



THE GUIDEPOST

The Newsletter of the San Francisco Tour Guide Guild

Vol. 20 – 2005

A New Guidepost



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After being absent for far too long, “**The Guidepost**” is reintroduced. The new editors are Ulla Kaprielian, Renate Coombs and Jason Cohen. We would very much like to have one more member on our team. Please contact any one of us if you are interested. If you cannot commit to be on the editing team, you can still be of help by writing articles about subjects that would be of interest to the membership. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Ulla Kaprielian:

I have been a SFTGG member since 1994 and work mainly as a German-speaking guide. In the past I have been the editor of The Guidepost, a member of the board, and held the post of president of the board in 2004. When I don't work or volunteer for the Guild I conduct walking tours for City Guides. In my spare time, such as it is, I like to do sewing and quilting.

Renate Coombs:

During my 10 years as a Guild member I have conducted many German inbound tours as well as local tours in German or English. I have written some articles for the Guidepost in its previous incarnation and rewrote (twice) two whole chapters of the Study Guide. I look forward to bringing some skill and lots of enthusiasm – as well as my eagle eye for typos – to this new editorial responsibility

Jason Cohen:

I have left the corporate world to become a professional tour guide last spring, at which time I joined the Guild. I have given tours for City Guides for several years and served as Chair of that organization's Management Board this year. Previously I gave tours for the Chicago Architecture Foundation. I am deeply grateful to so many members of the Guild for their advice and assistance as I begin my new career.

As you can see, the first new Guidepost comes to you in printed form. Starting in 2006 all issues will be sent out via our website to please all you computer savvy people. There are, however, a number of you who would prefer to receive a printed copy in the future as well. This will not be a problem.

In fairness to all, if you want a printed copy mailed to you, there will be an annual charge of \$10 to cover printing and postage. Your check should be payable to SFTGG and mailed to Ulla Kaprielian at the address below. Make sure to indicate Guidepost mailing on your check.

We need your input. Send articles and ideas you'd like to share either to:

Ulla Kaprielian – ullakap@hotmail.com or 124 Fiesta Circle, Orinda 94563
Jason Cohen – jcohen1@pacbell.net or 4419 Moraga Ave., Oakland 94611

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For more information contact:
SFTGG at 415.753.8600
PO Box 170610
San Francisco, CA 94117-0610
www.sftgg.org

Editing Team:
*Ulla Kaprielian, Jason Cohen,
Renate Coombs*

Layout & Design: Ulla Kaprielian

Contributors to this issue:
The Editing Team

**Deadline for Next Issue:
February 10, 2006**

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**term expires 2005

Message from the President

Ladies and Gentlemen

As we near the end of 2005, one of the busiest years in recent memory, I would like to thank all of the Board members for their efforts in making this a year of great strides for the Guild and our members.

This year we've accomplished a lot and I am so proud of all of us for moving forward. I say that with the understanding that there is still much growing to do!

This past year has seen us...

- Raise the rates for step-on guides and make them commensurate with our colleagues in other parts of the country.
- Write a letter to the DMCs regarding several issues including reimbursement for personal cell phone usage in the absence of radios.
- Update the membership roster and putting it, program articles/reports and more on the website for easy access and encouraging the membership to use the website.
- Send a letter to SFO management with a copy to Mayor Newsom regarding several issues including the sorry state of the SFO airport.
- Insert the certification requirements in the membership roster for easy access to encourage more members to get certified.
- Increase our visibility and credibility in the industry marketplace.
- Posted "What's New in San Francisco" information in messages to members.

And, we're not finished yet! We are planning another interesting and informative general meeting today benefitting the Food Bank as well as a beautiful holiday party on Monday, December 5 aboard the Santa Rosa and benefiting Toys for Tots.

It's been a wonderfully challenging year for all of us. I appreciate the energy, talent and support of each of the board members:

Rick Spear – Membership, Susan Guerguy – Treasurer,
Liz Burton – Secretary, Edie Marwedel – Certification & Study Guide,
Mary McCloy and Joan Wollenberger – Programs,
Joan Wollenberger and Robin Perry – Transportation,
Matt Chatta – Mentoring.

I hope that you will continue to support the incoming board and will step up to the plate to help make the Guild a strong and viable association of consummate professionals providing visitors to San Francisco with a warm and informative welcome!

On behalf of the 2005 Board I wish you all good health and on-going success in the coming year!

Susan Driscoll, President

Membership Dues: \$50 before Jan. 1; \$55 after Jan.; Business: \$75
Printed Guidepost: \$10 annually

A Visit to the New de Young

By Ulla Kaprielian

Thanks to a friend, I was fortunate enough to see this new museum just before the official opening on October 15th of this year. Since the guild had an evening reception some time ago, the lobby, the tower, and the gift shop were already familiar.

So, off we went to see what there was to see - a lot, as it turned out. Our first stop was the wing of American Native Art. I really liked the display. The Alaska natives' items made me feel nostalgic, having been to Alaska a number of times.



Our next stop was the Phillis Wattis Wing of contemporary art. Personally speaking, why not just go to MOMA? Of course, seeing a Georgia O'Keefe is always a pleasure.

The textile exhibit is simply breathtaking. There are a number of wonderful rugs; decorative items as well as some beautiful garments.



If you are interested in the art of Africa and New Guinea, this is the place to go to see it. Immediately adjacent are paintings by American artists, old and new. The change was so abrupt, I found it disturbing. It was hard to imagine why paintings from the 1700's to the 20th century were displayed side by side. I am sure that there is a reason, but it eluded me.

As a rule I enjoy looking at decorative art, furniture and such of different eras. There was some of it, but one could not help expecting an appraiser of the Antique's Road Show to appear at any moment.

The rooms are large, the ceilings are high and the lighting is intriguing. The skylights have natural light, enhanced by artificial light. In any event for the most part, the light felt cold. Despite the size, at times it felt somewhat claustrophobic to me.

"Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh" was not yet open. Since I admire this ancient Egypt, I can't wait to go and see this exhibit. The sculpture garden is also something that will have to wait for another time.



You might get the impression that I don't like the new de Young, not quite so. However, I found it very confusing and decided that it will have to be visited many more times, preferably, at least once, with a docent explaining the reasoning of the display flow.

There are a number of things to greatly admire - the use of wood for one. Floors and stairways are fabulous, made of Sydney Blue Eucalyptus. If you get tired or if you want to admire a piece for some time, the triangular shaped seats are very nice, again made out of beautiful wood. They are knee high as I found out by bumping against one.

We noticed that patina is already beginning to appear on the copper exterior, which will make the building look quite different from what it looks like now.

Some of you have already taken advantage of the free entrance to the tower by taking your guests for a spectacular view of the city on a clear day.

FYI: Beginning October 18th, the museum will be open from 9:30 a.m. until 5:15 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. After the 21st, the museum will be open on Fridays until 8:45 p.m.

Admission prices: Adults \$10; seniors \$7; youth (13-17) \$6 and children under 12 free. A \$2 discount is given to anyone showing a Muni bus transfer! Admission is free on the first Tuesday of each month. Hatshepsut will cost an additional \$5 on any day.

If you are planning to park in the new 400-car garage, it will cost you \$2.50/hour Monday through Friday and \$3/hour on weekends.

Livermore Wine Country

By Jason Cohen

Less famous and far less visited than Napa or Sonoma, the Livermore Valley wine region boasts history and an exciting renaissance worthy of exploration. Comparing the pleasure of visiting laid-back Livermore to traveling on Route 29 in Napa on a weekend, one visitor summed it up by saying, "Here in Livermore you can turn left!"

Livermore Valley is one of California's oldest wine regions. Robert Livermore planted the first commercial vines in the 1840's, but the valley's importance was established in the early 1880s when C.H. Wenté, James Concannon, and Charles Wetmore founded their wineries. A Wetmore Cresta Blanca wine captured America's first international gold medal at the 1889 Paris Exposition.

There were more than 50 wineries until Prohibition, and both Wenté and Concannon survived by producing sacramental wines. Today, run by fifth generation family members, Wenté is said to be California's oldest continuously operating family-owned winery. Concannon produced America's first varietal labeled Petite Sirah in 1964. These two historic wineries have been joined by about thirty newcomers in recent years!

The valley has an east-west orientation, making it unique among northern California winegrowing regions. The coastal fog and breezes blow in from the bay and ocean, cooling the valley's hot air at night – ideal conditions for producing fully ripened, balanced fruit. The soil is primarily gravel with excellent drainage. The appellation is *Livermore Valley*, though *San Francisco Bay* can also be used. Local wineries are especially well known for Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

According to the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association, innovations developed in the valley include overhead irrigation, mechanical harvesting and roller crushing in the vineyard. Nearly 80% of California's Chardonnay vines trace their genetic roots to a Livermore Valley clone.

Wenté – C.H. Wenté emigrated from Germany and started working for Charles Krug in Napa in the 1870s. He moved to Livermore in 1883. The family currently grows grapes on more than 3,000 acres here, plus about 1,000 more in Monterey County. There are two Wenté locations – the estate winery on Tesla Road, and the Vineyard/Restaurant/Golf Course with outdoor amphitheatre on Arroyo Road.

The Greg Norman designed golf course will be hosting the PGA Nationwide Tour (one step below the top PGA Tour) in 2006.

Wenté also owns Tamas and Murrieta's Well. A visit to Murrieta's Well includes, well, Murrieta's well. It is said to have been a place where Joaquin Murrieta watered his horses. Legend also says he buried gold nearby.

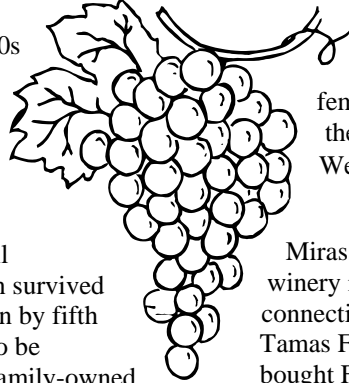
Concannon – This large winery has been in continuous operation since 1884. James Concannon was the first Irish wine maker in America. In 1950 the winery appointed the first female wine maker in California and in 1964 released the first varietal Petite Sirah. The winery was sold to Wenté in 1992 and to the Wine Group in 2002.

Steven Kent – This winery is part of the Mirassou family, which traces its history to La Rochelle winery in Santa Clara in the late 1850s. The Livermore connection began when Steven Mirassou Sr. and Ivan Tamas Fuezy started Ivan Tamas Winery in 1984. Wenté bought Fuezy's portion in 1996 and Mirassou's portion in 2001. The Mirassous (Steven Sr. and Steve Kent Jr.) became sole owners of *Steven Kent*, started in 1996 as an offshoot to Tamas. In 2005, they bought the La Rochelle brand from their cousins in San Jose and are moving it to Livermore (the vineyards are in the Santa Lucia Highlands of Monterey County). The Mirassou name was sold to Gallo in 2002.

Rios-Lovell – Max Rios bought the land in 1976 as a rural getaway from his job as Oakland cop. He started raising cattle, but took advantage of innovative land use legislation, the 1993 South Livermore Plan, to plant vineyards. The plan stipulates that owners can sell some of their land for high-end housing if they plant a certain amount of crops for every acre converted to residential use. The owner thus makes enough money to afford to plant vines. The plan also created the Tri-Valley Conservancy, which buys and maintains agriculture easements to permanently protect the land. Currently more than 4,000 acres are under protection.

Bent Creek – Showing the "down home" nature of the area, Bent Creek was founded by four friends, one of them a former school principal and one a physicist from nearby Lawrence Livermore National Labs. In fact, it's not unusual for tasting room employees in the valley to be retired lab workers, making one wonder if it's the wine or something else that gives them that cheery glow!

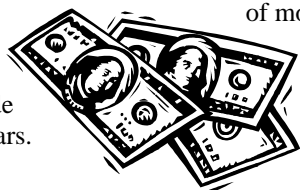
The Guild spent "A Day in Livermore" in January 2003.



March 17, 2005 – Our Visit to the Federal Reserve Bank

Our guide Andrea Davis took us through the Bank and explained what the Fed does, which is to count, store, and print money. They also ensure the country doesn't have a problem with either inflation or deflation. While the president is responsible for fiscal policy, the Fed, and most notably, Alan Greenspan, is responsible for our monetary system.

Every day about \$75,000 in old bills are taken out of circulation and shredded. As we toured, it was impossible not to notice that the place literally smelled of money. In fact, the smell is so strong that air-filtering systems have been installed so that no one gets sick. The police officer that escorted us through the vault (and made sure we didn't pocket any bills along the way!) told us that it even smelled like money outside the building. The vault has huge glass containers, each containing forty-six million dollars. They are designed to be slightly larger than the doors so that they can't be stolen.



Until we had one national currency, as opposed to each state having its own, up to half of all bills were counterfeit. That was one of the main reasons we have a national currency system, and the prime reason for the creation of the Federal Reserve Bank.

The tour continued in the check processing room. Most countries no longer have a check system, and the Fed is trying to phase it out in the US as well. In the meantime, all those checks still have to be counted. Forty thousand checks an hour are counted by automated machines.

In the Currency Museum we viewed old bills that had been taken out of circulation. When President Abraham Lincoln wanted to create a bill honoring Lewis and Clark, Spencer Clark, an employee of the Federal Reserve, decided that he was clearly more deserving of the honor. Clark proceeded to print up five-cent bills with his face on it. Before anybody could stop him, he had put 250,000 bills into circulation. If he were alive today, he would certainly be thrilled to know that these rare bills are now worth considerably more than their original worth of five cents.

Computer History Museum - Update

By Renate Coombs

On January 15, 2004, a small group of us enjoyed a very special program arranged by Joan Wollenberger. The title alone, "Peninsula-Stanford tour of Technology and the Arts," gives a hint of the ambitious scope of her undertaking. A summary of the day's events written by Wolfgang Borgstede can be found on the Guild's website.

To me the unquestionable highlight was the joy of discovering the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, a gem of a museum unfamiliar to most of us. Here is a museum with two tremendous assets, one permanent, and the other transient. We were fortunate to enjoy both.

The permanent part is the awesome collection of electronic dinosaurs (in the computer world age 65 qualifies an artifact as prehistoric); the transient part is the cadre of docents who labored with these early forms of computers. That special gleam in the docent's eyes is something that future generations will never see. If you have ever been to an aviation museum, you will remember the gleam in the eyes of the retired-pilot docents.

"Gates donates \$15 million to the museum," read a recent SF Chronicle headline (10/17/05). The gift from the Gates Foundation helps the museum reach its goal of raising \$125 million for educational programs and a long-term endowment, but even more importantly, it gives the invaluable imprimatur of an industry leader to the whole enterprise. The public has every justification to expect great things.

Born in Boston under the name Digital Computer Museum in 1979, the museum moved to its true home in the heartland of Silicon Valley in 1996. It maintains the world's largest collection of computing objects. The gift from the Bill & Melinda Gates is the biggest donation in the museum's history.

Computer History Museum, 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View. Tel. 650-810-1010

Marin County Civic Center – March 2005

Liz Burton arranged for us to have a docent-led tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael. We toured the Hall of Justice and Administration Building as well as the library. Each building is four stories tall.

Wright designed the buildings in 1957 at the age of 90. He died three years later, the same year in which ground was broken on the project. He envisioned a building that would undulate like a caterpillar over the graceful hills of Marin.

He planned for an open rooftop, not understanding California's rainy seasons. During construction it was decided to cover the roof with a clear dome. His idea of growing plants down the center of the building was carried out, and they have grown to quite a prominent size.

Wright pictured the 172-foot spire, easy to see from the freeway, as an exclamation point or ship's prow. He used circles and half spheres in much of the interior's architectural details. His favorite colors, gold and Cherokee red, are visible throughout.

The Civic Center has its own prison, to house those awaiting trial. It is built into the hills behind the main building.

After this visit we proceeded to Muir Woods and Sausalito with a stop at the Pelican Inn.

San Francisco Tree Tour – July 2005



Andy Hartman led us on an extremely well-researched tour of the trees of the Alamo Square neighborhood. There are about 115 species of trees, very few native to northern California. The trees that grow best here are those from Mediterranean climates, as well as imports from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. More of our trees came from other countries than from other parts of the United States! About 700,000 trees can be found in the city today, roughly one for each resident. Despite the large number of species in the city overall, San Francisco's parks contain a much less diverse collection. About 75% of the trees in the parks are Monterey Pine and Monterey Cypress (both native), and Blue Gum Eucalyptus.

Different species have been popular over the years, but since trees live a long time, there is a lasting legacy of the tastes of earlier decades. While mature Ficus trees abound in the city, today they are only the tenth most popular trees to plant. Today the most popular tree is the purple-leaf plum. The Monterey Pine has lost its popularity, as it is susceptible to disease and insects. Interestingly, this California native makes up much of the commercial forest in New Zealand and Australia, and the lumber is exported to the US.

The tour included ancient species of trees, such as the Ginkgo which have been around for 270 million years and the Southern Magnolia, which pre-dates bees and is therefore pollinated by beetles.

Andy did a superb job in developing and leading this tour. He catalogued every tree within one block of Alamo Square, 16 blocks in all, finding a total of 621 trees, at least 46 different species.

Much of the source material came from research by the Friends of the Urban Forest (www.fuf.net), which has planted 40,000 trees in San Francisco since 1981 (the city government has no budget for tree planting). Andy also recommended Trees of San Francisco by Mike Sullivan. The author's website is www.sftrees.com.

These are excerpts of some of the interesting programs the Guild has provided for you over the past years. Complete summaries of each program can be found at our website: www.sftgg.org.

SFTGG PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

Check www.sftgg.org for updated information

Craig Smith's Sculptures & Fountains Of Downtown San Francisco – Part two

When: November 30th
Where: Lotta's Fountain, Market & Geary/Kearny
Time: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Cost: \$10, payable to SFTGG,
mail check to Joan Wollenberger, 20 Bear Paw, Portola Valley, CA 94028
RSVP: Craig Smith at palmedo@aol.com

SFTGG'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

When: December 5th
Where: Hornblower 'Santa Rosa' – Pier 3
Time: 6 – 9 p.m.
Cost: \$35 (each member pays only \$15 – the Guild pays \$20)
Cost for guests: \$35

Mail check, payable to SFTGG
to Mary McCloy, 698 N. Santa Cruz Ave. #3, Los Gatos 95030
RSVP: by November 25th – mmccloy@earthlink.net, 408-395-7163

Huge buffet dinner, wine & mineral water – DJ and Dancing
(Wine donated by Trefethen Vineyards and Cline Cellars)

The party will once again be a *Toys for Tots* benefit in conjunction with the San Francisco Fire Department. Please bring an unwrapped toy, game, or stuffed animal.

Public Transportation: BART, F-Line, free street parking, \$10 valet parking

November 29th We are planning to have a MENTORING SEMINAR.

If you are interested, please contact Matt Chatta at Matours@aol.com or 650-374-6631
by November 14th.

Are you interested in a SMALL BUSINESS SEMINAR? - contact Rick Spear
at rick@rickspear.com, or 415-587-8134

SFTGG PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

See details on Page 7

Oct. 14	City Tour with Mary McCloy
Nov. 14	Fall General Meeting, Pier 39
Nov. 29	Mentoring Seminar
Nov. 30	Sculptures & Fountains with Craig Smith
Dec. 5	Annual Holiday Party, Pier 3

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PO Box 426752
San Francisco, CA
94142-6753