San Francisco, Inc.  
80 Chestnut Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

NON-PROFIT  
Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Burlingame, CA  
Permit No. 750

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

### Historical Society of South San Francisco

#### Board of Directors

President ..... John Penna  
First Vice President ..... Rich Garbarino  
Second Vice President ..... Ginny Tilton  
Recording Secretary ..... Denise Fernekes  
Treasurer, Social Media Manager ..... Julie Chimenti  
Financial Secretary ..... Donna Smith

#### 2024-2025 Directors

Lynn Boldenweck, Dave Casagrande, Nancy Casazza

#### Ex Officio Members

Diana Ferrari, Mary Giusti, Sylvia Payne

#### Plymire-Schwarz House Steering Committee

Director: Dave Casagrande

Jeanette Acosta, Molly Boyll, Julie Chimenti,  
Mary Giusti, Gene Hessler, Donna Smith

#### Museum Committee

Julie Chimenti, John Penna, Lois Severi, Valerie Sommer,  
Donna Smith, Bill Zemke

#### Event Planning Committee

Lynn Boldenweck, Molly Boyll, Sally Busalacchi, Margie  
Casagrande, Julie Chimenti, Gail Davison, Elaine Garbarino,  
Barbara Irl, Donna Smith, Ginny Tilton and  
Jo Zemke (with "on call" help from Rich Busalacchi,  
Dave Casagrande, Alan Chimenti and Bill Zemke)

*The Historical Society is co-sponsored by the South San Francisco  
Parks & Recreation Dept. It is through the City's  
generosity that many of the Society's goals are accomplished.*

### Contact & Location Information

#### Historical Society of South San Francisco, Inc.

80 Chestnut Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
[info@ssfhistory.org](mailto:info@ssfhistory.org)

#### History Room / Grand Avenue Branch Library

306 Walnut Avenue  
650-877-8533  
By appointment only.

#### Historical Society Museum

80 Chestnut Avenue  
650-829-3825  
[info@ssfhistory.org](mailto:info@ssfhistory.org)  
Saturdays (1:00-4:00 p.m.)  
Please call if you are interested  
in volunteering at the museum.

#### Historical Society's Plymire-Schwarz House

519 Grand Avenue  
650-875-6988  
[info@plymirehouse.org](mailto:info@plymirehouse.org)  
Saturdays (1:00-4:00 p.m.)

### Memberships Expire December 31

Membership runs on a calendar year expiring  
annually on December 31st.  
Membership is \$15.00 per person - \$20 per family.  
If you are interested in becoming a new member contact  
the Society at 650-829-3825 or  
Mail your check to:  
Historical Society of South San Francisco  
80 Chestnut Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

**ECHOES:** 650-829-3825 • [info@ssfhistory.org](mailto:info@ssfhistory.org)  
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