

THE INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDY

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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have written a bunch of President's Messages over the years, but I don't think I ever wrote one that gave me so much sorrow. I'm referring to the untimely (yes untimely, even in her 90s) passing of our beloved friend, Founding Director, well-respected researcher and author, and hard-working and very professional historian, Frances Richardson Keller. What made it even sadder is that it came so quickly after the death of her husband, Bill Rhetta, who was known to many Institute members because he accompanied Frances to Institute events over the years.

One of my fondest memories of Frances and Bill involved the annual Board meetings that were held at Lake Tahoe weekends, when the sessions were interspersed with long walks and visits to the lakeshore to enjoy the marvelous views. Bill, in particular, enjoyed these Tahoe meetings, and his booming laugh during after-hours conversations still stays in my memory of those long-gone days.

Newer members of the Institute have no idea how important a role Frances played in the development of our organization during its early days, at the end of the 1970s and in first few years of the 1980s. Back then, independent scholarship was a concept, not yet recognized, and if Frances, as a faculty member, was a participant, the concept had merit and was worth considering as a valuable phase of historical research. I believe her involvement also played a key role in the Institute obtaining its initial grant from the Western Association of Women Historians to help the Institute get going.

Frances was kind and helpful, no matter how busy or how involved she was in her own work. She may have said "No" to someone somewhere, but I don't recall it happening, and certainly not to me. She was a valuable friend and a valuable Institute member, and we shall miss her very much.

Jules Becker

WORK-IN-PROGRESS – Doris Linder

The Norwegian Roots of Seamen's Rights Reformer (and San Franciscan) Andrew Furuseth (1854-1938).

On Sunday, June 17, at **Ellen Huppert's** home in San Francisco, I presented my research on Andrew Furuseth, a Norwegian sailor who became the head of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific from the late 1880s until the 1930s, and from that position did much to expand and protect seamen's rights, most famously as the author of the Seamen's Act of 1915. Although much has been written in English about Furuseth's years in the United States (from 1880 until his death in 1938), nothing has appeared on his formative years in Norway. I found some of the roots for his engagement in improving the condition of seamen in his Norwegian boyhood and youth before he went to sea in 1871. His years as a deep-water seaman before he made San Francisco his home base in 1880 would be the bedrock for his commitment to reform.

Born to a cotter family in Romedal, a rural community about 80 miles northeast of Christiania, Anders (the Norwegian form of Andrew) grew up in a family that had been involved in the Thraneite movement of 1848-51. Named for Marcus Thrane, the movement was an offshoot of the spirit of reform sparked by the Revolutions of 1848. Although the Thraneites were suppressed, Anders heard tales in his youth about their program, especially ideas for improving the condition of the cotters. The scrap of land allocated to Anders' father by the terms of his cotter contract provided only a lean living for his growing family, so he resorted to indenturing eight-year-old Anders to a rich farm family in the most fertile part of the province. Although Anders was relegated to a subordinate position at the farm, a circumstance that may have nursed his sense of class injustice, he was fortunate in that the farm owner allowed him to go to school in addition to performing his farm duties. He had six years of elementary school before his term of servitude ended with his confirmation, and he left, age 14, for the Christiania area. He spent two years in Christiania, making preparations to enroll in the Noncommissioned Officer School. He engaged in language studies, gaining some proficiency in

English as well as a smattering of French and German. Such language skills were unusual among seamen, many of whom were illiterate. Also, Anders availed himself of access to books, thus commencing a lifelong love of reading.

However, Anders did not gain admission to the School, so like many Norwegian youths in the 1860s and 70s who took advantage of the many opportunities to become seamen in the rapidly expanding Norwegian merchant marine, he went to nearby Drammen and shipped out on the bark Maria in 1871. There were few other occupational choices in Norway, still largely an agrarian and fishing economy. These were the years in which he experienced the harsh life on the high seas and the iron rule of the officers aboard ship. His reading habit never left him and came to stand him in good stead as a future labor-leader-reformer who often gave testimony before Congressional committees. After several years of sailing under the flags of at least seven nations, he arrived in San Francisco in 1880 and deserted.

Furuseth's organizational talents were such that by 1887 he was at the core of building the Sailors Union of the Pacific, founded in 1885, into a strong union. Until he became a full-time union officer, he earned his living, as did many Scandinavians in San Francisco, by working aboard coast lumber schooners and, at times, fishing in Alaska. Anders, his name now anglicized to Andrew, related well to these seamen, and they were to form the core of the Coast Seamen's Union for over two generations. Always an internationalist in his perspectives on the needs of seamen, Furuseth journeyed to Britain in 1890 to participate in founding an international seamen's organization. After 1895, he worked as a lobbyist in Washington, D.C., work that resulted in the passage of the reform measure, the Seamen's Act of 1915.

Norwegian materials on Furuseth's youth, much of them available at the Norwegian Labor Archives in Oslo, enable the inclusion of this information in works on Furuseth. I am currently doing an English translation of a recent biography of Furuseth which will help accomplish this for readers of English.

Amy Essington – WORK-IN-PROGRESS

The Integration of the Pacific Coast League: Telling the Story of the West's Minor League Baseball.

You don't have to be a baseball fan to know that Jackie Robinson was the first black player in the major leagues. You may even know that this happened in 1947 and that Robinson played for the Brooklyn Dodgers. But you must be a historian to ask significant questions about the integration of professional baseball. Enter **Amy Essington**.

On July 15, at the home of **Joanne Lafler** in Oakland,, historians and baseball fans heard Amy talk about her doctoral dissertation on the integration of the Pacific Coast League. Although it was a minor league, the PCL—which grew to eight teams on the West Coast—was considered third in importance after the National and American Leagues. Studying its history, Amy found significant parallels to the racial integration of the major leagues.

Racial segregation in professional baseball—which produced the separate-and-unequal Negro Leagues—was the result of a "gentleman's agreement" that originated in the 1880s. Jimmy Claxton, a light-skinned player sometimes described as Native American, broke the color line in 1916 by playing for a PCL team, the Oakland Oaks, though only for two days. As Amy noted, this did not constitute true integration. Thirty years later, Jackie Robinson was hailed as the first black player for a minor league team, the Montreal Royals. In April of 1947, Robinson made his major league debut with the Dodgers. His success as an athlete, and also in coping with racist harassment during that crucial first season, opened the door for real integration in the major and minor leagues. Other black players, many of whom had begun their careers in the Negro Leagues, quickly followed Robinson.

The PCL was close behind the major leagues in integrating its teams. In November of 1947, the owner of the San Diego team signed John Ritchie, a college star who, like Robinson, had the burden of comporting himself as a "model black." By 1952,

all PCL teams had black players. Amy believes that successful integration on the West Coast was a key factor in the full integration of the major leagues in 1959, when the Boston Red Sox hired their first black player.

Amy's research took her from San Diego to Seattle, with stops in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento and Portland. Information about integration was difficult to find. The PCL Historical Society has no archives. Many of the men who played a role in integrating their teams are dead, but she was able to interview family members. She learned that some of the early black players saw themselves as contributing to the larger cause of racial integration, while others just "wanted to play."

Each PCL team has a separate chapter in Amy's dissertation. She had originally wanted to determine why the teams decided to integrate, then shifted her focus to discovering how integration transpired and how it was received. One interesting discovery was that young blacks on the West Coast identified with their local black players, not with Jackie Robinson. Old PCL fans suggested that this may have been because West Coast teams had such immense fan loyalty; there was little interest in major league baseball except during the World Series. National televising of games, and the arrival of major league teams in California in the later 1950s, changed all of that.

Looking at the integration of professional baseball in the context of racial discrimination in general, Amy noted that baseball was fully integrated before the rise of the Civil Rights Movement. But even in the more liberal West Coast, acceptance was not immediate. The first black players in the PCL were harassed by white players on opposing teams, and they complained that their white team-mates did not stand up for them. In focusing on the lesser-studied PCL, Amy Essington has shed new light on a piece of history that had seemed so very simple. Jackie Robinson was not the only pioneer.

Joanne Lafler

IN MEMORIAM

Frances Richardson Keller (1915-2007)

We said good-bye to each other on a lovely Sunday evening in mid-June after an early dinner in my backyard that was then awash in summer colors and scents. Frances was full of plans for the future, among them a move to a new and more spacious apartment and a trip back east to take her husband Bill's ashes to be interred in the family cemetery plot in upstate New York. I was about to leave on a trip to Germany, so a good-bye dinner seemed appropriate to send both of us on our way. It was to be our final good-bye. Such is life. In spite of the loss of her life's companion only a few months earlier and her mourning and missing him deeply, Frances continued to love life, her family and friends with a full and generous heart. We expected her to live forever.

Frances Richardson Keller was a friend to many, and those of us who were privileged to be counted among her friends miss her keenly. She represented the face of modern womanhood and all the challenges this entailed with grace and gentle dignity throughout her 92 years. Yet, underneath the layer of feminine gentility, was a core of passion that informed her life as friend, teacher and scholar. It was a passion for justice for women and for African-Americans, as she phrased it herself in her memoirs which she finished only recently. This passion is reflected throughout her extensive scholarly work.

Frances was one of the founding members of the Institute for Historical Study and remained a loyal, active participant and supporter until the end. Her many scholarly interests and achievements focused primarily, but not exclusively, on women's roles in making history and in interpreting and writing history. She was fiercely committed to the cause of ending discrimination of women and blacks of both sexes. She was, twice, president of the Western Association of Women Historians, chair of the National Women's Studies Association and an invited speaker for the Archives Opening in Washington, D.C. of the National Council of Negro Women, and a board member of the Women's

Heritage Museum in San Francisco, to name but a few. Three books, numerous essays, articles and contributing chapters to books, her attendance at innumerable scholarly conferences as chair or panelist testify to the lively dialogue she maintained with her chosen profession as a historian.

Frances came to the field of history in mid-life, when she moved to Chicago with her four children and entered the doctoral program in history at the University of Chicago. It was in Chicago that she met Bill Rhetta, who became her second husband and a loyal supporter of her professional ambitions. They moved west in the late 1970s, to the Bay Area. Frances began teaching, first at San Jose State University and later at San Francisco State University. She immediately became actively involved in the scholarly life of a historian in the Bay Area and in the historical profession.

We will remember Frances, the friend and the scholar, as someone who was always working on yet another historical project as soon as one was finished. She was full of interesting ideas, loved to discuss ideas, was well informed of what was going on in the world thanks to being an avid reader, daily, of the *New York Times*, and made no bones about her political views and leanings. She was a liberal, proudly.

Over the years, her friends were introduced to her extensive family of whom she was, justifiably, extremely proud. She dedicated her first book, *Views of Women's Lives in Western Tradition*, to the new generation of her family, her nine grandchildren, listing them all by name. Only little more than two years ago, her family and friends celebrated Frances' 90th birthday in grand style at a local restaurant. The spacious hall was filled to capacity with people who were well aware that they were attending a special event to honor an extraordinary and accomplished human being. It was a life well-lived. We salute you, our friend, Frances. May you rest in peace.

Monica Clyde

Memories of Frances

The lilt of her affectionate voice remains with me, chats in the car on the way to lunch, the birthday party in Sausalito when we guessed her age to be 70 and she confessed to 85. How young she was, engaged, passionate about events and policies, fervent in advocating for those marginalized, whether by race or gender. So many fragments, but they will remain whole and alive inside us.

Georgia Wright

Frances worked unstintingly for her own historical scholarship and on behalf of students and colleagues, providing good advice on how to advance in the historical profession. My husband, Peter, and I also enjoyed the many parties Frances and Bill gave. They were most gracious hosts. We miss them both.

Ellen Huppert

I knew Frances, but only slightly. My main impression of her is that she was one of the warmest and most loving people I have ever met.

Autumn Stanley

Frances was a kind mentor to me long ago, when I was in the process of getting grants for projects. A brilliant scholar, she was a hard-working writer and teacher who knew how to turn a project into a finished book. Several years ago, when I was in the process of making a portrait for her to use on her book, she said that she didn't want to look her age. I must have seemed confused, because she then told me that she had taught into her seventies. Since no one asked her about her age, she did not retire. She had started her career so late, that they thought she was much younger. I did too! I am honored to have been one of her many friends.

Margaretta K. Mitchell

Frances Keller offered her colleagues an original intelligence as well as great loyalty and kindness. Her choice of "fictions" as motive forces in history was perceptive and daring. Her support of work in women's history, mine and many others, gave both encouragement and direction. Her talent for friendship and for creating a community of scholars will be long remembered. We shall miss her.

Sunny Herman

Frances was a member of the board of directors of the Women's Heritage Museum for a decade. Her insights, abilities, accomplishments, dedication, and cooperative attitude kept everyone on target and positive. Frances especially took over the major oversight of the annual book fair, and most generously honored me, the organization's founder, by naming a book prize after me. She was my mentor more than anyone else had ever been, and my dearest friend. No one else has ever meant quite as much to me as Frances did.

Jeanne Farr McDonnell

Frances believed, with Anna Julia Cooper whom she discovered and edited, that "slavery anywhere should concern people everywhere." A guest at the play-reading group for Rodman's play about revolutionary Haiti, she enriched our discussion immensely. Having first published Cooper's dissertation with (rotten) Mellen, she rerouted the book to a decent publisher in 2005—an act of unusual scholarly fealty.

Anne Richardson

Frances was an icon to women historians, but no one ever acted less like one. Indeed, with her dry wit and no-nonsense attitude, she would have been amused at the very idea of icon-hood. She was known for her scholarly work, but she was also just plain fun to be with, whether we were discussing the historical background of a play about the Haitian revolution or lifting a glass of wine at lunch. Truly a woman for all seasons.

Joanne Lafler

Frances Keller was a fine scholar who lived her beliefs. In the end what remains is what kind of person she/he is. Frances was kind, faithful, and a good person.

Lucia C. Birnbaum

For those of us who loved Frances Richardson Keller, she will always occupy a place in our hearts. Her legacy will continue as she will continue to inspire us to emulate her generosity of spirit.

Joanna Menezes

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Memories of Frances (Cont.)

One small anecdote: Frances and I had this Thing about earrings. It began when I was adjunct San Francisco State University staff and she was keeping track of me. After I survived a year, I received a set of earrings as a reward. I reciprocated after some trip or other, and for 20 Xmas times or birthdays we have adorned one another's ears from our travels here and there. She was as vain as I am, no question! Very chic and worldly, no matter what age. Actually, I never knew her years. But I knew about her ears.

Judith Strong Albert

In her (as yet unpublished) memoir, Frances said that when she was fifteen years old, her aunt decided that she needed "finishing" and took her off to Paris. If there was one person who was never finished, it was Frances. There was always another project, another book, another journey—that was Frances. Bob and I enjoyed her charm, her sense of humor, simply her presence. She cannot be replaced.

Lorrie O'Dell

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Autumn Stanley has received the news that Associated University Presses has accepted her biography of Charlotte Smith, with the working title of *More Hell and Fewer Dahlias: The Public Life of Charlotte Smith, 1840-1917*, for publication by Lehigh University Press. Since her manuscript will come up a bit short of the required minimum number of words, Autumn is searching around in thirty years' worth of research for swatches of new material to add. Autumn especially thanks the Institute's Biography Writers' Group, particularly **Joanne Lafler**, for help and support along the way.

Francesca Miller reports that she has a chapter "Latin American Women" forthcoming in *Capital, Power and Inequality in Latin America*, Rowman and Littlefield, publishers, that is supposed to be out in September.

On September 7, Yale University Press will be publishing **Peter Stansky's** new book, *The First Day of the London Blitz: September 7, 1940*. It describes the events of that traumatic day and assesses their significance for the course of the Second World War and for British society. There will be a launch for the book at 375 Pinehill Road, Hillsborough, 3-5 Sunday November 11, Armistice Day! This is timed to coincide with the meeting of the North American Conference on British Studies in San Francisco Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning (November 9-11). Members of the Institute are warmly invited to attend.

Joanne Lafler received a grant from the Historical Society of Southern California/Haynes Trust to underwrite a week of research in Southern California history. She spent the second week of August at the Los Angeles main library and the Los Angeles County Recorder's office in faraway Norwalk. She turned up very useful information about Harry Lafler's real estate work and property ownership in the years of 1924-35 and the history of the astounding growth of Los Angeles in the post-World War I period.

Dave Rosen, who works as an historian for the US Coast Guard, was interviewed for CBS TV's "Eye on the Bay," explaining the history of the Coast Guard Island in Alameda. The segment airs on November 7.

In September, **Ethel Herr's** book, *Dr. Oma: the Healing Wisdom of Countess Juliana von Stolberg*, will be issued by Kok Uitgever in Kampen, Netherlands as a Dutch translation. The new title is *Mijn Schild Ende Betrouwen*, from the Dutch national anthem, *The Wilhelmus*, and can be translated, "My Shield and Reliance." In the fascinating tradition of being an historian, Ethel learned about this, not from her American publisher, but in a surprise letter from an unknown beguine sister from the beguinage in Breda, Netherlands.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Anne Homan had 1,000 copies of her new book, *Historic Livermore, California: A-Z*, printed at the end of April, and has sold 578 of them so far. She is planning on another printing of 1,000.

Amy Essington presented "African-Americans and Latinos on the Baseball Diamond: The Process of Inclusion in the Pacific Coast League," at the American Historical Association's Pacific Coast Branch Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii (July 2007).

Judith Offer's latest play is a second production of *A Shirtwaist Tale*, which tells the story of the 1909-1910 Waistmakers Strike which was the beginning of the powerful International Ladies Garment Workers' Union. Using klezmer music by Arkadi Serper and as many historical facts as she could cram in, the play tells the story of 30,000 girls finding their voices by demanding only 52 hours of work a week and a 10% wage increase. The cast includes the Richest Woman in New York, a Yiddishe comic troupe, the requisite Mean Contractor, and of course, a Young Couple in Love. *A Shirtwaist Tale* will run from October 5 to November 11. In keeping with Judith's tradition of introducing her audiences to interesting historical spaces, it plays at both the Humanist Hall in Oakland, 390 27th Street, and the East Bay JCC in Berkeley 1414 Walnut Street. For tickets (\$15-20) call (510) 444-8521, or go to www.ashirtwaisttale.com on the web.

Bill McPeak sends an update to his saga about getting his article published in *The Journal of the History of Earth Sciences*. At the time of the last *Newsletter* issue, Bill reported that the *Journal* now has a new editor and is being published out of Trinity College, Dublin. The new editor informed Bill that the article had gone back for revision, but apparently the revision was either lost or misplaced, and the person handling it never checked back. Bill sent the new editor all his correspondence which, Bill has been informed, will be passed on to another new editor, not yet elected, "and there lies the next step in my piece seeing the light of day. If I am lucky, the new editor will ask for it . . . and try to put it in the 2007 line up—if!"

GROUP REPORTS

HISTORY-PLAY READING GROUP

In the last issue of the Newsletter, I reported that the group had begun reading *Henry IV, Part I*, the second of Shakespeare's four play series that deals with the successive reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, and Henry V. Henry IV ruled England from 1399-1413, after seizing power from Richard II. Part I begins with Hotspur's (Henry Percy, son of the Earl of Northumberland) battle at Homildon late in 1402 and ends with the defeat of the rebels and the death of Hotspur at Shrewsbury in mid-1403.

We meet the young Hal, later Henry V, and the boisterous, albeit fictional, Falstaff, in the earthy surroundings of the tavern, which contrasts dramatically with the troubled royal court. As Bolingbroke (Henry IV) is mishandling the affairs of state, Hal is seen joking and drinking. By the end of the play Hal has resumed his rightful high place and has prevailed over Hotspur in battle. All is not settled for the King however, who must now deal with the Archbishop of York and another set of adversaries.

Henry IV, Part II, picks up where Part I left off. It focuses on Prince Hal's journey towards kingship and his ultimate rejection of Falstaff. In Part II, the two rarely meet. Another rebellion is launched but this time is diffused not by battle, but politically. Henry IV sickens and appears to die. Observing this, Hal believes that he is now King and exits with the crown. Henry awakens and is devastated, thinking Hal cares only about being King. In a powerful and touching scene, Prince Hal convinces him otherwise; they are reconciled and the King dies contented. With Henry V's ascension to the throne, Falstaff expects to be rewarded but instead Henry turns his back on him and his former dissolute life. The action continues in the last play, *Henry V*, where there is mention of Falstaff's death.

The history-play reading group will give readings from several plays at the Institute's Annual Dinner on November 17.

Edith Piness

GROUP REPORTS

BIOGRAPHY WRITERS

The group met on Saturday, June 30 at the home of **Ellen Huppert** and on Saturday, July 28 at the home of **Bonda Lewis**. **Autumn Stanley** is revising her manuscript on Charlotte Smith, *More Hell and Fewer Dahlias*, to follow the Lehigh University Press reviewer's suggestions. She presented the old and new versions of a part of Chapter 1 for feedback. **Ellen Huppert** presented two more chapters from the journals of Elizabeth Gurney: attending Normal School in Ypsilanti, and a steamboat trip she made with her mother and sister through Lake Huron and Lake Superior. The group made helpful suggestions to clarify Lizzie's comments. **Joanne Lafler** presented a chapter about Harry Lafler's arrival in San Francisco in early 1901, his work at the weekly *Argonaut*, his friendships with artists and writers on Russian Hill and with a Swedenborgian minister whose ideas influenced Lafler's later building projects. The chapter ends with Lafler's "arrival" as a spokesman for California literature and his separation from his first wife, Alice, in 1904. **Elizabeth Thacker-Estrada**, a member of the Editorial Board that manages the "First White House Library Catalogue Project," presented her essay, "Abigail Powers Fillmore and the White House Library," one of several essays that will accompany an annotated bibliography of the books purchased during the Fillmore Administration (1850-1853) for the new library in the Executive Mansion. Elizabeth is working a biography of First Lady Abigail Powers Fillmore. **Ann Harlow** continues her work on Albert Bender and Anne Bremer. She appreciates the constructive feedback from the group as both readers and experienced writers, as well as people's bits of obscure knowledge, research suggestions and accumulated wisdom about good writing. **Bonda Lewis** presented another chapter in her historical novel in which her protagonist, Jennie, made a significant life change. She moved from the farm dominated by the hostile Fritz Kimmel to the home of Alma and David Andersson, where she will help with their two sons and the baby expected in a few months.

Ellen Huppert

READERS OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY

At the last Medieval study group meeting, I gave a presentation titled "Marco Polo (1254-1324): The Facts, the Myths and His World." I first placed Polo's life in the context of world events, notably the importance of the Pax Mongolica (1200-1350), which facilitated a vibrant period of travel and trade between East and West. The Mongols' control of vast regions, and the resultant safety of travel along major improved routes, allowed direct contact between Europe and China for first time in 1000 years. As relative newcomers to this ongoing world system, Europe's maritime states, such as Venice, were strategically positioned. The Crusades had enhanced the demand for Eastern goods, and Eastern markets had stimulated European production of such trade items as fine woolen cloth. Much of what is known of Marco Polo's life comes from his own accounts. The first version of Marco's travels was written by Rustichello de Pisa, his cell mate in prison to whom he told of his adventures. Marco's own version, his famous *Description of the World*, was written around 1299. There are eighty-five extant copies of these books, showing rather important differences between them. Some recent scholars suspect that Marco Polo never went to China, noting key omissions and the fact that his book is full of superlatives and impossible myths and descriptions. Possibly, he never got further than his family's Black Sea trading posts, where he had access to Persian and Arabic guidebooks describing China. Scholars who support the journey downplay his omissions and note that his geographical facts turned out to be accurate. The real importance of Marco Polo is his book, soon translated into all European languages, exercising an important influence on the geographical discoveries of the fifteenth century, and serving as one of the primary sources of information about the Orient for many centuries. The European imagination was stirred by images of the real wealth that might be found and made in the Orient. Whether Marco told only half of what he saw, or saw merely half of what he told, the fact remains: he made history happen.

Lyn Reese

CALIFORNIA ROUND TABLE

At the last meeting of the California Round Table, I presented my study entitled "National Security or Bureaucratic Power? J. Edgar Hoover's Investigation of Sylvester Andriano." This year, 2007, marks the seventieth anniversary of an organization of San Francisco Catholic lawyers called The St. Thomas More Society. Along with a group called The Catholic Men of San Francisco, the St. Thomas More Society was one of two new men's organizations created by prominent business and professional leaders who pledged their support for Catholic Action, Pope Pius XI's program for greater involvement of the laity in the work of the Church. That program was introduced to San Francisco by Coadjutor Archbishop John J. Mitty in 1932.

Mitty's Catholic Action call appealed strongly to Sylvester Andriano. In 1937 Andriano was a 48-year-old Italian-born naturalized citizen who had graduated *maxima cum laude* from St. Mary's College and then earned a law degree from the University of California's Hastings School of Law. Andriano was one of the three attorneys who took the lead in organizing the St. Thomas More Society, and Archbishop Mitty appointed him president of the new Catholic Men of San Francisco group. How did this devout Catholic Action leader come to be characterized in the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "Long one of the West's outspoken advocates of Fascism," and why did General John L. DeWitt order Andriano excluded from designated "Defense Areas" on both the East and West coasts, and also the Gulf Coast, on the grounds that he was "a potentially dangerous person"? The answer to the first question lies in local Bay Area's political and religious rivalries between Catholics and anti-Catholics in the Italian-American community and between Catholic anti-Communists and their Communist Party competitors. The answer to the second question requires attention to a separate set of dynamics related to J. Edgar Hoover's expansion of the FBI's counterintelligence responsibilities from 1936 through the years of World War II and beyond. In July 1939, the FBI began its

investigation of Sylvester Andriano, collecting information from confidential informants who claimed that the attorney was a Fascist sympathizer. In March 1941, eight months before Pearl Harbor, Hoover decided on the basis of assertions by these and other similarly inclined informants that Andriano should be placed in "custodial detention" in case of national emergency. From then on, the Bureau dismissed testimony sympathetic to Andriano and built a case against him on the grounds that he was, as Special Agent Pieper charged on June 29, 1941, "one of the strongest pro-Fascist sympathizers in the San Francisco area." In a pattern that would continue throughout the investigation, the Bureau subsequently sought out additional condemnations of the attorney that would buttress the original charges. The same allegations, sometimes proffered by the same individuals, found their way into HUAC and Tenney Committee investigative hearings in November and December 1941, and again in May 1942.

J. Edgar Hoover's investigation of Sylvester Andriano did not contribute to strengthening American national security, because Andriano was not, contrary to the informants whose testimony Hoover utilized, an agent of the Italian government who exercised "a sinister influence" on Bay Area Italian communities. In contrast with large numbers of philo-Fascist Italian-American Catholics, Andriano rejected Fascist ideology and many Italian government policies because in his view they were incompatible with his Catholic faith.

In conclusion, the Andriano case demonstrates that J. Edgar Hoover allowed himself to become a proxy for local San Francisco anti-Catholic political activists who were determined to discredit the city's most prominent Catholic Action lay activist and remove him from public life. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to suggest that since the anti-Andriano informants included a prominent Italian socialist editor, CP leaders, and activists close to the party, J. Edgar Hoover's investigation of Sylvester Andriano made him a "dupe" of the San Francisco Left.

Bill Issel

CONFERENCE REPORT

Report from the 2007 Bled, Slovenia EUROCLIO conference

In March of this year, I participated in the annual six day conference presented by EUROCLIO. Founded in 1993 as a response to an initiative of the Council of Europe and to Europe's changing political climate, EUROCLIO's membership is mostly European middle/high-school-level history educators. It has more than sixty history teachers' associations and institutes with members from more than forty countries.

The conference was held in Bled, Slovenia, a resort town with an impressive view of the Alps and a castle-rimmed-glacial lake. Beyond the terrific views and warmth of the Slovenians, who treated us all like royalty, I was surprised by the national composition of the attendees. Most came from ex-Communist countries—from Latvia to Kosovo. The rest were from what I came to think of as the "European fringe"—from Iceland to North Cyprus (Turkish side). No one showed up from France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, or Belgium. There were only two Italians—both Sicilians! I was the only participant from the United States

Perhaps I shouldn't have been surprised at the participant demographics given this year's theme, "Teaching Human Rights: Lessons from History." The theme rationale stated: "In classrooms, history educators are often faced with different interpretations about the state of human rights in the past, and especially with sensitive issues such as violation of human rights." This issue is of real concern in countries moving from ideological education to a more sophisticated understanding of the past, and in countries composed of ethnic groups still hostile to one another. The new history being created is sometimes referred to as a "retelling of history."

Workshop sessions covered topics such as the beginnings of the Yugoslavian camps after World War II, the banishment of the *Volksgermans*, and ways to teach historic migrations and identity in Ukraine. Modern methods of teaching about the

violation of human rights in Romania's Communist regime and Roma cases in Hungary were also demonstrated. Also discussed were ways in which the French Revolution both supported and undermined the rights of conquered communities, and the negative results stemming from the suppression of various "mother tongues." My heavily attended workshop showed ways that primary sources can be used to identify past issues which in today's world would be categorized as violations of women's human rights.

There is a European Union initiative to develop a common European history text, although many of the participants dismissed such a text as an impossible goal. EUROCLIO has been working in "history hotspots," developing materials that demonstrate where things are shared in common, and where they are interpreted very differently. Many of its projects help local History Teacher Associations fund innovative teaching approaches "which create a sensitive balance between local, national and international history, taking into account the position of minority groups, controversial issues and different cultures and civilizations." EUROCLIO also funds research focused on international comparative inquiries which consider the relationship between history and the civil, wider society, and politics.

In 2009 the EUROCLIO conference will be held on the green line in Cyprus with teachers from both sides of the line hopefully working together. Sounds really interesting. Maybe I'll go!

Lyn Reese

BOOK REVIEW

***Historic Livermore, California A – Z*
(Walnut Creek, CA: Hardscratch Press, 2007)
Anne Marshall Homan.**

An encyclopedia of a town's history theoretically makes little sense until you examine **Anne Homan's** book about Livermore. Information in alphabetical order subtly overcomes many composition problems of straight historical narratives, such as when and how to combine essential elements of time, place, events, and people without stressing the reader with too much detail in one section or repetition in another. If a person is prominent at one occasion or period and less so at another, should the writer elaborate on subsequent events at first mention, or remind the reader later by repeating? The value of this approach is that most readers will not have to go from front to back, but rather scan for topics they care about.

As an example of how well Homan's format works, consider the earthquake entry. Anyone familiar with California's past knows about the devastation to San Francisco in 1906. Nearby communities seldom enter the discourse. Without the comparison, though, wider attention might have been given to places like Livermore, where the Southern Pacific Railroad's 20,000-gallon water tank and tanks at ranches collapsed, along with whole stocks of glass bottles and their contents crashing to pharmacy floors. Capitalized RAILROAD and DRUGSTORES in the entry help a reader who wants more. Livermore itself "experienced two earthquakes on the GREENVILLE Fault" in 1980. A now-popular place for dining and events in the vineyard territory, WENTE WINERY, had to cope, in 1980, when "Five large fermenting tanks holding more than 100,000 gallons of wine toppled."

The first entry, Airport, starts with 1914 and the name of the first pilot flying into the Livermore Valley, but his name is not capitalized, indicating that he did not figure subsequently in town life. The last paragraph explicates that vital topic with information about the development of the airport over the last forty years.

When I flipped through the book, looking at the many illustrations, I was astonished at the incredible feat shown in the photo of Johnie Schneider (1904-1982), standing on the backs of two horses, jumping over an automobile. He was a World Champion Bull rider, Best All-around Cowboy in Australia, and the Hawaiian Islands Top cowboy in 1939. When he was too old to ride in rodeos, he loved telling about them. "His plaque

at the ProRodeo Hall of Fame in Colorado Springs reads: 'Schneider had the soul of a poet and the heart of a cowboy.'"

Beyond cross-referencing in the text, the excellent index adds another dimension to the usefulness of this book. The town of Pleasanton does not occur as an entry, but in the index there are more than fifty references. The first one, dry farming, includes the information that "The winter of 1861-62 came with a torrent of rain, and the whole west end of the Livermore Valley was covered with water, from Arroyo Road to Pleasanton." When this flood was followed by a two-year drought, cattle herds were decimated, an item giving insight into the sharing of problems between communities and California as an agricultural state. A century later, the director of the East Bay Regional Park District, and Bill Herlihy of Pleasanton, energized activists by speaking to the League of Women Voters about the potential for a national park in the Pleasanton Ridge area.

Two factors contribute to the importance of this book: the format and the author's achievement in its writing, research, and illustrations. Homan interviewed local people, studied oral histories, mined newspapers and other writings. She modeled the format on a history of Port Townsend, Washington. This book should inspire community historians and local history organizations. More use of such a format, combined with the writing and research excellence like Homan's, would contribute to appreciation of the importance of local history. After all, everything becomes local in myriad ways, one of which is that we are all, in one way or another, products of the places where we grew up.

Jeanne Farr McDonnell

CALENDAR

September 9	Membership Pot Luck Dinner
September 16	Tour of the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley
October 21	Work in Progress -- Patricia Swensen
November 8	Historical Mysteries Program at the San Francisco Public Library
November 10	California History Round Table
November 17	Annual Membership Dinner

Members are encouraged to let us know all their news—a paper being given at a conference; a new job or position; the awarding of a grant or fellowship. Please send all material for the NEWSLETTER either by e-mail to lorrie@galleyslaves.com or to the Institute's postal address given below. Also, we welcome the opportunity to review members' newly published books. Contact **Autumn Stanley** at autumn_stanley@sbcglobal.net. The deadline for the next NEWSLETTER is **November 30, 2007**.

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