

The 640 Report

640 Heritage
Preservation
Foundation

Issue 18 -Summer 2013

Preserving the House that Women Built for a Second Century
640 SUTTER STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

640 Foundation Offers Two New Club Tours

In anticipation of the Metropolitan Club's Centennial, and in keeping with our mission of public education about our Club's important piece of women's history, the 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation is pleased to announce two new Club tours.

The first tour, *Queen of Clubs: the Social & Architectural Significance of the Woman's Athletic Club of San Francisco*, debuted in May and was given to the Auxiliary of the California Society of Pioneers. The 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation will make it available to groups visiting and dining at the Metropolitan Club. While it showcases our excellent facilities, its main purpose is to investigate the social, cultural, and architectural significance of the first women's athletic club west of Chicago and, after its expansion, the largest such club in the nation. The tour focuses on the important and distinctive role the Women's Athletic's Club played in the nation's Woman's Club Movement from the 1860s to 1920s; and its role as the catalyst for the emergence of a women's club district in Union Square.

The second tour, *Architecture and Culture of San Francisco's Grand Old Clubs: a Walking Tour in Club Land*, is in cooperation with San Francisco City Guides. Founded in 1978, City Guides is a non-profit organization offering history and architectural walking tours in San Francisco. This tour will be offered only twice monthly to a limited

number of guests. Interior visits in the Metropolitan Club will be less than ten minutes, and take place in the lobby and the main rooms on the fourth floor. Care will be taken not to intrude on member and guest activities.

The tour looks at eleven clubs in the area between Nob Hill, Union Square, and the Financial District, formerly known as "Club Land". It explores the heyday of these social clubs from the late 19th century up to the Great Depression. It looks at the clubs that survive today, and the pride each took in having a handsome club building.



City Guides Misty Tyree and Paul Fisher

By introducing these tours the 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation hopes to enrich our visitors' experience by fostering an in depth understanding of the Metropolitan Club's important place in San Francisco architecture and woman's clubs history.

-Alice Carey

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Message from the President



President Alice Carey

As the Metropolitan Club's Centennial celebration approaches, the 640 Foundation has initiated activities to honor our club's past. The Community Outreach Committee, in partnership with San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, is planning a series of lectures in March 2014 to coincide with and celebrate Women's History month. Gee Gee Platt, History Committee co-chair and former Heritage Board member, will act as liaison. At the same time Carol Ann Rogers, History Committee co-chair, has initiated an oral history project to record members' memories of the Metropolitan Club. In addition the History Committee has created a tour of the Metropolitan Club and, in cooperation with San Francisco City Guides, a tour of clubs in the Union Square area.

We are also looking forward to September's exciting Fall Fashion Show Luncheon at Saks Fifth Avenue, featuring designer Collezione Armani. Member Cathy Goodman is spearheading the program and raffle. Both will benefit the 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation.

During the past several months, Membership Outreach co-chairs Pat Ascher and Margaret Handelman have been increasing the Foundation's visibility by organizing luncheons to introduce newer Metropolitan Club members to the Foundation's mission and programs.

This spring we hosted our successful donor lunch honoring Gladys K. Mitchell, members of the Elizabeth Pillsbury Society, and recent major donors. Guest Speaker Charlene Harvey, Presidio Trust Board member, provided insightful information on the Park's future. Events Chair Peggy Mitchell organized the luncheon.

The Foundation also underwrote the very successful seminar Wine, Women and Financial Wisdom, organized by Helene Ettelson, which offered advice on financial management, wealth management and planned giving.

You will find more about all of these activities in this issue of the 640 Report, along with Elizabeth Pillsbury Society news and an update on recent tribute gifts that we gratefully acknowledge.

Fun Facts

Question

In 1914, the Woman's Athletic Club hired Architects Bliss & Faville to design their new edifice because:

- A. Founders liked their house designs
- B. Of the quality of the firm's design
- C. Of nepotism
- D. The Bliss's owned 75% of Lake Tahoe

See answer inside

An Oral Interview with Emmy Phillips

The Woman's Athletic Club was only six months old, awaiting the completion of its clubhouse, when Mary Elizabeth ("M.E. or Emmy") Phillips was born on April 2, 1916, in Shreveport, LA. Emmy's family had roots in Alabama. Her grandfather was on his way to Texas when the train broke down in Louisiana and he decided to stay, opening up a country store in Lafayette.

Emmy attended LSU, hoping to enter the newspaper business, and met her first husband, an Annapolis graduate, while visiting her sister and brother-in-law in Houston. A young bride, Emmy and her husband moved to San Francisco in 1937. "I almost start to cry when I think how wonderful San Francisco was at that time," remembers Emmy. "We had a lot of wonderful restaurants. And we used to go over to Larkspur in our second-hand convertible where there was an open-air place to dance."

The happiness of those years was interrupted by the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor - Emmy's husband was on the battleship USS Pennsylvania, and for seven days she did not know whether he had survived. Although unhurt in that event, he was killed in the South Pacific in 1944, and Emmy found herself a young widow working in San Francisco as an accountant and sharing an apartment with two other young women. The rent was \$40 a month. Following the war, Emmy moved briefly to Hawaii but soon returned to her beloved San Francisco.

In 1947, Emmy joined the Woman's Athletic Club. She recalls her primary interest was to swim. Work kept her from getting actively involved until the 1970s. She loved participating in the Aquacades. "I was not one of the top performers," recalls Emmy with a smile. "But it was a lot of fun and there was great camaraderie." She remarried, becoming Emmy Long, and moved to Redwood City. Finding herself with little time to enjoy the Club, she resigned but reinstated in 1962. During her years away from the Club, she opened *Elizabeth's Antique Shop* in San Mateo. The February 1952 issue of *Antiques Dealer* did a feature story on her that stated she wanted to "put her prospective customers in a buying mood" so she opted for giving "the feeling of approaching an old

southern home with high windows, gabled porches and 'old south' French windows."

Moving into the field of interior design, Emmy was eventually hired by the sales department of Leisure World Walnut Creek, now known as Rossmoor. Emmy lost her second husband and moved back to San Francisco. While working for Rossmoor, she was invited to a dinner party given by past Club president Helen Lamont, and met her third husband, John Phillips. "All three of my marriages were happy," says Emmy.

Emmy and John joined friends at the Club weekly to play bridge and have dinner. Smiling, Emmy recalls how they made plans to ring in year 2000 at the Club, but were so sleepy after dinner that they were asleep as the new century dawned.



Emmy Phillips returning from Hawaii aboard the Matsonia, 1946

Emmy has fond memories of the Club's Boutique which sold Club bathing suits, caps, robes and gifts, and was run by Club volunteers. "It was one of the saddest days for the Members when it closed."

"There was a very close relationship between the Club employees and the Members," explains Emmy. She remembers how happy she and her friends were for then very young employee Luz Reyes when she got married. Patrick, Pepe and a very handsome, Harvard educated bartender - a favorite of the young members - are other memories she has of Club employees.

"I have been privileged to live an interesting life," reflects Emmy on her 97 years. "The Metropolitan Club has been very important in my life and I have met some of my dearest friends there - very interesting, stimulating ladies. I am an optimist, although like everybody I have had my down periods. Now, when I am alone, I live in the past too. I look at pictures and they remind me of the good times."

Should you be fortunate to sit with Emmy over a cup of tea, you will find she is still creating good times as she shares her grace, humor and life stories with any privileged to be within earshot.

-Carol Ann Rogers

Generations of Service and Fun: Linda Kendall and Amy McNamara

Like many members, Linda Kendall was attracted to the Metropolitan Club because it is an all-women's club, where one need never feel self conscious in a bathing suit. Linda joined in 1975 and sponsored her daughter Amy (Hall) McNamara's membership that same year. Today, Amy's daughters Virginia (9 years) and Margaret (6 years) are also members.

Linda lives several months a year in Florida, a tradition started by her parents when she was a child, always looks forward to returning to her home and full life in San Francisco, including visits to the Metropolitan Club. As a former Board member, she has served on the Membership Committee and as Treasurer.

Linda's prescient recognition of the need for women to understand financial issues led her to organize a monthly series of programs in the late 1980s called Lunch - N- Learn, which covered such topics as investments in stocks, bonds, insurance and real estate. Each program presented an expert speaker in the field. For the convenience of members who worked, the lectures were scheduled for lunchtime, noon to 1:30 p.m.

"Today, women are earning good salaries," said Linda. "The need for understanding finance and investments is now greater than ever."

"My mother was very forward thinking," added Amy, who started her own 401k in her early twenties.

Amy, also an active Club member, served on the pre-construction committee with Alice Carey and others prior to the renovations, and also was instrumental in establishing the YAMS. "With many of us now in our 40s, we need a new name," she said with a laugh.

Linda and Amy are both participants in the Club's athletic program and took duo Pilates Reformer classes together. Amy notes that all in one day, in one building, she can play tennis, attend lectures and have lunch. Currently, Amy works with a personal trainer, and is very happy with the attention paid to "mind, body and soul," which she notes is all in keeping with the original Club mission. She is also pleased with the new healthy smoothies and the 640 menu.

As an architect, Amy has long admired the vision of the founding members and the Club design. "Each

space was designed with a purpose in mind," she noted. "It was an intellectual exercise to determine member needs, then create a design and build a building that not only meets these needs, but would be adaptable to future change."

With the pre-construction committee, Amy participated in creating the master building renovation plan, the parking lot study, and the architectural model of the basement and cabanas. She also spoke frequently at Town Hall Meetings, presenting the renovation plans to the members. Selecting historic pictures and memorabilia for display in the first floor main hallway, leading to the pool, was a fun activity of the post-construction committee. Preserving a few of the early bathing costumes, made of wool, was a challenge, and the job was given to a conservationist at the De Young Museum.

Amy's daughters Ginny and Margaret are learning Club service at an early age. Margaret, Amy remarks, was "pleased as punch" to serve on the Junior Member Host Committee for the Eighth Grade Graduation Tea. Tea and apple cider were served at the event.

Club life is not all committees and work for the Kendall/McNamara members. A recent birthday party, attended by eight 8 and 9-year old girls, included noodle races in the pool and a sleepover in the 6th floor suite. Chef Mehrdad prepared a special gourmet kids' dinner in celebration of Virginia's 9th birthday. Ginny, a lover of Eloise (who lived in a hotel) books, was most taken with the idea of "living" in the Club, at least for a night.

Another recent favorite activity was the Teddy Bear Tea. This year, the children stuffed and dressed their own bears, using a variety of clothing, ribbons, jewels, buttons and more. Amy's son Jack, as well as Ginny and Margaret, also participated, and gave his boy bear a compass to find his way around.

These three generations of members of the Metropolitan Club embody the spirit of those who came before, and of the generations yet to come; as stated in the By-laws, they "are a model for leadership by women in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation."

-Marcia Schneider

The Architecture of Bliss & Faville



"The career of Bliss & Faville, the architects," has produced "results that have brought credit to the status of architecture on the Pacific Coast, as well as inspiration to their brethren and pleasure to the public, who enjoy the many-sided benefits conferred by well-arranged and beautiful buildings." -Architectural Critic B.J.S Cahill, Architect and Engineer January 1914

The architectural firm of Bliss and Faville was one of the most established and well-respected firms in San Francisco. Walter Danforth Bliss and William Baker Faville's consistently high quality designs were important contributors to raising the architectural standards in the Bay Area. Both men were schooled in the Beaux Arts tradition, met at MIT, and apprenticed at the prestigious firm of McKim, Mead and White in New York. They came to San Francisco in 1898 as partners and worked together until 1925. They expressed the organization and character of their buildings through the Italian Renaissance style.

Photographs of Bliss and Faville's building on the left are as follows:

Union Bank aka Bank of California
400 California Street

Giorgio Armani aka Saving Union Bank
1 Grant Avenue

California State Building 350 McAllister

Geary Theater aka Columbia Theater
415 Geary Street

Marines Memorial Club aka Women's Club of San Francisco Building
609 Sutter Street

Masonic Temple 25 Van Ness Avenue

Southern Pacific Building 1 Market Street

Fun Facts Answer

A. At least four of the families of the founding members had hired Bliss & Faville to design their houses including I.W. Hellman, S.M. Ehrman, W.M. Newhall and R.D. Girvin.

B. Bliss & Faville was one of the most important architectural firms in San Francisco during the first quarter of the twentieth century due to the consistent quality of their designs and their cumulative contribution to the character of downtown San Francisco (see article to your left).

C. Club first President Elizabeth Taylor Pillsbury was married to Horace Pillsbury, and Horace Pillsbury's sister, Edith, was married to Walter Bliss. The President of the Club was the sister-in-law of the Architect.

D. While it is true The Bliss family owned three quarters of the shoreline of Lake Tahoe, there is no direct evidence this led to the Woman's Athletic Club commission. However the architects were part of the same elite social circles as the club women.

The answer is: A. B. C. & perhaps D.

640 Donor Lunch

On March 22nd, 2013, the Foundation held a Donor Appreciation Luncheon honoring Gladys K. Mitchell and featuring Club Member and Presidio Trust Board member Charlene Harvey as Guest Speaker. Guests enjoyed a delicious Spring menu by Chef Mehrdad Dabir and Charlene's informative talk on the Presidio's history and future. We were fortunate to have a table of Elizabeth Pillsbury Society Members at the event who all enjoyed catching up with one another.



Back row: Ann Welch, Peggy Mitchell, Margaret Handelman, Helene Ettelson, Susan Gearey, Chong Cook, Cecile Eggens. Front row: Linda Hannawalt, Mary Louise Anderson and Pat Smith



Left to right: Carol Ann Rogers, Donna Crowder, Carmen Castro, Gladys K. Mitchell, Misty Tyree and Virginia Formichi

Tribute Program 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation

THE 640 HERITAGE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES
THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTE GIFTS TO THE FOUNDATION:
JANUARY–MAY 2013

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LEO VAN DER REIS	HELENE ETTELSON
LEO VAN DER REIS	CAROL ANN ROGERS

IN MEMORY OF

DONOR

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LAURA KMIECIK	ALICE CAREY
MAXINE BACKER	SUSAN MOLINARI

Please contact Conor Ryan Tung in the Foundation Office for information about making a Tribute Gift to honor or remember a special person in your life.

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Wine, Women and Financial Wisdom

On Thursday evening, May 9th, the 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation sponsored a most informative financial seminar organized by Foundation Board Member Helene Ettelson, and featuring “The Women from First Republic Bank,” headed by Katherine August-deWilde, First Republic’s President and Chief Operating Officer, who gave a brief history of the twenty-eight-year old bank, including its purchase by Merrill-Lynch which was promptly absorbed by Bank of America, and subsequently purchased by employees and investors approximately five years ago. Anne Golden, Senior Managing Director and Portfolio Manager and a member of the Metropolitan Club since 1987, emphasized not simply buying and holding assets, but taking some portion of your gains, as well as losses, in order to diversify your portfolio. She also stressed the importance of recording the locations of your assets, and making certain family members know where to find each and every one. Miranda Holmes, Managing Director, Financial Planner, works with clients in establishing goals and objectives, and how best to achieve those within given financial limits: estate goals, reducing taxes, and planning for educational funding, for example. Pam Royer, Managing Director and Senior Trust Officer, spoke of the importance of valuing customers. Kathryn Lawrence, Managing Director, Relationship Manager and Senior Loan Officer and a member of the Metropolitan Club since

1988, posited a number of questions each of us should be able to answer: What is your net worth? How are your assets titled? Is your estate plan current? What are the provisions of your trust? Have you considered charitable contributions? How is your cash flow versus expenses? Are you aware of recent changes in Federal Estate Tax Laws, including the \$5,250,000 Estate Tax Exemption? She also explained that to avoid probate, each of your assets must be titled in your trust name.

Excellent questions from the audience centered around how to find and interview qualified professionals, including estate planning attorneys, accountants and financial planners, and how each of these is compensated. Financial Planners generally bill by the hour or the project although some receive compensation from investments they may procure for the client. Asking friends for recommendations and then interviewing at least three firms or individuals is a good beginning. Finding someone you trust and want to work with is the goal.

Based upon the quality and quantity of the questions, it seemed as though additional financial programs might be of interest to Metropolitan Club members. If you would find this useful or helpful, please contact Conor Ryan Tung in the Foundation office or any of the Foundation Directors.

-Gee Gee Platt

Elizabeth Pillsbury Society for Planned Giving

Mary Louise Anderson
June Arney
Judith Branch
Mildred Centanni
Chong Cook
Evelyn R. David
Carol Ede
Dr. Cecile Julia Eggens
Helene Ettelson
Susan J. Gearey
Pria Graves

The seal is a circular emblem with a Greek key border. Inside the border, there is a central figure, possibly a woman, surrounded by text. The names of the society members are listed over the seal.

Margaret Handelman
Linda Hannawalt
Shirley Hucklin
Effiellen Jefferies
Mrs. Wayne Johnson III
Elizabeth Lippit
Chrissie Martenstein
Kathleen M. Meagher
Peggy Mitchell
Suzanne Muntzing
Roberta Neustadter

Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy
Mary Elizabeth Phillips
Emilie Plake
Nancy G. Raznick
Susan D. Scannon
Patricia Bondesen Smith
Margrethe Ann Welch
Nancy Weston
Renate-Karin Wunsch
Mary Yetter

Member Outreach Luncheons

The rich history and architectural details of the Metropolitan Club are just a part of the focus of a series of recent and ongoing luncheons for new members, organized by Margaret Handelman and Pat Ascher. Both of these women worked for several years on the Foundation's Stewardship Campaign Committee and both currently serve on the Foundation Board of Directors. Today they are sharing some of their knowledge of the Club with its new members.

Former Club President, Margaret Handelman says, "In order to fully appreciate our fine Club, you need to understand its history. That, of course, includes its founding in 1915, as well as the building's listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2004, the subsequent establishment of the 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation, and the achievements of the Foundation's Stewardship Committee in raising funds to help pay for the project. The Foundation continues to raise funds to help pay down the Club's remaining mortgage."

Pat Ascher relates, "The women we are meeting usually have been members for just a year or so. Often they have questions about Club policy or about our various fund-

raising appeals. They also have some amazing suggestions for new activities and programs. It has been a delight to welcome them into the Club and to share with them

our appreciation of the strong women

who created it almost one hundred years ago. This heritage of strong women accomplishing goals and supporting one another continues to this day. I look forward to more of these luncheons soon."

If you have been a Club member for more than a "year or so", but would like to attend one of these luncheons, do not hesitate to get in touch with either Margaret or Pat. They would be delighted to hear from you and to include you one day soon.



Left to right: Margaret Handelman, Leslie Tognazini and Pat Ascher

Fall Fashion Show

On September 26, at Saks Fifth Avenue *The Round Room on Two*, will be the chic venue for a private fashion show presented to a select group of 640 Heritage Preservation Foundation's friends and supporters. A cocktail reception will begin at 11 o'clock followed by a beautifully catered luncheon.

In between, guests will view the designs of Armani Collezioni. Guests will have the early opportunity to purchase items from the show with 10% of the sale proceeds being donated by Saks to the Foundation.

In addition, an amazing array of raffle prizes have been donated including dinner for 12 at the home of Tante Marie Cooking School's owner Marie Risley, an overnight for 3 couples at Napa's Silverado resort and a private visit to Caspar Estate Winery, and a two night stay at the Metropolitan Club, with dinner and spa package. Raffle opportunities are \$25 per ticket or five tickets for \$100 and can be

purchased from the Foundation Office. The winner need not be present to win and you can pre-designate your favorite prize!



Although the show is sold out as of June 1, you can request placement on the Waiting List by contacting event chair Cathy Goodman at cgoodman32@icloud.com or calling (415) 318-6277.

Even if you are unable to attend, you can still contribute to the success of this event by purchasing raffle tickets or coming to Saks at 1:30 on September 26 to view and purchase items featured in the show, or elsewhere in the store. As a shopper that day, you will receive a card that will track your purchases. Remember that 10% of the proceeds of your purchases will benefit the Foundation.

Many thanks to Saks Fifth Avenue for their support!

-Carol Ann Rogers