

San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club

January 2008

Next Meeting: Saturday, January 26, 12 to 3 pm Volume XXIII, No. 1

Fort Mason Center, Room C-260

Laguna Street at Marina Boulevard, San Francisco

Meetings are usually held the fourth Saturday of every month except December.

Visitors and dealers are always welcome.

IN
THIS
ISSUE

- PORTOLA-LOUVRE RESTAURANT
- PHONE AND ZIP DATING TIPS
- OLFACTORY MEMORIES
- SAN FRANCISCO BARS

PROGRAM NOTES: John Burton, author of *THE POUR MAN'S GUIDE*, will show and tell us about "Bartending by the Bay." We'll hear about Professor Jerry Thomas, who wrote the first American bartenders' book, legendary San Francisco bartenders Harry Johnson and Cocktail Bill Boothby, the bartenders' role in Shanghaiing along with the Sydney Ducks from Australia, and John will wind up with comments on saloons and famous cocktails of that bygone era. John will also bring some old bartender tools, pre-Prohibition San Francisco bottles and more. We'll bring the cards.

SHOW & TELL: San Francisco bars, saloons, taverns and cocktail lounges, and, as always, collector's choice; three item, two minute limit.

PARKING: Come early; park in pay lot, upper free lot on Bay Street or along Marina Green.

COVER CARD



Year dates have been a favorite collecting topic since the early days of postcards. Throughout the Golden Age they remained popular with collectors—and publishers. 1908 was, perhaps, the first major opportunity for postcards to make an annual statement. It was a newsworthy year with political events taking advantage of the mails for spreading messages by word and image. The voyage of the Great White Fleet provided

another boost to publishing and collecting, and 1908, being leap year, was made use of by card designers favoring Sadie Hawkins Day. This card jumped out at me while I combed the shores of eBay. Published by San Francisco's own E. H. Mitchell, and accurately displaying the state flower *Eschscholtzia californica*, the California poppy, it deserves the place of honor as our first cover card of the year. Noticing who the high bidder was, and confident of his victory, I asked if it could be used in the newsletter. Not only did he agree, but he also arranged for the card to be delivered before the January 5 deadline. And so, thanks to Mark Adams, comes this centennial New Year greeting to all.

—ED.

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Newsletter Deadline: 5th of each month


MINUTES, November 24, 2007

The festive board was groaning under the weight of delectables brought by members for our annual holiday potluck meeting. There was food and drink to pique or satisfy every taste. By three o'clock only crumbs were left to be swept away.

Cards were brought for sale or trade by several members, among them Joseph Jaynes, Dorothy De Mare, and the club 10¢ boxes which were emptied.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Kathryn Ayres. Guests, including Helen Henderson who lives nearby, and out of the area members, Nick and Lynn Farago, were welcomed.

Announcements: Kathryn discussed the role of our Treasurer, "an invisible and vitally important officer." She then revealed that Ed Clausen will now assume that title, which had been nobly held by Dan Saks for 17 years. The office of Secretary, filled ably by Bruce Diggelman, also for 17 years, is vacant. Volunteers are encouraged.

Lew Baer announced that dues for 2008 were now being accepted.

Rich Roberts told of his visits to foreign eBay sites that list items not seen on the US eBay.com. On the Hong Kong site he came across a Postcard Marketing page which listed a book telling how to earn \$500-\$1500 a month selling vintage postcards

on eBay. Take a look for yourself:

www.ebay.com.hk seller: khadaji.

Raffle: There were 22 lots including several postcard reference books given by Joseph Jaynes.

Show & Tell:

Kathryn Ayres told of starting her Uncle Sam collection five years ago after finding a Thanksgiving card like the one she showed of the bearded patriarch carrying the turkey to the table. We also saw the newest addition to her Thanksgiving theme: a turkey with a human head. ... Jack Hudson smiled broadly as he showed off his new, gold lidded Gumps box that he uses as a postcard tote. Out of it he brought a real photo of the Hotel Empire Sky Room, followed by three Coon Chicken Inn cards that he told us were fakes! The non-PC named eatery opened in 1924 in Seattle, Portland and Salt Lake City selling fried chicken. African Americans staffed the kitchen and dining room, but were not accepted as customers. Entry was through the gaping mouth of a stereotype black person. Jack explained how he could tell the cards were ersatz: first by the noxious smell of the ink, and then by the card stock which is thinner and without linen texture. The genuine cards bring \$250 to \$300. Early aviation is one of Jack's favorite categories, and he showed a real photo of Glenn Curtis in a plane with Billy Sunday, followed by another RP of French aviator Jean Lambert.

Glenn Koch showed a Behrents school card from the Mission District, an RP of the Tower of Jewels with scaffolding and an RP of what is obviously a San Francisco home described on eBay as being in Los Angeles.... Rich Roberts held up a glass lens in a frame shaped like a ship's wheel. "What is it?" he asked. He then showed cards he had bought at the recent Sacramento show of the gantries when the Titanic was being built and another photo card of the shipyard with the Titanic under construction. The glass lens, he told us, was a memento given at the launching of the great ship. ... John Freeman asked for our help identifying a mystery card captioned "Juvenile Queen and Court, SF, 1912." He then showed a fantasy card of a bear with a woman captioned "The Grizzly Bear," which happened to be Sophie Tucker's hit song when she appeared at The Chutes.

Janet Baer brought six cards from her newest collection, Maps, and told how she enjoys the many layers of discovery that come with postcard collecting. ... Ted Miles showed and told of his find in the club box, a set of cards for the Cable Car Centennial that he had been searching for, for years. ... Deanna Kastler is excited about the upcoming series on San Francisco restaurants that will be in the newsletter. She showed a favorite card that includes several of her collecting interests: ice skating, San Francisco history, and Edwardian turn-of-the-century decor. ... Sue Scott recently found cards of Veracruz and now has a new set to chase for her Mexico collection.

—NOTES TAKEN BY LEW BAER, SEC'Y PRO TEM

TREASURER/HALL MANAGER REPORT

As of December 31, 2007\$5,498.92

—DANIEL SAKS, TR/HM, RET.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Donald G. Banhart. Don is having fun and good luck as a dealer on eBay.

Bill Dwyer, Bill Harlan, collectors of images of stamps and postal services, '50s and '60s Las Vegas, early Coney Island, Pioneer period aviation and ballooning.

Stan Flouride, artist and activist, Stan is also a collector of San Francisco.

Doug Johnson. Doug is a long ago member who has rejoined the fold. He collects one of a kind handmade cards, San Francisco, San Mateo, E.H. Mitchell.

Jennifer Kimpel. Jennifer collects pretty women, animals and holidays.

Bruce and Judy Nagle. Bruce and Judy collect Blacks, calligraphs, Carnegie libraries, curling, college crew, Storiottes, signed artists.

2008 DUES, ROSTER and MORE

Renewal response has been good, but there are still a number of club members who have not sent in their dues for 2008. It is going to be an exciting year postcard wise, and the club is counting on everyone's support and participation. Wondering if your status is current? Check the address label on this newsletter. If it reads "12/07" your dues are overdue. Please pay by PayPal or check today.

After a couple of years of procrastination a new roster is underway. It will be issued early this Spring. It would behoove us all to be certain that our correct contact and collecting details are listed. The ideal time to confirm them—as many have done—is when sending dues renewals by mail or PayPal.

Several email addresses are not correct in the club files. If you have not been receiving the one or two messages that are sent each month as news

and reminders, please let the Editor know your correct address.

There has been some concern about privacy and security of personal details. The roster, which goes to all current club members, will contain all the information on the membership application. If you wish some of it not to be published, please let the Editor know in writing.

—ED.

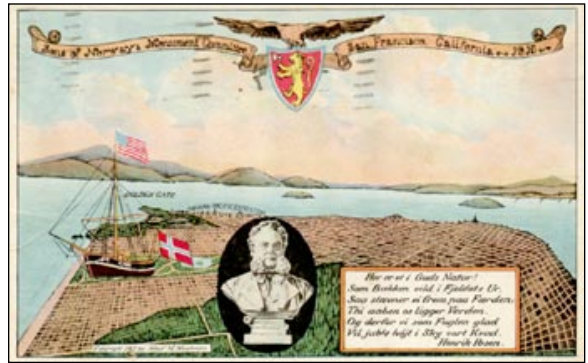
CLOSED ALBUM

One of our long time and most elderly members died in May. She had been a regular at our meetings even after she passed the 90 year mark, and she would bring a few cards from her collection to sell at reasonable prices to “cover the cab fare.” She would usually disappear before the business meeting and program began, but she always expressed her affection for our group. Among her interests were California, Stanford University, Luther Burbank and state capitols. Jane Dawson often asked that her name not appear in the newsletter, so it is mentioned here only in passing....

MEMBER NEWS

From Don Brown came word of the past year’s happenings at the Institute of American Deltiology in Myerstown, Pennsylvania. 200,000 cards were filed in the appropriate boxes; several states were completely organized alphabetically within their counties; early expos and other series were given Mylar sleeves; upstairs rooms were furnished and carpeted; and a steady stream of visitors from the East Coast and Midwest were greeted. West Coasters would be warmly welcomed, too. Don put effort into two scholarly programs during 2007: “Genealogy and Postcards” and real photos and their role in the “Democratization of Photography.”

Per Schulze, our one member in Norway, is interested in the *Gjøa* [Gjoa], and wrote in response to the story on Roald Amundsen’s boat:



Having only been a member of the SFBAPCC less than a year, I had not read your interesting article on the Gjøa [Gjoa], published in June 2003. Thank you for sending it to me!

I grew up in the Bay Area, in the 1950s and '60s. My parents moved from Oakland to San Leandro, Hayward and finally to Benicia, where my father still lives with his second wife (he is now 95 years old; she's 'only' 82). When I was a kid, for special outings, my father would take me to Playland at the Beach and Golden Gate Park, from where I have many fond memories. I remember the "Gjøa in the Park" very well; especially from when the hippies who occupied her actually set the ship on fire.

I now live just outside Oslo, Norway, where I work as a medical photographer at a cancer research and treatment institute (Det Norske Radiumhospital). Funny thing is, every time I drive from my home to downtown Oslo, I pass the Gjøa, now on proud outdoor display at the Norsk Sjøfartsmuseum at Bygdøy. The ship has been nicely restored, and in 2008 she will be moved indoors, to a special exhibit next to the Fram.

To me, still having the "Gjøa in the neighborhood" is as if I have brought a part of the San Francisco Bay Area with me here, to Norway.

I visit my father in Benicia as often as I can, and hope I will be able to attend an SFBAPCC meeting again soon. In the mean time, I very much enjoy reading the club's newsletter.

Vennlig hilsen og beste ønsker,

Per



THE NEW YEAR is starting out just right editorially — a full issue with a bit left over for the next. There have been promises made for contributions for the coming months. Let's hope those vows are not forgotten. This month we're starting off on our coverage of San Francisco restaurants. Deanna Kastler was the first to volunteer, and her story on the Portola-Louvre under its various permutations of name and locale is exceptional. Another multi-sited restaurant has already been spoken for, and there are many dozens of cards already scanned in the to do file. Please send in scans or color copies of the cards you would like to see featured and try to include some comment or reminiscence about each restaurant, its food, staff or the card itself. Having savory memories of dining out in the city throughout the '40s, '50s and '60s, I will not hesitate to garnish your offerings.

MESSAGE MACHINE: Dan Lester, who graciously gave us our internet address, www.postcard.org, emailed to say how pleased and proud he is with what the club and Web Master Jack Daley have done with the site. [We feel the same as you, Dan, and we thank you with every click of the mouse!] ... A number of members have made supporting gifts when renewing their dues, among them Mark Adams who paid double. "The extra is in memory of George Morris," Mark writes. "I knew George, knew he was into postcards, but had no idea he was a member of this fun club. So in a way I'm sending in his dues as well, as a tribute to him." ... From Iowa Audrey Ercolini wrote to say that the newsletter "had outdone itself" with the story on Dr. McLean and the Spreckles Rotisserie. She added thanks to Dan Saks for "sharing his interest and expertise on Holy City with everyone. The ties of postcards and history are truly endless." ... Mike Jacobsen emailed to express his wonder at the high auction prices some postcards have been garnering. He's not a high roller, but Mike would like to know what others are doing about insuring their collections. He imagines it would be hard to

convince an insurance investigator that a box of old cards was worth \$8000. And while he was wondering, he also asked what others have planned for disposing of their cards when they can no longer enjoy them. [These could be good subjects for a meeting time group discussion.] ... From enthusiastic new member Judy Nagle: "Can't believe it's been two months since I attended the show in Santa Rosa. Bruce needs a back issue SFBAPCC newsletter fix and when I went on line, I discovered I needed a password to access the archives. Can you help me?" Judy got the password OK with the advice that it is not needed only for viewing, only printing, which comes out as single vertical pages.

PRICING: from the December 8 Santa Rosa *Press Democrat*: "Bill Clinton's first governor campaign postcard, 1978, "Clinton for Arkansas," photo of Clinton, unused, 4x6 inches, \$95."

EDITORIAL THANKS to the many of you who sent end of year greetings. Your kind words and thoughts are most encouraging! Special thanks to Mike Wigner, Nancy Tucker, Santa and others who donated cards to overfill the club 10¢ box which was gleefully emptied by many clubsters at the November meeting.

NOT A POSTCARD, BUT IT SHOULD'DA BEEN! This two-sided advertising card has so much going for it that



would have made a great number of postcard collectors happy: Art Nouveau/rock poster style imagery, PPIE Star Maidens, pinball...! If it had a stamp box had been mailed on time, I would have gone to the show, if only for more postcards.

—LEW

Portola-Louvre Restaurant

by DEANNA L. KASTLER

As a collector of turn-of-the-century ice skating postcards, a black and white real photo postcard caught my attention with the caption “Ice Rink, Portola-Louvre Café, Powell and Market Streets, San Francisco.” The historical text continues with “C.O. Swanberg Pres, A.D. Short, Mgr,” on the front and “America’s Finest and Largest Restaurant, Excel-



lent Cuisine and Entertainment, Seating Capacity 1500, 18 Powell St.” on the back. But it is the image that makes it one of my favorites. On the left is a lovely lady in a long dress tiptoeing on ice skates, and the superimposed image on the right is of a couple gliding arm-in-arm across the ice. In the background other skaters swirl, as those seated at the restaurant tables look on.

This card was acquired for its ice-skating theme, but it encompasses my other two interests as well—San Francisco history, and the late Victorian/Edwardian periods when ladies wore elegant, long gowns. On romantic ice skating postcards of that time, a lady, her long dress flowing in the wind, often glides elegantly as a gentlemen gallantly holds her to prevent a fall.

The Portola-Louvre Restaurant/Café provided this unique entertainment, however I was unable to determine exactly when the ice rink was installed (probably 1910-1915) or whether dinner patrons could also enjoy a skate around the rink. No matter. Its history is of a long-time restaurant where San Franciscans could dine in high style.

The name “Louvre” showed up in various guises over the years according to San Francisco city directories. In 1884-85 a Louvre Saloon, with Julius Gruen proprietor, was in the Phelan Building on the

southwest corner of O’Farrell and Market. A year later The Louvre was listed, with Julius Gruen, in the Phelan Building at Eddy and Market. By 1890 some changes had taken place and Original Louvre with Louis Heyden Aber, proprietor, was in the Phelan Building, and The Louvre with Charles A. Zinkand, proprietor, was in St. Ann’s Building on the northwest corner

of Eddy and Powell. In 1895 and 1899 there were three establishments: New Louvre run by Rudolph Hagan and Felix Eisele was at 8-14 O’Farrell at the corner of Bagley; Original Louvre was at 8-14 O’Farrell (name change or two restaurants?); and The Louvre with Bogen and Wilkins, proprietors, was in St. Ann’s Building.

The Louvre had a brush with the law. The February 25, 1896 *San Francisco Call* reported that the Louvre restaurant liquor license was revoked and “restaurant keepers resorted to their wits for purposes of evading the law.” This was apparently because the Louvre broke the “no serving liquor on Sundays” dictum. It is unknown whether they were able to get around the regulation but the Louvre continued in business.

In 1900 Old Louvre, owned by Schwarz and Beth, was at the junction of O’Farrell and Market. The Louvre, with William Bogen, proprietor, was listed as a restaurant and family resort, at the northwest corner of Eddy and Powell. By 1903-04 the Old Louvre stayed the same, and The Louvre with Jesse Meyerfeld, proprietor, was a restaurant and family resort at the northwest corner of Eddy and Powell, and by now it had a telephone number: Bush 3.

The *Call* of February 11, 1903 announced that

the “Louvre has changed hands: William Bogan (*sic.*) former manager retired and the place will be under the management of Meyerfeld and Co. Owing to its good location, the Louvre has been a success financially and will probably continue so under new owners.”

Then came the earthquake of April 18, 1906, followed by three days of fire which destroyed hundreds of buildings along Market Street. In the *SAN FRANCISCO—AS IT WAS—AS IT IS—AND HOW TO SEE IT* of 1912, Helen Throop Purdy writes of the impact of the earthquake and fire. “The fire of 1906 made a clean, impartial sweep through the old favorites...but San Francisco could not do without her restaurants, and soon they were springing up everywhere.... There have been a few changes and some consolidations, as Tait and Zinkand, the Portola and the Louvre. Tait’s, before the fire, was in the Flood Building, where the Portola-Louvre is now...with its cascades and fountains and play of electric lights. But the Portola-Louvre is a brilliant French restaurant, gilding its excellent cuisine with a fine orchestra, and Vaudeville during the later afternoon and evening. Ladies go there in the afternoon for tea, and to enjoy the entertainments.”

As the phoenix rose from the ashes, so did the Louvre. In 1907, The Louvre (Inc) with Jesse Meyerfeld, as president and manager, and Herbert Meyerfeld, as assistant manager, opened in a new location at 1350 Fillmore, corner of Eddy.

The Louvre seems to have lasted one more year and by 1909-10 it was no longer listed under

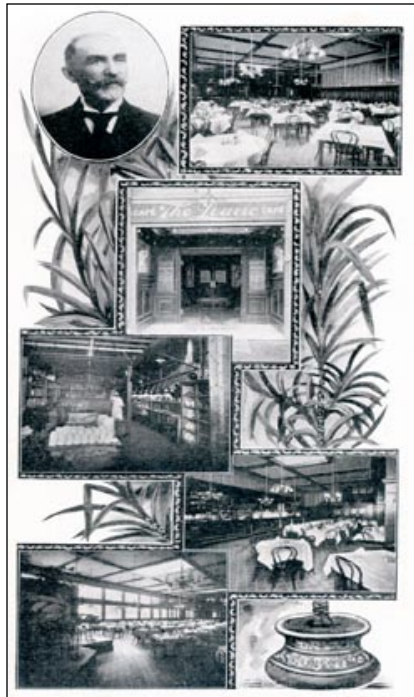
that name, but the Portola Café, C. O. Swanberg president and Herman Hermanson, manager, was listed at 18 Powell near Market. The *Call* of November 15, 1910 announced: “Consolidation. The Louvre (formerly Powell and Eddy) and Portola Café Under the Name of: Portola-Louvre Restaurant, Market and Powell streets. High Class Entertainment Daily, Matinee and Evenings. S. O. Swanberg, Pres., H. Meyerfeld, Mgr.”

By 1915/16, Portola Café and the Portola-Louvre Restaurant were both listed at 18 Powell. The Café remained in 1917 and 1918, and by 1919 Portola Odeon Restaurant with A. J. Becker, president and general manager, Gustaf Swanberg, vice president and associate manager, was the new name at 18 Powell. In the 1920 directory both the Portola-Louvre and Portola Odeon were gone.

The Portola-Louvre Restaurant was mentioned in several books. In *THE ROAD I CAME: SOME RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS CONCERNING CHANGES IN AMERICAN LIFE AND MANNERS SINCE 1890*, written in 1960 by Paul Jordan-Smith, the author says “There were many evenings of serious conversation at the Faculty Club, many not so serious.... Dinners served at the Bohemian Club were both ample and delicious. When visitors were not sufficiently notable to warrant a large gathering at the Clubs we would take them to the Portola Louvre Café, where thick planked steak dinners could be had for a mere \$1.25.” One wonders who was considered notable and who not.

In *BOHEMIAN SAN FRANCISCO: ITS RESTAURANTS*





ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE LOUVRE, INCLUDING INTERIOR VIEWS BEFORE AND AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE

AND THEIR MOST FAMOUS RECIPES AND THE ELEGANT ART OF DINING, by Clarence E. Edwards, 1914, a chapter called “Some Italian Restaurants” featured the Portola-Louvre Restaurant. “Under the St. Ann building, at Eddy and Powell streets, was the Louvre, started and managed by Carl Zinkand, who afterward opened the place in Market above Fourth street, called Zinkand’s. This was distinctly German in appointments and cooking was the best of its kind in the city. Under the Phelan building at O’Farrell and Market was the Old Louvre in which place one could get German cooking, but it was not a place that appealed to those who knew good service.” There seems to be some confusion whether the Louvre served Italian, German or French food.

Edwards goes on to say that “Thompson’s was another place that was too

elaborate for its patronage... [he] opened the place under the Flood building, after the fire... [and he had] enormous expenses and necessary debt... [and it] is now running as the Portola-Louvre.”

There were many fancy dinners and parties in San Francisco. This one made the papers. The *San Francisco Call* of December 25, 1910 ran this piece: “Senator Francis G. Newlands of Nevada had a party of friends at the Portola-Louvre café, and among the scores of others who entertained parties after the concert were: A. F. Williams,

James K. Polk, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Garcia, E. L. Leigh, Charles Carroll, M. Meyerfeld Jr., A. W. Voorsanger, E. Elkus, Dr. Otto Westphal, R. L. Fargo, Barney Galland, Robert H. Madden, Jessee Meyerfeld, Leon Nordman, Sam Morrissey, Max Todlech, James B. Duffy,



Ray Benjamin, I. Dannenbaum, S. Sander, Max Dill, Judge J. J. Van Nostrand, H. G. Dinkelspiel, Joe Eber, C. Swanberg, H. W. Westphal and Alfred Metzger.”

The menu in the San Francisco Public Library’s History Center collection was my pièce de résistance for this article. Over 40 pages include interior and exterior photographs from before and after 1906, the orchestra which played music every evening, and lists of delicious things to eat and drink. One could dine on everything from oysters to eggs to sandwiches, steaks and chops and imbibe on wines, beer and mixed drinks. After Theater Specialties ranged in price from \$.15 for two French pastries to \$1.50 for a Whole Spring Chicken en Casserole.

San Francisco has been known from the time of the Gold Rush for fine dining, and the Louvre had a long run. There were ups and downs, changes of name, location and owners, as well as an earthquake and fire, but for decades it maintained a reputation for good food and unusual entertainment.

The knowledgeable staff at the History Center and the periodical section of the San Francisco Public Library were very helpful in locating information to aid in my research.

POSTCARD CALENDAR

Feb. 8-10, Friday-Sunday, **San Mateo**, Hillsborough Antique Show, San Mateo Expo Fairgrounds, 11am to 9, 7 and 5 pm*

Feb. 16-17, Saturday-Sunday, Glendale, Vintage Paper Fair, 1401 N. Verdugo Road, 10am-6 and 4pm, Sunday free entry*+

Feb. 23, Saturday, **St. Helena**, Antique Show, 1255 Oak Street, 10am-5pm*

Mar. 1-2, Saturday-Sunday, **San Francisco**, Great Train Expo, Cow Palace, 10am-4pm*

Mar. 8-9, Saturday-Sunday, **San Rafael**, Antique & Collectors’ Fair, Civic Center, 10am-5pm*

Mar. 28-30, Friday-Sunday, **Reno**, Antique & Collectibles Show, 1350 N. Wells Avenue, 10am*

Apr. 12-13, Saturday-Sunday, Santa Cruz,

Postcard Dating Tips from John Freeman

I ran across an interesting way to help in dating postcards. In San Francisco in 1946 phone numbers had six digits. In 1947 they went to seven digits. Sure, there were prefixes for the first two digits, but that was the change-over time here, and I suspect it was nation wide. As far as I can tell, numbering was changed nationally in 1947. This could help date a postcard that includes a phone number in the image or caption.

Six digit phone numbers began in 1928 - a prefix and four digits.

Converting to all digit phone numbers was a more gradual process. It started in 1958 in Texas, but took 15 years to be implemented nation wide.

Here, we lost SEabright, LOmbard, WEst, BAyview and SKYline to all digits in 1962, I think.

I worked with two teachers who were high school girls in the early ‘60s. One told of calling 411 from her Oakland home and asking for a San Francisco phone number. The prefix was Fillmore. She dialed PH in vain, but couldn’t reach her party. The other gal remembers the change-over year as 1962 because she spent the whole summer after high school fielding calls in her phone company job, from people who wanted to know the new numbers of old prefixes.

I also found confirmation that the Zip Code became official July 1, 1963.

Central Coast Postcard & Paper Collectibles Show, 611 Ocean Street, 10am-5 and 4pm, Sun. 10am-4pm*

May 17-18, Saturday-Sunday, Concord, Vintage Paper Fair, 5298 Clayton Road, 10am-6 and 4pm, Sunday: Free admission*+

May 25, Sunday, **Healdsburg**, Antique Faire, Healdsburg Plaza Park, 8am-4pm*

Bolded entries are produced by SFBAPCC members.

* Ken Prag will be there; let him know what he can bring for you: 415586-9386, kprag(at)planetaria.net + R&N will have cards and supplies

Olfactory Memories

by FRANK STERNAD

FOR ME, the greatest trigger for nostalgia, déjà vu, and those other unplanned trips to the past, has always been odor. Not a visual image, not a familiar sound, but smell. Corn dogs frying in deep fat carries me back to the midway of the Clyde Beatty Circus in Los Angeles;



FARRAND'S REXALL

fresh cut pine transports me to a grove of Boy Scout Christmas trees propped up on a vacant lot, and a musty room reminds me of the cabin at Balboa Island we rented one summer when I was twelve. Another stimulant, nearly vanished in real time but strongly impressed in my nasal memory, is relived in only one environment—a drugstore.

I don't mean today's super-stores. They take on odors typical of the caverns in which they are housed—air conditioning, floor wax, gardening supplies. I'm referring to the smaller, independent and franchised pharmacies that acquired their characteristic fragrance through generations

of activity. It takes decades to build up that recognizable scent—loose corks and bottle caps allowing vapors to escape and penetrate into wallpaper and woodwork, pungent fluid extracts oozing onto bottle labels, spilled liniments seeping under floor boards and regenerated each

day by the tread of busy feet.

Vintage drugstore odor is not easily defined. It is complex—a combination of volatile oils like lavender and wintergreen blended with aromatics such as creosote, iodoform, benzoin, and thymol. When I stumble across one of these old survivors, the fumes take me back to my childhood and memories of the wonderful array of merchandise that was a drugstore: penny candy, comic books, hair oil, chemicals for science projects, and rubber tubing for sling shots. For you it may have been Walgreens or Harry's Corner Drug, for me it was a Rexall.



TUJUNGA REXALL



ALLRED REXALL, CORYDON, IOWA

Drinking In San Francisco

FEATURING POSTCARDS FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF DANIEL SAKS AND LEWIS BAER

San Francisco is known worldwide for its restaurants—some for their delectable victuals, some for their historic or other satisfying flavors. Time was, any desires could be fulfilled at San Francisco restaurants, and booze often played a role. Alcoholic imbibulation has added to the city’s reputation, so it is fitting that we spend a few pages on the cocktail hour before moving to the dining rooms that we’ll visit over the coming months. Much local color found in the saloons, bars, taverns and cocktail lounges was captured on postcards, especially during pre Prohibition and the linen war years. Although we include a few hotel lounges and restaurant bars, these pages hold mostly hard core drinking establishments.



◀ This generic card, made just after 1906, shows it like we hope it was: pleasing decor, convivial ladies, gentlemanly gentlemen, and plentiful bottles of the best imported bubbly.



All we know about 57 Cafe is seen on its real photo: ▶ stalwart bartenders serving loyal customers in 1940. Once located at the corner of 6th Street and Jessie.



◀ Before entering the dining room of the Backyard, a detour to The Cellar was mandatory. Carved out of rock, walled with brick—real and imitation—and with peasant murals above the bar, the room was warmed by a wood fire and champagne poured from a bottle suspended from the ceiling. 1024 Kearney Street.



This Bank Cafe card was purchased by the Editor under ▶ an erroneous assumption. It was, he was certain, a latter day conception of the Bank Exchange, the pre 'quake establishment in the Monkey Block, a block away on Montgomery Street. No regrets; it's a very pleasing real photo bar that exudes the sober business like air of the financial district.



Breakers Bar, 199 Ellis near Mason, remains a mystery. It was run by Pete Minandy and Carl Martin who advertised “Where good fellowship and hospitality are invited.” The place looks spiffy with roses—no bottles—on the back bar, deer heads above and highly polished brass rail and spittoons on the inlaid tile floor.



◀ 1950s era Brownie’s Bar at 2047 Chestnut was probably a pleasant place for a white collar worker to have a few drinks on the way home. Is that Charles McCabe petting the cat, and is that Brownie, pouring or purring?

▼ The “distinctive” Chancellor Hotel called its bar “unique.” These two views of it emphasize the one-of-a-kind claim. In the real photo all is light and dark, and the feel of being in a trans Pacific airliner is evident,

especially with the bird’s eye view photo murals of the city. The artistic and colorful version has an aura of clubbiness that would attract business men and wives out for cocktails before dinner. One woman in a long flowing gown with tropical blossom in her hair is getting ready for an entertaining night on the town.



◀ Bradley’s 5 and 10, in the post-quake business district on Fillmore, published numerous postcards—some real photos, some printed, and this one, somewhat over-size—in what looks to be the 1930s. On each card the bar claims several *-est*’s: “the longest bar in the world,” “the tallest and shortest bartenders on earth” and variations on the two claims. The bartenders, long and short, are pictured on a few vertical cards, and the actual real photo views of them bring high prices. Bradley’s post-card upholds the view of SF as a labor town; its cards are among the few that carry a union bug.



The Gangplank, 44 Campton Place, opened in the early 1930s, and its light lunches and full bar became popular with ladies downtown for shopping or the theater. Customers sat on upholstered kegs at individual barrel bars. Hostesses helped them find a comfortable position to enjoy their drinks.



On the site of the venerable Techau Tavern, The Golden Pheasant at Powell and Geary named its bar Techau Lounge. In the late 1940s, the Editor had many lunches there in custody of aunts or grandmothers, but he never saw the cocktail facilities. Right on the cable car line and across from the St. Francis hotel, the lounge was a popular stop for after theater crowds.



The Gotham, at the corner of Powell and O'Farrell, described itself as "A rendezvous of beauty... Where fine drinks are served...A show place in San Francisco." The 1940 deckle edged Curt Teich linen has given glitz and glamor to an otherwise tawdry building. Along with brands of better booze, it also boasts "Belfast Sparkling Water used Exclusively."



The Hotel Dale Buffet looks like a prime Market Street free lunch establishment with beer kegs at the ready, and a side bar for extra eating and drinking elbow room.



BUFFET—HOTEL DALE, TURK AND MARKET STREETS, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

Jack Howell's IT Club, the city's only theater restaurant with twin pianos, 3489 20th Street. Curt Teich gave all the glamor he could to the stools and horseshoe bar surrounding the stage. Swellegant... if a bit skimpy on ashtrays.





Jay's Gavel, 15 Boardman Place, across from the new Hall of Justice, made use of its courtly locale: "Always a justifiable verdict for good food, good fellowship, fine liquors... Where the famous and infamous meet."



Lefty O'Doul, 209 Powell, was a prize of a sports bar, as another Curt Teich linen shows. We see the city's own southpaw ready to welcome visitors to the '39 fair.



Lou's Rendezvous Cocktail Lounge, 373 Broadway in North Beach, offered the "finest luncheons and dinners" and claimed to be "A Perfect Way to Waste a Day."



Original Joes at 144 Taylor, was once in "the heart of the downtown district" which became the hard core Tenderloin. Fine steaks, burgers and pasta at the tables; bourbon and rough Gibsons at the bar.



Panelli's, at 453 Pine, alternated with New Joes and Sam's as my family's Thursday night dining place. We'd sit on the chairs facing the bar while our table was readied, and it was there I developed a liking for Old Fashioned soaked long stem maraschino cherries.



The Sky Room on the 24th floor of Hotel Empire reeks of the streamlined GGIE era with Art deco style, flesh toned walls, framed picture windows looking down on the city and bay. It would have been a pleasant place to watch the moon rise over a long stemmed Manhattan.



Strand's Castle, #25 10th Street, billed itself as "San Francisco's most unusual cocktail lounge." I guarantee it's seen far more unusual conditions since the card was made. The decor seems to be inspired by the quaint architecture of St. Francis Wood.



Sources for descriptive comments are postcard captions, the Editor's recollections, Google and EATING AROUND SAN FRANCISCO by Ruth Thompson and Chef Louis Hanges, Suttonhouse Ltd., 1937



How many bars, cocktail lounges and "clubs" has the Fairmont Hotel sheltered during the past century, and for how many have postcards been published? Of all of them the Tonga Room is the most bar-business like. The hotel's indoor swimming pool which opened in 1929 was converted, in 1945, into a bar and restaurant with Polynesian trappings and a floating bandstand. Buoyed by the war borne familiarity with the South Pacific and then the nationwide popularity of Rogers and Hammerstein's musical, the Tonga Room was quickly accepted as a place to drink with friends and dine with family. In the mid '50s it was booked semesters ahead for high school graduation dinners. Try as we might, I cannot recall an effective attempt at underage alcohol consumption.

◀ Zebra Lounge in the Huntington Hotel atop Nob Hill. The muted jewel colors play against the black and white of wild animal patterns.

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March 22
April 26
May 24
June 28
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August 30
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October 25
November 22