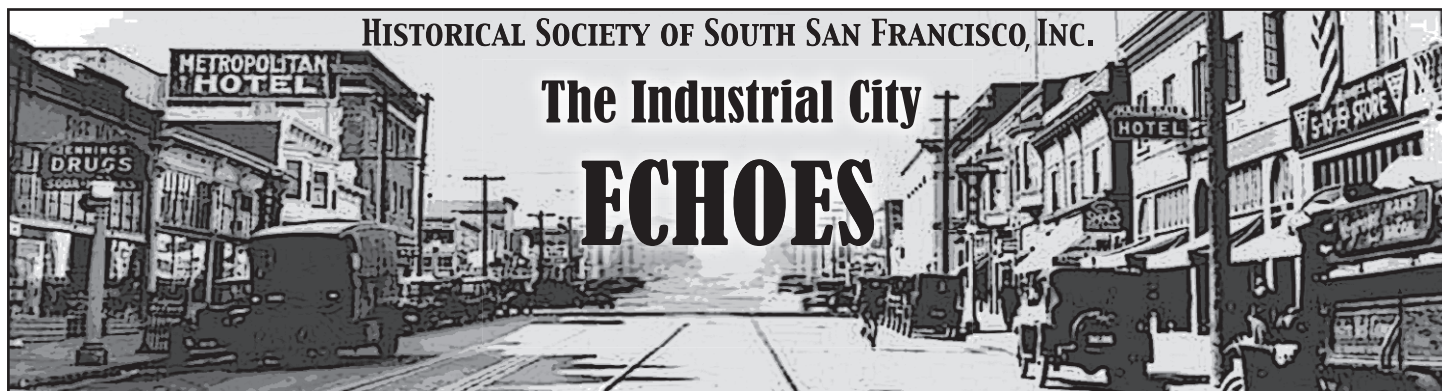




HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, INC.

The Industrial City ECHOES

Newsletter No. 171 - September 2025

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2025 Calendar

October 4	Champagne Garden Party
October 20	Board Meeting
Nov. 17	Board Meeting
Nov. 21	Annual Banquet
Dec. 15	General Meeting

*Members are welcome to
Board Meetings.*

*Members and non-members
are welcome to General
Meetings.*



September General Meeting

Monday, September 15th at 7:00 pm
Roberta Teglia Center (Magnolia Building)
601 Grand Avenue, South San Francisco

Remember the gas station on the corner or the repair garages in the neighborhood and on El Camino? Our guest speakers, **Bruce Cumming and/or Nicolas Veronico**, authors of "*The Lost Garages of San Mateo County*" will recall those days and give us a tour of those facilities long gone.

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

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



** Admission is Limited *
* No Tickets Sold at Door **

*In order to secure your reservation,
we kindly request payment be
received within seven days after
we have confirmed your reservation.*

Garden Champagne Party

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Benefiting

Historical Society of South San Francisco
PLYMIRE-SCHWARZ HOUSE

Join us in our Garden for an afternoon of
sweet & savory bites, bubbly & other beverages,
and a bit of shopping in the Boutique!

All for only \$40 per person!

Reservations begin Saturday, September 13, 2025 • 9:00 a.m.

Please call (650) 588-0639 and **leave a message** including:
• your name • phone number • number of guests in your party

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
Historical Society of South San Francisco

MAIL TO:
Donna Smith • 80 Chestnut Avenue • South San Francisco, CA 94080

events@plymirehouse.org



Memorial Donations

In Honor of Teaching

In Memory of

Laurie Ann Sanders Kenney

Donors: John and Elisa Noonan

In Memory of Robert Payne

Donors: Alan and Julie Chimenti

Ginny Tilton

Marie Yoschak

In Memory of Leon and Lorraine Fraysse

Donor: Stephanie Low

Society Donations

Laurel Larson

Plymire-Schwarz House Donations

Bill and Jo Zemke

P-S House Tea

Al Banfield

Carol Goodrich

Sharon Menesini

P-S House Window Fundraiser

Eugene Hessler



Historical Society Dues Expired on December 31st.

*To renew or become a member
please fill out this form and mail
with check made out to:*

South San Francisco

Historical Society,

80 Chestnut Ave.,

So. San Francisco, CA 94080

Name/Names/Corporation

Address

Phone #

Email

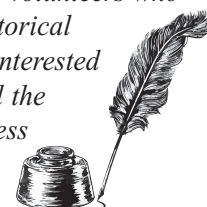
- ☐ Student\$5.00
- ☐ Individual\$15.00
- ☐ Family\$20.00
- ☐ Supporter\$25.00
- ☐ Corporate\$100.00
- ☐ Life Membership ...\$500.00

Message from Historical Society President

Welcome to several months of activities that began on August 16th with our annual successful rummage sale at the Historical Society Museum parking lot. Our Plymire-Schwarz house closed for repairs and should reopen in September with many new additions and our annual Garden Party on October 4th. Speakers at our September 15 general meeting will be authors of "The Lost Garages of San Mateo County." Volunteers are working on a presentation by the local Ohlone native Americans. We should keep in mind that we are the stewards of these ancient lands.

We take this opportunity to give our sincere thanks to all our volunteers who without their help there would not be a South San Francisco Historical Society preserving our history. A challenge is offered to anyone interested in dating the old map that was in Piwald's pharmacy showing all the streets from San Francisco to Redwood City when our city was less than 5000 residences.

John Penna



Museum Acquisitions

Bob Cavalieri: Motorized Model T Ford "clown" car used by SSF Lions in the 1960's and 70's for parades and events.

Huley Freddie: Vintage RCA radio and phonograph.

David and Joanne Gordon: Photographs of St. Veronica's flooding and Monte Verde class photos and memorabilia.

Mike and Linda Martinelli: Western Meat Company Panorama Photograph

Wayne Rocca: Historic Enterprise Journal articles re: Mayor, Andrew Rocca; SSF Mayor and Councilman badges; photos of SSFHS baseball players and students.

Plymire-Schwarz House Acquisitions

Paul Alvers and Donna Puizina-

Alvers: Vintage silver serving pieces and linens

David and Joanne Gordon: Vintage hall mirror, marble-top table, rocking chair, arm chair, regulator clock, stemware, china, framed prints.

NEW MEMBERS

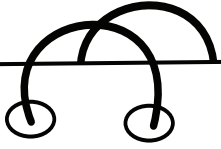
Chris Babcock, Susan Bryan,
Antonia Edwards, Gina Lazzari,
Humberto & Marianela Molina,
Donna O'Balle, Antonia Orozco
John & Cindy Petrovitz

School Days in South City



A new display, "School Days in South City" is now available at the Grand Avenue Library. Pulled from the History Room's collection, the small exhibit includes photos, yearbooks, and other ephemera of South City's public school district since its origins in the early 1900s. Curated by archivist, Eva Martinez and summer intern Marisol Medina Cadena.

Valerie Sommer, Library Director



South San Francisco Women's Club Vendor & Craft Fair

Saturday, October 11th
10 am - 3 pm
470 Grand Avenue, SSF

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P

37TH ANNUAL SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO HISTORICAL SOCIETY BANQUET

*Proceeds benefit the South San Francisco Historical Society
Museum and Plymire-Schwarz House.*

Yeah!! This year's banquet will be a CHRISTMAS THEME! Wear your UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATERS and we will have an ugly sweater contest. Again, and we are so pleased, that our famous "salami raffle" will be lead by Susan Kennedy and her capable assistant, Olive Risso. If you would like to donate gift cards, wine or other appropriate items for our raffle, please bring them to the Museum any Saturday 1:00-4:00 or contact Ginny 650-438-5498 for pick up. Our members have been so generous in the past and we really appreciate their help. See you there! *Ginny, Donna, Lynn and Nancy*

**Banquet: Friday, November 21, 2025 at the
Basque Cultural Center**
Banquet invitations will be mailed separately.

HONORING 2025 RECIPIENT OF THE VICTOR JOHN FEUDALE AWARD



Gail Davison was born and raised with her two brothers in South San Francisco. Her parents moved from Colorado to San Francisco in 1937 and in 1950 bought a house in the new South San Francisco neighborhood: Brentwood. Gail attended Avalon School, Southwood Junior High School, and graduated from South San Francisco High School in 1972. Upon graduation her first job was working as a credit clerk and then as an accounts receivable representative at Pameco Aire (Dubuque Avenue) for 22 years. After that she worked in the San Francisco Financial District for 14 years.

Gail has given years of dedicated service to South San Francisco. Many years ago she started attending the annual SSF Historical Society Victorian Teas. This was the first step to becoming involved with the Historical Society. She met a wonderful crew of volunteers and eventually joined the Plymire-Schwarz House Events Committee and became a volunteer. Giving hundreds of hours of her time and energy to the P-S House over the years, Gail is always willing to help plan and support activities, is typically seen in the boutique as cashier on weekends, and doesn't hesitate to bake delicious treats for Teas and other events. Whatever is needed, however she can help, Gail is there!

Gail's dedication to South San Francisco doesn't stop with the SSF Historical Society. In 2010 she started attending the SSF Friends of the Library (FOL) meetings and began volunteering at the West Orange Main Library sorting book donations. She became Treasurer of the FOL in 2013 and has served in that role ever since. For many years she also served as a volunteer for the SSF Library's Project Read program, responsible for securing donations for Project Read's annual Trivia Challenge silent auction fundraiser and serving as a volunteer on Trivia night. Gail became a SSF Library employee in 2014 and has been helping patrons at the old West Orange Main Library, Grand Avenue Library, and at the new Library/Park & Rec building, serving the community on the 3rd floor.

Gail is an avid knitter and donates her creations to those in need in San Francisco as a member of the St. Anthony's Stitchers Foundation, San Francisco.

Notes from the Museum

Over the last few months, we have been busy collecting, pricing and storing items for our annual rummage sale, which was held on August 16. The dedication of our many volunteers as well as donations from members and friends have made these very successful fund raisers. Thanks to all this hard work!

As Autumn approaches, we are getting ready to set up displays in Orange Park at Festa Italiana on September 14 and Concert in the Park on September 20. At Concert in the Park we will be displaying our recent acquisition of the motorized Model T Ford "clown" car used by the South San Francisco Lions Club at events and parades in the 1960's and 70's. Come join us for the fun!

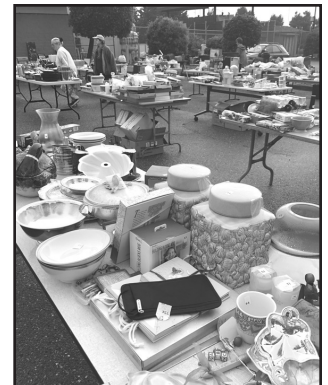
Bill Zemke

One Person's Junk, Another Person's Treasure

Volunteers began arriving at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 16, to find the museum parking lot blanketed in mist and light drizzle. Tables were quickly set up and just as quickly wiped down to try to keep them dry.

By 9:00 a.m., the sale was ready to begin—and the line of eager shoppers, who had been patiently waiting since 8:30, wasted no time rushing in to find treasures to buy – and buy they did!. The event proved to be a great success, serving not only as an important fundraiser for the Museum but also as a wonderful opportunity to welcome new visitors and share our exhibits with the community.

More than 40 guests toured the Museum during the day, many of them stepping inside for the very first time.



Grateful to our volunteers: Lynn Boldenweck, Molly Boyll, Rich and Sally Busalacchi, Dave Casagrande, Alan and Julie Chimenti, Gail Davison, Denise Fernekes, Gabby Firpo, Rich Garbarino, Max Gomez, Joanne Gordon, Gene Hessler, Barbara Irli, Sylvia Mosqueda, Frank and Cathy Rancatore and Bill and Jo Zemke.

Thanks to their hard work and the support of the community, the sale raised \$ \$3,465 for the Museum.

Jo Zemke

The Historical Society's
PLYMIRE-SCHWARZ HOUSE

“Steeped in Tradition... Served in a Box”

How a Sunday plumbing disaster turned our elegant Tea into a to-go adventure.

Twenty-three years ago, Margie Casagrande had a brilliant idea: an Afternoon Tea fundraiser for the Plymire Schwarz House. Her mother-in-law, Evelyn, knew just the person to help – me! – and before we knew it, the kettle was on and the planning was underway.

Since then, we’ve collected a treasure trove of Tea Tales. There was the guest who, after being served a cup of imported Harrod’s tea, asked if we had any “plain Lipton,” her favorite. Or the lady who accused us of poisoning her – our crime? A sprinkle of Gorgonzola on the salad.



This year, our first three Teas went off without a hitch. And then came The Fourth Tea. Early Sunday morning of the final tea we discovered the had plumbing backed up. The plumber arrived later that morning with the bad news: there would be no quick fix. With no working toilets, serving tea to thirty-four guests was out of the question. So, we did what any seasoned Tea hosts would do – we reinvented the event! Out went the tea tables and in came the “Take-Away Tea” operation. Sandwiches, scones, sweets, and tea all carefully packed for our guests to enjoy at home.

Thanks to everyone who joined us, donated, or volunteered, the event was a resounding success. The proceeds will help keep the Plymire-Schwarz House welcoming visitors as well plumbing repairs. Our deepest thanks to our wonderfully understanding guests, the quick-thinking Events Committee, and especially to Dave Casagrande, Alan Chimenti, and Bill Zemke – plumbing heroes turned tea-packaging pros. Our attentive servers at this year’s Teas were: Meriam Almasarweh, Laura Doctor, Emilie Gonzalez, Ava Leggero, Bella Leggero, Megan Nussbaum, and Ameen Saafi.

The gorgeous flowers – courtesy of Al Banfield of Garden Chapel and Gemma on Park Way – added the perfect touch of elegance to the Teas. The delicious scones were baked and donated by City Baking in South San Francisco. Thrivent (Financial) provided \$250 in “seed money” to help with the purchase of necessities. As in years past, Trader Joe’s sweetened the occasion by donating lemon curd and jam. Thanks to Katherine Hamburger who generously provided homemade cookies for both weekends, The rest of the delectable sandwiches, cookies and other treats were prepared by the Events Committee: Lynn Boldenweck, Molly Boyll, Sally Busalacchi, Margie Casagrande, Julie Chimenti, Gail Davison, Elaine Garbarino, Barbara Irli, Donna Smith, Ginny Tilton and Jo Zemke.

The legend of That Tea in 2025 will be steeping in our memories for years to come.

Jo Zemke



Plymire-Schwarz House Fundraising Appeal



Whether a volunteer and/or a supporter, you play a key role in making sure The Plymire-Schwarz House continues as the South San Francisco historic jewel that it has been for over 30 years.

Thank you for being part of our community – for connecting, exchanging ideas, and celebrating the historic spirit that makes The Plymire-Schwarz House so special.

The last several years saw us host our two traditional affairs: Annual Victorian Tea and Holiday Champagne Garden Party. Each provided a unique experience for friends to gather, reminisce of bygone eras, share today's good times, and support our organization.

If you have attended an event with us or shopped at the Boutique in the past, please remember we rely on financial support at all levels to ensure the quality of events we offer and to sustain our historic organization.

Our lovely old house often surprises us with unsuspected repairs - as well as the usual maintenance. Private donations account for a significant portion of The Plymire-Schwarz House annual income. We truly cannot do it without your support.

This year, two urgent needs arrived at once. The aging aluminum windows must be replaced to preserve the House's integrity, while the original leaded glass and wood frames will remain untouched. Just as we took this step, the sewer connection from the House to Third Lane failed, requiring full replacement.

Together, these repairs and upgrades will cost near \$40,000!

We hope we can continue to count on your generosity to help us. Please consider using the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped envelope to make a donation towards these repairs. You can even make a tribute gift in honor or memory of a friend, family member, or loved one.

With so much changing in our little city, we are grateful for your support to maintain this valuable piece of our history.

David Casagrande

Plymire-Schwarz House Special Visitors "When History Feels Like Home"



Last month, the Plymire-Schwarz House had the pleasure of welcoming some very special guests—descendants of Nathan and Jessie Adler, who once called this historic home their own. The visit was arranged by Karen Aeschliman, whose late husband, Kirk Smith, was the son of Marjorie Adler Smith.

What a special moment it was to share the Adler family's ancestral home with their grandchild and great-grandchildren! Karen arrived with her husband, Dale, son, Ryan, and his two boys, Colton and Wyatt—three generations stepping back in time together. Though Ryan's wife, Megan, and daughters, Charlotte and Harper, couldn't join us this time, we hope to see them on their next visit!

Standing in the same rooms where their grandparents/great-grandparents once lived, they imagined bustling in the kitchen, children playing in the parlor, and laughter echoing up the staircase. For our visitors, it wasn't just a tour—it was a homecoming; a sense of connection that bridged almost a century of history. They marveled at the preserved details and paused in reflection, picturing life in the 1940s and 1950s.

Moments like these remind us why the Plymire-Schwarz House matters. Every artifact, every doorway, every creaky floorboard, holds a story waiting to be rediscovered.

Julie Chimenti

*Enjoy a visit to the
Historical Society
Museum*

80 Chestnut Avenue
and

**The Plymire-Schwarz
House**

519 Grand Avenue

Both open on Saturdays
from 1-4:00 p.m.

Check out our website
www.ssfhistory.org



Facebook and Instagram!

@ssfhistory

@ssfhistorymuseum

@plymireschwarzhouse

This heartfelt reflection on old South City was written by Sarah (Serafina) Lovi Da Gragnano, a lifelong resident born here in 1913. Her grandson, Eric, recently donated her writing to the historical society—and we just had to share it with you in this month's newsletter.

“Echoes of Old South City”



Sarah and her grandson, Eric

Whenever I think of the past I am sad and amused. And when recalling the past with my friends, I laugh with delight and try not to indulge for that long-gone time or I shall want to cry; for the good times and the bad times.

I am sitting here, alone, watching the fog roll in over the mountain crest.

It is a quiet day, damp cold day. Fog covers the steel frame of the Christmas tree on top of Sign Hill. Every year for the holidays it shines with bright lights for all to see and admire.

I can still see the sign South San Francisco, The Industrial City. Soon it will be covered by the fog, or if we are lucky this day, the wind will come up and stir the hanging leaves of the trees planted there and the grass will sway in motion like a baton to the right and left; and by the time the sun is high in the sky, it will burn off, but not altogether.

It lays in wait along the ocean shore ready to return. I was born and raised here. I know this is the way it begins and continues for months, a moody erratic weather.

Let me look back to what to me are memories.

Now it is never as dense as when I was a child. I can remember waving goodbye to my mother on my way to school; and by the time I reached the back gate, I no longer could see her in the low mist. We didn't mind the wind and the fog as we walked on to school. Stepping on the acorn buds which had fallen off the eucalyptus trees lining the streets and trying to miss the shiny drops of vapor dripping from the trees ready to drop on our body.

In the distance we could hear the moan of the fog horn's warning sound.

My parents and my older brother came here from Italy in 1911. And I lived in a house in the back of the 200 block of Miller Avenue.

I was born there in 1913 and my youngest brother was born there in 1914.

In 1916 my parents bought a house on the 400 block of Commercial Avenue. And my sister was born there in 1916. The house which is still there was the last house on the block going north.

My father had to put screens on all the windows; because everybody played there, and there were many broken windows. We played softball, baseball, bat the wicket, kick the can, and whatever other game. On warm nights the yells and screams of children, playing late into the night could be heard below our windows.

My father used to call our section of town “The International Center.” It was a mixture of immigrants. Italians, Germans, Greeks, Spanish, Portuguese and French. We all got along fine.

It was a custom to visit neighbors, friends and relatives during the Xmas Holidays and extend greetings and sweets from the different countries; and it meant goodies to take home. Grocery stores would give calendars, plates with calendars printed on them, boxes of fancy cookies, bags of oranges and candies.

And Santa Claus would appear in front of the City Hall and give out

small mesh stockings with candies in them. And at school we were given paper cones filled with candies.

I remember people walking the streets with a white mask across their faces during the Influenza. My sister was the only one to get it in 1918; and we almost lost her. It was a sad time. Many died of the “Flu” as it was called. Church bells could be heard quite often ringing in a slow mournful tone for the mass for the dead.

I remember going with my father and my oldest brother down to the bay, at the shipyards to watch the launching of a ship. As it came down sideways in the water, huge waves of water came up and almost covered it. I remember it scared me; but I was fascinated at the sight of it as I sat on top of my father's shoulders.

World War I brought more industries and people and the town was beginning to change for the better.

We loved running an errand for mama down to the end of Grand Avenue to the butcher and wait eagerly for the free hot dog he would give us. And on our way home we would top at the livery stable on Cypress Avenue and watch the horses. There was a blacksmith shop at the end of Baden Avenue. If he was shoeing a horse, he would give us the old pair of horseshoes so we could play the game of horseshoes.

Mama seldom went downtown; which was just around the corner; because peddlers with their wagons drawn by horses or whatever peddled their wares along the streets. Each had his own distinct call. The vegetable man rang a bell. The bread and sweets man yelled, “Breads.” The fisherman blew a horn. But the comic was the fabric, button, and etc., peddler. He had a singsong call. I can remember my mother bargaining with him in her small sprinkling of English. I can picture him, his hands forever moving, sometimes he would wring them along with his voice, rubbing his head. Or he would let go a string of words which to my mother made no sense. But now I look back, he was in desperation falling into his own language. Now I wonder, in the back and forth haggling, who was the winner and who was the loser?

On Saturdays we waited for the junk man. We could hear him calling in a wailing whine “Rags, Bottles, Sacks.” His rickety noisy wagon, drawn by an old horse, shook over the rough, uneven ruts in the alley, and whatever was hanging, old pans, junk, could be heard clanking blocks away. If we had collected enough paper, rags, bottles, dry bones and whatever, we would barter with him. What a joy when we had dimes and quarters to call our own.

I remember the organ grinder that came up the street with his tiny, sad looking little monkey held on a leash. We were given pennies to throw in his extended can; and he would do a little dance in his funny little costume and hat.

Or when something important or drastic in the news brought out newsboys yelling, “Extra, Extra, read all about it” and we went out with a nickel to buy a paper. President Harding made the news when he died in San Francisco in 1923. President Wilson is the first president I remember.

Summertime was fun time. We had time to run across wheel rutted dusty alleys and streets to watch the fire truck roar by, with its volunteer firemen. Every year around the fourth of July the grass on the hill would turn and our green hill would turn black.

The gypsies would come in the summer. They would camp down by the pump house, which is now Chestnut Avenue. We called it the Willows because of the pussy willow tress and the marshlands. We were scared of them and at the same time fascinated by them, so we kept our distance. They had colorful wagons, and the women dressed in long, bright colored dresses; and string and strings of jewelry around their neck, and long loops of earrings.

They would come begging at your door, and want to tell your fortune and future.

Sometimes my mother would gather us together, along with a few neighbor's children; and we would cut across fields, running skipping ahead of her. Often dodging a cow or goats grazing there and finally coming to rest at the foot of the hill. Years later, the sign South San Francisco The Industrial City was painted there.

We enjoyed racing down the hill on a piece of cardboard or flat thin board, screaming, often falling off. Scaring no doubt field mice which would scurry by in a flash, and garter snakes wiggled by to hide. Sometimes we were lucky we could chase a cottontail. On our way home we would stop at one of the families selling homemade cheese.

And my favorite the butterfly was forever flying around you. The beautiful Monarch, and different colored ones. Sometimes they would come to rest on our extended arm.

The iris was the most outstanding flower, along with the poppy, lupines and wild daisies. My mother would not let us pick the wild flowers, saying they were wild and needed the air and sun to live. Children sold bouquets of iris along the Old Bayshore Road.

Vacation time meant running with a stick through the grass and swatting it so the grasshoppers would jump and hop away, or tease the potato bug so it would spit out its tobacco, as we called it. Time to play marbles, spin the top, and hopscotch.

We had time for catching caterpillars and putting them into a jar, thinking they would turn into butterflies. And making our own kites out of newspapers, slim slats of wood from orange crates and hold them together with flour paste.

A streetcar ran up and down Grand Avenue. We had no timepiece so we listened for the streetcar as it came clackity noisy on its rails. We looked forward to riding on it going into San Francisco. The conductor would give us old transfers and ticket stubs to keep. And in later years my son would collect them.

There was a horn on top of City Hall. It tooted at noon and at night. And a certain number of toots would let us know in what section of town the fire was. During World War II, it was used as an air-raid signal.

Many mornings when we got up, we could smell by the odor lingering on that the skunk had paid us a visit during the night. Or that the weasel had killed a number of chickens. And traps were set to catch the slinky critter.

Cars were black, skinny, noisy clunkers and not too many of them.

For refrigeration we had iceboxes. Ice was delivered to our houses. Many times the boys followed the iceman so they could pick up pieces of ice that fell off.

Women washed clothes in tin tubs, mostly outdoors. Mondays and Saturdays everybody had clothes hanging on a line, flying with the wind.

Streets were paved with tar that got soft on hot days. We would pick some up and chew it like gum. Alleys and streets were muddy and we sank up to our ankles sometimes. When the tide came in, water was high clear up to Grand Avenue.

In winter the wind howled and the electric wires would sway and let out a funny whistling noise that sounded like a moan. Many times it was lights out and a kerosene lamp appeared on the table. I loved it. It had an ornate brass base with a glass cone that mama lifted up and with a match lit the wick sticking up like a tongue. As it burned the flame would dance and shine the colors of the rainbow.

And the winter nights were spent in front of the black coal and wood stove I shall always remember. As the coal burned it would hiss and the wood would crackle and pop. My brothers and I called it the "Black Monster." Mama called it "The Black Devil" because she had many cake failures. And papa called it "Money Eater": because it burned sacks and sacks of coal and wood.

As I look back a lot went on around that stove. It warmed us when we

got up and when we went to bed. We toasted bread in the oven, roasted chestnuts, heated marshmallows until they almost burst. There was always a kettle of hot water on top of the stove ready for tea, coffee or hot chocolate made with watered canned milk. There was always a clothes line strung over the stove to dry the clothes.

I went to school at the Baden and Grand Avenue Grammar Schools and Spruce Avenue High School. I liked going to school and had good grades. Teachers were strict. In grammar school I would bring 15¢ every Friday so I could have milk and graham crackers during recess time.

There was a big celebration for the opening of the City Hall on November 11, 1920. We were all so proud of our new City Hall. It was a replica of Independence Hall. Later Tennis Courts were behind it. In the 20's a silver mine was found by the hill, but abandoned later.

Every year we looked forward to the parades with marching bands and drum corps. And the concerts that were held on Sunday on the corner of Grand and Maple Avenues.

Time was going by so fast, and so was the town moving ahead. New streets and alleys were being paved and homes built on them. Horses were being replaced by trucks and cars. New business stores were opening up downtown.

The owl that we teased at night by echoing his hoot, hoot call was disappearing. The black chicken hawk that circled the skies ready to swoop down for its prey was also seldom seen now.

We no longer looked to the skies for the geese and ducks noisily migrating north. Instead now we looked for the two winged airplanes which landed at Mills Field. And later for the egg-shaped Dirigible Balloon, that we called the blimp, that slowly soared in the sky.

The town was getting into the newspapers. Auto bandits staged holdups on Old Bayshore in the hills between South City and what is now Brisbane. They would stop the cars and rob the drivers and riders.

Prohibition was a lively topic. We heard often, Federal Officers raid saloons. A ship was caught unloading liquor at the bay. Moonshine was sold in family homes.

There was a gambling raid on a Chinese run saloon on Grand Avenue.

Billboards were being erected all over advertising products. A Heinz 57 sign was stationed on a hill along Bayshore Highway.

When Lindberg made a tour of the United States, he landed at Mills Field and we saw his plane. We stood by the Underpass on Airport Boulevard and watched him pass by in a car, waving and smiling.

By 1923 we were going to have a park by Orange Avenue. The population was now over 3,000. And even though a depression came to So. City, industries continued to locate here, in 1929 and on.

In 1932 Greyhound Racing came to So. City and it had jobs for people. Even my youngest brother worked there. But in 1938 it became illegal to race dogs and it closed down.

In 1932 I got married and in 1935 my son was born. There was a lot of unemployment, people would come begging for something to eat. I remember giving breakfast and sandwiches to men that knocked on my door.

In the 40s during World War II, the population doubled and there was a need for housing, so Lindenville, a housing project was started. During that time we were also on rationing of food, meats, and canned goods.

More than 1,000 men fought in World War II; and some never returned home.



Sarah's son, Victor - 1938



The Industrial City ECHOES

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

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

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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, Gayle 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

Historical Society Museum

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

History Room / Grand Avenue Branch Library

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

Historical Society's Plymire-Schwarz House

519 Grand Avenue
650-875-6988
info@plymirehouse.org
Saturdays (1-4:00 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

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