

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, INC.

# The Industrial City ECHOES

Newsletter No. 169 - March 2025

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## 2025 Calendar

April 21 .....	Board Meeting
May 19 .....	Board Meeting
June 16 .....	General Meeting
July 19 & 20 .....	Victorian Teas
July 21 .....	Board Meeting
July 26 & 27 .....	Victorian Teas
August 16 .....	Antique Bazaar
August 18 .....	Board Meeting
Sept. 15 .....	General Meeting
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.*



## March General Meeting

**Monday, March 17 at 7:00 pm**

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

Come join us to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with light refreshments and great conversation with friends.  
Included will be a short video on Irish Town.

*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!*



## December General Meeting

The holiday meeting was very festive and fun for all.  
The entertainment was provided by GenenTonix, formerly known as the Genentech Carolers.



## Memorial Donations

### *In Memory of Madeleine Banfield*

Donor: Ginny Tilton

### *In Memory of Robert & Leona Brian*

Donor: Bruce Brian

### *In Memory of Margaret "Dolly" Burkhardt*

Donors: Alan & Julie Chimenti

### *In Memory of Jake and Boots Jones*

Donor: Judy Adams

### *In Memory of Armando "Nin" Pera*

Donors: Ginny Tilton

### *In Memory of Nando Teglia*

Donors: Frank Risso & Family

### *In Memory of Emily Uccelli*

Donors: Frank Risso & Family

## Society Donations

Mary Andersen

Al & Madeleine Banfield

Joanne Bortoli

Rich & Sally Busalacchi

Jeff and Toyoko Chimenti

## Plymire-Schwarz House Donations

Kathleen Masner

Flor Nicolas

## We Appreciate All Donations!

Donation envelopes are available at the Museum and the Plymire-Schwarz House or you can send a check to the South San Francisco Historical Society, 80 Chestnut Avenue, So. San Francisco, CA 94080. Donations will be listed in the newsletter.

## Plymire-Schwarz House Acquisitions

**Lynn Boldenweck:** Vintage shoes from White House department store; vintage hair pins and combs

**Merel Glaubiger:** Vintage crocks

**K. Lynn Savage:** Vintage teapots

## Message from Historical Society President

*Last year is gone and the new year is with us. How time flies without notice as our Historical Society continues preserving our past and watching the future. Looking at the newsletter front page photo of Grand Avenue, how many buildings and businesses can you identify? Can you remember what it was like then compared to now?*

*Our Plymire-Schwarz House is open and decorated for Valentine Day. Our museum has a new addition. A five by five foot period map showing all the streets from San Francisco to Redwood City that hung in Piwald's Pharmacy. Stop in to see it and let us know what year you think it may be. While at the museum, check out our crime and law in South San Francisco exhibit. You may recognize someone you know.*

*A special thank you to all our volunteers that help keep our museum open and memories secured. Their work is truly appreciated by all.*

*Happy days to all*

John Penna



## History of San Mateo County Parks

**Wednesday, March 19th  
12:00 PM**

SSF Main Library  
2nd Floor, Community Room  
901 Civic Campus Way  
(650) 829-3860

Join us as we take a visual journey through the six coastal San Mateo County Parks. Learn about the cultural and natural history of the sites, as well as the beautiful vistas and vantage points that each park offers.



**South San Francisco Public Library**  
Brittany Austin  
Library Program Manager II,  
Adult Services

## Museum Acquisitions

**Kathleen Hennessy:** 2 New Southern Restaurant swizzle sticks in honor of Laurie Ratliff & Steven Sui

**Dawn Humphrey:** Vintage SSF High and Druids pins

**Steven & Mary Lou Wald:** Dr. Horace Wald's baby cradle & clothing; vintage doilies & stocking; correspondence to early SSF physician, Dr. Thomas Coffing Doak



## 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

## NEW MEMBERS

Carol Gradney  
Carroll & Ryan Meek  
Jackie Radenbaugh  
Cathy & Frank Rancatore



## Museum News



Several months ago, a large map, retrieved from the back room of the former drug store, Piwald's Drugs (located on the corner of Grand and Linden Avenues) was framed and donated to the Museum by John Penna.

It is now on display in the museum. The map, which covers all San Francisco Peninsula cities, was used by the pharmacy to locate customers that needed a prescription delivered. Unfortunately, the map is not dated so we are hoping to come up with an approximate date. The map does not show the Golden Gate Bridge or the Bay Bridge so perhaps it is from the early 1930's?

Come visit the museum any Saturday between 1:00 and 4:00 to examine it in person. Maybe you can even help us narrow down a date!.

*Bill Zemke*

## Meet Max

My name is Maximiliano Gomez and I am a 17 year old senior at El Camino High School. I have lived in South San Francisco for all 17 years of my life. Some of my hobbies include biking, playing video games, and most notably of all learning history. For as long as I can remember I have always been interested in history. It started when my dad and I would watch history documentaries on events like the American Civil War, World War I, and World War II. From then on history always intrigued me. Growing up I would get books and games that took place during a certain period in time and it allowed me to further deepen my appreciation for history.

Recently, I've had the opportunity and pleasure to assist in organizing and cataloging the collection at the South San Francisco Historical Society Museum.



## "Old Town Wasn't Always Old"

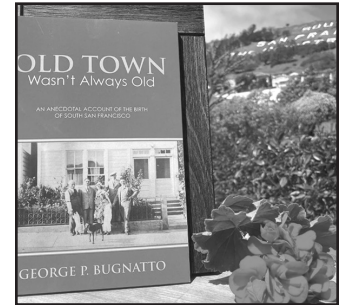


*George & Maggie Bugnatto*

George Bugnatto was born and raised in South San Francisco and lived here his entire life. He married Maggie Popovich and they raised their family in the same house he grew up in on Juniper Avenue. His love for South City was such that he penned a book recounting the birth and growth of South San Francisco, "Old Town Wasn't Always Old."

The Museum carries an inventory of this charming anecdotal account of the early days of South San Francisco. When the last copy was sold, we reached out to George & Maggie's children, Peter and Jennifer, who graciously had 25 books published and donated them to the Museum. This is exactly the spirit of community and Old Town that was instilled in them by their parents – and we thank them for their generosity!

If you would like to purchase a copy of this book, please come by the Museum (Saturdays 1:00-4:00) or contact us at [info@ssfhistory.org](mailto:info@ssfhistory.org) for more information.



*Julie Chimenti*



**South San Francisco  
Women's Club**  
Founded 1914

**Craft, Plant, and Bake Sale**  
**Saturday, March 15, 2025**  
**10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

**Clubhouse is Historical Marker #3  
in the walking tour guide.**

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



Facebook and Instagram!

**@ssfhistory**

**@ssfhistorymuseum**

**@plymireschwarzhause**



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

**The Plymire-Schwarz House all dressed up  
for the Holidays.**



## **SAVE THE DATES!**

We are excited to announce that The Plymire-Schwarz House has 2025 tea dates on the calendar.

Saturday, July 19 ♦ Sunday, July 20

Saturday, July 26 ♦ Sunday, July 27

Reservations will be taken starting Saturday, June 28th.

More details will be in the next newsletter and online ([www.plymirehouse.org](http://www.plymirehouse.org)).

If you're on our mailing list, invitations will be coming your way. If you'd like to be added to our electronic mailing list, contact us at [info@plymirehouse.org](mailto:info@plymirehouse.org).



## **The “Event Committee”**

Over twenty-five years ago, a “Tea Committee” was formed to organize the new idea of serving Teas at the Plymire Schwarz House. Over the years the Tea Committee took on planning other events that provided necessary income for both the House and the Society.

Recently, the name of the committee was changed to the “Event Planning Committee” and is comprised of Lynn Boldenweck, Molly Boyle, Sally Busalachhi, Margie Casagrande, Julie Chimenti, Gayle Davison, Elaine Garbarino, Barbara Irli, Donna Smith, Ginny Tilton and Jo Zemke (with “on call” help from Rich Busalachchi, Dave Casagrande, Alan Chimenti and Bill Zemke)

We met recently and have set dates for some exciting events in 2025!

**May 15** – Museum Clean Up Day, in cooperation with Improving Public Places (date not confirmed)

**July 19 & 20 and July 26 & 27** – Victorian Teas at the Plymire Schwarz House

**August 16** – Antique Bazaar at the Museum

**October 4** – Champagne Garden Party at the Plymire Schwarz House

**November 21** – Awards Banquet (thanks to Ginny Tilton and her committee – Lynn Boldenweck, Donna Smith & Nancy Casazza)

**November 29** – Christmas Boutique opens at the Plymire Schwarz House

So many exciting events coming up in 2025 for the Historical Society and the Plymire Schwarz House!

*Jo Zemke*



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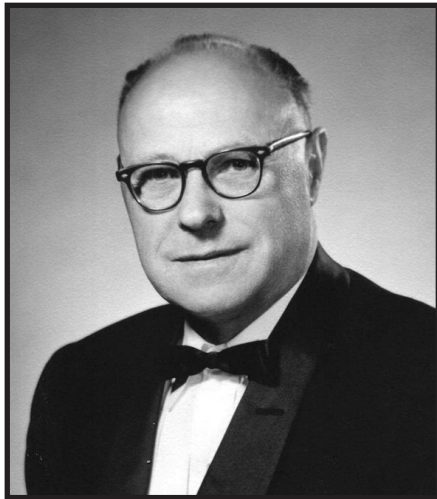
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# WORK BEGUN ON S.S.F. FIREHOUSE

*Excerpt from San Mateo Times - 19 April 1949*

With the issuance of a building permit for \$143,476 to the Monson Brothers Construction company of San Francisco for a new central fire station here, actual work on the foundation of the new structure has begun. Last piles to support the two-story building were driven last week.

The ground floor of the new, modern building will house a 50 by 46-foot apparatus room for fire trucks, a repair shop, alarm and recreation rooms and offices for the chief and assistant chief. The secondary story, which will not be as great in area as that on the ground floor, will contain a dormitory, toilets, locker and writing rooms and two rooms for fire officials. William Henry Rowe, San Francisco architecture, drew plans for the new structure.



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## S.S.F. FIREHOUSE TO DRAW CHIEFS

*Excerpt from San Mateo Times - 15 July 1949*

Fire chiefs from the entire bay area are expected to attend the dedication ceremonies ... for the new Baden avenue firehouse, Chief A. J. Welte.

Mayor Leo Ferko, city councilmen and fire chiefs from all San Mateo county cities will be on hand to inspect the building and equipment.

Following the ceremonies, honored guests and the general public will be invited to inspect the department's new building and refreshments will be served.

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## Historical Facts About South San Francisco

The letters on Sign Hill were painted on the hill in 1923. In 1928 a special \$5,000 bond issue was voted to have the 60-foot letters cemented.

There was a silver mine in South San Francisco atop Sign Hill. In 1920 an outcropping of lead and silver was discovered; however, it proved too costly to mine.

The city was incorporated in 1908, after two previous unsuccessful attempts. A special election was held at which citizens voted 218 to 36 to incorporate.



## 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  
San Bruno, 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

*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)

#### Historical Society Museum

80 Chestnut Avenue  
650-829-3825  
[info@ssfhistory.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:info@ssfhistory.org)  
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