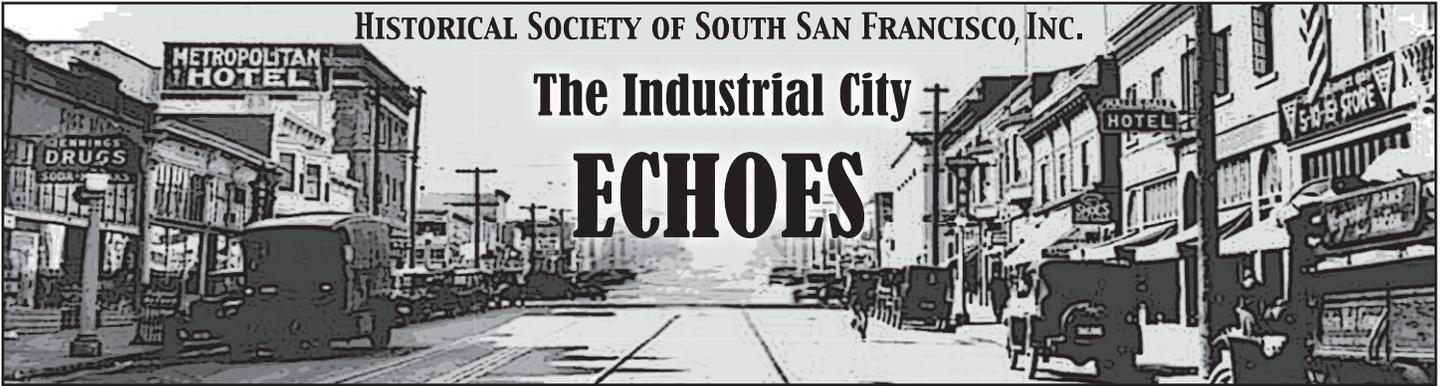


# The Industrial City ECHOES



www.ssf.net/history

Newsletter No. 130 - June 2015

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## 2015 Calendar

June 15 . . . . .	General Meeting
July 20 . . . . .	Board Meeting
August 17 . . . . .	Board Meeting
September 21 . . . . .	General Meeting
October 19 . . . . .	Board Meeting
November 16 . . . . .	Board Meeting
December 21 . . . . .	General Meeting

General meetings are held at:  
Magnolia Center, 601 Grand Ave. - 7:00 p.m.

Board Meetings are held at:  
Society Museum, 80 Chestnut Ave. - 7:00 p.m.

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



## Program for March General Meeting

**June 15, 2015, 7:00 pm**

Magnolia Senior Center, 601 Grand Avenue, South San Francisco

RUDY SANTINI, South San Francisco resident, business owner and World War II veteran, will be our guest speaker with a presentation of the history of Santini & Rocucci and other interesting historical stories.



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

*Refreshments will be served after the program.*

## Colma A Journey of Souls

An informative and interesting film by Bryan Kingston, "Colma A Journey of Souls" was shown at the May 18th general meeting. The film featured author Michael Svanevik and Colma historian Pat Hatfield.



*Richard Rocchetta, Pat Hatfield  
and Dorothy Hillman*



The South San Francisco Historical Society is looking for program ideas.

Do you have slides, photos, artifacts or interesting stories about South San Francisco?

Share your family or business history.

Contact the Historical Society at 650-829-3825.

## Attention Cookie Brigade

Please remember to bring a batch of your favorite homemade cookies on June 15th.

*Many thanks!*



## Message from Historical Society President

Our Pedro Tournament fundraiser was held on Sunday, May 17. We had 12 tables of players. Everyone had a fabulous time and is looking forward to our next one. Thanks to Donna Smith for chairing this event. For a beginner Pedro player, she sure was organized!!! As usual, Sam Bonanno's pasta and meatball dinner was so delicious. Thanks to Dave Casagrande and Richard Zaro for helping Sam in the kitchen. Julie, Alan and their team handled the bar as if they were professionals. Good job! Too many other people to thank for checking-in, serving and/or cleanup. You all know who you are and you are very much appreciated! Now we can look forward to our Victorian Tea.

— Ginny



## In Memory

Virginia Lyle "Ginny" Boston

Darold (Dick) Fredricks\*

Pep Pasco (d. 2014)

Helen C. Richards

Joseph Francis Rodondi

Pia Menicucci Sciandri



\*Darold Fredricks

1933-2015

Darold was always a great resource for the Society, generous with his time and availability. More than once he would pop-in at the museum to obtain information or share it. Besides documenting local history he was well known for writing articles on San Francisco and cities down the Peninsula. Over the years he wrote for several newspapers, including the (Sun) Independent, and more recently for the Daily Journal. His articles were repeated in our newsletter (including this issue) and we will continue to do so. He never had a problem as long as he was given credit. During the past year he entrusted us with volumes of the San Bruno Herald among other artifacts, hoping that one day San Bruno would start its own historical society. He will be sincerely missed. Our condolences to his wife Peggy and family.

## Museum Accessions/Acquisitions

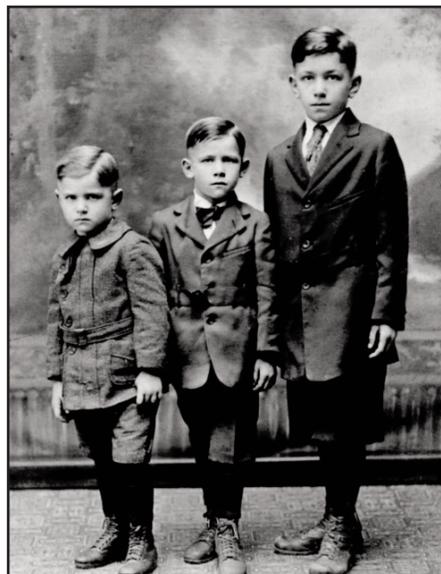
- **Frances Regalia:** Photos of Grand Avenue parade (c 1930s); Postcards of Fuller Paints and American Marble Co.; Swift employee photos at various events; needlepoint picture of Sign Hill by Sue Park, daughter of Joe Park; and crochet dolls for kitchen. (Needlepoint and crochet items are currently on display in our new Arts & Crafts Exhibit.)
- **Bob Rodrigues:** Photos of Guy F. Atkinson Co. building, located at Railroad and Orange Avenues, and area of North Canal Street (c 1970s).
- **Nancy Barton:** Photos of Grand Avenue (1893-94) - Dunn Realty, Maggs Home, and Lux Mansion.
- **Margo Leidig:** Memorabilia belonging to Calvin Enderlin - high school and college yearbooks, slides from trip to Russia in 1966; 1976 SF Examiner; and WW II military honors.
- **Sam Bonanno:** Wedding photo of Nicholas and Mary Bonanno, 1931 (on display).
- **Virginia Smith:** Memorabilia belonging to Alice Wallace Swanson - assorted women's hankies, music sheets, and Wallace family photos (c. 1915) at the Western Meat Co Stock Exchange building.

## Do You Recognize These Boys?

The photo was probably taken around 1910-1915. It was brought into the museum by Frances Regalia who is a DeZordo. Written on the back is Silvio Joe Nick.

If you recognize anyone in this photo please contact the Chestnut Museum at 650-829-3825.

Thank you!



## New Members

Michael Calbreath

Raymond & Caroline De Nardi

Jack Murray

Christina Ramos

Tara Yoschak

## Historical Society Museum

If you are looking for a gift, consider visiting the museum at 80 Chestnut Avenue. There are pins remembering SSF events, T-shirts, books on local history, postcards and more.

Come and see what there is to see about our city.

# Sunshine Gardens School Students Visit Chestnut Museum

On April 22nd 3rd grade students from Sunshine Gardens School visited our museum. A requirement of the 3rd grade curriculum is to study local history. Historical Society docents guided the students through the museum explaining the history of South San Francisco.

The students are always enthusiastic about their visit.



## A LOOK BACK: Witnessing the Birth of South San Francisco by Darold Fredricks

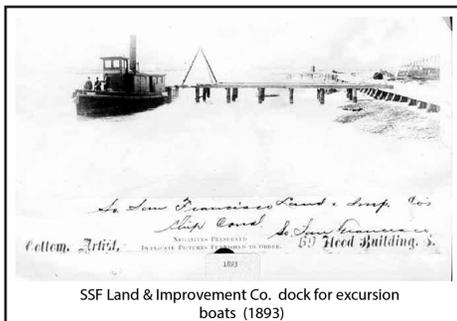
Published in the Millbrae-San Bruno Sun, Wednesday, September 13, 1995

The city of South San Francisco was incorporated on Sept. 19, 1908, due to the desire of the South San Francisco Land and Improvement Company (SSFL&I Co.) to be relieved of its financial burden for the development. The SSFL&I Co., started by Gustavus Swift of Swift Meat Company, authorized Peter Iler to act as an agent to get the titles ready for the company in 1889. This he did, and in 1890 the SSFL&I Co. began platting the land east of the 12-Mile House (on Mission Road) and in Baden where Charles Lux had his mansion. Lux had died in 1887 and Henry Miller, who had bought out his partner's interest, wanted to continue in the cattle business. Swift contacted him, a deal was made, and the former Miller-Lux Ranch was incorporated into the SSFL&I Co. The eastern part of the former Rancho Buri Buri, bound on three sides by the Bay waters, was where the meat-packing plants were to go, along with other industrial businesses.

The San Bruno Toll Road (now Airport Blvd.) was to be the separation line between the anticipated industrial development and the platted city that was to be developed for the workers of the industries.

In 1891, the SSFL&I Co. had platted out a city complete with park and school sites in which the workers and their families could spend time for pleasure and education. It was a grandiose plan that included development of Sign Hill as well as the marshes that were full of willow trees due to the extremely moist environment.

Before Iler was finished with the work, the SSFL&I Co. acquired Maria Tanforan's farm land along Sneath Lane and land as far away as San Bruno Avenue. Their plans were big and included a city that was to accommodate tens of thousands of new residents. The directors for the company were Gustavus Swift, Nelson Morris, E. Martin, Peter Iler, Henry Miller, E.R. Lilienthal and Charles W. Smith. The directors appointed William Martin and Ebenezer Cunningham to run the company and they immediately laid out the town east of unincorporated Baden (between Orange and Chestnut avenues) and, per Swift's instructions, called the new town South San Francisco. Streets were constructed and the anticipated rush of buyers prepared for J.I. Dunn and Company Realtors sold the first lot in 1891 to John E. Nunn.

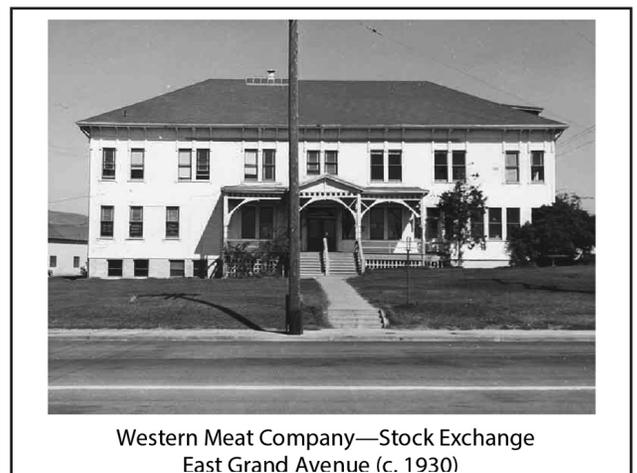


The city was launched, but to attract more buyers excursion boats were encouraged to bring down prospective clients from San Francisco. Lunch was provided to the would-be buyers while they looked over the area. Many came to look around and eat the free food, but few bought land at first. In 1894, with a capital stock of \$800,000, the first major industry developed on the point (East Grand Avenue) - the Western Meat Company, with the major stockholders being Henry Miller, Henry S. Crocker, Armour and Company, Michael Cuddahy and Peter Iler. A justice of the peace (H.H. Hubachek) and constable (J.P. Hill) were appointed, and civic government was on its way to being organized.

Now that the Western Meat Company was developing jobs for the community, the Steiger Terra Cotta Pottery Works followed in 1894, with Baden Brick also in 1894, Malath Brick Company in 1898, W.P. Fuller Paints in 1898, and the South San Francisco Lumber Company in 1898.

In anticipation of needing a central control on the meat industry, the three-story Stock Exchange building was built in 1893, across the street from the stockyards. The lower floors had offices and the company's bank, and on the second floor were a dining room, reading room, and a bar. The third floor had sleeping quarters and apartments. The basement had a barber shop and bathrooms. It was a large, ornate building with a veranda extending along one side of the building.

The SSFL&I Co. continued to buy land and lay the property out for lots and business development. They controlled the development of almost all of the Baden and South San Francisco properties, but their financial burden for developing streets, water, sewer, etc. became more than they could handle. So, the company encouraged incorporation. It culminated in the population of 1,989 citizens voting in favor of incorporation on Sept. 19, 1908.



## Excerpts from: South San Francisco 1920's - 1940's Was It the Best of Times?

by Marian E. Cavassa Wagstaff written for her class reunion

The South San Francisco which I am going to share with you is best described starting from where I lived at 478 Baden Avenue--the corner of Spruce and Baden. Spruce Avenue extended to Railroad Avenue where there was a street barrier and beyond was "The Willows." Spruce Avenue was a skaters paradise. This was the area where many campfires could be seen from time to time and indicated a time when men were without work. We called them hoboes. Many of them found their way to our back door where they asked for a meal. Some worked for it and others went their way with a thank you. The number that came caused us to believe that our house had been marked.

I am reminded of an incident that presents this point. It was told by my father and it relates to the year 1906. Many people left San Francisco following the quake coming to SSF seeking refuge with friends and family members. They walked or came by bicycle. A large number of Chinese from Hunters Point came to the drug store en-route to their destination--the SSF oyster beds. Each individual purchased two items--a roll of toilet paper and a tooth brush. My father was impressed by their selection reflecting their cleanliness, but to make certain his conclusions were correct he finally asked one of the many why items were purchased and was told "to write letters home, of course" (paper, brush and the SSF squid for ink).

Back to my story...Railroad, Commercial and Baden Avenues extended to Chestnut Avenue. Where the willows stopped and violets grew in field after field. Linden Avenue was not industrialized beyond the Morrill Ink Plant. When riding in an open car winds would whip through leaving the riders chilled to the bone. This section of Linden Avenue was called "No Man's Land." Grand Avenue extended beyond Chestnut Avenue meeting the San Francisco/San Mateo carline. There was little construction on Grand Avenue beyond Chestnut Avenue; there were many gardens, a few farm houses, and the 12 Mile House, that caused a bit of comment and speculation, was the last establishment before the depot.

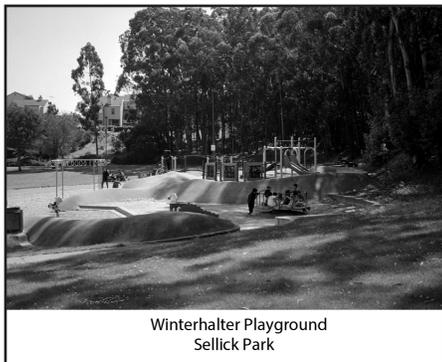
The Rosaia Ranch, where beautiful gladiolas among other flowers, brightened the area above Grand Avenue on Chestnut. Beyond the flowers were vegetable gardens one leading into another. Should one traverse this way any distance and enter the road leading to Colma they would pass the cemeteries--a weird place to be after dark.

There were few homes in the early period beyond the Junior Senior High School adjacent to the base of the hill on Spruce Avenue. All along Linden Avenue in the direction of San Francisco there were many small homes each with their fenced manicured gardens and a few neighborhood stores. Nearby was the Martin Elementary School. Pecks Lots was in its infancy with a vigorous sales campaign which continued for a number of years.

As one walked down Linden Avenue across the highway and down to the beach remnants of the oyster beds and a few dilapidated warehouses were passed. For the most part the green rolling hills with a view of the bay on all sides led to the beach where many family picnics and beach parties were held.

Grand Avenue extended past the Southern Pacific Railroad Station, the Edwards Wire Works, Armour's Meat Plant, the Stockyard, the Tannery, the Western Meat Company, Fullers Paint and finally the Marine Magnesium Plant. Beyond was another small cove which was less frequented than the other beach.

There were gangs in our early years. The Baden and the Railroad gangs were active groups. In fact, Baden Avenue had several distinct groups. Interaction planned through parent foresight kept the groups on an even keel. Both Father Moran and Rev. Adam Bird were intensely interested in the welfare of the youth in SSF. Programs were developed within each church facility and at times there was an interrelationship of a number of different groups. Before All Souls Catholic School was built the open field was frequently used for baseball games, minor track, informal group games and carnivals.



Available facilities for summer recreation were initiated by the school administrators and board of education. As interest grew, formalized programs developed involving both the city council and the school district. I believe the efforts of Mrs. Carrie Winterhalter and Mrs. Margaret Weller were instrumental in presenting this issue and a program of action. The success of this joint effort marked the beginning of what is now an enviable recreation program for a greater number of people in a much larger community. What has been accomplished can be credited to the city council in its appointment of a recreation commission May 19, 1941. S. K. Robbins was elected chairman, Margaret Weller, vice chairman, and Lura Sellick, secretary. Lura has been an active member of that commission since that date. I salute her and the many that have served over the years. Lura should be commissioned by this body to write the historical development of Recreation in SSF. It is a program of which you can be most proud.



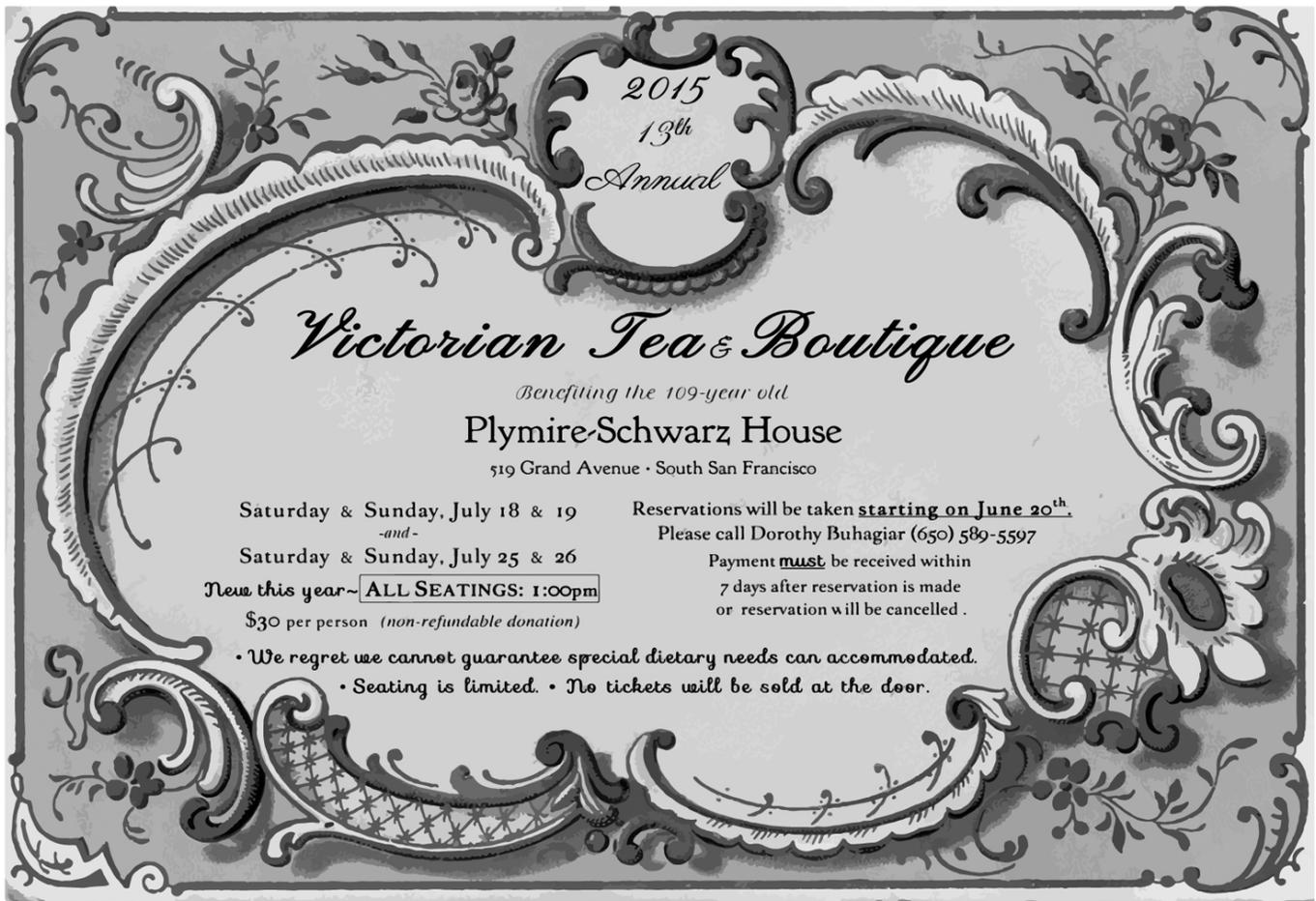
# South San Francisco Historical Society Pedro Tournament and Dinner

I would like to thank everyone who attended the Pedro Tournament on Sunday, May 17th. Some came from as far away as Santa Rosa and Novato. A special thanks to Sam Bononno for a great dinner and to members who helped set-up, check in players, sell drink tickets, serve dinners and clean up. Thanks to Alan Chimenti & friends for bartending.

*Donna Smith*



Now there's another way to find out  
what's going on with the  
South San Francisco Historical Society.  
Follow us on Facebook



## The Annual Dinner Raffle Committee Needs Your Help!

If you frequent great local restaurants, could you please ask for a donation of a gift certificate for our annual fundraiser?

Contact Mary Giusti, 650-583-3102 or Valerie Sommer, 650-829-3872, for a copy of the annual appeal letter.

These are some of the restaurants that we would like to highlight in our raffle:

Amoura	Antigua Café
Barbara's Fish Trap	Basque Cultural Center
Bertolucci's	BJ's
Boulevard Café	Buon Gusto
Cheesecake Factory	Di Napoli's
Elephant Bar	Five Guys
Gunter's	Flacas Jamaican Grill
Grand Palace	Gunter's
Houlihan's	IHOP
Jack's	Joanne's
Moss Beach Distillery	Pasta Moon
Paul Martin's	Sam's Chowder House
South Harbor	And More

If you have a favorite restaurant not on this list, we'd appreciate your assistance. Thanks!



## Join the South San Francisco Historical Society Help preserve our storied history

*If you are interested in becoming a new member or to renew your membership 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



# 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

## South San Francisco Historical Society

### Board of Directors

President .....Ginny Tilton  
First Vice President .....Sam Bonanno  
Second Vice President .....Sylvia Payne  
Recording Secretary .....Cisca Hansen  
Treasurer .....Julie Chimenti  
Financial Secretary .....Donna Smith

### Two Year Directors

Jeanette Acosta, Barbara Cerquettini, Lily Germano, Robbie Huerta,  
Valerie Sommer

### One Year Directors

Lynn Boldenweck, Dave Casagrande, Victoria Morales Healy,  
Gloria Lagomarsino, Lois Mares,

### Ex Officio Members

Roy Bava, Diana Ferrari, Mary Giusti, Bertha Iskra, Rick Ochsenhirt,  
Sylvia Payne, Ray Yoschak

### Plymire-Schwarz Steering Committee

Director: Roy Bava

Jeanette Acosta, Rose Bava, Louise Brusco, Julie Chimenti,  
Elizabeth Ervin, Phyllis Feudale, Mary Giusti, Robbie Huerta,  
Bertha Iskra, Rick Ochsenhirt, Ray Yoschak

### Museum Directors

Elizabeth Ervin and Sylvia Payne

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

## Contact & Location Information

### Chestnut Avenue Museum

80 Chestnut Avenue  
650-829-3825  
Tues & Thurs (2-4:00 p.m.) and  
2nd & 4th Saturdays (1-3:00 p.m.)  
Museum Committee Co-Chairs:  
Elizabeth Ervin & Sylvia Payne  
Office Hours: Weds (10-2:00 p.m.)  
*Please call if you are interested  
in volunteering at the museum.*

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

80 Chestnut Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

### History Room / Grand Avenue Branch Library

306 Walnut Avenue  
650-877-8533  
Thurs (2-4:00 p.m.) *or by  
appointment*  
Library Historian: Kathy Kay

### Plymire-Schwarz House

519 Grand Avenue  
650-875-6988  
Wednesdays (2-4:00 p.m.)  
Director: Roy Bava

## 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 museum at 650-829-3825 or  
Mail your check to:  
South San Francisco Historical Society  
80 Chestnut Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

**ECHOES Editor:** Sylvia Payne • 650-829-3825 • [ssfhistorical@gmail.com](mailto:ssfhistorical@gmail.com)  
**Layout & Design:** Gloria Lagomarsino • [amgraphics25@yahoo.com](mailto:amgraphics25@yahoo.com)