

# San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club

January 2019 Meeting: Saturday, January 26, 11:00AM to 3:00 PM

Vol. XXXIV, No. 1

**Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Mural Hall**

**Browsing and Trading, 11:30AM to 1:30PM - Meeting begins at 1:30PM**

**San Francisco**

*Visitors and dealers always welcome.*

*Meeting Schedule on back cover.*

IN  
THIS  
ISSUE

- Cover Card: Entrance to Confusion Hill?
- Meeting Minutes
- Kathryn Ayers "Lucky Baldwin" Program
- Omar Kahn "Paper Jewels" Program

**PROGRAM:** The Saturday, January 26 San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club meeting is from 11am to 3pm at Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Mural Hall (entrance off lower parking lot), 678 Portola Drive, San Francisco 94127. The meeting will be called to order at 1pm and the program will follow. (club meetings will be back at Fort Mason in February.)

### Postcards and Space-Time

Defy gravity at MYSTERY SPOTS across the US! Santa Cruz vortex is just one of many. Physics and the space-time continuum are turned upside down as the enigma of multidimensional reality is revealed in Daniel Saks presentation.

**LOCATION INFORMATION:** Ebenezer Lutheran Church in Mural Hall The entrance to Mural Hall is off of the lower parking lot.



## CLUB OFFICERS

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MINUTES, October 20, 2018

**Call to Order:** The club meeting was called to order by President Ed Herny at 1:30 pm on the 20th of Oct. 2018 in room C-235 at Fort Mason, SF.

**Attendance:** 30 members were in attendance.

**Vendors:** Ed Herny, Arlene & Ted Miles; David Parry, Sue Scott, Hal Lutsky; Lori & Ken Cubanski.

**Free Items:** Free items from Norman Freitag. Jim Caddick supplied us with cookies.

**Raffle:** 12 items.

**Announcements:**

For Nov. & Jan. 2019, we'll meet at HerChurch in San Francisco. Directions were printed, and provided by Dan Saks.

Nancy was called by Tom Brackett and informed that our long time member Gail Kransky passed away. Her husband Walt recently donated his Edward Mitchell collection to the UC Berkeley Bancroft Library.

**No Old or New Business.**

**Program:** Kathryn Ayers on Elias Jackson "Lucky Baldwin

Respectfully Submitted,

-Nancy Redden, Secretary

## MINUTES, November 24, 2018

**Call to Order:** The club meeting was called to order by Vice President Kathryn Ayres at 1 pm 24 Nov. 2018 in Mural Hall at Ebenezer Lutheran Church in SF.

**Attendance:** 31 members were in attendance

**Vendors:** David Parry, Nancy Redden, club cards from Lew, and free cards from Arlene & Ted Miles, with free offerings from Norman Freitag.

**Raffle:** 12 items including 2 books donated from Glen Koch: "SF Golden Age of Postcards" and 1 book donated by Ed Herny: "Picturing Berkeley."

### **Announcements:**

Per Russ Samuels Westpex's theme for 2019 is in honor of SF Mayor & 1st Postmaster John White Geary.

Norman Freitag advised us that in Jan. 2019 USPS 1st class stamp will go from 50 cents to 55 cents. The extra ounce stamp will go down to 15 cents. Post card stamp will stay the same at 35 cents. Ed Clausen let us know we that will be back meeting at Ft. Mason Feb. through May 2019.

### **Old Business—none New Business—none**

**Show & Tell:** Nancy had a Santa's Village card with a great message on the back from Santa to some children. Lew showed a Mayor George Moscone card; Glenn had a comic card equating a vampire with landlords in SF, a fake Mitchell; Jack displayed a vintage Man on Stilts card- walking from New Jersey to Calif. at 11 1/2 ' ground to top.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 for the program.

**Program:** Omar Khan on his new book: "Paper Jewels Postcards from the Raj"

Respectfully Submitted,

-Nancy Redden, Secretary

## "Lucky" Baldwin - Kathryn Ayers

Elias Jackson "Lucky" Baldwin was born in Ohio in 1828, and raised in Indiana, where his father had a farm. At age 18, he eloped with a neighbor girl. Shortly thereafter, he opened a hotel and general store. 1853 finds Baldwin in Racine, Wisconsin, where he also operated a hotel and general store. His hotel guests included men coming back from the California gold rush. Baldwin kept hearing that supplies were very much in demand in California, so he packed up his wife and small daughter, and along with five neighbors, he made his way to San Francisco.

Many families making the overland trek ended up having to dump valuables and precious heirlooms in the desert, for their horses could no longer pull the weight. Baldwin had the opposite experience. In Salt Lake City, he sold a whole wagon load of brandy, and was therefore \$3000 richer than when he left Wisconsin. He used the money to buy horses, and continued west. One of his customers at the stable was Adolph Sutro, who had made his fortune in silver gleaned from the Comstock Lode. Baldwin was interested, and traveled to Virginia City, Nevada, where he invested in mining stocks. Before he left on a European honeymoon with his second wife, he told his business partner to sell his stocks when they reached \$200 a share, but he took the only key to the safe with him. When he returned, the stocks had reached \$2000 a share. That's when the newspapers started calling him "Lucky" Baldwin. (He hated the nickname. He preferred to be called "E.J.")

Baldwin was appalled at the deforestation around Lake Tahoe. When he'd first seen the lake, it was surrounded by trees, but two-thirds of them had been cut down to provide lumber for the Comstock mines. He bought the remaining third of the property, just to preserve the trees. There was a small hotel on the land; he expanded it and named it the Tallac Hotel, after the nearby mountain.

When Baldwin hit California, he was 25 years old. He sold the horses in Placerville, and made his way down to San Francisco. He was disgusted at the conditions of the hotel that he and his family stayed in the first night, so he bought it the following day. In the next few years, he operated five businesses, some simultaneously: two hotels, a coal yard, a brick-making factory, and a livery stable.

His time and money were thereafter divided between two very different projects: the rustic Santa Anita ranch in Southern California, and the luxurious Baldwin Hotel in San Francisco. The latter stood at Powell and Market streets. Some of the furnishings were imported from Europe, but most of them were purchased at the United States Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. Almost everything that was served in the hotel dining room was shipped in from his ranch: meats, poultry, produce, nuts, dairy products, wines and wine derivatives. Only fish and spirits were purchased in San Francisco.

The ground floor housed the Baldwin Theater, which opened in 1875, while the top floors were still under construction. The biggest names of the day played there, such as Lillian Russell, Edwin Booth and Maurice Barrymore. And a young city native, David Warfield, served as an usher. Warfield, of course, later achieved national fame as an actor, and the Warfield Theater on Market Street was named for him.

The hotel opened in 1876. It stood for twenty-three years, but it never made any money. Baldwin's first manager said they simply gave too much for what they charged, and indeed, San Francisco may not have yet been ready for a luxury hotel. Unfortunately, it burned to the ground as the result of a kitchen fire in 1898. Baldwin had allowed his insurance to lapse, so it was a complete loss. He sold the land to railroad baron James L. Flood, and the Flood Building still stands on the corner of Powell and Market today.

Thereafter, E.J. spent his time at the Santa Anita Ranch, which comprises the bulk of the San Gabriel Valley in Los Angeles County. At one time, Baldwin owned 56,000 acres in Southern California. He imported decorative trees, fruit-bearing trees and nut trees, farmed the land, and raised livestock, as well as his pride and joy: race horses.

In 1906, Baldwin opened a race track in the area. It closed upon his death in 1909, and burned in 1912. However, the Santa Anita Racetrack was established in 1934, and it is still in operation today.

On the shores of a lake at the heart of the ranch, he constructed a Queen Anne house in 1879. This house was for guest; his own quarters were much more rustic. That house and a similarly styled carriage house are still standing, as is the railroad station that sat on the property. All three structures hold museums.

When Baldwin died of pneumonia in 1909, just one month shy of his 81st birthday, the newspapers speculated that he must be worth \$25 million. In reality, only \$4,000 could be found. The banks wanted to immediately foreclose on the property, but the nephew of the Baldwin's first wife, Hiram Unruh, intervened on behalf of the family. He asked for some time to be able to sell the property, and promised to pay the banks back in full, with interest.

The property was valued \$11 million, but Unruh managed to raise that figure to \$40 million. E.J. had always said that there was oil under the land where his sheep grazed, but no one could remember him doing any explorations. It turned out to be true, and so the property value increased. The center of the ranch, dubbed the City of Arcadia by Baldwin himself, was retained by the family until 1936.

The next owner was Harry Chandler, the publisher of the Los Angeles Times. This was fitting, since the Times building stood on one of the two prime business blocks in L.A. that Baldwin had once owned. When Chandler died, he willed the property to the state of California. Baldwin's ranch is now the Los Angeles County Arboretum, which is still in existence today. The ornamental trees are the ones that Baldwin planted, and the peacocks that wander the grounds are the descendants of the birds that Baldwin first brought California.

P.S. The club needs speakers to give program



Postcard





Louise Baldwin's Old Home at  
the Ranch Near Los Angeles





## Paper Jewels Postcards from the Raj

The postcard that started me on my collecting journey was "Women Baking Bread" which I acquired at a Vintage Paper fair in Concord, outside San Francisco around 1995. I had seen an advert for the show, and being a collector of photographs, thought I might drive out the (to me) vast distance to Concord and see what was going on. To my surprise I found a lot of India cards. When I picked up "Women Baking Bread" it transported me right back to my grandmother's house at 5 Queen's Road in Lahore when I was a small boy, and she sat on the verandah shelling peas or rolling chapati dough with a servant girl. I admired the way the artist propped up the bed, used tromp de l'oeil effects for the lantern and cloth to indicate depth, the way the coal stove and flour sifter were all there - in short, I thought it beautiful and authentic. I could hardly believe a postcard could be so evocative, if not Proustian. I picked up my first postcards at that exhibition, and over the years went to many such exhibitions all over California, in New York, London and later bought voraciously online as well in order to find postcards of the Indian subcontinent that were remarkable, that told a story, or served as doorways into the past. I had already collected 19th century black and white and sepia photographs of India, but now found the color of many postcards and the personal messages that they contained something rich and different, largely untapped by scholars and historians of the period.

It is worth mentioning that "Women Baking Bread" is a very rare postcard. I found copies of it but once or twice more in the years since 1995. As I learned more about postcards, I also was able to pretty much determine that it had been printed at the Ravi Varma Press in Bombay and the artist who made it was likely Paul Gerhardt, a German painter who was chief lithographer at the press. It was probably produced in 1898 or 1899.

My book Paper Jewels Postcards from the Raj and presentation to the SFBAPCC tries to describe the many factors that led to the rise of the postcards between 1895 and 1915, the economic, technical, travel and other forces that shaped the rise of the Instagram of its time (which I do not feel is an exaggeration). The first "postcards" of India were actually Singer Manufacturing Company postcards produced in the US in 1892 for advertising purposes during the World Columbian Exhibition in Chicago in 1893; they were strictly speaking not mailed, but reflect how important advertising was in the early days, because businesses could absorb the costs of making what were often very beautiful lithographic postcards for justifiable marketing purposes. Nestle, Liptons Tea, Texaco Oil, and others come to mind, as well as obscure European wine and tonic manufacturers.

I also go into the role played by Vienna, Austria in the production of early India postcards; this was the city I grew up in and knowing German has helped enormously over the years in doing research in the city archives and among dealers. A likely Austrian photographer in Kolkata, Werner Rossler, had the first postcards of Kolkata [then Calcutta] printed in Vienna as early as 1897; I even have some signed and sent by him. Separately an Austrian painter, Josef Hoffmann is apparently responsible for the first artist-signed postcards of India in the summer of 1898 based on a journey he made there in 1893-94. They were printed on a lithographic press in Vienna's 6th district; finding such a press in the basement of another old firm in recent times was one of the highlights of my research efforts. In the 1890s you also had an Indian-based firm, The Ravi Varma Press, produce cards drawn by its chief lithographer, Paul Gerhardt. They were advertised as the first such postcards of "Native Types" in Indian newspapers in 1899. They include postcards like Happy (the sender can fill in the precise holiday), or the wonderfully designed Bombay View where the characters in the foreground draw you into the scene. Interestingly the working language at the Press was German, and it later emerged as a formidable force in India, helping to popularize through reproductions the Hindu mythological scenes painted by its original owner, Ravi Varma; images like Birth of Shakuntala remain enormously popular today.

Indeed, it was the quick taking over of this initially foreign medium by Indian artists, photographers and publishers that is so interesting. My favorite Indian postcard artist, also based in Mumbai [then Bombay] was M.V. Dhurandhar. He produced, from about 1903 onwards, a remarkable series featuring different people in the city – a Milkmaid, a dog walker, a Victoria cab driver, policemen, office peons, road sweepers and more. He always gave them individual characteristics, or added a touch of satire as he did so beautifully with The Indian Postman (it would seem, from reports of people who know many postmen and women, that San Francisco's finest can't help reading postcards too . . .). Finding and having Dhurandhar's autobiography translated from the original Marathi was a highlight of my research. He remains my single favorite postcard artist, and I keep finding works he did in later years, even stumbling upon a postcard series he made for a man who later became the "Father of Indian cinema," Dadasaheb Phalke. Phalke produced silent films with morality tales much like those encapsulated in Dhurandhar's postcard series.

Of course, there were a lot of foreign postcard artists who also distinguished themselves, particularly the painter Mortimer Menpes whose paintings from a trip to India in 1903 became a magnificent series by the firms Raphael Tuck and A.C. Black. Menpes was

intoxicated by the color and sights he saw on his visit, and they led to works which used color and line to give characters and place splendor and authenticity. A Rajput of Rajgarh and A Belle of Northern India are good examples. Like Gerhardt and Dhurandhar, Menpes was also very familiar with how a press operated and the production process; this seems to have helped in the design and manufacture of postcards that stand out for their beauty and originality. This was also the age when photography had become a dominant medium, and Menpes is able to mimic its effects and strengths while compensating for its weaknesses like the lack of color. Watching the Pageant, Delhi is almost a candid painting.

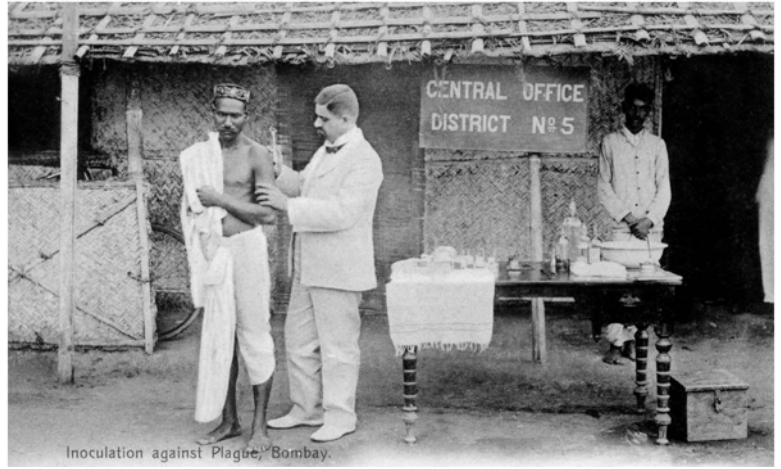
I also go into some of the great national publishers of postcards of India, like Clifton & Co., whose collotype or “light-print” postcards covered all sorts of interesting events like the plague in Mumbai (Inoculation against Plague, Bombay), or even famines; there are Indian producers like Gobindram Oodeyram in Jaipur who were early lithographers and then hand-tinted a number of collotypes that were depicted life in Rajasthan at the time. Different places had different postcard flavors; Jaipur postcards were often tinted pink, the brand color of the city, whereas South Indian cards by firms like Higginbotham’s and Spencer’s favored red as a dominant color. Regional and publisher differences help remind me about how much choice there was on the part of publishers in producing what are otherwise commodities; they had to sell and these kinds of choices reflect both market pressures and individual tastes.

America did not play a major role in the production of early India cards, but there were some choice examples, like two tea advertising cards from about 1910, Emperor Shah Jehan and Mumtaz-i-Mahal which featured the builder of the Taj Mahal and the woman he built it for, his wife who died while giving birth to their 14th child in 1631. The Emperor shown is actually not Shah Jehan, but Bahadur Shah Zafar, another Mughal Emperor who followed him two centuries later – close enough for an ad! Another card, Footwear of Nations India by the Woonsocket Rubber Co. from 1906 shows how sophisticated these cards could be. The woman represents modernity, the rubber-soled shoe with all its comfort and practicality, but the product still seeks the blessing and luxury of the feudal prince and shoes it competes with.

Finally, I turn to how postcards played a major role in the Independence movement from about 1917 through 1947. They would be turned against the foreigners. They were used to highlight politicians imprisoned by the British, heroes like Mahatma Gandhi and Lala Lajpat Rai, or Bhagat Singh and Sukhdeo, both hung by the British. Indeed, Gandhi’s iconic image with a walking stick was already available as a postcard in 1930 from the Kulkarni Brothers in Bijapur [Gandhi, 1930]. There are numerous postcards

of Indian troops who fought with the British in World War I, and when they returned to India, helped bring a newer, more anti-colonial perspective back with them. Religion and politics were often mixed in postcards from the 1930s and 1940s; I was also happy to find that postcards could be used to depict events otherwise unknown to us like a key Congress Party meeting in Karachi in March 1931, or hangings in Peshawar by the British that year in response to an uprising. At Independence, postcards were also able to convey something of the ambivalence people felt after an enormous transfer of populations between the new countries of India and Pakistan. Postcards were an incredibly flexible and revelatory medium; because they are so close to the times, and often include messages in-the-moment to their recipients, they can offer an absorbing and exceptional window into the past. I am not done collecting or learning from the postcards.

Omar Khan, Dec. 2018



Clifton & Co., Bombay.



Deutsche Himalaya-Expedition 1934  
Lm Nanga Parbat (8120 m)

*Prof. W. Morke*



FOOTWEAR OF NATIONS, 10 DESIGNS - No 4 INDIA

COPYRIGHT, 1906, BY WOONSOCKET RUBBER CO.



सरदार भगतसिंग.  
Phoenix P. Works.

Sardar Bhagatsing.  
Copy Rt. 136



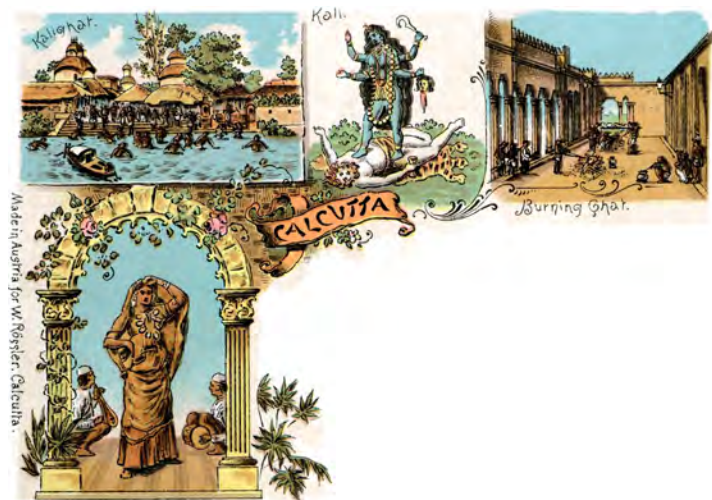
The Indian Poet



Milkmaid

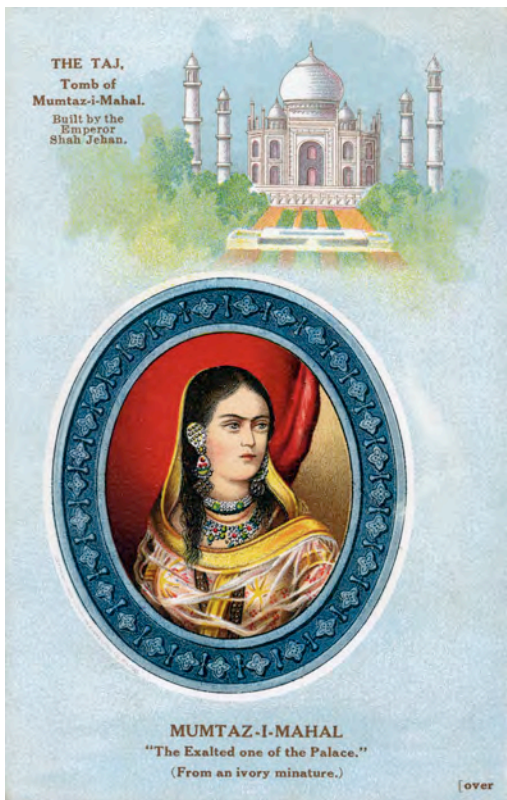


Watching the Pageant, Delhi.



Made in Austria for W. Rosler, Calcutta.

f[...urc]l Girf.





Listen up Post Card Club Members!!! We are in need of Presenters to give programs and write articles for the San Francisco Bay Area Post Card Club Newsletter and upcoming Meetings Pronto!



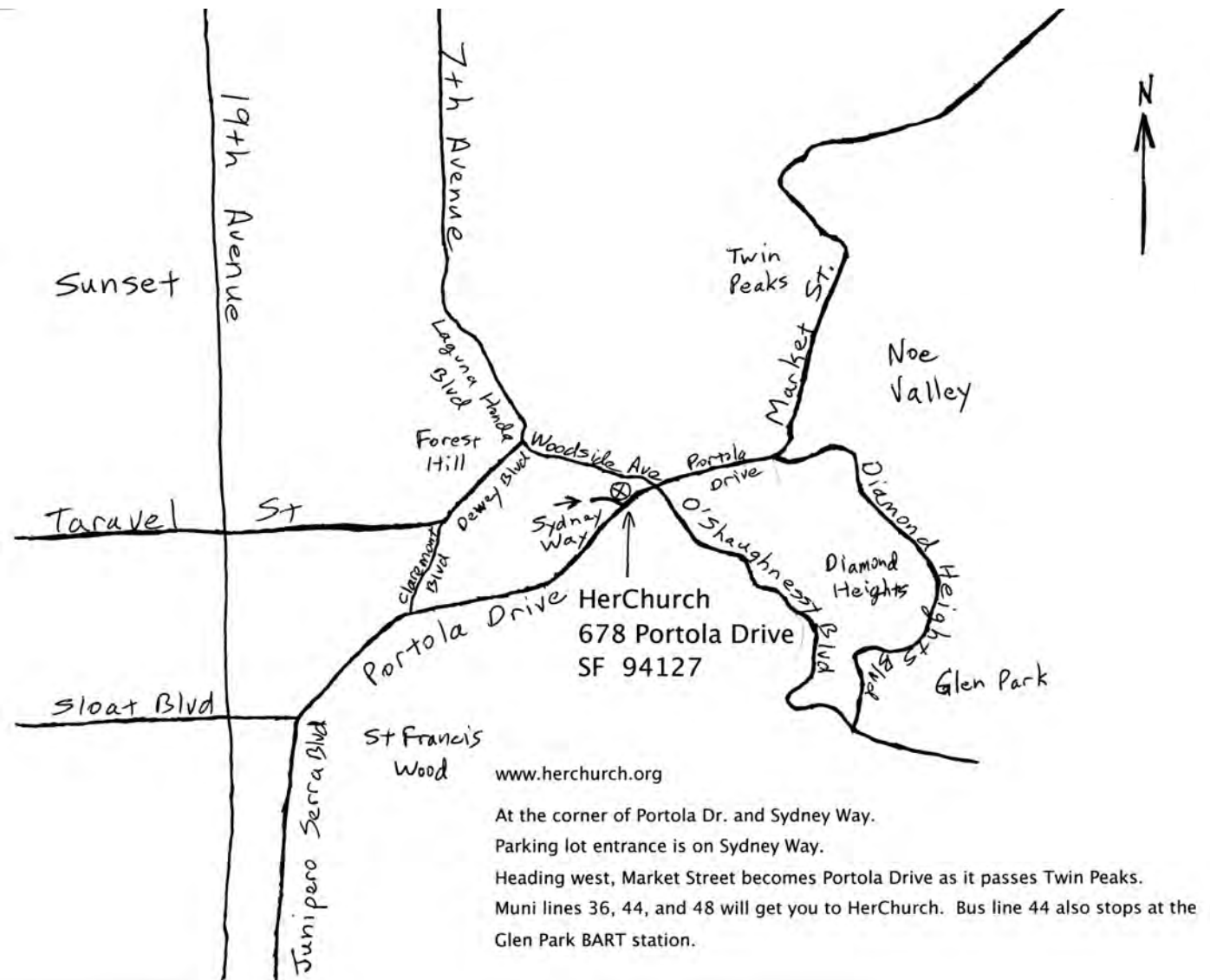
Give the Newsletter Editor a call at 310-270-3636 or e-mail: [sfbapcc@gmail.com](mailto:sfbapcc@gmail.com)  
Please do either or both. Thank you in advance -Phil



## Important Room Announcements

- The club will be once again holding meetings at Fort Mason starting on our February 23 meeting.
- Directions for the next meeting have been provided below.

### MAP TO HER CHURCH



**2019 MEETINGS**

Feb 23  
\*Back at Fort  
Mason Rm C-230  
Mar 23  
Apr 27  
May 25

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA POST CARD CLUB  
APPLICATION FOR NEW MEMBERSHIP**

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