The Institute for Historical Study *Newsletter*

Volume XXIII, number 3 Fall 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm writing this a week before the Institute's Annual Dinner on 9 November, and I hope by the time you read this I will have seen many of you there. We are very honored to have Peter Palmquist come from the north to present his work, and I'm sure an enjoyable evening will be had by all. The next membership gathering will be our Annual Membership meeting in February, and I hope the attendance at that occasion will be larger than last year when (I think) we broke the record.

October was a busy month. The Institute co-sponsored two events in San Francisco: the meeting with the Chinese American Historical Society on 18 October, where Georgia Wright spoke on the photographs of Arnold Genthe, and the presentation by Masha Zakheim and Bob Coleman at the San Francisco Public Library on the work of Diego Rivera. I hope that we can participate in more of such 'joint-ventures' in the future.

Also, we are coming up on that time of year when the Nominating Committee gathers to pick a slate of candidates for membership on the Board of Directors. I think I can speak for those of us who have served on the Board, that doing so is not an onerous task, and I hope that you will strongly consider it if you are asked to join us. As an all-volunteer organization, we are only as active as our members are, so if you enjoy and appreciate what the Institute does for you, please say yes!

—Lorrie O'Dell

WORK IN PROGRESS

Gary Brower

On Saturday, 17 August, Institute members gathered at the home of Ellen Huppert in San Francisco to hear Gary Brower present the introduction to his forthcoming book *Ambivalent Bodies: Making Christian Eunuchs*. Gary, a historian of Early Christianity and Episcopal campus minister in Berkeley, is preparing his Duke University PhD dissertation for publication. His research is based on the passage from Mathew (19:12), where Jesus, after being questioned on marriage and divorce, responds to the disciples' question whether it is expedient to marry. Jesus says, "For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."(Revised Standard Version.) There is no parallel passage in the other Gospels.

Gary refused to speculate on either Jesus's original meaning, or if he even made this statement; rather, Gary's concern is how this passage was interpreted by early Christians. His original research involved mastering all references (about 600) to eunuchs and the different types of castration in the Greco-Roman world up to the time of Justinian, as well as in the medical literature. He says he learned much more than he ever wanted to learn on the subject.

His thesis is that for Greco-Roman upper-class males, self-control was essential. They needed dominance over themselves and others to avoid being classified as passive and effeminate. For to lose self-control was to lose honor and one's status as an upper-class man. Thus, to castrate oneself was to admit that one lacked self-control. As Christianity spread and became the dominant religion for the upper classes, it was essential that it not counter this concept of manhood. Consequently, the passage became increasingly interpreted metaphorically as referring to a third way, celibacy. A celibate priest or monk still remained a 'real man.' Eventually for Christians, the literal meaning was effectively lost.

The early and repeated Church edicts renouncing self-castration as anathema, however, show that for a while it was a continuing problem for the Church. For example, the extremely ascetic Alexandrian church father Origen (ca. 182–251), taking Matthew 19:12 as the counsel of perfection, emasculated himself. There was also a precedent in the religious sect that worshiped the goddess Cybele, with its eunuch priests, the Galli. For them, eunuch-hood was seen as an intermediate position, closer to God. Gary suggests that Christian hermits, who became

eunuchs for God provided an alternative source of authority—if, for example, the local people came to him for adjudication. The bishops, however, did not want rivals to their authority. For example, at the First Nicene Council the self-castrated were not allowed to become ordained as priests.

The discussion was lively and wide-ranging. Gary was asked questions concerning celibacy in the Roman Catholic Church and why it was not the ideal in other Christian churches. Concerning castrati, he said that while the Church deplored the practice it was tolerated, since castrati were a source of income for poor families and they sang in church services during those eras when women were not allowed to sing. The group offered suggestions to improve the text and widen the context.

—Ross Maxwell

GROUP REPORTS

New Biography Writing Group

On Saturday, 28 September, Sunny Herman hosted the first meeting of a support and discussion group for biographers in the Institute. Present were Sunny and Jeanne McDonnell (two of the organizers), Joanne Lafler, Agnes Peterson, Maria Sakovich, Georgia Wright, and Masha Zakheim. This first meeting was an opportunity to get acquainted with each other's work, and to map out a tentative course for the future of the group. Everyone had a chance to describe her project, ask questions, and offer suggestions or comments.

The members' projects are diverse, ranging in date from the sixteenth century to the twentieth, and fascinating as only individual lives can be. Sunny Herman has long researched the life and work of Alva Myrdal, and written extensively about her. Now she is doing a study of Myrdal, Vera Micheles Dean, and Barbara Ward, three Western women who promoted aid to developing nations in the 1950s and '60s. She isconsidering how they all came to focus on the problem of foreign aid, especially as applied to India, from their disparate activities before and during World War II. Sunny's major problem, as she describes it, is organizing a three-part biography that is really a study of policy.

Ethel Herr, out of town on the 28th, is writing about Juliana von Stolberg, mother of William of Orange and the great "stammoeder" of the Dutch royal house. Juliana contributed to the Dutch revolution against Spanish occupation and, through her son, to the cause of religious freedom worldwide. Ethel had long dreamed of writing her story, so when she was asked to write a short fictionalized biography of a sixteenth-century woman for girls ten to fourteen, she chose Juliana. The rest is history—or rather, biography. The work, told from the viewpoint of Juliana's granddaughter, is going well, and Ethel hopes eventually to expand it into a full-length biography for adult readers.

Joanne Lafler is researching for a biography of her husband's father, Henry Anderson Lafler (1878–1935), who was active in the literary world of San Francisco in the early twentieth century. He witnessed the 1906 earthquake and published both a magazine article and a controversial pamphlet about it; he presided over a lively bohemian community on and around Telegraph Hill in the 'teens and 'twenties, and he homesteaded property in Big Sur in 1909 and built his legendary Stone House there in 1925. The book—tentatively titled "The King of Telegraph Hill"—presents some writing challenges: Where does the biographer's voice belong? Should the material be presented as a strict chronological narrative or in thematic chapters? Joanne looks forward to sharing problems (and, she hopes, solutions) with the Biography Group.

Jeanne McDonnell is pursuing a long-time interest in Juana Briones y Tapia de Miranda (1802–1889). Briones was born in the fledgling pueblo of Santa Cruz, California, where her parents were among the earliest settlers. She lived at the Presidio of San Francisco, may have been the first settler of Yerba Buena, and acquired a large ranch in what is now Los Altos Hills, which she managed for forty years with care, precision, and the needs of her large family in mind. She was unusual in her achievement during times of upheaval, and part of the history of California is visible through her story. Jeanne's major problem, which she has developed strategies to overcome, is writing about an illiterate person and one who, as a woman, was excluded from roles in either government or the Church, which would have given her a route to honor and prestige, and left a more visible record.

Maria Sakovich is currently writing her thesis rather than a biography, but is interested in the group. Ever since doing a short piece several years ago about two of her female ancestors, she has been thinking about undertaking biographies of a grandfather and of a Progressive Era reformer. She hopes to gain insights useful for these future projects.

Autumn Stanley, also out of town on 28 September, is doing a biography of a nineteenth-century reformer named Charlotte Smith (1840–1917). The tentative title is "More Hell and Fewer Dahlias." Smith deserves a place in US history if only for her three magazines, notably the *Inland* (St. Louis, 1870s). But she did much more, founding a union of female federal clerks, bringing it into the Knights of Labor, and in 1883 calling for equal pay for equal work. Her union later became more PAC than union—one of many ways in which she was ahead of her time.

Smith is significant among nineteenth-century women activists in being an economic feminist rather than a suffragist; but US historians, obsessed with suffrage, dropped Smith into obscurity. She also left no personal papers. However, thanks particularly to her magazines and a family pension claim, the work is at last nearing completion.

Georgia Wright's subject is an anonymous diarist, a Parisian bourgeois royalist bachelor who wrote between 1792 and 1799, the years of the Legislative Assembly, the Terror, and the Directory. His work reveals the texture of daily life: love (secret) and death, friends and family, house searches and famine, guard duty and card games, job searches and festivals, book-buying, church-going—and throughout, the rumble of the tumbrils on their way to the guillotine. Much has been written about this period, and about the Parisian mob, but little about the private life of middle-class people, their remarkable resilience, and the support they gave each other.

Masha Zakheim reports that she is wrestling with "finding a voice" for the copious material she has for a "bio-memoir" of her artist father, Bernard Zakheim. There are many aspects to her view of her subject: daughter, art historian, political commentator, etc.

The next meeting will be Saturday, 3 November, at 2:00 PM at Masha Zakheim's. At that meeting, each member will read up to one page of text, showing how they overcame or handled one of the difficulties inherent in

their subject. The third meeting will be in January, date and location to be decided at the next meeting. At that time we will analyze and discuss the structure of the McCullough biography of John Adams, or another of individual choice. We will try to arrange the meeting locations so that people from the Peninsula, San Francisco, the East Bay, and Marin will have approximately equal amounts of travel time. Jeanne McDonnell has laid out the format for the first three meetings, and proposes that someone else take over the leadership for the next three, and so on, so that the organizing work as well as the travel will be evenly distributed.

—Autumn Stanley

Medieval Study Group

Nancy Whitten Zinn offered a presentation on the History of Education, Reading, and Bookmaking in the Middle Ages at two meetings of the Medieval Study Group, 13 July and 24 August. To set the stage, she covered very briefly the educational process in the classical and Byzantine periods. Side excursions on bookmaking and literacy described the replacement of the papyrus roll by the codex as the common format of books by the fourth century CE following the introduction of Christianity. Basic educational subjects—grammar, dialectics, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music—common to the Roman period, were codified in the second century CE by Varro, and became the quadrivium and trivium of the Middle Ages. The development of higher education was traced from local schools through the schools established in the Carolingian period to bishop's schools to cathedral schools, which eventually became the foundations of the medieval universities. Salerno, Paris, Bologna, and Oxford were the examples of the variety of governance, subject emphasis, and student life. Bibliographies on the topic were made available.

On 28 September, John Rusk presented an overview of *The Evolution of the Fishing Village: Landscape and Society Along the South Devon Coast, 1086–1550* by Harold Fox, a study of why in-shore fishing evolved from part-time employment for Devonshire farmers to a full-time occupation over the course of the Middle Ages. It takes into account landscape, land tenure, supply and demand for fish, fishing methods, transportation, manorial finances, and feudal obligations. The book describes the transformation of storage sheds (cellars) for fish and equipment that were located along the coast into the picturesque fishing villages we associate with Devon today.

For future meetings, the group has decided to return to its original format of reading primary sources and having more general discussions rather than individual presentations. After much discussion, *The Life of Charlemagne* by Einhard was chosen as the next reading assignment.

—John Rusk

History Play Readers

The History Play Readers spent three sessions reading and discussing the late eighteenth-century play *Egmont* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe started writing the play in 1775 and finally completed it in 1787; it was first performed in 1791. Set in Brussels in the mid sixteenth century, the play's hero is Count Egmont, Prince of Gaure, one of the early leaders of the rebellion of the Netherlands against the tyrannical political domination of the Spanish Hapsburgs, especially Phillip II. Goethe uses many minor characters, such as a shopkeeper, a tailor, a carpenter, and a soapboiler, to set the scene for the political aspects of the drama—the increasingly repressive government of the Spanish. Egmont is seen by "the people" as the hero who will defend the traditional rights of the various provinces and help to defeat the forces of Spain acting under the command of the Duke of Alva. However, Egmont is arrested, and in 1568 he is beheaded, becoming one of the first martyrs to the cause. Although the Union of Utrecht,

when seven provinces joined to declare their independence from Spanish rule, wasn't formed until 1579, the revolt of the nobles in which Egmont was a leader is considered the beginning of the struggle. Full independence for the Netherlands wasn't recognized until the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648.

Goethe's use of the historical background makes the actions of Egmont understandable, and the readers generally agreed that a sense of time and place was well illustrated. However, Goethe took great liberties with the character of Egmont himself. In actuality, he was 45 years old when he died and had been married for many years and had fathered at least seven children. But the romantic in Goethe needed a more dashing hero and a tragic love story. He depicted Egmont as young and careless, full of bravado and self-assurance, romantically involved with a young woman of the bourgeoisie whom he visits secretly. As portrayed by Goethe, it is this youthful aspect of Egmont that brings him to his untimely death.

Although the play was read over three sessions, the tension during the reading of the climactic scenes in the final act was felt by all the participants. What "Egmont" may have lacked in historical accuracy, it made up for in dramatic presentation.

—Lorrie O'Dell

BOOK REVIEW

Peter Palmquist and Thomas R. Kailbourn. *Pioneer Photographers of the Far West: A Biographical Dictionary, 1840–1865.* (Preface by Martha A. Sandweiss.) Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

This large and weighty biographical dictionary of some 1,500 photographers and others related to the field is an amazing achievement. While this book is a major reference book on the early history of photography in the American West, it is "no dry recitation of the facts," according to Sandweiss. She gives it her highest praise as a top reference tool for photographic history. The biographical essays are not only well-written and detailed but they are filled with fascinating characters, who might pop up in novels of the period.

As scholars, Palmquist and Kailbourn have been thorough, honest, and generous to future researchers, revealing their primary sources. Both of the authors are exemplars of the independent scholar. Both work from the great tradition of the amateur historian and collector. Palmquist comes to it from his work as a retired professional photographer and continuing collector, and Kailbourn from his work as a freelance editor, which he combines with running a business as a painting contractor.

The narrative style is straightforward. The footnotes are clear, and nothing is written in jargon or in cryptic abbreviation. Thus this book seems personal and becomes user-friendly for the reader. It is particularly interesting to find more than a focus on the daguerrean and photographic artist; all of the tradespeople and other professionals who were a part of the business are present to complete the picture of the era. Furthermore, Alaska, Hawaii, and parts of Mexico, Central America, and Canada are included in the book in order to represent the whole region as it developed during the period.

It should be mentioned that the volume is well illustrated with images that tell part of the story. Of special interest are the pictures of the photographic studios of the day, giving the reader more of a sense of the establishment of the medium as an integral part of the business life of the era.

This is a volume to wander through, stopping to study the lives and ways of working in the hills and along the coast towns of the American West.

Other recent books by Peter E. Palmquist:

A Collector's Obsession: Photographs of Humbolt County, California from the Peter E. Palmquist Collection. Published by Peter E. Palmquist, 2001.

This medium-sized paperback book is a compilation of images from the area of Palmquist's home town, from the 1850s up until 1999. The captions and biographical notes are very informative and the progression of images traces the history of the medium and its changing aesthetic.

Points of Interest: California Views 1860–1870: The Lawrence and Houseworth Albums. (Preface by Gary F. Kurutz). San Francisco: Berkeley Hills Books and The Society of California Pioneers, 2002.

This volume includes a selection of photographs from the San Francisco firm of Lawrence and Houseworth, the premier source for landscapes, portraits, and stereographs of northern California for some forty years after the state was formed, in 1850. The images emphasize views of land and seascape. The albums are among the treasures of the Society of California Pioneers.

Frozen in Iron: A Selection of Tintypes from the Peter E. Palmquist Collection. Arcata, CA: Peter E. Palmquist, 2001.

This medium-sized paperback book brings together many kinds of nineteenth-century portraits, all of them tintypes. There are the familiar studio poses set against painted backdrops. However, there are also some outdoor images of groups and people on horseback along with more theatrical and amusing poses that have the feel of the later snapshot aesthetic made possible by the box camera.

I will be meeting with Peter after his lecture in November to interview him about his career as a photography collector and scholar. The interview will appear in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

—Margaretta K. Mitchell

PERIPATETIC MEMBER

East Germany

Ever since 1985 I had wanted to take a tour of East Germany to see the places where J. S. Bach had played the organ. I thought that I had missed forever the chance to do such a tour, inasmuch as the one in 1985 celebrated Bach's 300th birthday—and how soon would that be repeated?

Luckily, I found such a tour on the Internet and was able to join a group of practicing (!) Organists on the same quest. In retrospect, 2002 was the better year. Thirteen years have passed since "The Fall of the Wall," and much in the former East Germany has been restored and repaired.

We began the tour in Berlin, and witnessed a united city with easy access to the cultural spots that formerly had been behind the wall. As the guide said, "Checkpoint Charlie is now a museum," and the last fragment of the old wall stands as a political reminder. The central church, the Dome, is restored, with a fine organ. Since I am not an organist, I was part of the historical tour that was to have visited Wittenberg, Prague, and Dresden, which we couldn't do because of the severe flooding in those places. We compensated by staying longer in other locations and visiting sites that were not originally scheduled—small parish churches with baroque organs.

The organists and other players gave us quite a few concerts featuring baroque organs that date from Bach's time. We had five days in the small town of Naumburg, which features a large organ, now totally restored, that was created by Zacharias Hildebrandt and played by Bach during his younger years. (I was impressed by a slide show about an organ-maker who had struggled early in his career, during the GDR years, as he tried to restore this instrument, with only a few tools and parts available, and with limited funds. He is successful today—very inspiring.)

A curious contrast was provided by a visit to Halle, the birthplace of G. F. Handel, Bach's almost exact contemporary. Halle's museum presents many visual reproductions of places and events during Handel's lifetime, and best of all plays suitable music of his as we moved from room to room. It was an auditory delight!

We also visited Eisenach, Bach's birthplace; Warburg Castle, where Luther sought refuge when he was excommunicated from the church for his Protestant Reformation; Altenburg, featuring an organ by Trost, a contemporary of Bach's; and Weimar, which reminded us of the collapse of the Weimar Republic, allowing Hitler's rise to power in the late 1920s.

Our last long stop was at Leipzig, where Bach spent his last twenty-seven years as choirmaster and organist. There is a Bach museum across from Thomaskirke, Bach's church, and the Gewandhaus, where Mendelsson revived "old-fashioned" Bach music some seventy-five years after the passing of the baroque era. We returned to Berlin to depart for home after two busy weeks of hearing music and inspecting historic sites.

I was glad to see the rebuilding and restoration of this part of Germany—although I of course cannot applaud Germany's history during the twentieth century. If I think *culturally*, I have to acknowledge that this Germany is a better place than it was for so long. At least we have access to historic Bach again!

—Masha Zakheim

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Eleanor Alexander writes: By chance I discovered that the Leo Baeck Institute in New York had a wealth of material about Fritz Mauthner (1849–1923), the brother of my husband's grandfather. Mauthner was born in Bohemia, went to the Gymnasium and law school in Prague and moved to Germany in 1876. For many years he was the theater critic of a liberal newspaper in Berlin, but later he became a "Privatgelehrter," writing about philosophy and linguistics; he also published some novels and some well received satirical pieces. He was very much interested in the connection between language and thought.

I translated many letters that the Leo Baeck Institute sent me, which I later published in a volume entitled *Letters to Fritz Mauthner from Family, Friends and Colleagues*.

My daughter-in-law Jean, a librarian, got interested in the material and discovered a Fritz Mauthner Society in Germany, as well as several books on Mauthner, both in German and in English. Mr. Werner Petsciko, the founder of the Society, has put my translations of the letters on the Internet, including a small photo. I am of course pleased and hope that many members of the Institute will take a look at these letters. They can be found at www.mauthner-gesellschaft under "Letters." You will need the user name: Exlex, and the password, which is 8138DiNo.

The letters are very interesting for several reasons: they tell us a great deal about intellectual life in Germany at the turn of the century, and they show a very warm family life and a mind full of spirit. We are lucky to have these letters, which the Roman Catholic priest, Father Wilhelm Restle, living in Mauthner's Glaserhäusle in Meersburg, kept safe all through the Nazi period. In 1966 he gave them to the archivist of the Leo Baeck Institute.

Rosalie Stemer Feldman, a member who has moved to Connecticut but has retained her ties with the IHS, is serving as an officer of The Center for Independent Study in New Haven. Rosilie served on the Board of the Institute before her move to the East Coast.

Laurette Goldberg announces the publication of her latest book, *The Goldberg Variations Reader: A Performers' Guide and Anthology of Critical Appreciation.* Published by MusicSources, Laurette's Center for Historically Informed Performances, this work was also supported by an Institute Grant-in Aid in 2000.

Francesca Miller, a recipient of one of the Institute's Grants-in-Aid in 2000, has been invited to be the guest speaker at the twentieth-anniversary celebration of the San Diego Independent Scholars on 20 November, 2002. Francesca will present the talk she gave at our Annual Membership meeting last February: "mazing Grace: The True History of Legendary Irish Pirate Queen Grace O'Malley."

Jody Offer's new play, a comedy entitled *Frame of Possibilities* premiered in November at the Metro Theatre in Oakland, 201 Broadway near Jack London Square. The work was directed by Norman Gee. It showed on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, November 8 through 24.

Anne Richardson's article "Tyndale and the Ordeal of Bartolomeo Platina" will be published in the December 2002 issue of the *Tyndale Society Journal.*

Harvey Schwartz has had published, during the past two years, what he characterizes as "article-length short volumes prepared for labor unions." They are: 1./ *Labor's Stronghold: 120 Years of Local 22, United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America, in San Francisco, California, 1882–2002.* San Francisco: Local 22, UBCJ, 2002. 2./ *Harry Bridges, A Centennial Retrospective: An Oral History of the Origins of the ILWU and the 1934 Strike.* San Pedro, CA: The Harry Bridges Institute, 2001. 3./ *Union Carpenters on the North Coast: 100 Years of Local 751, United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America, in Santa Rosa, California, 1901–2001.* Santa Rosa: Local 751, UBCJ, 2001.

He has also had a book review of *Maritime Solidarity: Pacific Coast Unionism, 1929–1938,* which was published in the Spring 2001 issue of *California History.*

Autumn Stanley has been researching women inventors and gender and technology for more than twenty years, continuing to collect material for a developing archive on inventive women even after her big book *Mothers and Daughters of Invention* appeared in 1993. She has just learned that the Iowa State University/Ames Library will purchase her archive and give it a permanent home for the use of other scholars

NEW MEMBER

Elizabeth Thacker-Estrada is an Independent Scholar with degrees in Library and Information Studies from the University of California, Berkeley. She is presently employed as the Special Projects Manager at the San Francisco Public Library. She was introduced to the Institute at the IHS reception during the AHA Annual meeting last January. She is presently researching and writing books on first ladies Abigail Powers Fillmore and Jane Means Appleton Pierce, and she comments that she joined the Institute "to participate in a collegial and supportive exchange of ideas and concepts relating to historical research and publishing."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December15	Bernard Wishy will present "Totalitarianism: Bastard of Modern Freedom."
February 22	Annual Membership Meeting, Preservation Park, Oakland.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Please send all your *Newsletter* material to Peter Browning. You may use any PC word-processing format—or as a PC-ASCII file if you use a Mac. It is highly desirable to send hard copy as well as computer files, e-mail submissions, or e-mail attachments. When files are converted from one format to another, paragraph endings are sometimes lost—or, what is worse, paragraph endings are added at the end of every line. And should you send me something that I can't open, I can scan the hard copy and thereby reproduce your deathless prose perfectly.

Send book reviews and books to be reviewed to Autumn Stanley. Please send membership news to Peter Browning on the form on page

Deadline for the Winter 2002–2003 *Newsletter* is **30 January.**

Well well well—The Editor grants to himself the privilege of filling this space, with words from seventy years ago that could have been written today.

11 November 1932—Why trouble oneself about the character of Congress, since it is not the supreme legislative authority? What the United States Congress says goes only on the sufferance of nine old crates on the Supreme Court, who are really the supreme law-making power in the land—not law-interpreting, but law-making—and who are absolutely inaccessible and irresponsible. No one can get at them; the united will of the people can not get at them in any legal way. Everybody knows these things. Everybody knows that the whole of our political mechanism is as remote from the control of the American electorate as Japan's is.

16 November—Think of the crew that we have seen come and go these past few years—and where are they now? You connive and squirm and shuffle and lie your way along to a candidacy, not daring to say your soul is your own; then for a little while you are Mr. President or Mr. Secretary or something of the kind, then are turned out and forgotten, then finally die and go to hell, and that is all.

A Journal of These Days, June 1932 – December 1933, by Albert Jay Nock.

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The Institute for Historical Study
P.O. Box 5743
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 540-8415

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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Peter Browning
P.O. Box 1028
Lafayette, CA 94549-1028
Phone & Fax: (925) 283-3184
E-mail: peter@greatwestbooks.com

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