

# 1915 Expo



## A fair to remember

How San Francisco came of age during the Panama-Pacific International Exposition



## OVERVIEW

# S.F. took global bow with 1915 fair

By Carl Nolte

If you crossed San Francisco Bay on winter's day a century ago, you would see a huge sign in capital letters: CALIFORNIA INVITES THE WORLD.

It was as eye-catching as the forest of construction cranes on the city's skyline is now. The big sign and the cranes were the mark of the same thing: San Francisco was reinventing itself.

A hundred years ago, it was the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a magic city of palaces and towers that glittered like a mirage in what is now the Marina district for nine months, starting on Feb. 20, 1915.

It was a coming-out party, a fantastic extravaganza of light, color and show business designed to show off California, to let the world see that the Golden State "had come of age," in the words of historian Kevin Starr.

Why should we remember the 1915 fair? Because it was the showpiece of a new San

**The 1915 S.F. exposition featured a gleaming Tower of Jewels.**

Francisco, a city undergoing a transformation just as profound as it is now with the digital age. Instead of a Super Bowl, or the dream of an Olympics, San Francisco threw a huge celebration

of itself and called it a world's fair.

Only nine years before, most of San Francisco was a smoking ruin, shaken by a giant earthquake and wrecked by fires that burned for four days. There was a line in the little ditty that San Franciscans liked to quote after the 1906 disaster: "From the Ferry to Van Ness/ You're a godforsaken mess."

But in a few years, not only did San Francisco stage a world's fair, but it also built a grand City Hall, developed a brand-new Municipal Railway and stocked it with the most modern equipment in the country, started work on the Hetch Hetchy water and power system, and built a new General Hospital — all at pretty much the same time. It was "an extraordinary explosion of civic patriotism," Starr said.

All that is left on the original fairgrounds is the magnificent Palace of Fine Arts, restored to its 1915 splendor, like some ancient ruin. There is also the Marina Green at San Francisco's northern doorstep, and artifacts here and there: the statue of the Pioneer Mother in Golden

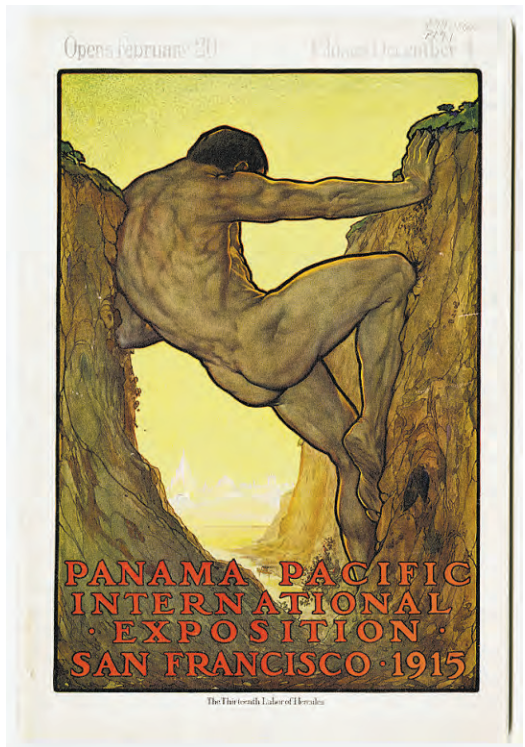






The L. A. Thompson Scenic Railway

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Published by PPIE Co.

**Above: “The Thirteenth Labor of Hercules” touts the 1915 exposition in San Francisco. Left: The L.A. Thompson Scenic Railway, with its eye-catching elephants.**

Gate Park, the two faux stone elephants, Jumbo and Peewee, who guard Viña del Mar Park in Sausalito.

The fair was great while it lasted: “a temporary Byzantium ... a vision of what San Francisco wanted to be but couldn’t be,” wrote Gray Brechin, the author of “Imperial San Francisco.” “You couldn’t decree an imperial city.”

The backers of the fair certainly tried. Over all of this presided Mayor James Rolph Jr., a millionaire from the Mission District who wore cowboy boots, striped pants and a carnation in his lapel. He was called Sunny Jim and would be sure to tell visitors that the new City Hall dome was higher than the one on the Capitol in Washington and that San Francisco was the best city in the world.

The fair was a huge hit — the attendance was 18,876,438, amazing in a day when San Francisco had fewer than 420,000 people, about half the present population, and fewer than 3.5 million people lived in California.

Of course, many of the fair-goers came more than once, but exposition managers claimed that more than 500,000 people came to the fair from outside Northern California. “And this was in a time when film was in its infancy, there was no ra-

## On the cover

The charming Palace of Fine Arts on the original Panama-Pacific International Exposition fairgrounds.

dio, no Internet and it took a week to get across the country,” said Laura Ackley, who wrote “San Francisco’s Jewel City,” a chronicle of the life and times of the fair.

What visitors saw when they got to the fair was 635 acres covered with buildings in pastel colors, to represent the Mediterranean look of California. There were pavilions from 21 foreign countries and 28 of the United States.

The fair had everything — palaces, artwork, airplanes, an assembly line that produced 18 new Ford cars a day. It had racing cars, cowboys, Indians, statues, fountains, music, fireworks, carnival sideshows, 11,000 paintings and 1,500 statues.

Everybody who was anybody came to the fair.

Thomas Edison, inventor of the incandescent lightbulb, and Henry Ford, who perfected the assembly line, shared a stage. They met with Luther Burbank, the plant wizard. Edison took a spin



California Historical Society

## A Panama-Pacific International Exposition Medal of Award.

around the city with Harvey Firestone, the tire mogul.

Buffalo Bill Cody came to the fair, and so did Teddy Roosevelt, Charlie Chaplin, Fatty Arbuckle, Helen Keller, the educator Maria Montessori, bandleader John Philip Sousa, and Camille Saint-Saëns, the famous composer.

Don’t forget William Jennings Bryan, the noted orator; Hiram Johnson, the governor of California; and Thomas Riley Marshall, vice president of the

United States.

There was Barney Oldfield, the race car driver, and Eddie Rickenbacker, later a flying ace. Harry Houdini, the magician, was chained in a locked box weighted down with 500 pounds of iron and dropped into the bay. He escaped.

Houdini wasn’t the only wonder at the fair — there was also Captain Sigsbee, the Educated Horse, who could add, subtract, and play “Suwannee River” on the chimes. The horse got tired of performing daily, so he alternated with Madame Ellis, who could read minds.

But the real stars were in the skies — daring aviators, including some of the most famous fliers of the day. Aeroplanes were as new as tomorrow in 1915 — the fair opened less than a dozen years after the first powered flight.

The first star was Lincoln Beachey, a native San Franciscan who was billed as “the king of the skies.” He was said to be the first American to fly the loop the loop, but the stunt led to his death when the wing of an experimental plane failed and he crashed into the bay.

He was followed by Art Smith, “the boy aviator,” who flew loops by day, and stunts by night, his plane trailing fire-

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## OVERVIEW

# City comes of age with 1915 fair

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works, like a comet.

Ordinary citizens could fly themselves. For \$10 they could fly with the Loughhead brothers, who later changed their name to Lockheed. A plane would take passengers over the fair, over the bay and back again. From the skies they could see it all.

The fair extended from Chestnut Street to the bay and from the Presidio to Fort Mason. The fair was crowned by the Tower of Jewels, as tall as a 43-story building, and decorated with 102,000 brightly colored cut glass “Novogems” that moved in the wind. “A searchlight is directed on the tower at night,” wrote Laura Ingalls Wilder, “and it is wonderful.”

The Tower of Jewels had no real function. It was a one-of-a-kind building, part Byzantine, part Italian with touch of Aztec. Besides the glass “jewels,” there were statues on the tower. As architecture, “it was a bit of a mess,” Ackley thinks. But it was bold and impressive, and no one who saw it ever forgot it.

The 1915 fair began as an idea by Reuben Hale, who started Hale Bros., a local department store chain. He wrote the Merchants Association — later called the Chamber of Commerce — suggesting an international world’s fair to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal and a new role for San Francisco as a major player in the Pacific.

The idea sat on the back burner, but after the city was nearly destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire, the civic mantra of those days became simple: San Francisco would be rebuilt, bigger and better than ever.

And what better way to show it off than a world’s fair? That was the aim of the city’s mercantile elite, “an oligarchy of businesspeople,” Starr called them, “a coalition of the city’s Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leading citizens. They were Progressives with a capital P.”

The city staged a five-day-long Portola Festival, in 1909, a kind of dress rehearsal, with parades, a big flotilla of ships



Cardinell-Vincent Co. / California Historical Society

**What goes up must come down: The deconstruction of the Italian Tower is captured for posterity, circa 1916.**

from foreign nations, even a Chinese dragon that was so big it took 120 men to carry it in a parade up Market Street. The festival attracted more than 400,000 visitors, and it was clear that San Francisco knew how to throw a big party.

“There was a huge sense that the city was reborn,” said Starr.

Next, the city needed to come up with a plan and convince the country that a world’s fair was just the ticket. The main competition in California was San Diego, which ran its own Panama California fair in 1915, and New Orleans, which also wanted to hold an international exposition.

San Francisco had a key ally in President William Howard Taft, who was fond of the city by the bay. “San Francisco is the city that knows how,” he said. The House of Representatives voted 180 to 159 for San Francisco over New Orleans — and the fair was on.

Ground was broken in 1911. An area on the northern edge of the city called Harbor View was selected; about 400 houses were removed, part of the bay was filled in, and work began on the Palace of Fine Arts in the summer of 1914.

“It was also a huge redevelopment project,” Starr said. In a sense, the time around the fair’s run not only rebuilt the city but also reimagined it.

The fair opened on Feb. 20; it had rained the night before, but the sun came out on opening day; a quarter of a million people went through the gates. Admission was 50 cents, half price for children.

“You know,” author Laura Ackley said, “I would like to get into a time machine and go back to the fair, because the world is so completely different now.” She would like to go for a month, but not longer.

“I would like to go to the Palace of Horticulture to see the displays, I would like to hear John Philip Sousa at his last performance at a world’s fair. It would be cool to hear him with Saint-Saëns and the 80-member exposition orchestra and a 300-voice choir.”

She said she would have some candy floss, “a new invention,” she said, “like cotton candy.”

She thought she might be able to talk to pioneers, “real 49ers,” she called them, who had crossed the plains in covered wagons and were now old men

and women who came to the Panama-Pacific Exposition like venerated relics of another time. Among them were Patty Reed, one of the last survivors of the 1846 Donner Party disaster.

In fact, Starr, the historian, says, the fair was a bit of a farewell to the city’s past as well as show of the future, mixed together. “One city gone and another born,” he said. The Palace of Fine Arts, in particular, he said, represented “a mourning for a lost city.”

On the fair’s final day, Dec. 4, 1915, more than 450,000 people came one last time. Toward midnight, it was said that a hush fell over the crowd. Exposition president Charles C. Moore offered a farewell thought. “Friends,” he said, “this is the end of a perfect day, and the beginning of an unforgettable memory.”

The lights went out, one by one, a bugler played taps, and, as Samuel Dickson, who was there, remembered: The crowd turned and left slowly, without a sound, leaving the fair and “slowly climbing the hills, back to reality.”

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PLANNING

# S.F. had money but no location

By John King

One supposed charm of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition is that it represents a lost age of civic unity, when San Franciscans and their leaders made things happen with efficient grace as they summoned a fantastical vision to life.

This was, after all, the event in local history that stirred William Howard Taft to crown San Francisco with the title the City That Knows How — praise bestowed during his visit here for the groundbreaking on Oct. 14, 1911.

But there's a problem with this yearning for an era before factions and special-interest strife: The 27th president drove his shovel's silver blade into the soil of Golden Gate Park. The city's power brokers couldn't rally behind a single site as the time to show physical progress drew near. Instead, exposition leaders put their bets on an extravaganza stretched across the northern half of the city from the Embarcadero to the ocean, a plan quietly abandoned after the presidential hoopla faded away.

"It was a grand exhibition of popular ignorance, cocksureness, and impatience," Frank Morton Todd wrote with bemused hindsight in his official history of the exposition. "Thousands might concede that they did not know how to build an exposition but no one would concede that he did not know where to build it."

Common sense would suggest that something as basic as location would be locked down before the city was selected by the federal government to hold an international exposition, but no. The competition between San



Chronicle file photo

**President William Howard Taft passes the old Chronicle building during a parade in San Francisco in 1911. He was in town for groundbreaking ceremonies for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition.**

Francisco and rival New Orleans during 1910 turned on issues of boosterism and regional pride.

The deciding factor may have been that then, as now, the Bay Area was well stocked with wealthy residents eager to make their chosen home shine. When New Orleans' exposition committee announced in early 1910 that it had pledged of \$200,000 to make a fair happen, San Francisco's boosters responded with a gala at the Merchants Exchange where

\$4 million was pledged.

By the time the House of Representatives prepared to choose between the two cities in January 1911, San Francisco guaranteed a world's fair with \$17.5 million in civic and state funds to get things started. New Orleans couldn't come close to matching this amount. With Taft's blessing, San Francisco was awarded the right to hold the 1915 exposition.

The day after the vote in Washington, a headline in the San Francisco Call pro-

claimed, "City Ready to Begin Building of Great Fair." Readers also were informed up high that "first of all, the site must be decided upon."

Which was no easy task.

In retrospect the choice for what then was dubbed Harbor View was obvious, given the visual splendor surrounding the 635 acres bounded roughly by Van Ness Avenue, Lombard Street, Crissy Field and the bay. But this was a time when much of the city's land was undeveloped, which meant an abundance of blank

slates waiting to be filled.

Land south of Islais Creek near Hunters Point, for example, was the top vote getter in a Call "election" where readers cast more than 25,000 ballots. Among the attributes was that the land was "practically fogless."

This case couldn't be made for another much-hyped locale: Lake Merced and its surroundings, then framed by a weave of forested hills. But supporters (including nationally famous planner Daniel

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# Breaking ground on expo

Location from page P5

Burnham) shrugged off weather conditions, instead arguing that the topography offered “a splendid opportunity for unusual water features.”

Downtown power brokers had their own favored destination, the working waterfront along the Embarcadero. The idea was a range of attractions in a band from Telegraph Hill to Rincon Hill, with two-story wharf buildings where each upper floor would hold exhibition space connected by an elevated boulevard.

There were other geographic hats tossed into the ring. The Call ballot included Visitacion Valley, Yerba Buena Island and the Tanforan area of San Bruno. Arthur Mathews, “among the best known of San Francisco artists,” received publicity for a proposed exposition ground atop Nob Hill.

“Had the San Franciscans been able to unite in meek agreement on a site for the Exposition they would not have been the hardy breed they are,” Todd wrote later.

And then as well as now, some cynical residents preferred that nothing happen at all — especially if it meant, in the words of one letter writer, “misappropriating the public funds to fill in mudholes and a part of the bay to make land valuable for a few Millionaires who spend their money in New York City.”

As the committee organizing the exposition was eager not to offend the city’s top names — several of which in fact were on the committee — two sites emerged as front-runners.

Harbor View was one, its selling points including the relatively low costs to fill and grade the mudflats, and the fact that the military was happy to include Fort Mason and the northwest corner of the Presidio in the mix. The other was the western half of Golden Gate Park; not only was it city property, but its potential was trumpeted on a near-daily basis by The Chronicle, whose publishers had instigated the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition.



California Historical Society

**The 1915 expo tickets were like IDs and were validated by the admissions department.**

The committee appointed a subcommittee, then three more, then a fifth. The latter came back on July 25 with its solution: a super-size celebration that would take in both the Harbor View and Golden Gate Park sites, as well as vestiges of the downtown waterfront scheme.

Committee members rallied behind a solution that one newspaper promptly labeled “more beautiful, more novel, more appropriate in spirit and more appealing to the imagination than any other exposition the world has had.”

That scenario explains President Taft’s presence in Golden Gate Park, where, among other attractions, there was talk of connecting the Chain of Lakes via a Panama-like canal. He also could have chosen Telegraph Hill, where, said the groundbreaking program, “it is proposed to install the largest wireless telegraph station in the world.” Or Lincoln Park above the Pacific Ocean, where “a giant commemorative statue ... will command the entrance to the harbor.”

The groundbreaking, in short, was accompanied by rhetoric as starry-eyed and insupportably grand as every much-touted makeover un-

veiled hereabouts ever since, up to and including the 2013 America’s Cup and the recent failed Olympic bid.

And as often has been the case in the decades since, what came to pass in 1915 bore only a partial resemblance to what boosters first proclaimed.

During the same month that Taft was feted by civic leaders, the fair’s architectural committee buckled down to work. “It became at once apparent that a composite plan was impossible from a technical and financial standpoint,” the exposition’s Division of Works noted in a lengthy 1915 report. The costs of stringing together a constellation of attractions would make it difficult to build anywhere close to the number of exhibit halls that were needed. Not only did Harbor View pencil out the best, the architects “believed that it had tremendous scenic possibilities.”

On Dec. 15, 1911, all the alternate schemes and dreams went into the dustbin of history. Fortunately for us, the architects knew their stuff.

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## 5 events not to miss

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition opened Feb. 20, 1915, as overnight rains gave way to sunshine that sparkled off 102,000 cut-glass gems suspended from the Tower of Jewels, 435 feet up in the sky.

We cannot expect anything that dramatic for the fair’s centennial, but we can expect to see the Palace of Fine Arts in spotlit colors exactly as it was the day the fair opened 100 years ago. As the weekend and the year unfold, there will be 100th anniversary symposiums, lectures, a bike tour and art shows from here to Fresno dedicated to remembering and celebrating the Jewel City that stood for 287 days.

Here are five you won’t want to miss. Information comes from the PPIE100 Centennial Guidebook, created and published by the California Historical Society. A complete listing is at [www.ppie100.org](http://www.ppie100.org).

### Lighting of the Palace of Fine Arts

The 100th anniversary of the fair’s opening will be celebrated by re-creating the historic 1915 lighting of the Palace of Fine Arts. View a film and light installation by Optic Flare in the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre lobby. Friday, Feb. 20, 9 to 10:00 p.m. 3301 Lyon St., San Francisco.

### Community Day at the Palace of Fine Arts

Opening ceremonies for the centennial begin at noon Saturday, Feb. 21, with civic dignitaries and fair reenactors portraying Charlie Chaplin, Buffalo Bill Cody and Henry Ford. Music will continue all afternoon highlighted by a Uke-A-Thon, which anyone with a ukulele can join. There may be as many as 1,000 ukuleles, at 3 p.m.

Come evening the grounds will again be spotlighted and Optic Flare will present a film and light show in the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre lobby. 7 to 10 p.m.

All Community Day and light show events are free.

### Lighting of the Ferry Building

The Ferry Building was a beacon throughout the fair, and on March 3, it will become a beacon again. The tower will feature old-fashioned-looking bulbs to spell out “1915,” the way it was done in 1915. The lights will then stay on until Dec. 4, the day the fair ended. March 3, 5:30 p.m., 1 Ferry Building. Free.

### “City Rising: San Francisco and the 1915 World’s Fair”

A major overview of the fair put on by the California Historical Society opens Saturday, Feb. 21, in Innovation Hangar, where the Exploratorium used to be. A concurrent exhibition under the same name opens at noon Sunday, Feb. 22, at California Historical Society headquarters, 678 Mission St.

### “Jewel City: Art From the Panama-Pacific International Exposition”

An exhibition involving 250 artworks, which were on display at the Fine Arts Palace, French Pavilion and other sites during the fair, will open Oct. 17 and run through Feb. 10 at the de Young Museum, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive.

— Sam Whiting  
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# 'Calling all ukes' — Celebration honors historic instrument

By Lauren Nelson

**B**en Ahn taps his flip-flop rhythmically against the stool. His eyes are closed, and he belts out smooth lyrics. One hand glides up and down along frets of the ukulele, while the other picks at the four soft strings. His hand taps against the wood, giving the tune a melodic, thumping beat.

It sounds like the soundtrack to any Hawaiian vacation, but for Ahn, these are the sounds of his Hawaiian homeland that he has turned into a musical career.

Since moving to the Bay Area in 2013, Ahn has immersed himself in the ukulele and local music scene. He will share his talents as host, emcee and performer at the Uke-A-Thon, an opening-day event at the Centennial Celebration of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition.

To Ahn, it is fitting that the ukulele be honored.

"Knowing it was something that took place 100 years ago, I think it makes perfect sense," he said. As a native Hawaiian, participating in a Feb. 21 event in San Francisco "sounded like a match made in heaven."

The original Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915 is

credited with introducing the small, four-stringed instrument into mainstream music in the U.S. The Uke-A-Thon will celebrate that heritage with musical performances, as well as an educational portion, where the crowds will learn how PPIE helped make the ukulele gain popularity.

The idea for the Uke-A-Thon came from Jan Berckefeldt, Executive Director of the Maybeck Foundation. She doesn't play ukulele, but she says the Hawaiian pavilion became one of the most popular areas for people to enjoy music and the ukulele.

"The craze today astounds me," Berckefeldt said, of the ukulele's new popularity.

Pronounced "oo-ku-lay-lay," the ukulele has four strings and a short neck and is known for being a friendly instrument that's easy for most people to pick up and play.

"Aside from it being engraved in my veins, it's a pretty disarming instrument," Ahn said.

He once heard the ukulele described perfectly like this:

"When you bring a guitar to a party, people expect you to be good; when you bring a ukulele, they expect you to be fun."

Berckefeldt and Hiram Kaailua Bell, a master uke instructor and performer, want people to see just



COURTESY OF DONNA EWALD HUGGINS

## Ukulele players at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition.

how fun the ukulele is to play. Bell will play at this event, which honors Polynesian and San Francisco history and is important in the ukulele world.

"Because of the exposition, just about everyone started playing," Bell said. "It started a movement in the ukulele following on the mainland."

Rather than have the focus of the event be solely on star performers, Berckefeldt hopes the focus will be on community.

"For us, this is a way to bring

## Uke-A-Thon

3-5 p.m. Feb. 21 at the Palace of Fine Arts

For more information, visit [www.PPIE100.org](http://www.PPIE100.org), or follow PPIE100 on Twitter and Facebook @PPIE100.

community together through music," Berckefeldt said. "We want to make it about people, family, kids coming together and playing music."

Everyone is encouraged to pack their ukuleles — whether they know how to play them or not — and participate in an audience-wide play-along. Bell, who teaches ukulele, will give a mini workshop before the group performance to show how to hold a ukulele and how to play a few notes.

Once everyone gets the notes down, the group can perform one of his favorite Hawaiian songs. The solo part is easy, so Bell is confident everyone will be able to pick it up and strum as a massive group.

## Panama-Pacific International Exposition Centennial opening highlights

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

**San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival** — Noon, City Hall. The annual event launches its 2015 Season under the rotunda of San Francisco City Hall.

**Palace After Dark** — 9-10 p.m., Palace of the Fine Arts, 3301 Lyon Ave. The public is invited to stroll the Palace grounds — see what it looked like in 1915!

There will be a film and light show by Optic Flare in the theater lobby.

Palace After Dark is made possible by a grant from Taube Philanthropies with additional funding from The Friend Family.

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

**PPIE100 Community Day** — Palace of Fine Arts, Noon-5 p.m. PPIE100 Community Day will be a free, open to-the-public celebration of music, arts, history and innovation — all of the things that made the 1915 World's Fair such a special moment a century ago. The programming and attractions will be provided by nearly 30 community organizations and some of the largest Bay Area cultural institutions, including the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Exploratorium, Bay Area Discovery Museum and a new exhibit at the California Historical Society. Community Day will serve as

the first public opening of Innovation Hangar (iHangar), a unique social innovation space that facilitates connections, ideas and investments in a way that simply cannot happen in the virtual world. The day will focus on engaging young people and families with hands-on activities.

**Palace After Dark** — 7-10 p.m., Palace of the Fine Arts.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

**City Rising: San Francisco and The 1915 World's Fair** — Noon-5 p.m., California Historical Society, 678 Mission St. Opening of *City Rising: San Francisco and The*

*1915 World's Fair* from CHS headquarters. It is a stunning jewel-box show, highlighting the Fair's history, beauty, complexity, and impact. Includes posters, historical artifacts and souvenirs of the Fair. For more information, visit [www.calhist.org](http://www.calhist.org).

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

**Commonwealth Club panel discussion** — 6:30-9 p.m. Commonwealth Club, 555 Post Street. A discussion on the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, moderated by Dr. Anthea Hartig, with Dr. Kevin Starr and San Francisco cultural leaders. For tickets, visit [www.commonwealthclub.org](http://www.commonwealthclub.org).

### TUESDAY, MARCH 3

**Ferry Building lighting** — 6:15 p.m. Ferry Building. For the duration of the 1915 Exposition, the Ferry Building was festooned with lights, a beacon proudly proclaiming "1915" to the world. This lighting will be recreated in a civic ceremony beginning at 5:30 p.m. Lights will be switched on at 6:15 p.m. and remain on until Dec. 4, the night the Fair closed. All are welcome. Made possible by a grant from Taube Philanthropies and other community supporters. That same evening, in the Ferry Building at Book Passage, Laura Ackley will be signing her book "San Francisco's Jewel City."





**To our fellow park lovers, history buffs and visionaries:**

We are thrilled that next Saturday, the Palace of Fine Arts will re-open to the public, with a day of free exhibits and activities to delight, educate and engage visitors as part of the celebration of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition centennial.

Outside historic light displays on Friday and Saturday evenings salute the dramatic lights of the 1915 Fair. On Saturday, the building will be electrified with displays and projects from local and national institutions including Maker Media, the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, the San Francisco Fine Arts Museums and the Exploratorium, many of which will continue on through the year.

This momentous celebration would not be possible without our partners: the California Historical Society, Maybeck Foundation, and Innovation Hangar, each of which brings a valuable perspective on our theme, "Then, Now and Tomorrow."

And none of this would be possible without the professional and dedicated Recreation and Park Department staff who will offer artistic activities on Saturday, and who are always on hand tending to the grounds of the Palace for the enjoyment of all.

We hope you will join us in celebrating the past 100 years and the next 100. Warmly,

**Phil Ginsburg,**  
General Manager, Recreation and Park Department

**Mark Buell,**  
President, Recreation and Park Commission

**SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATION HANGAR**



Innovation Hangar in the Palace of Fine Arts opens to the public on Saturday, Feb. 21.

Its featured partners offering activities for all ages on Community Day include:



# PPIE100 Community Day: Activities for all as Palace of Fine Arts reopens on Feb. 21



## A celebration of history, innovation, art and music

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21**

**Opening Day Dedication** — Noon. Join together under the Rotunda of the Palace of Fine Arts for the opening ceremony of the PPIE100 Centennial, including a Native Californian Dance.

**Uke-A-Thon** — 3 p.m., Outside Rotunda, featuring Ben Ahn, Hana Hou 100, Hiram Kaailau Bell, Academy of Hawaiian Arts, and special guests. All are welcome. Lessons, dancing, fun!

**The Exploratorium** — Help the Exploratorium celebrate both the legacy of the fair and the Exploratorium's own history in the Palace of Fine Arts. Movies in the Innovation Hangar Studio (formerly known as McBean Theater) include *Historic Films with the Cinema Arts Department* at 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. and *Blast From the Past, The Exploratorium at The Palace of Fine Arts* at 2:30 p.m. From noon to 3 p.m., staff will offer an activity: *Early Animation and Color Mixing with Explorables*. Walking tours will include *The Exploratorium Remains* — *Tours Inside the Palace of Fine Arts* at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and *Historic Walk About the Science of Light* at 1:30 p.m. All tours will meet outside the Innovation Hangar Studio.

**Music in Schools Today** — In the spirit of both the incredible array of musical offerings at the PPIE and Music in Schools Today, artisans will work with guests to make instruments out of "found" and recycled materials, teaching that music can be found in everything. A drum maker will show how drums are made, and an Instrument "Petting Zoo" will allow attendees to try out musical instruments.

**San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department** - Two art projects offered by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department will create objects celebrating Community Day's theme of "Then, Now and Tomorrow," by putting a modern twist on important elements of the Fair. In recognition of the importance of badges, brooches and medallions at the Fair, attendees can create jewelry with LED lights and a selection of found materials.

Staff will also help visitors create an Ad Hoc Tower that will serve as a tribute to the fair's tallest building: the 43-story Tower of Jewels, which was covered in "jewels" known as Novagems. Visitors can choose from a variety of materials to add to the Tower, which will be constructed over an illuminated base that will direct colored beams of light up through the center. Come watch the Tower grow as people contribute to the hands-on construction.

**IHangar Junior Aviators** — Spark!Lab Smithsonian, in conjunction with the Bay Area Discovery Museum, offers a hands-on invention experience. Developed by the Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, this experience encourages children between



**PPIE100**

More details about PPIE100 can be found at [www.PPIE100.org](http://www.PPIE100.org). Follow @PPIE100 on Twitter and [Facebook.com/PPIE100](https://www.facebook.com/PPIE100).

the ages of 6 to 12 to create, collaborate, test, experiment and invent. Visitors will use materials to create inventions to take home. Spark!Lab reveals the stories behind inventors' work and help kids learn the history and process of invention.

**Participating food vendors:** Three Twins, Alicia's Tamales Los Mayas, Hongry Kong, Le Café Roule, Grilled Cheez Guy, Little Green Cyclo, Bowl'd Acai

**Additional Community Day partners:**

- ▶ Cameron + Company
- ▶ Chinese Historical Society of America
- ▶ Friends of the Exposition Organ
- ▶ HistoryPin
- ▶ Marine Mammal Center
- ▶ Mechanics' Institute
- ▶ Oakland Museum of California
- ▶ Presidio Trust
- ▶ San Francisco History Association
- ▶ San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band and Lesbian/Gay Chorus of S.F.
- ▶ San Francisco Railway Museum
- ▶ Shaping San Francisco
- ▶ Society of California Pioneers
- ▶ Swanton Pacific Railroad Society
- ▶ Western Neighborhoods Project
- ▶ World Arts West

**History/Memorabilia Court(s)**

- ▶ Beach Babylon *San Francisco* Hat
- ▶ California Historical Society/Laura Ackley
- ▶ Exposition Organ
- ▶ Guardians of the City
- ▶ The Hand Fan Museum
- ▶ Huggins Gallery (Display Cases)

### SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCES

**Outside Rotunda Stage:**

- ▶ **11:50 a.m.-Noon** — Emeryville Taiko
- ▶ **12:20-12:40 p.m.** — Emeryville Taiko
- ▶ **1-1:30 p.m.** — Nemenzo Polynesian Dance Company
- ▶ **1:45-2:15 p.m.** — San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows, joined by Ukulele musicians (Hana Hou 100) for final song, "SF Open Your Gates."
- ▶ **3 p.m.** — Uke-A-Thon
- ▶ **4:30-5:00 p.m.** — Hana Hou 100 Ukulele Quartet, Ukulele Jam Session

**Innovation Hangar Community Stage:**

- ▶ **12:30-1:10 p.m.** — Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe of the Ohlone People
- ▶ **1:20-1:30 p.m.** — Nora & Ed's Mala Junta Tango Group
- ▶ **1:30-1:45 p.m.** — Panama Pacific International Exposition This Day in 1915
- ▶ **1:45-1:55 p.m.** — Nora & Ed's Mala Junta Tango Group
- ▶ **2:10-2:15 p.m.** — Chinese Performing Arts of America
- ▶ **4:25-5 p.m.** — Rising Rhythm Collaboration, Afro-Latino band with dancers performing styles such as rumba, bomba, hip hop and other street dance styles.

### HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE PALACE OF FINE ARTS

**California Historical Society** — Join the California Historical Society for a History for Half Pints Family Program. Design your own ribbons, pinwheels and other fun embellishments that recall the activities and memorabilia of the fair.

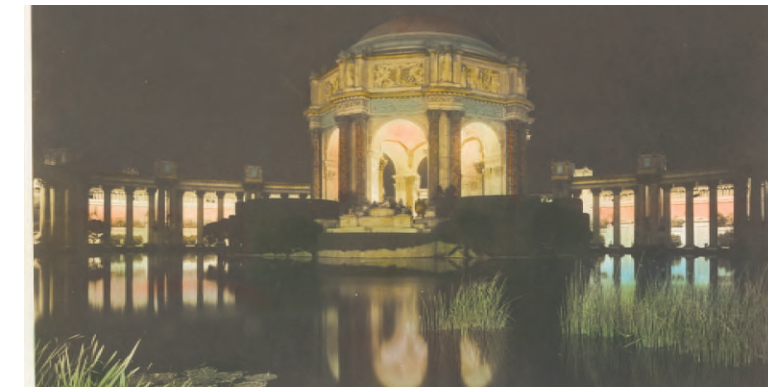
lis and Streetcolor leading hands-on art making workshops.

The Museums' area at Community Day will also feature information about its exhibit *Jewel City: Art from the Panama-Pacific International Exposition* at the de Young in Golden Gate Park. The exhibition runs from Oct. 17 to Jan. 10, 2016, and includes 250 paintings, sculptures, prints and photographs by the major American and European arts who captivated audiences in 1915.

**Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco** — The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco — which comprises the de Young and Legion of Honor museums — will have de Young Artists in Residence Joshua Margo-

# Two illuminating experiences: Philanthropists light up Ferry Building, Palace of Fine Arts

Two of the most stunning attractions during the opening of the centennial will be the historic recreations of lighting at both the Palace of Fine Arts and at San Francisco's iconic Ferry Building. The Palace Centennial lighting has been made possible with lead gifts from the Friend Family and from Taube Philanthropies.



SELIGMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION

Tad Taube and Taube Philanthropies also made the facilitating gift for the permanent installation of The Bay Lights, and the Friend and Taube families previously provided lead gifts for the Restoration of the Palace of Fine Arts. Their commitment to the city and particularly the Palace of Fine Arts is extraordinary. Taube Philanthropies also provided the facilitating gift for the Ferry Building relighting.

**THE PALACE OF FINE ARTS**

Palace After Dark begins Friday, Feb. 20, from 9-10 p.m. and continues on Saturday, Feb. 21, from 7-10 p.m. The public is invited to stroll the Palace grounds, view a film and light show and be able to see and feel what it was like to attend the Fair in 1915!

Using modern lighting technology, colored lights will sweep across the Lagoon, illuminating the water and the flow of its natural currents from the south end to the north end and out into the bay. The facade of the Palace of Fine Arts Exhibition Hall will also provide a surface for recreating the magic of the nightly light shows of the PPIE.

The designers of the PPIE hired Jules Guerin to develop a color

**The Palace of Fine Arts lit up in 1915 for the exposition.**

palette for the fair using a Mediterranean inspired theme. The Palace of Fine Arts was originally colored according to this palate and these historic colors will be replicated through lighting.

Palace After Dark attendees are then invited to enter the Palace of Fine Arts Theater lobby to see a film and light show created just for the Centennial by San Francisco lighting designers Optic Flare and underwritten by Maurice Kanbar.

**THE FERRY BUILDING**

In addition to commemorating the completion of the Panama Canal, the Exposition celebrated San Francisco's recovery from the 1906 earthquake and its emergence as a center of world trade.

Built in 1898, the Ferry Building was one of the few structures that, amazingly, was not seriously damaged during the 1906 earthquake.

In 1915, this vital transportation hub served as a welcoming center

for over 18 million people who visited the city to attend the PPIE. For the duration of the Exposition, its tower was festooned with lights, a beacon proclaiming "1915" to visitors on both sides of the Bay.

Donna Ewald Huggins presented Mayor Edwin Lee with the idea of "re-lighting" the Ferry Building for the Centennial, and he was immediately on board. The Port of San Francisco, the Ferry Building, former Mayor Willie L. Brown and Chief of Protocol Charlotte Shultz also supported the effort. Jim Phelan designed and installed the lights, replicating as closely as possible the lighting of 1915.

Those lights will be turned on once again on March 3, in a public ceremony that will feature civic dignitaries. Crowds will gather at 5:30 p.m. with the actual relighting taking place at 6:15 p.m.

Don't miss the magical moment when the Ferry Building once again invites the world to 1915!

# A tale of fire engines and Model T's

For those fascinated by antique cars and fire apparatus, don't miss these Community Day displays.

**Model T's and the Ford Motor Company:** The Ford Motor Company certainly had one of the single most popular exhibits of the Exposition. At Ford's "booth," transfixed fairgoers watched as 18 Model T's a day chugged off an assembly line, one every ten minutes!

Two 1915 Model T touring cars, similar to those that came off the PPIE assembly line, will be on display. Attendees will be able to take photos of these gems and pose with their proud vintage-attired owners. The

Ford Motor Company will also display a history of the company complete with photo opportunities.

**The Guardians of the City:** The Guardians of the City Museum and Safety Learning Center celebrates the San Francisco City and County First Responders and preserves precious artifacts from those departments.

In 1914, the American LaFrance company won the coveted contract to provide fire equipment at the PPIE. Ten pieces of apparatus were leased to the Exposition Fire Department. Two of the ten original units used will be returning to their original "home" on Community Day. Also, a hose tender from the San Francisco Fire Museum that was originally intended for the Exposition will be on display. Members of Guardians of the City will be on hand with historic memorabilia & photographs and to answer all your questions.





## About the Centennial of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition

February 20, 2015 marks the opening of the 100th anniversary of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), the World's Fair celebrating the completion of the Panama Canal and showcasing San Francisco—its recovery from the ashes of the 1906 earthquake and fire and its world trade potential. Throughout 2015, the PPIE100, a citywide consortium of cultural, civic, and historical organizations, will conduct centennial programs to commemorate the PPIE's historical significance and to reflect on its legacy. Come join us in what San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee describes as “a uniquely San Francisco way to celebrate a centennial—to focus on then, now, and the future.” For more information, visit PPIE100.ORG.

### ORGANIZED BY



**MAYBECK FOUNDATION**  
Celebrating the Work of Bernard Maybeck



### CORE PARTNERS

640 HERITAGE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION, THE BILL BALLAS PPIE COLLECTION, THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA, CAMERON + COMPANY, CAROLANDS FOUNDATION, CHINA CULTURE ART GLOBAL PROPAGATION COMMITTEE, CHINESE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA, COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA, CONGREGATION EMANU-EL, CULINARY HISTORIANS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, EXPLORATORIUM, FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO, FRIENDS OF THE EXPOSITION ORGAN, GUARDIANS OF THE CITY, HEYDAY, HISTORY CENTER OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, HISTORYPIN, IRISH-AMERICAN CROSSROADS FESTIVAL, LESBIAN/GAY CHORUS OF SAN FRANCISCO, THE NOVAGEM KING, MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, METROPOLITAN CLUB, MUSEUM OF THE SAN RAMON VALLEY, NEW MUSEUM OF LOS GATOS, OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA, OPTIC FLARE, PRESIDIO TRUST, R. CHRISTIAN ANDERSON, SAN FRANCISCO ARTS COMMISSION, SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE, SAN FRANCISCO HERITAGE, SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY ASSOCIATION, SAN FRANCISCO LESBIAN/GAY FREEDOM BAND, SAN FRANCISCO PARKS ALLIANCE, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY, SAN FRANCISCO RAILWAY MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP, SAVE WORLD HERITAGE - INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPH ARCHIVE AND RESEARCH CENTRE, SCENEPAST, SFO MUSEUM, SHAPING SAN FRANCISCO, SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS, SWANTON PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, SWEDISH-AMERICAN PATRIOTIC LEAGUE, UC PRESS, THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE OF SAN FRANCISCO, WESTERN NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT, WORLD ARTS WEST

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# JANET DELANEY

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## SOUTH OF MARKET

JANUARY 17–JULY 19, 2015

*Janet Delaney: South of Market* relates the complex history of a changing San Francisco neighborhood through an exhibition of more than 40 photographs from the 1970s and 1980s.

This exhibition is organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in collaboration with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Janet Delaney, *Second at Market Street*, 1986. Archival pigment print. Janet Delaney, *10th at Folsom Street*, 1982. Inkjet print. Janet Delaney, *Jean's Auto Body Specialists*, 1264 Folsom Street, 1979. Inkjet print. Janet Delaney, *Neighbors Painting Mural*, Langton between Folsom and Howard Streets, 1980. Inkjet print. Images courtesy of the artist. © 2014 Janet Delaney

**de Young**

Golden Gate Park • [deyoungmuseum.org](http://deyoungmuseum.org)



## LANDMARKS

# Where the expo artifacts are

By Sam Whiting

When the Panama-Pacific International Exposition closed on Dec. 4, 1915, 459,000 people came to bid farewell, and by Dec. 5, it all had to go — everything inside the buildings, and then the buildings themselves.

What was built of plaster and wire, which was most of it, was leveled, with only the Palace of Fine Arts saved. What was on loan was shipped back, and what wasn't and was worth saving was offered up for sale in newspaper ads. Barges arrived. Whole buildings floated away to new homes, and some became homes in Oakland, Berkeley and Belvedere.

Souvenirs and trinkets ended up in museums and private collections. Jewel City obsessive Donna Ewald Huggins has 3,000 pieces of Expo-iana at her home in San Rafael. But she has nothing in the way of original statuary or artifacts. Since there were 11 major palaces and 100 smaller pavilions holding thousands or millions of items, the following question arises:

Where did it all go?

As just one example, "End of the Trail," the monumental sculpture of an Indian warrior on horseback, was dumped into the Marina mud after the fair. The city of Visalia, in Tulare County, eventually rescued it and later sold it to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, where it is on display front and center.

For some reason, a lot of stuff from the fair ended up in New York and Pennsylvania. For some reason, not a lot of stuff ended up here in the Bay Area.

What follows is what we found locally, either out in the open or accessible in a museum, church, school, club or roadside attraction.



Santiago Mejia / The Chronicle

The "Pioneer Mother" statue now sits near Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park. It was displayed at fairs in 1915 and 1939.

## San Francisco

**Palace of Fine Arts:** Bernard Maybeck's glorious palace rotunda is not original, strictly speaking, because it was torn down and rebuilt of sturdier materials in the 1960s.

What is original are the giant green wooden doors to the palace. Behind those giant wooden doors are twin 14-foot plaster angels that stand on pedestals near the doors. Designed by Maybeck, these were salvaged from the original rotunda. Also original are the steel truss framework to the

palace and four great stone fireplaces.

One aspect that predates the fair is the lagoon, though it was not in the graceful curvaceous design it now inhabits.

**"Pioneer Mother" (Golden Gate Park):** Along John F. Kennedy Drive, at the entrance to Stow Lake, stands a tall bronze statue of a woman with two kids tugging on her. In bas relief at its base are various forms of transit for moving west.

"Pioneer Mother" was cast in New York and shipped west in tribute to Mother's Day,

created by Congress in 1914. At the fair it stood outside the main entrance to the Palace of Fine Arts. It went into storage, only to reappear at the subsequent Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island in 1939. From there it came to the park, a donation by Native Daughters of the Golden West.

Other than two paintings in storage, this is the only piece of the fair in the Civic Art Collection overseen by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

**"Beethoven" (Golden Gate Park):** In front of the Califor-

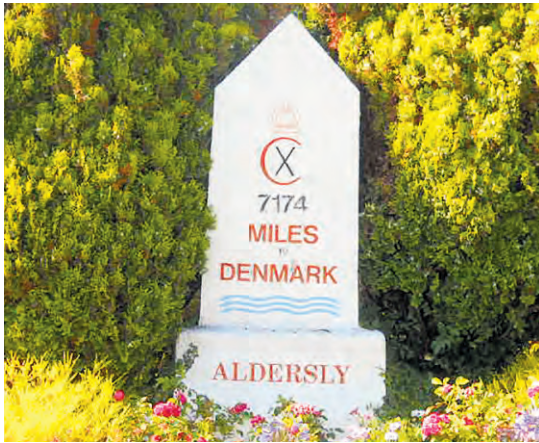
nia Academy of Sciences is a bust of Ludwig von Beethoven, staring directly at the course band shell, as if trying to hear a concert. The bust was donated to the city in 1915 by the German-American Auxiliary to the Panama Pacific International Exposition.

**Marble urn (Golden Gate Park):** Inside the Conservatory of Flowers is a heavy marble urn with naked kids forming a ring around its base. It is unmarked, as is the palm tree nearby, transplanted from the fair.

**Japanese Tea Garden gates**



**A signpost from the Denmark pavilion at the exposition now marks a retirement community in San Rafael.**



Gina Pandiani

**(Golden Gate Park):** A gift from the sister city of Osaka, Japan, the gates were actually built for the California Mid-winter Fair of 1894, and re-moved to the Marina for the fair. They were returned and were restored in the 1980s.

**De Young Museum:** Three paintings exhibited at the fair are on permanent display in the galleries. They are “Mother and Child” by John Henry Twachtman, “Winter’s Festival” by Willard Metcalf and “Spring Winds” by Joseph Raphael. Also on permanent display is “California,” a bust by sculptor Hiram Powers.

**Legion of Honor:** “The Thinker,” by Auguste Rodin, was a greeter at the French pavilion and now does the same duty in the entry court to the Legion.

**University Club:** Against a red brick wall on the sidewalk, as California Street climbs to Powell, is a bronze statue of the Greek god Hermes, with wings at his Achilleses’. Called “Resting Hermes,” it belongs to the University Club, which bought it from the Italian delegation for \$300 at fair’s end.

At first, Hermes was exhibited in the fourth-floor rotunda of the club on its own pedestal. Later it was removed to the garden and eventually made its way to the sidewalk. Stolen once, it was recovered intact, and is now the easiest artifact to see without having to get out of the car.

**Notre Dame des Victoires:** Inside the school auditorium, which is just a few steps up from Pine Street at Stockton Street, sits what is certainly the largest collection of fair artifacts still serving their intended use: 150 folding chairs.

Made of wood and still sturdy and comfortable, the chairs are joined at the hip in sets of two, like the stadium seats at Candlestick Park.

The chairs were bought at fair’s end and stored for 10 years until the school opened in 1924.

**Trinity Episcopal Church:** The bronze lectern in the shape of an angel came from the Tiffany exhibit at the fair. Standing 8 feet tall and weighing hundreds of pounds, it was purchased by the father of a parishioner and donated to the church at Gough and Bush streets. Trinity is currently closed for a seismic upgrade.

**Bill Graham Civic Auditorium:** An off-site structure of steel and stone, it was put up as a joint project between the city and fair organizers. Originally called Exposition Auditorium and later San Francisco Civic Auditorium, it opened a month before the fair and was used for conventions and ancillary events. The Exposition Organ has been sitting in its basement for years. Its pipes have been restored and it awaits its centennial debut.



Santiago Mejia / The Chronicle

**Honorio Perez passes the exposition’s elephant light standards, which are now at Viña del Mar park in Sausalito.**

**One Sansome Street:** A. Stirling Calder, sculptor in chief for the fair, made 90 “Star Maiden” statues to gaze out from the Court of the Universe. The maidens were not built to last, but the mold was, and a single replica was commissioned by Citicorp in 1983. Called “The Star Girl,” the bronze statue stands in the open atrium of the banking center at the corner of Sansome and Market streets.

**Herbst Theatre:** Eight 27-foot murals, painted by Frank Brangwyn for the Court of Abundance, hang in the auditorium of the Herbst Theatre at the War Memorial Veterans Building. The building is closed for refurbishing, and the murals will next be seen when it reopens later in 2015.

## Marin County

**Viña del Mar Park, Sausalito:** Standing along Bridgeway are twin elephant streetlight standards with a circular fountain set back between them. The elephants, named Dumbo and Peewee, stood as flagpoles outside the Court of the Universe at the fair, and were designed by the famed New York architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White. The fountain, which was outside the Palace of Education, was designed by architect William Faville of Sausalito.

After the fair, Faville and subscribers purchased the fountain and elephants, which was barged to the Sausalito pier and slid along rollers into place. The elephants were used

as flagpole standards until 1939, when the vibration started to weigh on them and they were repurposed as lighting fixtures. In 1976, they were restored, and they look unblemished by the 40 years since.

**Mill Valley City Hall:** A painting from the Marin County Exhibit in the California Building hangs above the entry to the council chambers. Called “Mount Tamalpais Panorama,” it is by Ettore “Hector” Serbaroli.

**Mission San Rafael:** Another painting from the Marin County Exhibit is in the museum gift shop at the historic mission. First displayed in the Cliff House, following the fair, it was purchased by a church patron for \$400 and moved to the mission in 1976. Painted in an irregular half-oval shape, it was titled “Baptism of Chief Marin,” but is now called “Mission San Rafael.”

**Downtown San Rafael:** The Victor Company Pavilion, forerunner to RCA Victor, was dismantled and rafted to Marin, where it hit land and was reassembled into the San Rafael Improvement Club on Fifth and H streets. It is now listed as belonging to Rotary Manor.

**Aldersly Retirement Community (San Rafael):** The sign from outside the Denmark Pavilion made its way to the driveway of this retirement home. The tombstone-like marker reads “Denmark 7174 miles,” to rub it in for lonely seagoing Danes who were the first residents at 326 Mission Ave.

## East Bay

**Chabot Space & Science Center:** Before the fair, Chabot Observatory in Oakland had contracted with the Cleveland firm Warner & Swasey to build a 20-inch telescope for its new observatory. A deal was cut to waive the shipping fee in ex-

*Artifacts continues on P14*



## In search of expo's treasures

*Artifacts from page P13*

change for first exhibiting the telescope, nicknamed Rachel, in the Palace of Liberal Arts. After the fair, the deal was honored, and Rachel arrived on Dec. 17, 1915, to be assembled. It has been there ever since and is open for free viewings Friday and Saturday evenings at the Chabot Space & Science Center.

**Oakland Museum of California:** Two paintings from the Palace of Fine Arts are on permanent view. They are "California" by Arthur Mathews and "Warm Afternoon" by Guy Rose. Also on view is a dress worn by vaudeville dancer La Estrellita, who starred in "Streets of Seville," performed in the Joy Zone.

**Martinez Historical Society Museum:** Every county in the state was invited to place an exhibit in the California Building. Only Contra Costa County seems to have preserved its exhibit intact. The exhibit consisted of two light boxes that illuminated glass plate pictures of Byron Hot Springs, as an enticement to the resort. The light boxes, featuring their original bulbs, are in working order, though Byron Hot Springs is not. It folded, as did a hotel built specifically to handle the crowds expected to come to the hot springs directly from the fair.

**"The Football Players" (UC Berkeley):** A bronze by Douglas Lee Tilden arrived in 1900 to become the first statue on campus. Loaned to the fair, "The Football Players" was returned and stands on a pedestal between Strawberry Creek and the Valley Life Sciences Building.



Sam Whiting / The Chronicle

**Telescope from the exposition is at the Chabot Space Center.**

**Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology (UC Berkeley):** Dolls from the Swedish Pavilion and the model of a Chinese temple are normally on display in the museum, which is closed for renovation. The costumes worn by the Swedish dolls reappear in a dance performance at City Hall on Friday, Feb. 20.

**London plane trees (UC Berkeley):** The manicured grove of 54 trees on the esplanade at the base of Sather Tower were transplanted from the fair to the Campanile, which opened three days before the fair closed.

### Peninsula

**Tea house from Japanese Pavilion:** Bought by one E.D. Swift, who fancied it a residence for his daughters, it was barged down to Belmont. Three years later, it was loaded on a wagon and brought by mule

train into the hills, above El Camino Real. A speakeasy called Elsie's during Prohibition, it has variously been a bordello and a respectable saloon, and is now the Van's Restaurant, an American steak house.

The Van's has been expanded over the years, but the entrance and main dining room, built of redwood, are original, as is the wallpaper.

### Santa Cruz County

**Overfair Railway:** This small railroad, one-third scale, was transported to the Santa Cruz Mountains, where it still chugs along as an amusement called Swanton Pacific, owned and operated by Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

*Sam Whiting is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: [swhiting@sfgate.com](mailto:swhiting@sfgate.com) Twitter: @samwhitingsf*

## INNOVATIONS

# Companies had a chance to shine — and even glow

**By Steve Rubenstein**

It was a great big beautiful tomorrow in 1915, and somebody at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition wanted to sell it to you.

General Electric wanted to hook fairgoers on this wonderful thing called a toaster that could, without an open flame of any kind, produce toast. Heinz wanted to enthrall attendees with the miracle of canned peaches that had no bits of solder inside.

The phone company wanted to remind fairgoers that its new transcontinental lines were open for business and that, for the equivalent of \$500 in today's funds, anybody could place a three-minute call to New York, assuming he had that much to say.

And the mining industry desired to show off a great new glowing, all-powerful substance called radium, and did. Tens of thousands of fairgoers descended into a fake mine and stared at specks of radium through microscopes.

Radium turned out to be good for nothing, except for making your watch dial glow in the dark, and for causing anemia and cancer. But there was so much to do at the fair that no one stuck around the radium exhibit long enough to come down with anything.

Much of the marketing took place in the commercial exhibits sponsored by giant corporations. Perhaps the most aggressive was General Electric, which built a model

house and stuffed it full of miracle appliances that hardly anyone in 1915 had heard of.

Some of the miracles, like the toaster, are still in general use. Other miracles, such as the electric player piano, are still in general use in museums. Then there is the electric fireplace, which never caught on because a fire is not supposed to be electric, and — at other exhibits — the electric butter churn and the electric cream separator, whose times have come and gone, and the electric cow milker, which is useful if your home comes with a cow. "Corporate marketing," said fair historian Laura Ackley, "was alive and well. The fair was the university of the world and the shop window of civilization."

World's fairs and modern amusement parks have always had corporate sponsors presenting elaborate commercials in the form of entertainment. At more recent world's fairs, exhibit halls were built and named by their corporate sponsors and not held in nondenominational "palaces" as they were in 1915.

Visitors to the 1964-65 world's fair, and later to Disneyland, remember the GE Carousel of Progress — the theater-in-the-round update of General Electric's 1915 paean to toasters, as well as countless rides and attractions sponsored by big-name conglomerates.

In 1915, the hottest newfangled technology was that miracle called the airplane, invented only 13 years earlier. The fair featured a handful





"THE TRAIL OF THE END" P. P. I. E. DEC. 4, 1915. COPYRIGHT 1915 BY F. R. ZIEL

F.R. Ziel 1915

**Above: Stunt pilot Art Smith leaves a trail in the air to mark the end of the world's fair.**

**Right: Henry Ford's entourage displays the newest automobiles at the expo.**



California Historical Society 1915

of stunt pilots putting on air shows, but for those of means, there was nothing to match an actual 10-minute plane ride. For \$10 — a formidable sum in 1915 — fairgoers took off from the bay two at a time in a homemade seaplane and circled the bay and the Marin County coast.

Before clambering aboard, passengers had to sign a waiver agreeing that, were they to die, it was tough luck. No refunds. But hundreds of fairgoers took the flights without incident.

Even newer than the airplane was the transcontinental phone line, which had been completed only the year before. Thousands of fairgoers jammed the AT&T

theater, picked up earpieces wired to their auditorium seats and listened enthralled while a young man in New York read the headlines, described the weather and played a phonograph record.

Fifty years later, the phone company would stage a similar exhibit at the New York World's Fair, touting its latest invention — the picture phone. The public responded in a similar way. Few could afford a long-distance call in 1915, and even fewer wanted a picture phone in 1965.

The technology of the tin can was just as exciting in 1915 and much more affordable. Food safety was all the rage in 1915, and nothing was worse than opening a tin can that had been soldered shut and finding bits of solder inside. Making its debut at the 1915 fair was the miracle canning machine, which crimped shut the lids instead of soldering them. With no more bits of toxic metal inside, a can of peaches suddenly contained nothing but peaches. To most fairgoers, that breakthrough was a lot more important than calling New York.

Perhaps no exhibit captured the uncharted brave world of tomorrow like the fake mine. Fairgoers rode an ersatz mine elevator (it vibrated but didn't go anywhere) and entered a simulated mine, where they were invited to view through a microscope the miraculous, glowing stuff known as radium. Fairgoers were told radium's limitless energy would power the future.

But after radium turned out to be too hazardous even for glow-in-the-dark watches, it went the way of the picture phone and the electric fireplace. The future did turn out to be glowing, in other ways.

*Steve Rubenstein is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: srubenstein@sfgate.com*



# Pacific WORLDS

OPENING MAY 2015

OAK  
LAND  
MUSEUM  
OF  
CALIFORNIA

The museum of us.

This exhibition is made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence, the Oakland Museum Women's Board, Matson Foundation, James Campbell Company LLC and Stephen and Susan Chamberlin. Additional support is provided by the OMCA History Guild.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
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[museumca.org](http://museumca.org)

PHOTO: age/fotostock