

Living

REFERENCE

NORTH BEACH BRANCH

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sunday, March 23, 1986—1

By Jane Ayres

Special to the Times Tribune

Why does an outsider go to North Beach?

Let's start out in the morning with a walk up Columbus Avenue. Graffeo Coffee is roasting beans at its store near Francisco Street. Across the street at the North Beach branch of the San Francisco Public Library, the bocce ball court waits for one of the old Italian players to come unlock it with his key. The librarians open the doors to people waiting on the street to read books. Early morning swimmers exit the public swimming pool near the playground.

At Gino's Cafferata at Lombard and Columbus, the little factory is puffing as it turns out ravioli and tortellini — fresh every day.

Chinese people practice tai chi in Washington Square Park as the sun breaks through the fog. Chimes ring from the twin towers of Sts. Peter and Paul Church facing the park as a plump Chinese priest stands in the doorway of the Salesian Boys' Club, his arms folded across his stomach.

A wild man in a vestigial military uniform harangues a row of winos sitting



Nestled below Coit Tower lie the homes and businesses of San Francisco's North Beach.

*"... You have seen them
on the benches*

*in the park
in Washington Square*

*the old Italians in the
black high button shoes*

*the old men in their
old felt fedoras*

with stained hatbands

*have been dying
and dying*

day by day ..."

*From "The Old
Italians Dying" by
Lawrence Ferlinghetti*

NORTH BEACH

NORTH BEACH

on a park bench. They look at him attentively, like good students in a classroom.

The bartender at Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store makes his first caffe latte of the day. He serves it to a street sweeper who stands in the doorway drinking it. Farther up Columbus at a fruit and vegetable market in the middle of the block, a grocer puts his stock on the sidewalk. As a man walks by, the Chinese grocer says "ciao."

They are washing the big windows at Cafe Roma and Cafe Puccini right across the street. The two cafes face each other like tiny principalities in Italy. One gets the sun in the morning; the other in the afternoon.

Now you come to the corner of Columbus and Broadway, still San Francisco's Times Square. It is quiet in the morning. The night people are asleep. Down Columbus is City Lights Books, its windows full of books you haven't read, books you want to read, books you never heard of but wouldn't mind meeting.

All this is just on Columbus Avenue. You haven't even climbed Telegraph Hill yet to look at the WPA murals in Coit Tower. You haven't had lunch yet, or visited an Italian bakery, or listened to opera on the juke box at Tosca or jazz on Sunday afternoon at Grant and Green.

And you haven't had the incomparable delight of walking down the Filbert Steps at night and discovering the magical community garden full of tropical flowers and palm fronds created over 30 years by Grace Marchant for her Telegraph Hill and North Beach neighbors.



Johnny Giotfa leads the operatic free-for-all at noon Saturdays in Cafe Trieste.



The old Italian men spend afternoons playing bocce ball...



...while the Chinese begin their mornings with tai chi in Washington Square Park.

Are we losing 'The Italian Heart?'

By William Johnson
Times Tribune staff

Former San Francisco 49er tight end Monty Stickles, now pot-bellied and graying, shambled into the Little City Antipasti Bar, corner of Powell and Union streets, a couple of weeks ago. He spotted the bartender reading a book about North Beach titled "The Italian Heart of San Francisco."

"Must be an old book," Stickles commented with glum resignation as he eased his girth onto a bar stool.

"North Beach is mostly Chinese now."

Saloon patrons all along Columbus Avenue can be coaxed easily into dreary eulogies about the death of North Beach. They list a multitude of reasons — foreign property investment, the acquisition of property by more competitive Chinese-American landlords, encroachment of high-rise office buildings and the movement of Italian families to more spacious homes in the suburbs.

Whatever the cause, the number of Italian families and businesses in the neighborhood continues to dwindle. Census figures estimate that no more

than 800 Italian-American families still live in the neighborhood.

Around Washington Square, more than three dozen storefronts stand vacant as old Italian businesses continue to move away and landlords wait for tenants willing to pay jacked-up rents. Recent casualties in the Italian business community are Gloria's Italian Delicatessen on Vallejo and Rossi's pharmacy, corner of Stockton and Union streets.

In February, Cuneo's Italian-French Bakery at 523 Green closed. Co-owner

Please see 'HEART,' Page 8

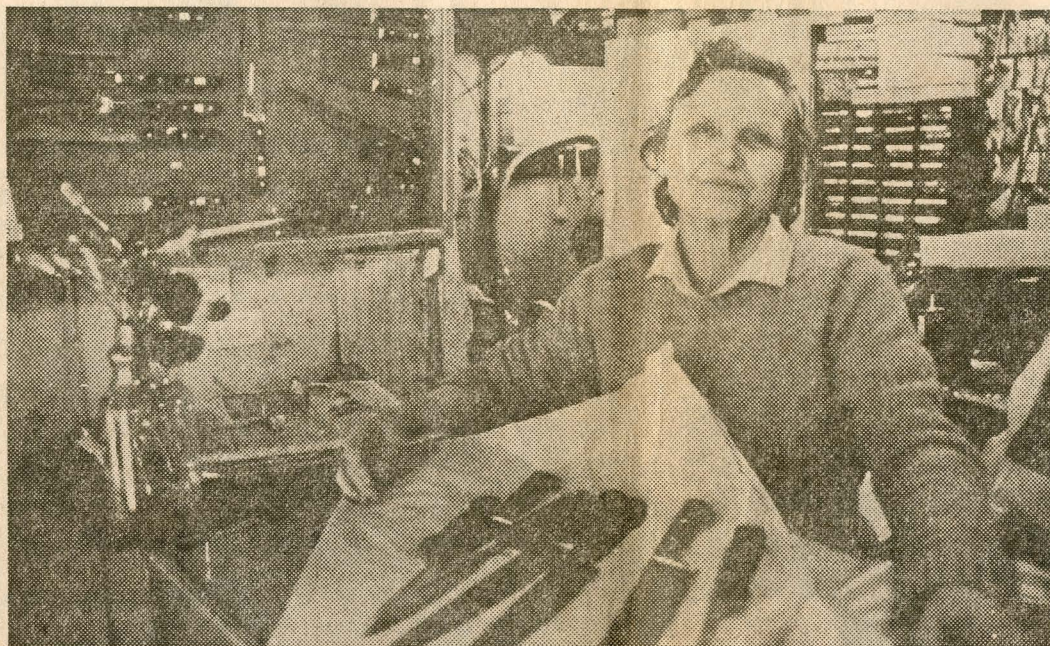
Inside

Historical views	Page 2
The Broadway scene...	Page 3
Coit Tower	Page 3
Bars and restaurants ..	Page 4
Cafes	Page 5
Shops	Page 6
Three profiles	Page 7
Two cultures mingle....	Page 8

Photographed by Maria Pease

North Beach: Historical perspectives

The scene
changes
— and the
merchants
see it all



By Jane Ayres

Special to the Times Tribune

No one sees what is going on in a neighborhood with more acuity than a small merchant. Shops are at the same time a part of a neighborhood and a barometer of its changes.

Here is what some of the shopkeepers of North Beach have to say about their life and times behind the counters.

Graffeo Coffee. In 1953, Giovanni-Baptiste Repetto came to San Francisco from Genoa. Repetto, who is known as John, had experience in *torrefazione*, or coffee roasting, and the first thing he did was look for a coffee business.

Graffeo Coffee had been on Columbus Avenue since 1935, started by John Graffeo, an opera buff who had pictures of Italian opera singers on the walls. When Repetto bought the business, the beatniks were just starting to congregate in North Beach.

Repetto's son, Luciano, is the proprietor of Graffeo Coffee now, and he has impressions of a lifetime on Columbus Avenue, in the shadow of the spires of Sts. Peter and Paul Church on Washington Square.

"You should have seen the beats — they were so interesting," he said. "They wore bizarre costumes. There was a man named Paddy O'Sullivan who dressed like a buccaneer — capes, swashbuckling boots. City Lights was a corner bookstore where a lot of them hung out.

"What I liked about the beats is they were a subculture, not a counterculture. They liked quiet jazz, flutes and things. No amplified music.

"I was a little kid, going to Peter and Paul's, and I would go over to upper Grant to see what they were up to. They would be at Miss Smith's Tea Room or the Co-Existence Bagel Shop. They read their poetry out loud, but how loud is poetry?

"They kept a low profile on drugs, too. Maybe they smoked a little pot, but they weren't obnoxious about it. Not like the hippies, who just lay around on the sidewalk, stoned.

"You know the beats weren't street people — they paid rent. They had their VWs or Deux Chevaux, or Lambrettas or Vespas. They supported themselves with

the butcher. It was right down the street here on Columbus. Sawdust on the floor, the real thing.

"When it came to pharmacists, you had your choice. One place, Lavotti-Rossi's, sold herbs and live leeches — you know, to suck the blood from a black eye."

Graffeo Coffee in the 1980s is thriving beyond anything John Graffeo could have planned for it. The owners ship coffee around the world from the modest Columbus Avenue store, often to movie companies on location. Luciano Repetto opened a second store in San Rafael. And a store on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills is about to open.

Columbus Cutlery. Professional chefs go to this shop for their knives. Stagehands are advised by their union to buy buck knives at Columbus Cutlery. It's a tiny shop with crowded windows full of Swiss army knives, scissors, meat grinders — if it has blades and it is hand operated, Columbus Cutlery sells it.

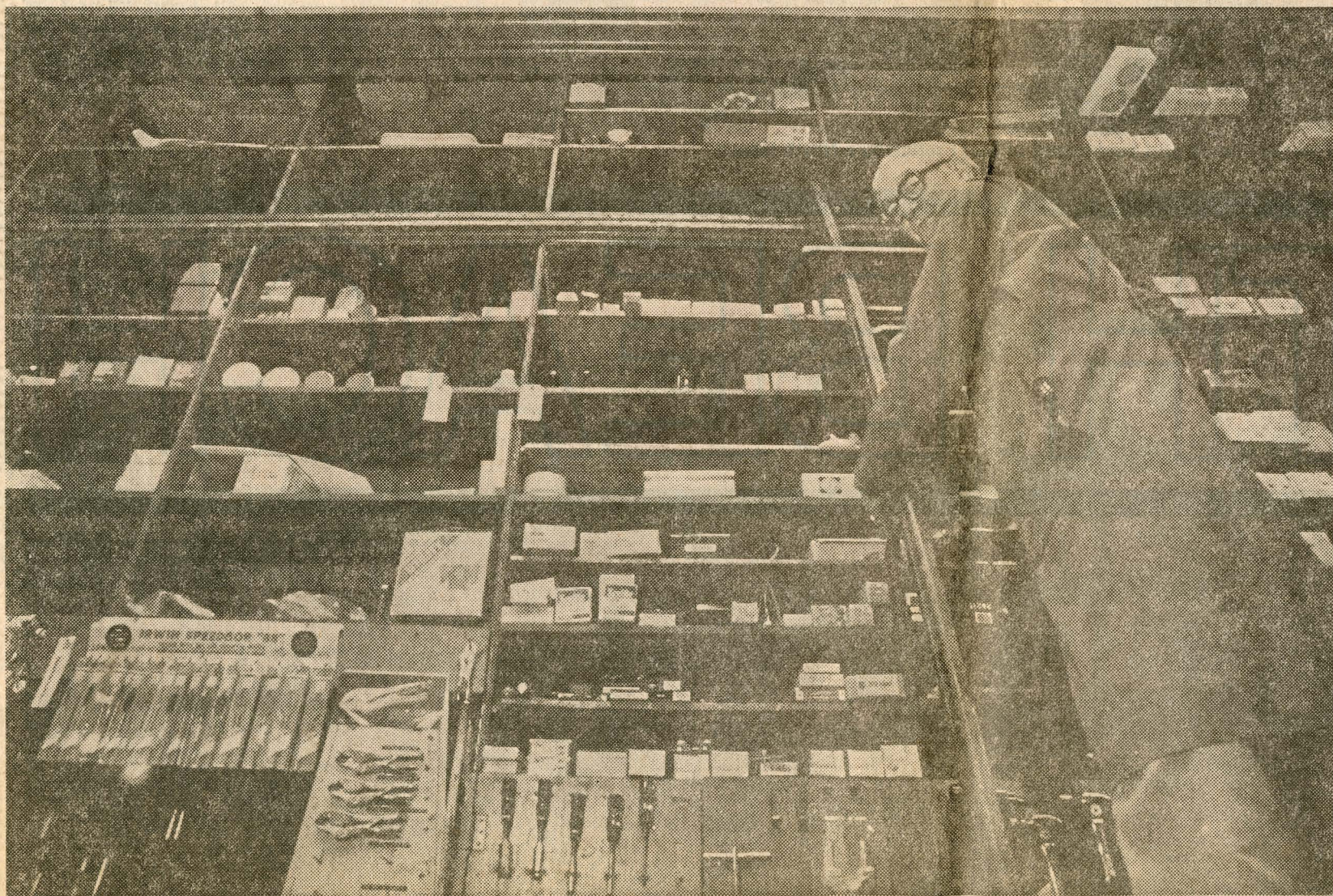
Peter and Ottilia Malattia came to San Francisco in 1965 from the walled city of Lucca in Tuscany. Ottilia remembers walking her first three children in the parks on top of Lucca's walls. Her last two were born here.

"The hippies had just started to come here. They slept on the sidewalk in front of the store. One fell asleep on the counter while looking at knives. But we got through that. It's over. That's my son, Romeo, in the back there. He works with me now. My children went to school here, and now it's home," she said.

Figoni Hardware. On upper Grant Avenue, next to the Coffee Gallery, is a hardware store with a Sherwin-Williams "Cover the Earth" neon sign. Figoni Hardware has been in the same location since 1907, although it didn't become Figoni until 1915.

There are seed packages by the door. As you enter the cavernous rooms of the store, you pass wooden drawers full of hardware. There are bins full of six-penny, eight-penny, 10-penny nails. You can buy one nail if you want to. There are bocce balls in the window. The high ceilings allow more storage — crab nets, fishing waders.

Melvin Figoni started working in the store in 1924, while he was still in high school. He wears a blue



Times Tribune photos by Maria Pease

'What I liked about the beats is they were a subculture, not a counterculture ... They read their poetry out loud, but how loud is poetry? ... Maybe they smoked a little pot, but they weren't obnoxious about it. Not like the hippies, who just lay around on the sidewalk, stoned.'

— Luciano Repetto

If it has blades and is hand operated, Ottilia Malattia (top) sells it at Columbus Cutlery; Melvin Figoni (above) sells everything from nails to bocce balls at his hardware store, which has been in the same location since 1907; at Graffeo Coffee, William Vivas and Peter DiMartino (right) pack coffee that is shipped all over the world.



little businesses like photography or sandal making. They spearheaded the crafts movement with their avant-garde jewelry.

"Not only did the beats have jobs, but they patronized the shops. They bought cheeses in the Italian delis; they loved the coffeehouses — that's why they settled here in the first place — North Beach was so European.

"Here's a lady beat — she has on a long skirt, sandals, her hair in a ponytail. Looks kind of like a ballet dancer. And she has all these natural stones — agates — hanging around her neck. The man? Capes, dark sunglasses, goatees. They would go down to Aquatic Park on Sundays and play the bongos.

"What stores were here when I was a kid, in the '50s? Banks, Italian clothing stores — pastry shops! Buon Gusto, Gallo, Barbarotto, Soracco Bros., Malvina: They were all within five blocks. And Panelli

hardware coat and moves around the store, climbing ladders, stocking shelves.

"We sell hunting and fishing licenses here, you know," he said. "We used to sell guns, but no more. The times are too wild now. Our window got broken when somebody leaned into it too hard.

"Now we don't just sell bocce balls to the teams that play at the pier. We sell a lot of bocce balls to people down around San Mateo, to use in their back yards. A full set is eight big balls and one pallino, that's the little ball.

"Sure, the old days were great; it was all family. My grandmother lived up at the top of the hill. If anybody got sick, they sent cousins down to help.

"But I liked the hippies; they were lively. Hey, wait a minute, which ones were the first? Oh, yeah, the beatniks. They were good boys. Always raising hell."

Historian laments the 'remnant' of once-thriving Little Italy

By William Johnson

Times Tribune staff

It was called *Little Italy* at first, one square mile of residential neighborhood in the heart of San Francisco, near Columbus and Broadway.

But its influence on the city and even the nation for more than a century has been enormous.

The complete history of Italian San Francisco had not been told, surprisingly, before Presidio Press last month released Richard Dillon's "North Beach — the Italian Heart of San Francisco."

Illustrating the book is an extraordinary collection of photos taken by one of the city's most prominent photographers of his time, the Italian-Swiss J.B. Monaco. Monaco's record of daily life in Little Italy as well as the cataclysmic quake of 1906 is previously unpublished. His photos represent a broad view of early life in the city — from horse-drawn beer wagons to the ill-fated ferryboat San Rafael, fictionalized by Jack London in his novel "The Sea Wolf."

One rare photo showing Van Ness Avenue awash because of broken water mains portends the terrible, unchecked post-quake fire that would subsequently destroy most of the city.

Dillon, the former head librarian at the state of California's prestigious Sutro Library in San Francisco, is the author of more than 20 books. His expertise is most obvious in those passages that combine concise capsule summary with insightful and sometimes wry commentary.

Dillon's history begins with the

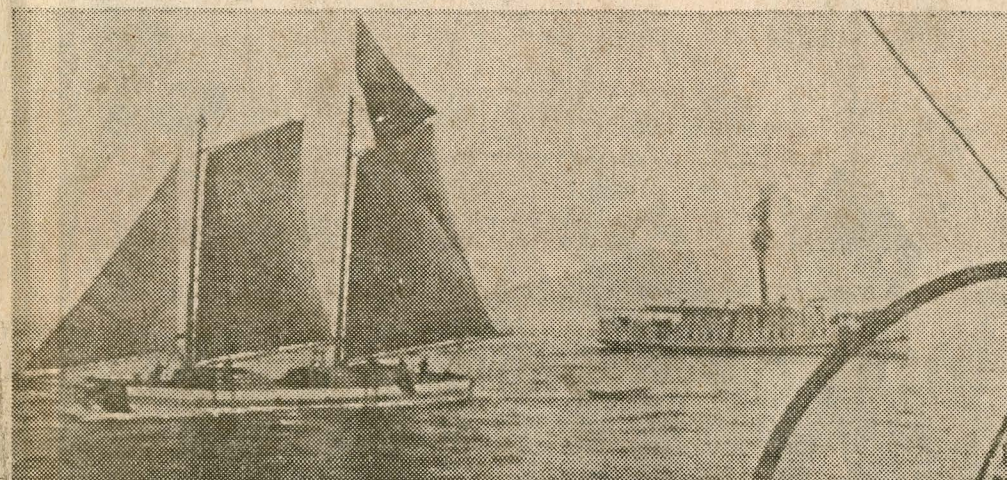
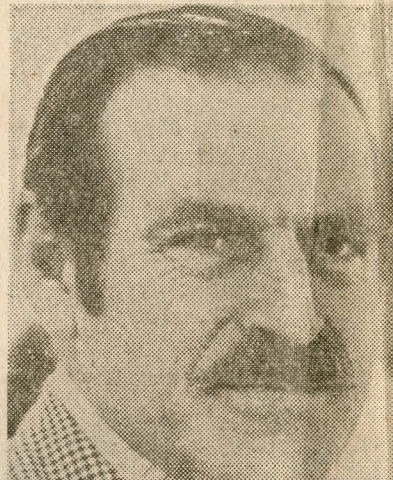
first Italian immigrants who sought their fortune in the Gold Rush. They intended for the most part to get rich fast and return to their home provinces. Dillon recounts the rise of such *prominenti* as chocolate mogul Domenico Ghirardelli and financier A.P. Giannini. Giannini's Bank of Italy, Little Italy's greatest success story, grew into the nonpareil Bank of America, with deposits today totaling more than \$85 billion.

With special detail, Dillon traces the origins of the Italian-dominated fishing industry from the 1850s. Fisherman's Wharf, previously known as "Italy Harbor," continues to be the city's No. 1 tourist draw. The legacy of the once-extensive Italian fishing fleet endures in the form of well-known restaurants such as Sabella's and Castagnola's. It was Tomaso Castagnola, legend has it, who invented the crab cocktail around 1915.

Despite North Beach's days of glory, Dillon concludes the book on a pessimistic note. The present and future of the Italian-American community are grim compared with the golden era around the turn of the century. Dillon's word to typify the once-prosperous, self-sufficient square mile near Washington Square today is "remnant." Dillon estimates that no more than 500 Italian families still live in the neighborhood.

A dapper, intense man with swept-back hair and bushy mustache, Dillon talked about the rise and fall of North Beach at the Sutro Library near San Francisco's Stonestown Shopping Center. He

Please see HISTORY, Page 9



A new book by Richard Dillon (far left) includes photos by J.B. Monaco chronicling the early days of North Beach, including one of the ferryboat San Rafael (left), which was sunk in 1901 and later fictionalized by Jack London.

sea-green
tourmaline

Timothy Fidge & Co.
creative jewelers,
fine gem specialists
Town & Country Village, Palo Alto
(415) 323-4653

CO-Z 8 MOTELS

WIN A FREE WEEKEND FOR TWO

1 FREE TICKET PER REGISTERED GUEST MONTHLY DRAWING

<p>MOTEL 1984 El Camino Mtn. View, CA (415) 967-6901 VCR's Restaurant, Lounge</p>	<p>MOTOR LODGE 64 El Camino Mtn. View, CA (415) 965-0585 VCR's JACUZZI</p>	<p>IMPERIAL MOTEL 3945 El Camino Palo Alto, CA (415) 493-3141 VCR's JACUZZI</p>	<p>MOTEL REDWOOD CITY 2610 El Camino Redwood City, CA (415) 368-1495 HBO VCR's</p>
--	---	--	---

20% OFF REGULAR ROOM RATE

GOOD FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY ONLY

EXPIRES MARCH 31, 1986

NOT GOOD WITH ANY OTHER OFFER

The bottom has fallen out on the topless scene

By Susan Zakin

Special to the Times Tribune

Goldie Meadows, 39, has a nostalgic feeling for Eric Clapton's epic rock song, "Layla." To her, it epitomizes North Beach in the 1970s

"You know the break where the guitar trails off and Bobby Whitlock's piano comes in? That's when I'd drop my dress," she recalled.

Meadows, who now earns four times her stripper's salary by working as a technical illustrator for a multinational corporation, cut "Layla" from her repertoire in 1973. That was when the San Francisco Board of Supervisors banned total nudity from any nightclub serving food or liquor. According to Meadows, that ordinance started the decline of North Beach's more risqué nightlife.

And decline it has. With the closing of the El Cid at Broadway and Columbus last month, the number of topless clubs fell to three from an all-time high of 28 in 1970. Several bottomless clubs — which do not serve liquor — remain in the neighborhood and, yes, you can talk to a naked girl.

Ironically, a movement to salvage what remains of the neighborhood's character, a mixture of beatnik holdovers like the Caffè Trieste, strip joints and the old Italian influence that once dominated North Beach, is coming from the Board of Supervisors, the group that once tried to quash its seedier aspects.

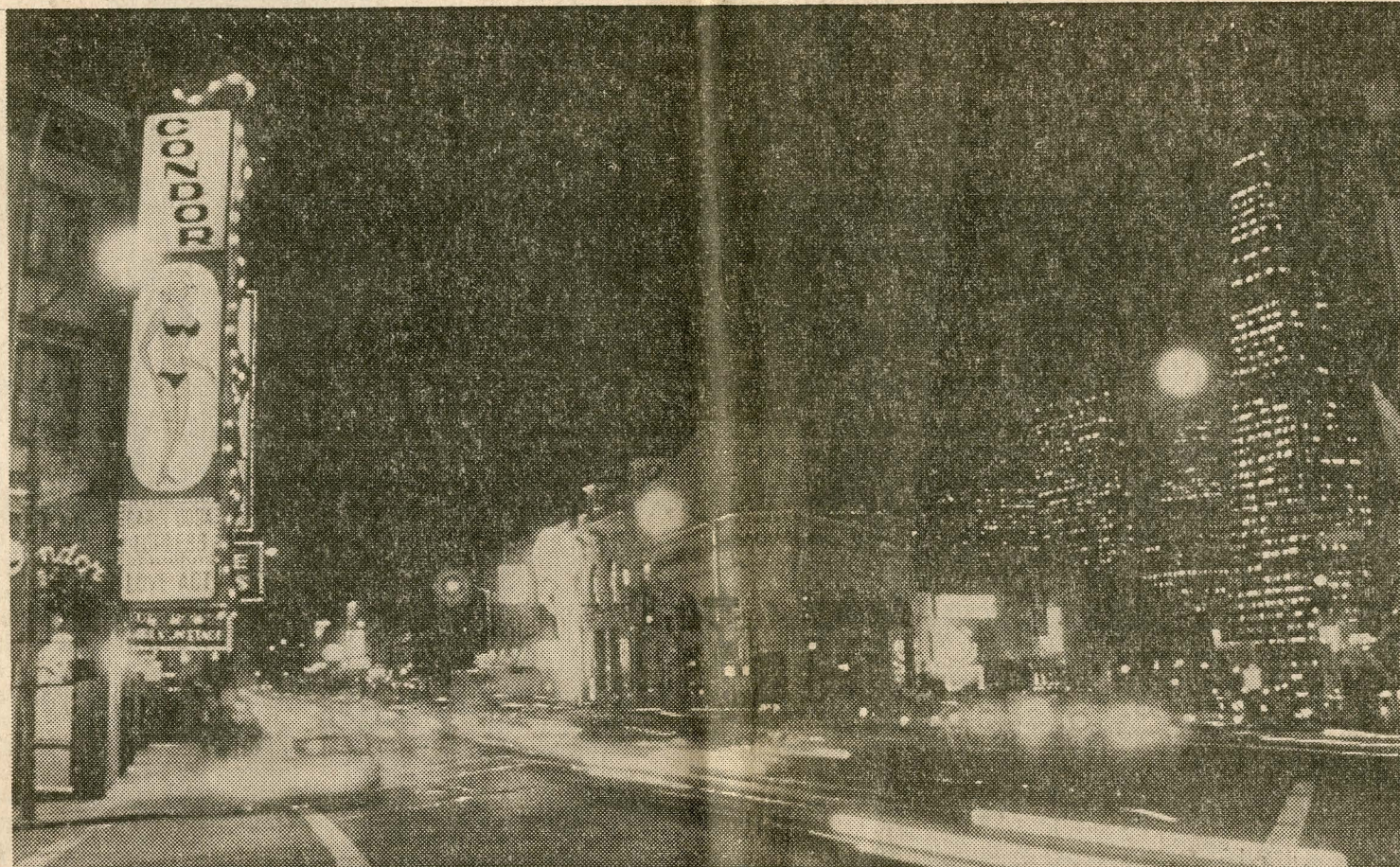
Last month, Supervisor Harry Britt proposed commercial rent control for North Beach, as well as the creation of a board to mediate and arbitrate rent disputes. Although the legislation is not specifically designed to preserve topless clubs, it will not exclude them from protections offered to other businesses, said Sharon Johnson, administrative aide to Britt.

"You protect it all," Johnson said. "You don't say, 'This is an opportunity to get rid of the elements you — or other people — don't like.' Otherwise it becomes a form of censorship."

Rent control might have saved the El Cid, which closed its pink and lavender doors after the landlord attempted to raise its rent from \$3,000 to \$12,000 a month. Rumors on the street have it that a fast-food franchise made the landlord an offer he couldn't — or didn't want to — refuse.

Broadway old-timers agree that only vestiges remain of the go-go atmosphere that characterized North Beach in the 1960s and early 1970s. But the myth remains, fostered by people like Goldie Meadows, who occasionally returns to North Beach for a quiet Sunday afternoon drink.

"Total nudity was different," she recalled, sitting on a barstool at the Galaxie, a bargain topless club that resembles a neighborhood dive. "There was a kind of 1960s innocence about nudity, and the type of women attracted to the work were dif-



At the height of the craze there were 28 topless clubs on Broadway; now there are three.

Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

ferent. There were plenty of people with IQs over 135 who were writing books and who spent their breaks reading at City Lights bookstore.

"They were horrified by the more commercial aspects and would have slapped your face if you asked them to turn a trick."

Despite deliberately contrived appearances to the contrary, most strippers are not prostitutes. Most club owners simply don't want the competition, and if a stripper is found using the club to make dates with johns, she is usually either fired or reprimanded.

Hustling drinks is another story. The topless clubs, which do not charge admission, make up the difference with a two-drink minimum. At the Galaxie, drinks are \$4.75. At the Condor and the hungry i, they are \$6.75. In certain clubs, strippers work on stage for 15 minutes and waitress for 45, earning a percentage of each drink they sell. Back when Herb Caen had all his hair, this was called being a "B" girl and considered illegal.

Although club personnel deny that drink hustling goes on, it is only a minor deception compared to those of the so-called bottomless, or total nudity, clubs. These hardcore clubs show pornographic movies and strippers strike poses reminiscent of Hustler magazine.

In the Roaring 20s — a bottomless club

'There was a kind of 1960s innocence about nudity, and the type of women attracted to the work were different. There were plenty of people with IQs over 135 who were writing books and who spent their breaks reading at City Lights bookstore. They ... would have slapped your face if you asked them to turn a trick.'

— Ex-stripper Goldie Meadows

prohibited from serving alcohol by city ordinance — a waitress generally makes the rounds of customers, asking if they would like wine, beer or soda. The club serves near-beer and fake wine at \$4.75 a shot and customers often leave feeling intoxicated.

If customers pay a high price for their fun, strippers often pay a higher one. For instance, Micki, 37, has been a stripper for 11 years. She supports a 16-year-old son and until recently wrote an astrology column for a local newspaper. Like several others who have spent more than a decade in the North Beach clubs, Micki believes her experience has destroyed her ability to have a relationship with a man.

"I live two lives," she said. "This is not really me. I'm into astrology, I go to a community college. I try to leave my work here. But it affects my sex life a lot. I'm not a lesbian, but when I leave this place, I don't want to have anything to do sexually with a man. I just want to relate to a man as a friend."

Although Micki is not gay, many of the women who work in the strip clubs are. Connie, who asked that her real name not be used, is a gay woman who works as a bartender in a topless club.

Now in her mid-30s, Connie comes from a prominent Southern family. During most of her 20s, she was entrenched in hippie culture and, until she became a stripper, lived off checks sent by her family.

"For me, I was glad to just have a job. I was thrilled to not be taking my mother's money anymore," Connie said.

Like many women, Connie grew up with little confidence in her ability to make a living in a man's world. She still has not left the club scene, but is beginning to think more about the future, although she says it terrifies her.

Meadows, who has successfully made the transition to the straight world, vividly recalls the panic that she says landed her in her first job as a stripper.

"For me, it was therapy. I was so frightened and so sick and so confused by getting out of college and finding out that typ-

ing speed was the only thing that counted. It saved my life."

Meadows said that her migraine headaches, which she has had all her life, were less severe when she was stripping. Being a stripper gave her a creative outlet she has only recently begun to replace with her artwork, she said.

"I developed acts that would express different parts of my personality," she said. "I would tie a rope to the end of the stage and pull on it to 'Wild Horses' by the Rolling Stones. I wore a bowler and twirled a cane for 'Cabaret.' It was a real great joy. I deliberately misunderstood a lot of what was going on around me."

Many women are drawn to stripping not by their creativity, but by a heady, if illusory, sense of power.

"It's a power play and it's fun," said Theresa, 25, who works at the hungry i. Her middle-class parents would hate it if they knew she was stripping, she added.

"I don't want them to understand. This is my job."

Meadows phrased it another way.

"If you can stand up in front of a man and look him in the eye with no fear, you're in control. He knows he can't do that. It's wonderful to talk to the same man who you would be a secretary for, who wouldn't talk to you if you served him a hamburger, and ask him anything you want. There are no rules in a strip joint."

Meadows and others who saw North Beach at its peak say that, with a few exceptions, today's strippers are neither as creative nor as sexy as their predecessors. Drug use is heavier than in previous years and most remnants of the classical striptease, never a North Beach specialty, are long gone.

A few holdouts remain. Lolita Rios, who performs three nights a week at the hungry i, is one of the few name performers left on the street since Carol Doda left the Condor a couple of months ago over a contract dispute.

But Lolita, who has been stripping for 15 years, is planning to retire soon. She recently bought a lingerie shop in Fremont that specializes in prostheses for women who have had mastectomies.

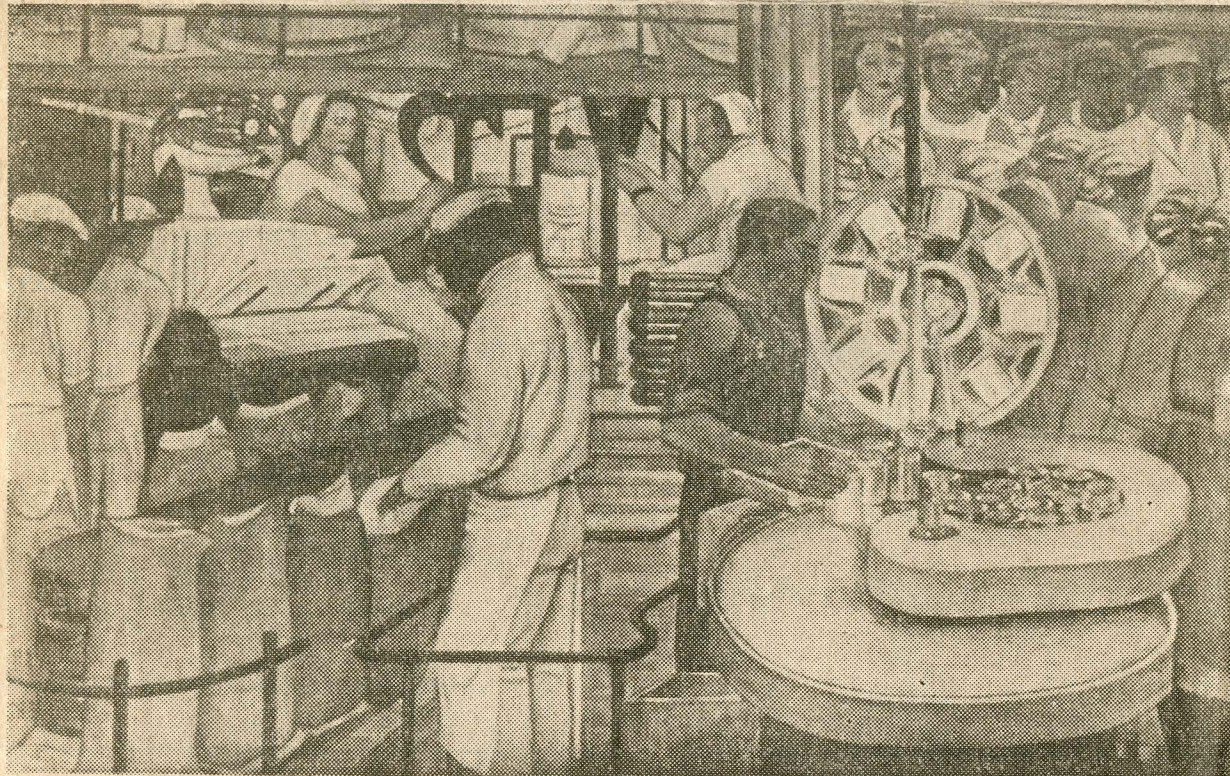
"This business gave me a lot of knowledge about how to fit people," she said. "It's not like buying a size 5 pair of shoes."

Even with the closing of the El Cid, a 60s relic whose sign, "He She Love-In," reads like a historical monument to the recent past, business is not great at the other strip clubs on Broadway. At the Galaxie, strippers often play to an audience of their peers, indulging in quirky monologues as they grind their hips.

"You know what I hate?" one complained recently from the stage. "When they say, 'Oh, you draw men like flies.'"

Connie was working behind the bar that night.

"Yeah," she answered. "We're the cartoon."



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

The Coit Tower murals were funded with New Deal money, but depict Depression horrors.

The colorful woman who gave the city money for Coit Tower

By Chris Preimesberger
Times Tribune staff

If you stand on its steps and gaze skyward, Coit Tower pierces the blue like a giant cannon aimed at the sun. From another vantage point a mile away and 23 stories up — the Fairmont Hotel tower on Nob Hill — Coit Tower resembles a minuscule, isolated castle spire in a sea of toy buildings.

No matter how you view it, Coit Tower is one of those timeless postcard symbols of San Francisco, ranking with the Golden Gate Bridge, the Transamerica Building and Lombard Street for international recognition.

Castle Coit rises majestically over its fiefdoms of North Beach and the Embarcadero, and it owns some of the best views of the city:

360 unhindered degrees of tiny cars, buildings, bridges and sailboats on San Francisco Bay.

At virtually any time, all 29 parking places at the tower are used. Visitors often wait 15 to 20 minutes to catch the view.

Coit Tower seems as though it always has been there, yet it has stood a silent sentinel atop Telegraph Hill only since 1933. For a long time, it was the city's highest structure.

The tower is named for Lillie Hitchcock Coit, certainly one of the most colorful personalities in the history of the city.

Coit loved excitement. As a 20-year-old in 1863, she first received public attention when she was named mascot for the Knickerbocker Hose Company No. 5. Thereafter, the story goes, she was

always where the action was, rarely missing a blaze in town.

Coit, a feminist well ahead of her time, abhorred then-current attitudes of men toward women. To circumvent this problem, she often dressed as a man to gamble in North Beach saloons; she was known to smoke cigars and publicly ice skate in shortened skirts. She was even discovered by her husband once on a men's camping trip.

In her will, Coit, who lived from 1843-1929, bequeathed \$125,000 to the city of San Francisco, which was to be spent "for the purpose of adding beauty to the city which I always loved."

So city officials hired Arthur Brown Jr., the architectural com-

Please see TOWER, Page 9

The phantom provides Coit Tower with 24-hour security

By Chris Preimesberger
Times Tribune staff

He prefers his real name not be used, and that is understandable. After all, he has a job to do, and to do it right requires remaining anonymous.

So for this story, we'll call him Ken, the mystery man who spends a good portion of his time at the top — at the top of Telegraph Hill.

Ken, a native of Boston who was reared in New York, has been the overnight caretaker at Coit Tower for 10 years. He is single, about 40 and employed full time in a middle-management position by the city of San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, where he works during the day.

"The signs outside the tower warn of 24-hour security," he says, "and they're not kidding — I'm it. There's also a good security alarm system to protect the property when I'm not around."

When Ken is at Telegraph Hill, he uses a compact work station/living area at a location he doesn't want known. There is one main room, a bathroom and a little kitchenette at his hideaway — just big

enough to accommodate one person, he said.

"When the tower was opened, there was a family of three who used it (his work station)," he said. "I don't now how they did it, really."

And it was a rather prominent family: It was the grandparents and mother of former Santa Clara University and Oakland Raider quarterback Dan Pastorini.

"Some (North Beach) old-timers like to tell the story that an NFL quarterback was born in the tower," Ken says, "but that's not true."

Dorothy Brady Pastorini, mother of Dan and now a resident of San Jose, said her parents were the Coit Tower caretakers from 1934 until the early 1940s. Dan was born in the Bayview district of San Francisco in 1949, long after his grandparents left the tower to live in Sonora.

Dorothy lived at Telegraph Hill for one year with her parents until she got married in 1935.

"My husband and I used to court up there (at the tower). We'd walk together up to the top — and come

back down, of course," she said with a laugh.

Ken has the same affection for the place, but spending so much time at a historical monument does have its drawbacks.

"You really don't have too many in-and-out privileges," he says. "I know the traffic patterns pretty

well, so I know when I can go and when I can't. Privacy I don't have much of. But it's a beautiful, historic place, and the views are sure nice."

Ken enjoys doing historical research on the tower in his spare time and has a great deal of respect for the valuable Depression-

era murals inside. That is part of his motivation for being the overnight caretaker

Because Ken spends so much time there, he found he had to have an official address of some kind for the tower, which sits at the

Please see PHANTOM, Page 9

Domestic-International
BUSINESS/VACATION TRAVEL SERVICES



Robyns Travel Inc.

• AIR • RAIL • CRUISES
• TOURS • HOTELS • CAR

One Call Does It All
415-328-5375
437 Lytton Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94301

CRUISE BARGAINS



TRANSCANAL
April 7-June 6, 1986
Start at \$1295.00 p.p.
(FREE AIR)

ALASKA
June 5, 12-days
Start at \$2315.00 p.p.
Other sailing savings
Up to (\$500.00) per couple.

MEXICO
Savings up to
(\$800) per couple
till May 26, 1986

EURAM TRAVEL
366 Cambridge Ave. M-F 9 A.M.-6 P.M.
Palo Alto (415) 326-7470 SAT. 10 A.M.-4 P.M.

CRUISE BARGAINS

STANFORD DELI

Save Time!
Fresh, Homemade Salads
No Preservatives



Expires 3/31/86

• Molinari Salami Chubs Only	\$3.99 lb.
• Jarlsberg Swiss Chunks Only	\$3.59 lb.
• Pasta w/Pesto Homemade	\$2.50 pt.
• Olives All Varieties	\$2.50 pt.
• Italian Gorgonzola Dolcelatte	\$6.49 lb.

83 Stanford Shopping Center
(Next to Norney, facing the parking lot)
328-3354

The bars

By William Johnson
Times Tribune staff

On a Saturday night a couple of weeks ago, a foursome of chattering, confident, young urbanites strode into the loud, smoky **Porto Fino Bar** at 520 Columbus Ave. The four had dressed *au courant* for their night out: Pleated khaki pants, unstructured jackets, etc.

After a couple of steps inside the door, they scanned the scene and froze. The jukebox rock 'n' roll was not their kind of music. The red Formica-top tables, the deer antlers hanging on the walls and the faded yellow-gray curtains over the windows were not their kind of decor.

They eyeballed the shabbily dressed old lady on a nearby stool. She puffed furiously on her cigarette and ranted to no one in particular about some recent indignity. She was definitely not their kind of people. Pivoting smartly in their Guccis, they vanished in a rush of cool night air.

Brass fixtures, light oak woodwork, lincoln green upholstery, ferns and wicker chairs have not become the norm in North Beach drinking establishments — yet. Nor will it likely happen in the near future.

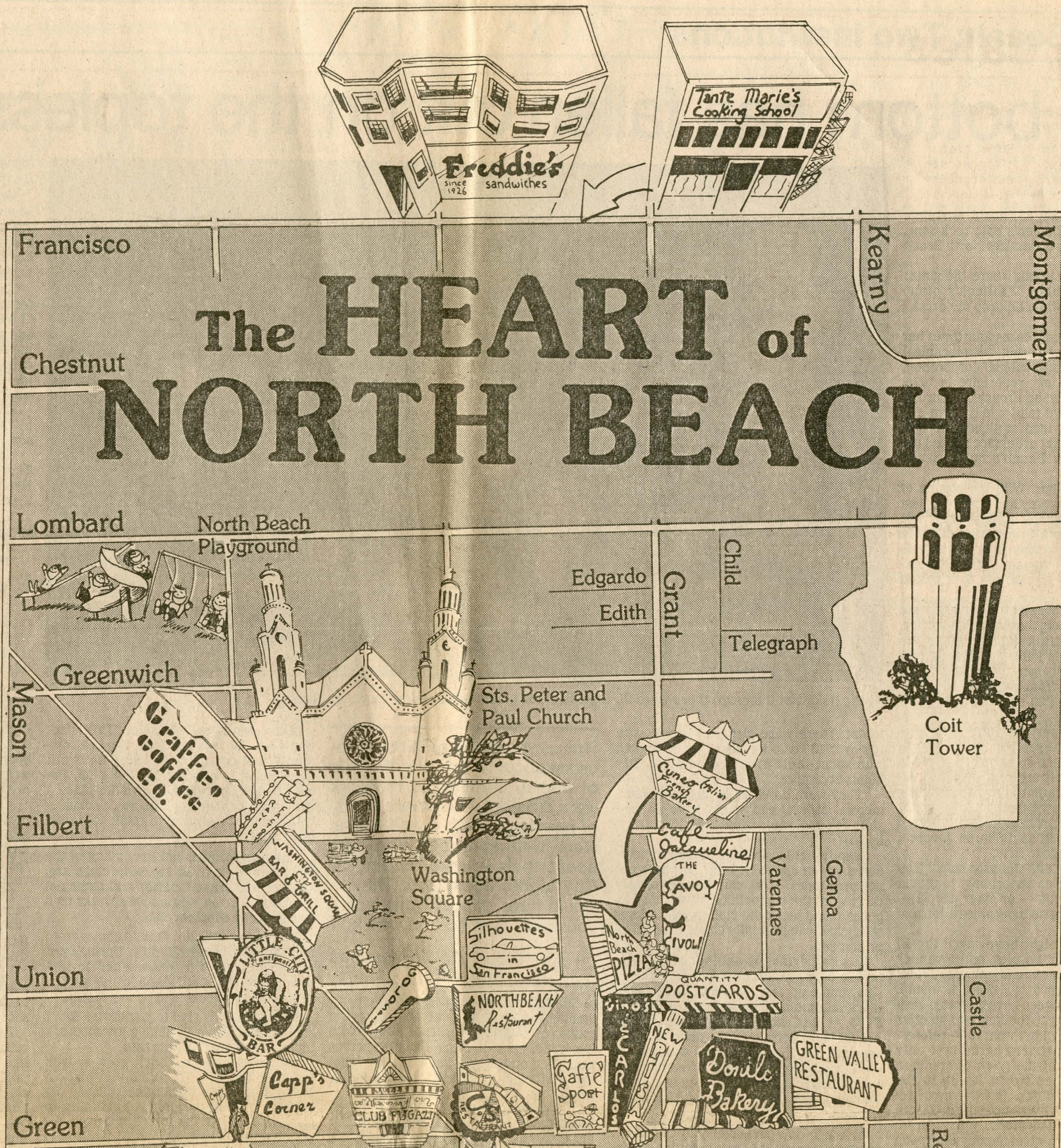
North Beach neighborhood watering holes continue to attract the same steady parade of local animal life as those on the parched plains of East Africa.

Here is a representative sample:

For those who want to ease into the local dens with a minimum of culture shock, the **Little City Antipasti Bar**, at the corner of Union and Powell, has its share of brass, etched glass and a young, upscale clientele. In-crowd noshes include garlic and smoky bacon soup for \$3.75, mussels in saffron cream at \$7.25 and baked Camembert and prosciutto for \$6. Though trendy, the Little City attracts witty and intelligent characters; a lively conversation at the bar is almost guaranteed, even during the day.

Off Columbus at 12 Adler Alley is **Specs**. The place is stuffed to the ceiling with junk — everything from stuffed armadillos to gorgeous carved North Coast Indian ceremonial masks. Specs is loud, lively and bustling with more locals than tourists normally. If you take your true love to Specs to propose, you will have to shout.

At Gino and Carlo's Cocktail



The cafes

By Penelope Rowlands

Special to the Times Tribune

Outside on Vallejo Street, the sun is blazing, garbage trucks are grinding, Chinese children are playing on the sidewalk and the year is 1986.

But one step across the threshold of the Cafe Italia, it's no longer clear what year this is or, even, what country. Two middle-aged men, fantastically decked out in sunglasses and slender European suits, argue over the previous day's *Corriere Della Serra*. The jukebox blares songs by such favorites as Eros Ramazzotti, Marcella Beln and Gianna Nannini.

Bilingual young pool sharks circle the pool table in the yellow, fading afternoon light, gold chains glinting at their necks, their language a curious hybrid of English and Italian.

There are 25 or so such cafes in North Beach, places named De Medici, Europa, Trieste and Roma, and each one is a world of its own. It's a land far removed from the bustle and sterility of modern-day America. Here people still smoke cigarettes, lots of them, and they talk with their hands. The older men's suit trousers are creased as sharp as razor blades and the air is thick with after-shave lotion. And during the day, at least, it's still very much a man's world.

In the Cafe Italia, as in many of these places, the New World seems barely more than an illusion, something distantly glimpsed through the open doorway. Italians may have sacrificed much to get here, but in some ways, it doesn't seem they've traveled very far.

At the Italia the other afternoon, life went on, Italian style.

"Buon giorno, signorina," one of the immaculately groomed older men called seductively to a fair-haired American woman experiencing culture shock in the corner.



John Danikian chalks his cue while Carlo Nuovo takes a shot at Cafe Italia, where the flavor is definitely macho.

Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

"Buon giorno," she stammered back, looking deep into her cappuccino.

In unison, the two men adjusted their chairs for a better look.

They kept on arguing, but their hearts were clearly no longer in it. Instead, they stared boldly and exchanged conspiratorial glances. Every now and then, one or the other preened discreetly, adjusting his hair or the angle of his sunglasses in the mirror behind the bar.

About midafternoon, the evening waitress burst out from the back room, humming as she began her shift. Dressed in a plunging neckline, high heels and pounds of makeup, she would be a sensation anywhere else, but here among the regulars no one seemed to notice.

Time moved slowly at the Italia that afternoon, and this random group of friends and acquaintances

went about their lives as though they might go on forever. Dust gathered on the bocce trophies and Ferrari posters, and a few more notches were marked on the pool tournament scorecard.

Nowhere was there any indication that this was a world on its way to extinction, just as only a few weeks ago there was no sign that Frank's Extra Bar on Stockton would soon be gone, or that the long-popular family restaurant La Pantera on Grant Avenue was about to close its doors.

Only a few weeks ago, the Cuneo Bakery moved from Green Street to Grant and the Gloria Delicatessen on Vallejo disappeared altogether, both the victims of drastic rent increases, impossible to make up for with espresso, prosciutto or pastries.

"If you want to see North Beach, you'd better hurry," San Franciscans have taken to telling visitors lately. If anyone in the Cafe Italia was worried the other day, no one let on. Their neighborhood might be disappearing bit by bit around them, but these cafe habitues were calmly holding on to life's important things — a decent game of pool, yesterday's news from Milan and some really serious girl watching.

●
Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store, 566 Columbus Ave., isn't a cigar store at all but a sliver-shaped corner cafe with an unparalleled view of Sts. Peter and Paul Church.

Modestly boasting "the best cappuccino in town," Mario's, like almost every other cafe in North Beach, favors the eclectic look in

interior design. A bright red boxing glove is suspended above the bar, and there are endless family photographs and faded reproductions of pre-Raphaelite paintings. The clientele is the usual mix of neighborhood lounge lizards and enraptured tourists.

●
All hell breaks loose on Grant Avenue every Saturday at noon when the Giotta family, owners of **Caffe Trieste**, 609 Vallejo St., put on an operatic free-for-all. Neighbors and tourists cram into the orange-walled cafe like sardines to get a load of this inimitable action, and the music seems to carry all the way to Chinatown. Trieste is invariably crowded and, even when no one is singing or carrying on, the acoustics are fairly deafening. For the faint of heart, coffee beans

can be bought at **Cafe Trieste Annex** and enjoyed in tranquility at home.

●
"Modern dancing and immodest dress stir sexual desire," a sign above the bar at **Cafe Vesuvio** solemnly proclaims. Located at 257 Columbus Ave., just down the street from City Lights bookstore, Vesuvio is a little bit less old country and more new wave than some of its counterparts.

The clientele is Bohemian in a way you probably thought was no longer possible, though the drink in favor is more apt to be beer than espresso. The decor, however, is more of the same: bright yellow walls, faded posters, stained glass and peacock feathers. Oh, and no modern dancing but plenty of im-

modest dress.

●
On a bright spring afternoon, when the windows of **Cafe Roma**, 414 Columbus Ave., are open wide to the street, Columbus really does seem to transform into the Via Veneto. Those suave Romans at the next table are probably tourists from Topeka, but never mind. Roma is still chic in a way the smaller cafes are not.

Amazing objects can be seen here, like linen tablecloths and silver salt shakers, things that are nowhere to be found in the region's humbler, less-well-mannered cafes. Real food is even served, and while it's relatively expensive, no one seems to mind if you order a cappuccino and make yourself at home.

The sports bars

By Chris Preimesberger

Times Tribune staff

North Beach sports bars have an identity all their own. They attract mostly men who come to eat, drink and talk about the plays and players of past and present. Patrons gather around wide-screen televisions and cheer and jeer — mainly at basketball, football and baseball games and boxing matches.

Invariably, they are decorated in sports memorabilia. Lucky patrons sometimes catch a glimpse of a hero, because athletes themselves are often patrons.

The oldest, most established of this type of eating/meeting place is the **New Pisa Restaurant** at 550 Green St. It attracts people of all ages, but it has a loyal nucleus of older aficionados who have gone there for years.

The second-oldest sports bar, which now caters to a young-singles crowd, is the **El Matador**, Broadway at Kearny.

The newest and most lavish is 3½-month-old **P.J. Montgomery's**, Broadway at Montgomery, just up the street from such well-known establishments as Belli, Belli & Belli, Ernie's and Doro's.

The New Pisa is family owned and operated and has served food and drink amid sports talk at its current location since 1977. The proprietor is Dante Benedetti, who was the USF baseball coach from 1965 to 1980 and a member of both the USF football and baseball Halls of Fame. Benedetti and his father before him have owned the New Pisa in three locations since 1920; the family has been a fixture in North Beach for three generations.

Business at the three-story New Pisa always has been good — very good. Benedetti supervises the kitchen daily and his daughters, Sandy and Claudia, work there.

The New Pisa's barroom has been a work of "art" in progress — without an artist — for years. The decor can best be described as potpourri de sport.

The walls and bar itself are heavy with faded pennants, from the Yomiuri Giants to Canisius College to Stanford, circa 1935. Photos of old and new Bay Area game-day heroes are everywhere, many autographed and offering good wishes for Benedetti and his crew.

There is a photograph of some members of the 7th Army Air Force in the Central Pacific during World War II. Among the young, smiling faces is that of Staff Sgt. J. P. DiMaggio Jr., also known as the Yankee Clipper. Near it is another non-sports photo, the famous one of the Marines' flag-raising on Iwo Jima — autographed by its Pulitzer Prize-winning creator, Joe Rosenthal, a New Pisa regular.

A youthful Willie Mays is on the cover of *Look* magazine over the bar; a team picture of the 1955 San Francisco Seals is on a wall; autographed photos of Jack Dempsey and Casey Stengel are there, too.

A sign publicizes Benedetti's motto: "Learn to do the things you hate. That's the sign of a strong man."



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Dante Benedetti treats all his customers, such as Frank Lowell, like celebrities.

Weak people only do the things they like."

The New Pisa's prices are inexpensive, and the food has been praised for years. It is best to arrive early for lunch (11:30 to 11:45 is best), and you must be prepared for a little noise. Many people enjoy the place and don't make a secret of it while they are there.

It is open every day but Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.

"These things (businesses such as the New Pisa) are doing a disappearing act," Benedetti says. "This is a traditional, old-San Francisco place, about the only one of its kind left. Families just can't make a living with them. The profit margin is too low, and (liability) insurance rates are too high. Mine jumped 100 percent this year."

Asked which sports celebrities visit the New Pisa most often, Benedetti said: "Every customer I get is a celebrity. That's the way we've always looked at it."

El Matador, in a four-story Victorian building, is vastly different. On its front awning, it boldly describes itself as a "sports bar" and boasts "big-screen video," "boxing" and "pool." It has no boxing ring; however, there are four pool tables and lots of open space on the first floor.

There are wall-to-wall pictures and not many tables in the place, which is open from 5:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. every day but Monday. Dinner is not served.

Patrons smoke, drink, watch a lot of television and play a lot of pool.

P.J. Montgomery's, 391 Broadway, is an attractive restaurant/bar designed for sports yuppies.

Lavishly framed and lighted LeRoy Neiman prints adorn the freshly painted walls. A prominent glass case displays mementos from past San Francisco 49er seasons, such as footballs signed by team members and jerseys once belonging to Joe Montana and Dwight Clark. Three large video screens in strategic locations carry sports programs ranging from fishing to football.

Track lighting and a high ceiling enhance the airy appearance. Decorative brass and wood is abundant in the bar area, which is frequently patronized by three-piece-suited professional people.

Banquet facilities can handle from 30 to 100 people. The menu includes steak and seafood; the prices are moderate.

P.J.'s is open every day but Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. It has received regional publicity since KSFO sports director Ron Barr started broadcasting his evening sports talk show from the lounge once a month.

Discovering the traditional way to imbibe

By William Johnson

Times Tribune staff

Grappa, Strega, Cynar and Fernet are not members of a prestigious San Francisco law firm; they are alcoholic beverages of Italian ancestry.

The neighborhood bars of North Beach offer the perfect opportunity to try these varieties of alcohol.

In general, the flavors of these drinks are strong, herbaceous and on the bitter side, like the better-known Italian aperitif Campari.

Grappa is distilled wine (brandy) and flavors vary according to quality. Some Grappa tastes like retsina, the Greek liquor made from tree sap.

Strega is a yellow liquor with a flavor resembling a combination of sake, tequila and, some say, eau de sweatsock.

Cynar is a thick schnapps-like distillate of artichokes. Its taste runs toward the sweetish side.

Perhaps the most notorious Italian alcoholic beverage of all is Fernet, a brown, thick herbal concoction made from chamomile, calumba, rhubarb and other exotic plants. It is traditionally administered to quiet a queasy stomach. Italian grandmothers swear by its medicinal properties, but the Food and Drug Administration has recently ordered its formula changed. New batches will be available in a few months.

The flavor is bitter and strong. The effect is tongue-numbing — like downing a couple of shots of 151-proof rum plus a couple of codeine tablets.

Fernet's label warns pregnant women not to drink it. The original Fernet is not available everywhere, but bartenders at the Savoy Tivoli on Grant Street have some on stock.

For many, the most delicious alcoholic discovery of North Beach could be Vov, a sweet Marsala fortified with egg yolks. The flavor is like a Christmas eggnog. Try some Vov in a morning cappuccino at Caffè Malvina, 512 Union St. Cappuccino and Vov washes down well the breakfast specialty at Malvina, "eggs alla Bruno," which are eggs accompanied by a fresh, rich tomato sauce well-seasoned with herbs and garlic.

Cappuccino, Vov and eggs alla Bruno will make non-Italians wish they were *paisanos*.

The restaurants

Continued from Page 4

Sometimes the best dining spot in North Beach is a bench in Washington Square. Although many of the nearby delis make take-out sandwiches, few do it with the sense of mission found at **Freddie's** on the corner of Francisco and Stockton Streets. This is the quintessential bare-bones sandwich shop — no tables, no chairs and almost no stock on the polished wood shelves. The special soft rolls are what have made Freddie's sandwiches revered since the mid-1920s. There's a good assortment of Italian meats and cheeses in the combination sandwich, but do not brand yourself as a tourist by requesting extras such as lettuce, tomatoes, onions or peppers. "Mustard and mayonnaise," the soft-spoken Italian lady behind the counter will tell you, with just the slightest edge of steel to her words. "This is the tradition."

Freddie's Sandwiches. 300 Francisco St. (415) 788-9457. Open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

At the **Cafferata Ravioli Factory**, diners eat under dangling salamis and next to huge cans of Italian olive oil and bottles of chianti stacked high along the walls. This 99-year-old family-style establishment is still an authentic factory — vintage pasta machinery is visible through the windows on the restaurant's Columbus Avenue side.

The pasta dishes here (meat canelloni, tortellini with alfredo sauce and prosciutto, and others) are hearty and priced between \$7.50 and \$9. Salad is included. Large families of Italians come here for informal conviviality. It is possible to eat here and be in the minority as a speaker of English.

Cafferata Ravioli Factory. 700 Columbus Ave. (415) 392-7544. Open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch and from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner; open Sunday at noon for dinner.

For a romantic subterranean experience under brick arches, nothing beats dining at **Buca Giovanni**. Elegant Italian restaurants below ground with formal but friendly male waiters are more commonly found in Boston and New York City.

The menu is extensive, featuring chicken, veal, scampi, lamb and quail dishes. Pasta here is on par with the best in San Francisco. Among the offerings are linguine with clams and calamari; penne with smoked salmon, whiskey and cream; panzerotti stuffed with seasoned veal and walnut sauce; and tortellini stuffed with venison. Prices are a la carte, dinner for two will cost about \$60 with wine. As an antipasto, do not miss "salsa rossa," a smooth, rich tomato butter applied to fresh French bread.

Buca Giovanni. 800 Greenwich St. (415) 776-7766. Open 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. for dinner Monday through Saturday. Closed Sunday.

If European charm is what you're after, share a table with a stranger at the **U.S. Restaurant**. Maria Borzoni, the Borzoni matriarch from Parma, Italy, does most of the cooking here. Pasta al pesto is her specialty. What makes this pasta dish so unique is the freshness of the basil. Here, one can breakfast on Italian sausage and eggs, or dine on a variety of sand-



Times Tribune staff photo by Maria Pease

A customer will get double directions from the twin Panelli brothers, Robert (left) and Richard, of Panelli Brothers Delicatessen.

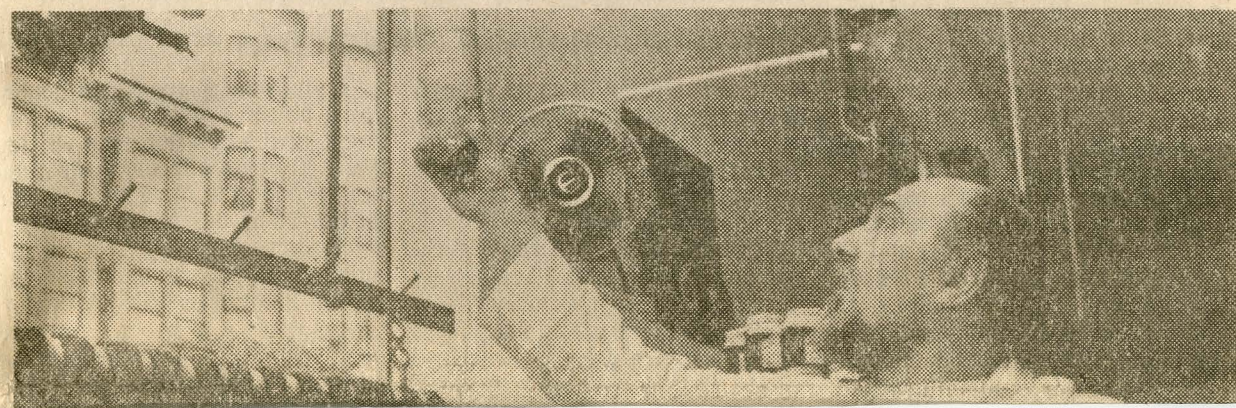
The shops

By Casey Ellis

Special to the Times Tribune

Leo Rossi is an anachronism in this culinary era of cutting corners, making it easy and sticking everything in a microwave oven. Yet his approach to food is typical of the old-fashioned devotion to good quality that makes shopping in North Beach so satisfying.

Rossi takes six months to cure the prosciuttos that hang, draped with big branches of fresh rosemary, along the walls of **R. Iacopi and Co.**, a handsome meat market and deli at the corner of Grant Avenue and Union Street. Home-cured rolls of pancetta hang in one window and wonderful smells of herbs and spices fill the shop.



wiches or one of numerous daily specials — such as osso buco and risotto, “everyone’s favorite.” The specials are a real bargain, running from \$6 to \$7. Pasta dishes run from \$3.75 to \$6. The U.S. has been in the Borzoni family for more than 50 years.

U.S. Restaurant. 431 Columbus Ave. (415) 363-6251. Open for breakfast 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday. No credit cards.

Get a secluded booth at the **Green Valley Restaurant** and have an old-fashioned Italian family-style, ahem, discussion. The food also comes at you Italian-style: soup or salad, pasta, entree and dessert for \$5.95 at lunch and \$10.35 for dinner. Eddie Simi’s family has owned the restaurant since 1918. Now he is one of three partners that operates Green Valley. Simi says his restaurant is probably one of the oldest in North Beach. It opened in October of 1906 and was rebuilt after the earthquake.

Green Valley Restaurant. 510 Green Street. (415) 788-9384. Open for lunch Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; dinner 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Open Saturday and Sunday for dinner 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Mondays.

A shop where the medium truly is the message

“Our motto is everything and anything,” says Wilbur Sandsman of Quantity Postcard on Grant Avenue.

Sandsman opened the postcard shop seven years ago and people still “can’t figure out what’s going on in here.”

What Sandsman offers is more than 10,000 different postcards ranging in price from 5 cents to \$5. His method for obtaining inventory is “hunt and pecking” — at flea markets, in postcard periodicals, while traveling, and on the phone.

“I always had a liking for postcards,” he says, “combined with the thought that I could make a go of it.” And one would like to think that an off-the-wall business could make a go of it in North Beach. He describes his success as “small but steady.”

Sandsman says his collection ranges from “Gothic Americana to very serious historical things that once taken out of their time or context become almost absurd.”

An example is a postcard from the site of President Kennedy’s assassination.

“That Kennedy card is not made at all for any humor,” Sandsman says. “If people find any humor in it, it’s in their own interpretation. It’s just a good example of the commercialization of the American mind.”

Another postcard is of an alligator farm in Florida. “The dangerous man killing alligators,” reads the caption. “One doesn’t quite know how to interpret that,” Sandsman says. “It could be the man killing alligators, or the man-killing alligators.”

Sandsman says his most unusual card is of “George, the flying swine,” a greeting from St. Augustine, Texas.

— Sue Guglielmono

Rossi started working at his grandfather’s market when he was 10 years old. When he left the business 20 years ago, his friends in North Beach said he would never come back. After an assortment of jobs that ranged from actor to restaurant owner, he did indeed return.

“I’m back, and I’m having fun,” he said in a booming voice that reverberated off the spotless white tile walls.

“Taste this cheese torta; my wife makes it,” he exhorted, offering a sliver of mascarpone cheese, fresh basil and sun-dried tomatoes that was nothing short of sublime.

Anyone who savors sausages should sample Rossi’s sweet Sicilian-style links of pork, veal and fennel, the garlic-tinged *Toscana* and the *Calabrese*, hot with ground red pepper.

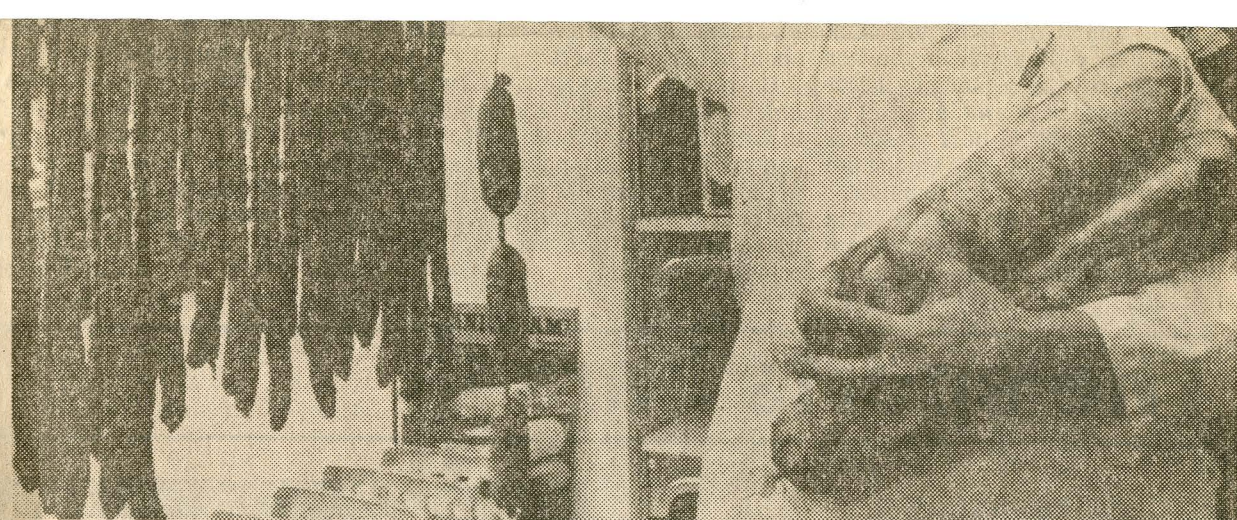
“Come back on Saturday,” he said. “I’m going to make *cotechino*. You’ll love it.”

Unlike Rossi, twin brothers Richard and Robert Panelli have never worked anywhere except at **Panelli Brothers Delicatessen**, 1419 Stockton St. Here they dispense equal parts philosophy and cold cuts.

“Everything now is big business,” Richard said, “but little business is what made the neighborhood.”

Panelli Brothers may be small in comparison with a typical supermarket, but its shelves and refrigerator cases are crammed with ingredients for anyone who wants to cook Italian. Virgin olive oil, chestnut flour, premium pastas, fresh mozzarella, parmesan cheese grated to order and slabs of dried salt cod could convert any shopper’s kitchen into a *cucina*.

Any ingredient for Italian cooking not found at Panelli Brothers probably is available across the street at **Florence Italian Deli**, 1412 Stockton St. Those who want to make a major investment in preparation time should purchase the salt-packed anchovies. Food purists insist that the flavor is dramatically better than with the canned variety, but boning these little critters is a lesson in patience. Less demanding ingredients, such as Arborio rice, cranberry beans, lentils, garban-



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Leo Rossi of R. Iacopi and Co. makes his own sausage.

zos and dried fava beans, also are available here, as well as cheeses, salamis and a variety of pastas.

For fresh pasta, head to **Molinari Delicatessen** at 373 Columbus Ave. The green tagliarini, made fresh each morning, is terrific, as is the tortellini, with its succulent filling of prosciutto, mortadella and parmesan cheese. Molinari’s also is a good source for olives, with five varieties to choose from.

Man does not live by antipasto and pasta alone — although the idea has a certain appeal. At the very least, one should stop at some of the area bakeries, especially for some of the uniquely Italian breads.

A frequent Saturday morning ritual for San Francisco cooking teacher Connie McCole is phoning **Danilo Bakery**, 516 Green St., to reserve a loaf of the Tuscan corn bread that is baked only one day each week.

Danilo also bakes doughnut-shaped loaves of bread, known as *frizelle*, that are split and then tied together with fine string. In the south of Italy, the rings are

moistened with olive oil, tomatoes, garlic and hot peppers, but they taste nearly as good just lathered with some sweet butter. Wheat bread is baked Wednesdays and Saturdays, but the current big sellers are the little round pizzas available every day.

For *focaccia*, the premier source in North Beach is **Liguria Bakery**, 1700 Stockton St. The thick pizza bread is baked in old brick ovens, a process essentially unchanged since the Middle Ages.

For the cookie lover, North Beach is a movable feast. Try the apricot- or raspberry-filled *crostata* at the **Bohemian Cigar Store**, 566 Columbus Ave., the *amaretti* and chocolate *biscotti* at the **Cuneo Bakery** at the corner of Union Street and Grant Avenue and the tender meringue cookies with chocolate chips or crisp *ossi di morto* (“bones of death”) at **Victoria Pastry**, 1362 Stockton St. In fact, the best way to end a day of shopping in North Beach is to purchase a big box of assorted cookies at Victoria and slowly consume them on the drive back to the Peninsula.

Where Italian character still lives

By Casey Ellis

Special to the Times Tribune

When it comes to the future of North Beach, Frank Marianetti is an optimist.

The dapper and courtly assistant manager of Fior d'Italia Restaurant believes “the district is going to get better and better. But we can’t let any more of its Italian character slip away. We all talked about the situation a lot 10 years ago; we should have taken action then. We have to hold the line and not let in another savings and loan or another Chinese laundry.

“I even think we might be able to reclaim some of the non-Italian spots,” he said. “The topless places are certainly dying. People can see the same thing on television or at the movies these days and not get insulted in the bargain.

“The area was really Little Italy when I was a kid. Then nearly every-

body on the streets would be speaking Italian, but the style started to change during World War II.”

Marianetti was only 10 when he began working in the restaurant as a dishwasher’s helper.

“My job was washing the coffee mugs we used for serving wine during Prohibition. The mugs didn’t fool a soul; they just advertised what was going on. Working here is the only job I’ve ever had, but I’ve been a lot of different things — busboy, waiter, bartender, even part owner for a number of years,” he said.

The venerable restaurant will be 100 years old in May, but its food follows the new, lighter trend in Italian cooking. Marianetti acknowledged that popular tastes have moved away from dishes such as calf’s head vinaigrette and tripe.

“They’ll probably be back,” he added. “I’ve seen a lot of the so-called new cuisine and it ain’t that new. Everyone is making a big fuss about

fresh vegetables, but we were serving fresh vegetables here back in the ’20s.

“Our cooking style is Northern Italian. Now the restaurants at Fisherman’s Wharf, they fix things Sicilian style. They caught the fish; they’re entitled to fix it their way — though it’s certainly not our way.”

Fior d'Italia’s way is to grill prawns, or poach salmon with shallots, leeks, celery and carrots. Salads are prepared with slices of tomato and Bufala mozzarella or sliced fresh oranges and radicchio. Sweet peppers are roasted and served with a *bagna cauda* for dipping.

After a recent lunch-hour rush, Marianetti sat at a back table beneath a mural of the Italian countryside with others from the staff, sipping coffee and trading quips.

“This work is always interesting,” he said. “You might get tired, but you never, never get bored.”



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Frank Marianetti hopes for a return of Little Italy.

North Beach: Just three of its characters

Ferlinghetti still the literary heart of San Francisco

By Jane Ayres

Special to the Times Tribune

Lawrence Ferlinghetti walks the jumbled streets of North Beach in a tall, long-legged Western gait. With his unhurried speech and hawk-nosed Northern Italian profile, he could be a cowboy from Florence, or Dante on horseback.

Ferlinghetti's city state in San Francisco is City Lights Books, the intellectual heart of North Beach. The bookstore and companion publishing company share quarters in a ramshackle 1½-story space on Columbus Avenue near Broadway. Just across Adler Alley from the venerable Vesuvio Cafe and across the street from the equally respected Tosca Cafe, the building is well-situated for thirsty book lovers.

At least two generations of San Francisco writers have educated themselves in the basement of City Lights bookstore. The chairs, cozy basement atmosphere, community bulletin board and selection of political writings have attracted leftists and fledgling writers since 1953.

"I had been living in Paris," Ferlinghetti said in an interview up the street at the Puccini Cafe. "I loved the book stalls along the Seine, and I wanted to start a paperback bookstore in San Francisco."

People doubted that a store selling only paperback books would be popular enough to make money, but the shop was crowded from the first day with beatniks and poets, readers and writers.

"Right from the start, we had to stay open until midnight," Ferlinghetti said. "Safeway has just figured out what we knew 30 years ago. The public demands have to be met."

Ferlinghetti's interpretation of what the public wants has not always been so utilitarian. His arrest record stretches back to 1956, when he was arrested by San Francisco police for publishing Allen Ginsberg's "Howl," the epochal

and profane Beat Era literary landmark. In the same action, bookstore manager Shigeyoshi Murao was arrested for selling the small paper booklets, which the police confiscated.

Other arrests followed. In the '60s, Ferlinghetti was hauled in for publishing "The Love Book" by Lenore Kandel. Then for selling Zap comics in the bookstore.

"If it weren't for the ACLU, we would have gone under. They defended us in all the cases. Expensive defenses," Ferlinghetti said.

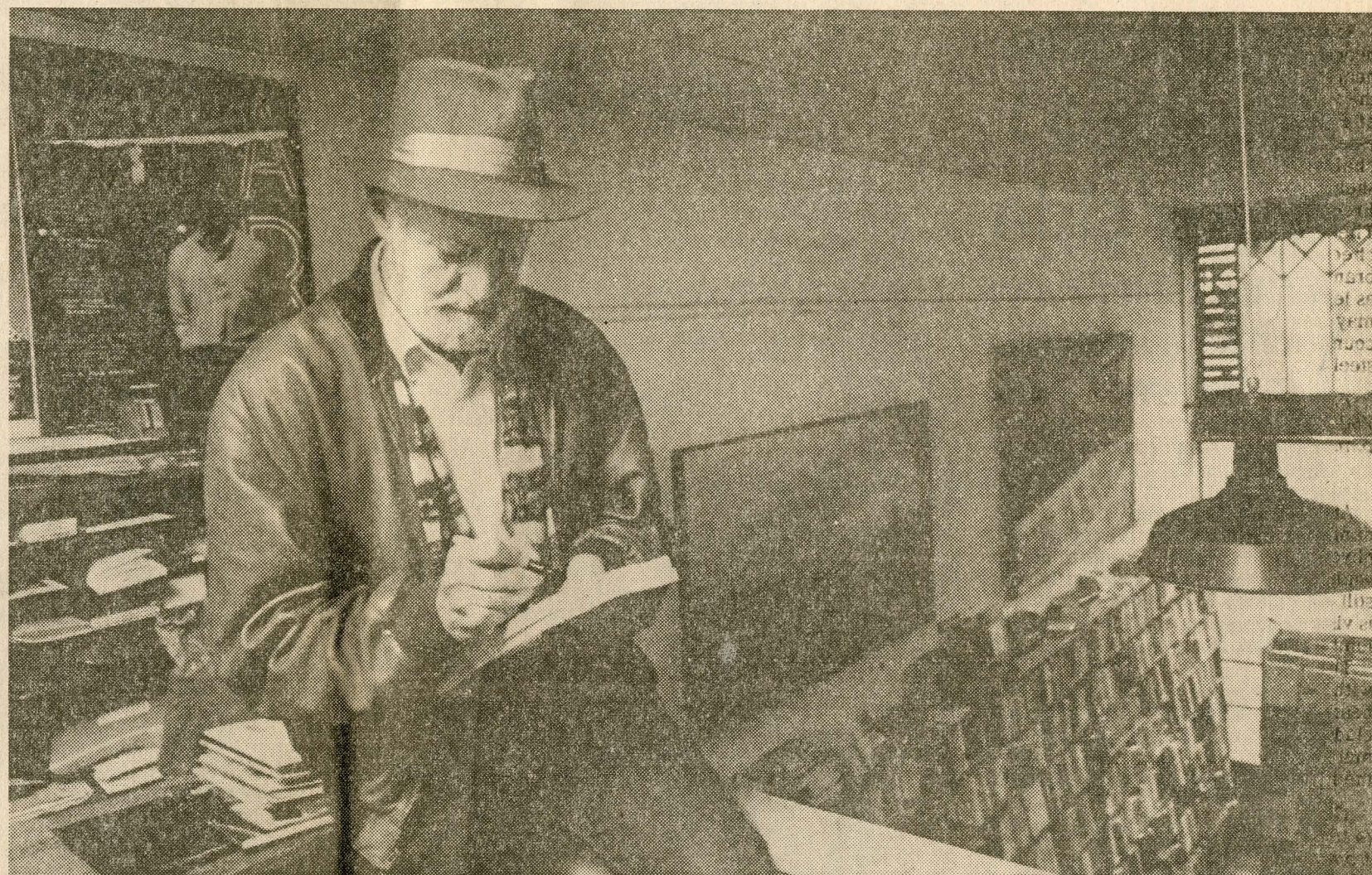
Literature and politics have been linked in Ferlinghetti's life and career since the early days of the bookstore.

"My first partner was Peter Martins, the son of Carlo Tresca, the executed Italian anarchist. We carried Italian anarchist newspapers in the early years. There was a garbage truck that would pull up outside the store. One of the workers, wearing a derby hat, would jump off the truck, dash in to the store and buy his paper. Then he would jump back onto the truck and it would drive off," Ferlinghetti said.

Ferlinghetti took a crooked road to San Francisco. After an early childhood marked by loss and abandonment, he ended up the foster child of a wealthy, cultured family in upstate New York. An avid reader and restless youth, he fixed his sights on newspaper work. He worked his way through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for its journalism school and because of a passion for Thomas Wolfe's "Look Homeward, Angel."

On the heels of his graduation from college, World War II erupted, and Ferlinghetti enlisted in the Navy. He served five years, including the entire length of the war, and emerged a lieutenant commander.

Back in New York, he was ready for newspaper work, but "there were two people for each job al-



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Lawrence Ferlinghetti's City Lights Books has been a haven for writers since the days his friend, Jack Kerouac, roamed North Beach.

ready — the one who left his job to fight and wanted it back, and the one who got it while the other guy was gone and didn't want to give it up."

Ferlinghetti eventually got a job in the mail room at Time magazine.

"I thought I would work my way into writing somehow, but the elevator never even stopped at the editorial floors. I still don't know how they got their mail," he said.

Fed up, Ferlinghetti decided to go to the Sorbonne on the GI Bill.

"Paris in 1947 was still wartime. There were ration lines for everything. I lived in a two-room medieval apartment in Montparnasse. The rent was \$26 a year," he said.

From Paris to San Francisco the poet came, bringing his unique political aesthetic. The early '50s were a fertile time for the consideration and expression of dissent. City Lights Books' publish-

ing operation began quietly with the Pocket Poets series, but within two years had published the controversial "Howl." The publishing has continued over the years with what Ferlinghetti calls "radical, libertarian, anarchistic, anti-state stuff — the outsider in literature."

The output of City Lights Publishing is "about 10 or 12 books a year." It has published "Love Poems of Karl Marx," a Walt Whitman primer and early Timothy Leary writings. A critical work on Melville's "Moby Dick" — Colin Wilson's "Call Me Ishmael" — and works by Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Sam Shepard and Charles Bukowski reflect Ferlinghetti's kaleidoscopic tastes.

In the 30 years since "Howl" was published, Ferlinghetti has traveled restlessly and reported back on what he found. He traveled to the Soviet Union in 1967, invited by the Writers' Union. He traveled to Cuba on a "personal mission."

In 1960. In 1984, he went to Nicaragua as a guest of the Sandinista government. The result was "Seven Days in Nicaragua Libre," a forum for his radical ideals.

These days, Ferlinghetti has turned over the running of City Lights Books publishing and bookstore to his partner, Nancy Peters. He edits books for City Lights, and works on his own books, including a new novel about Paris during the tumultuous events of 1968.

"I'm calling it 'Love in the Days of Rage.' The French title is 'Les Enrages.' That's what they called the revolutionary populace in 1789 — it means 'the enraged ones,'" he said.

Besides the working novel, Ferlinghetti has just finished translating into English the poems of the late Italian filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini. Recently, a West German film crew came to his Hunters Point studio to capture him in the

been a lifetime parallel to his poetry.

Ferlinghetti has been speaking his own poetry since the '50s. He reads it at occasions such as poet Bob Kaufman's funeral, or to raise medical funds for Julien Beck, founder of the Living Theater, before his death last year. In June, he will speak at a poetry conference in Florence.

And always, he walks the streets of North Beach, dipping into his own memory of 35 years there, and then deeper into that of others.

"The Fratelli Forte, Forte Bros., who had a travel agency next door to us for 25 years, used to tell me about Columbus and Broadway in the '20s. It was all boarding houses, French and Italian. The bachelors who lived in them would be standing around on street corners. At 6 o'clock, you would hear all the dinner bells, and then they would be

Capp and his Corner: City's history comes mixed with the drinks

By Sue Guglielmo

Times Tribune staff

Joe Capp lives up to the expectations created by his cigar and fedora: His voice could have been a study for Marlon Brando's Godfather, his stories the stuff of North Beach legend, his demeanor a main attraction of Capp's Corner.

Capp and his partner, Frank Sarrubi, go way back, back to when "this town was wide open." "We had more liberties back then," Sarrubi says — playing cards, gambling, the speakeasies. "Broadway was safer then. More complacent. Now you can't even walk half a block."

Capp, 75, and Sarrubi, 76, knew each other as kids. Now, Capp says his job description is "BS-ing and some hiring and firing. Frank, he counts the money."

Their Corner exemplifies the North Beach spirit — a mixture of regulars saddled up to the bar rolling liar's dice and tourists eating family style hoping to share a moment with the cigar-sucking proprietor.

Order a "Seven-Up" at Capp's and he'll tell you "this isn't a drug store," for Capp's is the kind of place for something with a little more bite.

Capp and Sarrubi opened the restaurant and bar 19 years ago. Before that Sarrubi was a shoemaker downtown. Capp, who changed his name from Caporale, worked for the San Francisco Call



Joe Capp, with trademark cigar and fedora, rolls dice with longtime customer Vince Larocca.

Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Bulletin as a circulation driver, but that is just a small portion of what Capp is all about.

He boxed professionally "until I broke my nose." Then he promoted fights at Kezar Pavilion. For a time, he managed semipro base-

ball clubs. And "I did a bit of gambling — on football, the horses. ... I made a good living."

"I was arrested a few times," he adds, "arrested for gambling. The most time I served was six days in a work furlough."

When he was 7, Capp started selling papers down at the waterfront. "I had to bring home two bits a night to my father," he says.

He quit school at 13. He says his teacher asked him to go to the board and work a problem. He re-

fused. She repeated her request, putting a hand on his shoulder. He refused again. Then, she put her other hand on his other shoulder and he slapped her face. He walked out and never returned.

Capp, however, was a survivor. It was just a short time before he found the money to buy a 1921 Star Roadster Convertible.

"My car was one of the first cars over the Golden Gate Bridge," he says. "Not bad for a 13-year-old kid."

After getting the car, he convinced the man who delivered his papers to leave him 600. He piled the papers into the rumble seat and headed for the junior high he recently had left. There he picked up a bunch of kids and took them to Pine and Kearny, where his former schoolmates sold all the papers. "I created my own district," he says.

Another time, he convinced a police sergeant that he needed press identification so he could get onto passenger ships down at the wharf. One time he was on board hawking his papers when a lady approached him and asked if he could get her off the ship without clearing customs.

"So I take this lady down through the engine room and have her duck way down in my car. She has me take her to the St. Francis Hotel. ... She gave me a \$20 bill."

"The next day there was her picture on the front page — Barbara

Hutton," the ostentatious Woolworth heiress. "She must of been 18, 20 years old."

Joe DiMaggio sold papers for Capp. So did fighters Johnny Fezzano and Little Joe Roche.

"Street sense" is what you learned hawking papers, Capp says.

Many of his boxers, ball players, newspaper carriers have their photos on the wall of Capp's "Celebrity (sic) Corner." Singer Tony Bennett, comedian Marty Allen and former 49er Dan Colchico also are on the wall, along with some "regular Joes" such as a meter maid who's "dead now ... he always wanted his picture up there, so we put him up."

Colchico was in the restaurant recently, eating clams and rice. "Everyone on that wall has been in the restaurant sometime," Capp says.

Twelve years ago in June, Capp had a triple bypass. As doctors are wont to do, he gave Capp some health advice. "I told him you mind your store, I'll mind my own," Capp says.

These days Capp walks through the neighborhood for exercise, often stopping for conversation, but he still smokes. "Yeah, sure. Why not? Don't take my cigar or my brandy," he says.

For Capp — with his dark suits, fedora and ever-present cigar — is one of the few who remains in touch with the Italian heart of North Beach.

Little Joe's: The wait as much fun as the meal

By Jane Ayres

Special to the Times Tribune

Going to North Beach for dinner and a night on the town can present a perplexing problem: How to have both things happen on the same night, and get full benefit from your parking place?

If you eat first at an Italian restaurant (and there are many good ones), you find yourself too full and tired to roam up and down the streets and alleys afterward.

If you decide to wander around for a few hours and then have dinner, all the good restaurants will be too crowded when you get there, and you will have had too many drinks or coffees after stopping at all those interesting little cafes.

The thing to do is eat at Little Joe's on Broadway just off Columbus Avenue. It's dinner and a show.

"I like to see people happy. When they see some show here, they're comfortable, they have a good time. That makes the food taste good."

— Franco Montarello

"Rain or Shine, There's Always a Line" say the T-shirts worn by the cooks and waiters at this establishment that quickly has become a North Beach institution.

The line refers to the wait, but what a fun wait it is. On Fridays and Saturdays, the lines for dinner are the longest. You see everything in line at Little Joe's. You can keep an eye on the passing traffic of Broadway through the big plate-glass windows, so it's like you're

still out and about. Then you can buy wine from a little station set up just for the purpose of serving wine or beer to people in the line.

As you sip your Valpolicella, you have a great view of the cooks behind the counter. All Little Joe's food is cooked in plain sight. Slow-cooking items such as the roast chicken and boiled beef are started in the morning, of course, but almost everything else is cooked on the spot. And it is all assembled before your very eyes by a madcap group of fry cooks, counter men and impromptu pop singers.

The impresario of this revolving circus is Franco Montarello, the "Little Joe" of the restaurant's title.

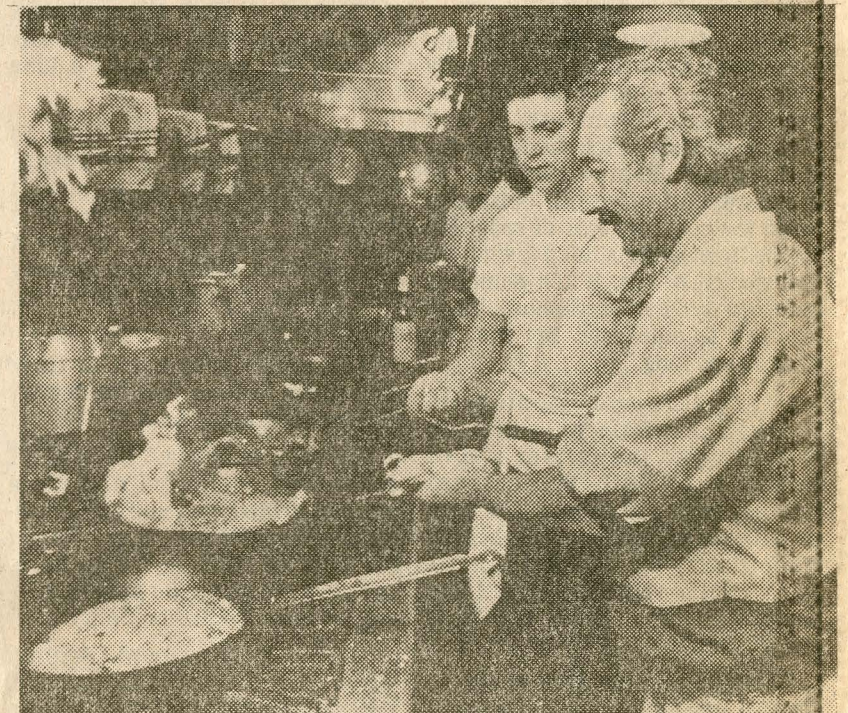
Dressed in a sports shirt open at the neck, usually wearing a white apron, Montarello seems almost to dance around the restaurant, bouncing from the cashier's station

with its bowl of "Italian after-dinner mints" — cloves of garlic — to a post at a railing overlooking the line of waiting customers. For a few minutes, he directs traffic to the tables, then dashes behind the counter to throw together a carbonara. Through it all, he keeps up a running dialogue with customers, waitresses, cooks: anybody who comes into his range gets some kind of acknowledgement.

Montarello left the small town of Varese in the Italian province of Liguria to come to San Francisco in 1953.

While working as a garbageman in San Francisco and Oakland, he thought about his plan to open an Italian restaurant. He tried one on Broadway in Redwood City in 1962, and called it the Marble Arch. Then he had one with a partner in

Please see LITTLE JOE, Page 8



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Franco Montarello (right) loves "Italian mints" — garlic.

North Beach: Home to two cultures

Potstickers and ravioli side by side

Common denominator is pride in the family

By Sue Guglielmon
Times Tribune staff

The pops and spent casings of firecrackers celebrating the Chinese New Year are as much a part of North Beach ambiance this time of year as Italian delis and cafes.

Chinese men practice tai chi in Washington Square Park, while rows of old Italian men in their fedoras sit on benches watching the day pass before them.

And "gung hay fat choy" is heard as frequently as "ciao" at Panelli Brothers Delicatessen.

"The border used to be Broadway," said Robert Panelli, who owns the store with his brother, Richard. "Now it's right here at Vallejo."

Bill Fung of Daly City grew up on that border.

"I was raised in the middle — between Chinatown and North Beach," he said. "The Italians and Chinese depended on each other ... in sports, education."

Fung's family shared an apartment building with cousins, aunts and uncles. Their landlords were Italian.

"We loved them," Fung said. "The husband had passed away and the wife decided she was going to sell. She wanted to sell it to us."

"The biggest changes are in the family," said Richard Panelli. "When we were growing up, coming down to the store was a lot more interesting than staying at home. Now kids have cars. They're off with their friends. When we were kids, we did what our mother and dad did, whether we liked it or not."

The Panelli brothers don't expect their



Times Tribune photo by Maria Pease

Father Mario Rosso and Sister Agnes Lee have eased the change from Italians to Chinese parishioners.

offspring to take over the business, which has been in the family for three generations. The Panellis admit they want more for their children — perhaps to become doctors or lawyers. And their children want something different for themselves.

"The desire for status among young people today is a big change" among the Italians, Richard Panelli said. "And you just can't tell kids what to do."

"Italian people laid back," Fung said. "There were a lot of the older generation within the community. They were used to it, accustomed to it. The Chinese repre-

sented young blood. They want to do business, they want to do better."

A look at the youth of the area underscores his point.

Father Mario Rosso of Sts. Peter and Paul Church estimates that the Salesian Grammar School is 85 percent Chinese. The playground at Washington Square Park is filled with Chinese youngsters.

There is a noticeable lack of Italian children in the district.

The Italian congregation at Sts. Peter and Paul, Father Rosso says, "is all old people."

Meanwhile, the Chinese and Italian cultures are very much alike in one respect. Both are family oriented. Fung's cousin, Gordon, like his father before him, is a doctor in practice in Chinatown. And Gordon still lives near that border.

Perhaps the next generation of Panellis, too, will rise to the challenge of a tradition on that nebulous border between Little Italy and Chinatown.

As it is, Lawrence Ferlinghetti's words ring more true each day: the old Italians "have been dying and dying ... day by day. ..."

Italian priest says Mass — in Chinese

By Sue Guglielmon
Times Tribune staff

Father Mario Rosso and his assistant, Sister Agnes Lee, of Sts. Peter and Paul Church are the antithesis of cultural misunderstanding in North Beach.

Father Rosso is in charge of the Chinese programs at the church and says Mass in Chinese Sundays at 10 a.m. He speaks the language fluently, having spent more of his life in China than in his native Italy.

Rosso was born in Northern Italy, but went to Hong Kong in 1938 when he was 15 and on to Shanghai a year later. There, he completed his seminary studies. He lived in China for 43 years.

"The Communists arrived (in Shanghai) on the 24th of May 1949. I left in July of 1951," Rosso said. "They tried to get our children to accuse us, say that we were spies. But they wouldn't. Ah, to leave them ... it still hurts," he said, putting his hand over his heart.

From there, he returned to Hong Kong, where he learned Cantonese, the dialect most often heard in North Beach and Chinatown. Eventually, he was sent to Sts. Peter and Paul because of his unique background.

"I never dreamt to come here," he said.

The church began offering Mass in Chinese in 1974.

"Our aim is to integrate them into the community, to become real citizens of this country, not to be apart," he said.

On Feb. 23, Sts. Peter and Paul "had a religious celebration of the New Year," the Chinese New Year. Father Rosso and Sister Agnes Lee happily share photos and memories of the celebration.

Finally, he outlined the reasoning of the church, the Italian basilica, for welcoming the Chinese community: "So they can listen to some good words."

'HEART'

Continued from Page 1

Maria Groppi told a committee of San Francisco supervisors that a threefold increase in rent at another Cuneo's outlet on Grant Avenue forced the closure of the Green Street bakery. It had been in continuous operation for more than 100 years.

"We have to protect the businesses that make North Beach attractive," Groppi said as she bagged some bread sticks for customers in her remaining neighborhood bakery at 1501 Grant Ave.

Other Italian-Americans blame North Beach emigration rather than outside influences.

Luigi Marciano is a chef at the Green Valley Restaurant on Green Street, a North Beach fixture since 1906. He stopped in at Cuneo's to pay his condolences on its last day. Marciano estimates the restaurant's business was about 85 percent Italian a decade ago. Now, only about half the customers are Italian.

"The Oriental community has bought up the land," Marciano said. "The old Italian people pass away and the community goes."

Duane Cimino is president of his family's North Beach-based real-estate company, which has been in business since 1932.

Cimino reminisced about growing up in North Beach as Groppi was closing up the Green Street bakery forever.

"I used to buy coffee here when I was a kid. Italians started selling out 20 years ago," Cimino said. "The demand for property in this area is so high now that it pushes out businesses with low profitability, such as bakeries.

"Somebody comes in and buys the Green Valley building, say for \$400,000, and they have to make a profit on their investment. Commercial tenants can pay as much as \$4 per square foot per month now."

Cimino believes it will be impossible to stop the economic changes under way in North Beach.

"Commercial rent control will not cure it," he said emphatically.

In the future, North Beach will be groomed to attract tourists. This inevitably means more boutiques and T-shirt shops, Cimino said.

"I foresee big commercial tenants who will try to emulate the character of North Beach as it

once was," he said.

There are those, however, who would manipulate social and economic forces to preserve the neighborhood. During the past several months, groups of concerned citizens and politicians have stepped forward with proposals to "save North Beach."

In this month's issue of the quarterly magazine North Beach, editor Robert Anbian rallies readers with this pronouncement: "A neighborhood/renters/small-business revolt is likewise gathering new steam — let those who would be mayor or sit on the Board of Supervisors take note. Small and independent businesses need relief and a fair opportunity to survive now."

San Francisco Supervisor Carol Ruth Silver said in a recent phone interview that a neighborhood zoning advisory board could approve commercial use of North Beach properties and preserve its historic character.

"As chair of the Planning, Housing and Development Committee, I recommend the appointment of a consistency committee that would act like the Coastal Commission," she said. "The committee of local

residents would pass on any new, additional or proposed businesses in the neighborhood. The committee would advise the city Planning Commission. Preferences would be extended to service businesses such as cleaners or shoe-repair shops, and efforts would be made to prevent existing businesses from being forced out because of high rents.

"We would also prefer one-of-a-kind businesses to discourage branches or banks and fast-food chains. New businesses would be screened to determine whether they contributed to the character of North Beach."

If a special district is created for North Beach, it should not become a Disneyland-like tourist trap, advised historian Richard Dillon, chronicler of the area's illustrious past.

"Look at what has happened to Fisherman's Wharf," Dillon said. "It's full of tourists walking around buying damned T-shirts and eating bad meals at four times a fair price. It's not too late to do something now about North Beach, but I don't know how fast these things move."



Times Tribune photo by Marla Pease

"We have to protect the businesses that make North Beach attractive," asserts Maria Groppi of Cuneo Bakery.

LITTLE JOE

Continued from Page 7

North Beach, called La Bussola.

In 1970, Montarello hit on his winning formula — the lunch counter. He opened a tiny place, just a counter with stools, on Columbus Avenue. The food was solid and well cooked. The portions were generous and the atmosphere was uninhibited and spontaneous. Workingmen came there for lunch and spread the word about the place. Soon the lines of people waiting for one of the 17 stools began streaming out of the door and down the block.

After a few years, Montarello annexed the real-estate office next door and Baby Joe's was born. Now there were actual tables and chairs, and the place was open for dinner, too. Behind the counter were cans of olive oil, bottles of wine for cooking, vats of spaghetti sauce. Iron skillets hung just above the cooks' heads. When someone ordered spaghetti carbonara, a bell clanged to celebrate. But the line was just as long.

Four years ago, Montarello moved the whole operation to Broadway, to the former site of Mike's Pool Hall. The current building seats 110 people. The cans of olive oil are still stacked behind the counter; the cooks still burst into song; the skillets still burst into flame. And on weekends, the line is longer than ever.

The food at Little Joe's is classic Italian-American cooking brought to a high art. The spaghetti carbonara is not what you would ex-

pect. It has sour black olives in it. The white beans and sausage are comfort food for the soul. In spite of the high volume, the quality is consistent.

Montarello says, "My food goes out good — no matter what."

It's not just the food, anyway. It's the back chat among the cooks behind the counter, the customers sitting on stools, the people in the long snaking line, the crowds at tables on the raised level where Franco directs traffic.

Montarello on the subject of hiring cooks: "I look for a guy with a little personality — a happy guy who's willing to work. It helps if he needs the money. That means he's motivated — see? I can always teach him to cook. My cooks stay seven, eight years. That's a long time for a cook."

On sources: "It's important to buy everything fresh. I use Friscia for fish. They know me by now. If it's frozen, I don't buy it. I just take it off the menu until I can get it fresh. Basilico I get from somebody who grows it just for me — we need a lot of it."

Montarello goes back to Italy from time to time, but he doesn't like the food there now.

"They've changed," he said. "I order veal scallopini and it's a piece of grilled veal and two mushrooms. Where's the sauce? To get the kind of cooking we do here, you've got to go up the mountain — that's where it's still home style."

"I like to see people happy. When they see some show here, they're comfortable, they have a good time. That makes the food taste good."

One more vote for Cavallino.



"I took my Rabbit to another auto body place and they started working on it. But they did everything wrong.

The repairs were so bad, I panicked and called a friend who works with some architects in Palo Alto. 'Brenda,' I said. 'I want you to poll all the people in your office and ask them where they take their BMWs and Porsches for body work. I figured they'd want the best service around. The vote came in:

Cavallino Rampante.

So with great enthusiasm and trust, I handed my Rabbit over to the people at Cavallino.

And the work was outstanding. Now, they've got my vote."

We offer full collision repair service. And as Mary Austern will tell you, customer satisfaction is guaranteed.

Call

(415) 326-9800.

CAVALLINO
COLLISION REPAIR

1880 W. Bayshore Blvd. Palo Alto, CA 94303 (415) 326-9800



Enid Pearson

TAX PREPARATION IRA's



Patricia Wood

Pearson-Wood Associates Inc.

For Appointment

(415) 961-2003



Registered for Security Transactions with Judy & Robinson Securities, Inc.

MENLO PLAYERS GUILD PRESENTS

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, April 5, 10-4

at Burgess Theatre, 601 Laurel St., Menlo Park

FREE Tours and Demonstrations

Acting / Audition Workshop directed by Ray Doherty

(Supportive Environment, Beginners Encouraged)

Families Welcome

Information
322-3261



9 AM — (check in 8:30)
— 1 Mile Fun Run
— 5 Kilometer Race
— Costume Contest

This space is donated as a community service by

TimesTribune

This performance is made possible by a grant from the Arts Council of San Mateo County's Partnership Fund. The California Arts Council is a contributor to this fund.

North Beach: Migration to the Peninsula

The climate drew the first Italians ... and then the friends followed

By Patricia Hannon

Special to the Times Tribune

When William and Mary Eva moved to the Peninsula in 1947, El Camino Real was a two-lane road and, except for a few isolated housing tracts, all that could be seen for miles was open land. Beyond that lay a valley of blossoming fruit trees.

An arched sign on the El Camino entrance to Redwood City welcomed them and epitomized the reasons for the large Italian migration from North Beach to the Peninsula: "Climate best by government test."

To William Eva the move was a natural one. Although he was born in North Beach, his family moved to Italy when he was 4 years old, and he spent much of his childhood on a small farm there.

At 17, his father suggested he return to America, so in early 1929 young Eva emerged from a boat in San Francisco not knowing a word of English.

Fortunately, he did have a trade and soon was hired by Guido Brandoll to bake cakes and cookies. Eventually, Eva bought Bayview Bakery, which specialized in Italian, American and French pastries.

In 1947, Eva sold his business because he yearned for the country and wanted to pursue his hobby of raising trees.

His wife, Mary, said, "He loved to putter around in the garden," a hobby he still enjoys at the couple's home on James Avenue in Redwood City.

The sunny Peninsula climate also was an attraction for Mary Eva, who was born in Italy but reared in North Beach, where her family moved when she was 6 months old.

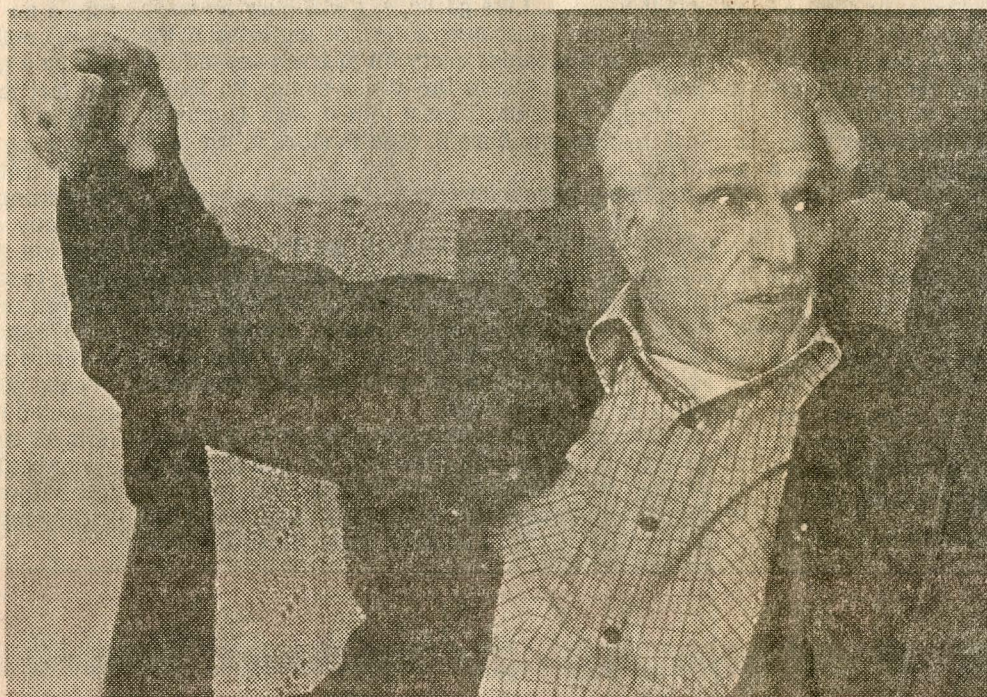
Although she admits that growing up in the city was sometimes exciting, the country atmosphere of the Peninsula appealed to her maternal instinct.

"The weather had a lot to do with the move," she said. "I couldn't let the children outside (in North Beach) unless they were wrapped up like Eskimos."

Weather also brought Al and Hazel Cirelli to Redwood City, but theirs was more than a yearning for country life. In 1940, they were told that their 2-year-old son, Albert, had asthma and that a move to the Peninsula would be the best thing for him.

Al Cirelli was born in 1912 in a small house that still stands on Kearny Street. Coit Tower now looms only a block away.

His vivid memories of the streets of San Francisco in the days before World War II



Times Tribune photo by Rod Searcey

Al Cirelli invited his friends for a barbecue, and soon they migrated, too

As Italians sold their North Beach homes and businesses, more and more of them made their way to the Peninsula. Many of them followed each other in the migration.

The Cirellis were among the first of their peers to make the move and said that within 10 and 20 years most of their Italian friends and family from North Beach had moved to the Peninsula.

Many of the couple's friends from San Francisco would share in Sunday barbecues that could not be enjoyed in the fog-covered city.

"Sure enough three, four or five years later they would be down here," Cirelli said with a hint of an Italian accent.

As early as 1930 the Italian population on the Peninsula was growing so much that the Italian-American Social Club in Menlo Park was formed as a gathering place.

Guido Brandoll was one of the first members of the club. While he owned the bakery in San Francisco, he said he often spent weekends on the Peninsula playing bocce ball, picnicking and making wine and beer with his friends.

Brandoll moved in 1934 from San Francisco to Calistoga and then to Sonoma before settling in Redwood City in 1975.

though attracted by the weather, they basically "moved with the group ... in-laws and outlaws," he said.

Firpo is president of the Italian-American Social Club and said it still serves as a gathering place for the Italian community by providing golf tournaments, bocce ball and horseshoes, among other social activities. The club has about 960 members although only about 250 are active, Firpo said.

Many of the Italians on the Peninsula also are active in other social clubs that bring them back to their heritage, including the Italian-American Catholic Federation, the Native Sons of Italy and the Fun After 50 Club in Redwood City.

By the time Mario and Inez Marcucci moved to Redwood City in 1969, their neighborhood near East Oakwood already was referred to by residents as "Little Italy," she said.

Mario Marcucci said he never liked the fog in San Francisco, but it took the construction of Interstate 280 near the couple's home to convince his wife to move.

Many Italians left strong roots in San Francisco, and especially in North Beach. But they made new homes and new roots on the Peninsula and few of them would



come complete with an iceman, a Chinese laundry and a junkman who carried his goods in a horse-drawn buggy.

During Cirelli's youth, North Beach was about 80 percent Italian. Slowly and surely the residents of a thriving Chinatown only a few blocks away started pooling family funds and buying houses and apartments in the Italian enclave.

"When you retire, this is the best weather," he said.

For Victor Firpo, the Peninsula also had the best weather — only for him it was the best for gardening and growing vegetables.

"I'm quite a farmer," Firpo said. "I like to work in the garden all the time ..."

Firpo and his wife Frances moved to their East Palo Alto home in 1949, and al-

trade their country a sunshine for the hectic life of the city.

Mary Eva said she never missed living in San Francisco.

"I don't even like to go there and fight the traffic," she said.

And, in spite of her initial hesitation in moving here, Marcucci also prefers the Peninsula to the city.

"I'm here to stay," she said.

William and Mary Eva came to Redwood City from North Beach in 1947 so he could garden and their children could enjoy the mild climate.

Times Tribune staff photo by Sam Forencich

TOWER

Continued from Page 3

pany that had designed City Hall and the Opera House, to build a monument on the city-owned hill. In 1930, Telegraph Hill was topped only by a park.

Telegraph Hill, beginning with the Gold Rush in 1849, had served as a lookout station to relay news of ships entering the Golden Gate. In the late 1800s, a telegraph operator wired information from the summit to businessmen in the Financial District on Montgomery Street.

Architect Henry Howard worked on several designs for Coit Tower before coming up with the simple and fluted reinforced-concrete column that stands 180 feet high.

When Coit Tower was completed, New Deal money was being made available for civic projects — new highways, bridges, buildings and sewers. The city utilized some of these federal funds to have the interior of the Coit Tower lobby improved with artwork.

The idea to cover the bare walls of the tower with murals was implemented by Dr. Walter Heil, director of the San Francisco Legion of Honor Museum. Heil selected 25 artists to do the work.

The irony of the Coit Tower

murals is that although they were funded by government money, the frescoes often depict the horrors of the Depression, which many people (and the artists) blamed squarely on the government.

A 12-foot-high bronze statue of Christopher Columbus by Vittorio Di Colvertalio stands in the center of the Coit Tower parking plaza. It was given to the city by the Italian community in 1957.

Coit Tower is open seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A gift shop on the first floor offers posters, books, post cards and other souvenir items. A ticket for the observation tower elevator costs \$1.50 for adults, 75 cents for children under 12.

PHANTOM

Continued from Page 3

top of Telegraph Road and never had needed a street number. A few years ago, Ken went down to the post office and negotiated for an address. Now it is designated 1 Telegraph Road.

Ken says his friends are used to him spending much of his time at Coit Tower and don't think much of it anymore — except when they are trying to find a parking place. New friends invariably are amazed when he takes them there, he said.

Above all, Ken is fundamentally

a security guard, and he is always on the watch for intruders and vandals.

He let out a little secret.

"The police are getting more and more concerned about high-school-age kids driving up to the tower, drinking, breaking bottles and whatnot," he said. "And what they are going to be doing soon is installing one of those sobriety checkpoints at the top of the hill — like the ones police have been using down on the Peninsula.

"Once they (people with alcoholic drinks) get up to the top, there's no place to turn around and run away, and they will be in for a lot of trouble."

HISTORY

Continued from Page 9

continues to work at the library, researching yet another book on early California history.

The author highlighted some of the unique features of San Francisco's Little Italy that emerged from his research.

Unlike other enclaves of newly arrived ethnic groups 100 years ago, North Beach Italians were a divided lot. Because the first emigrants left their provinces before Italy became a unified nation, the various Italian-speaking factions retained their regional characteristics.

"A Genovese mother would never let her daughter associate with a Sicilian young man," Dillon said.

Another characteristic of North Beach Italians was their continuing reluctance to become naturalized U.S. citizens. This fact no doubt contributed to their remaining renters rather than becoming property owners and landlords.

When World War II broke out, more than 70 percent of those working in San Francisco's Italian-dominated fishing industry were still aliens, Dillon estimates.

Though he avoids assigning blame about the decline of North Beach, Dillon provides many influences that have contributed to it.

Probably the most important is a phenomenon experienced by nearly all immigrant groups in the United States: Succeeding generations, still maintaining a tradition of big families, moving to the suburbs to find more space.

"Like so many other groups, Italians have become Americanized after three generations. Typically, the first generation keeps the ways of the old country, the second generation begins to change and the third generation are going after MBAs and living in (the East Bay's) Piedmont or San Mateo," Dillon writes.

"In time, Little Italy became a proving ground, a holding area for Italians until they felt comfortable enough in their new environment to melt into the city's larger community or to disperse throughout the Bay Area, perhaps even marrying outside of their own nationality."

Despite further encroachments upon the North Beach neighborhood, Dillon remains hopeful that its Italian character will survive. The "beat generation" invasion of the 1950s helped disperse Italian ethnicity, he said. And the merchandizing of topless titillation near the intersection of Broadway and Columbus caused some older Italians to mutter the last rites for North Beach.

"This is more than an issue of buildings," Dillon said. "We're worried about the quality of life enhancement here."



Photo courtesy of Richard Dillon

Richard Dillon's "North Beach — the Italian Heart of San Francisco," details the origins of the Italian-dominated fishing industry from the 1850s. Its legacy: Fisherman's Wharf.

HALO POWER TRAC

Regular and Low Voltage



HALO RECESSED

Regular and Low Voltage



30% OFF

Suggested Retail Prices
Accessories Included

JAC ELECTRIC

We're the smallest...but serve you best
4214 El Camino Real, Palo Alto 494-6424
Mon.-Fri. 10-6, Sun. 12-5. Parking in rear

ESTATE & CONTEMPORARY ORIENTAL & EUROPEAN AMER. & EUROPEAN

JEWELRY • OBJECTS OF ART • FURNITURE

PORCELAINS—ANTIQUES—SILVER—CLOCKS—IVORY—RUGS

HIGHLIGHTS

- BEAUTIFUL, OLD MEISSEN 18" SEAGULL FIGURE, 6 FRUIT PLATES, CUPS & SAUCERS, CANDLESTICKS AND MORE.
- COLLECTION OF EXTREMELY FINE, RARE, SMALL HEREKE PRAYER RUGS, ISFAHANS, NAINS & OTHER PERSIANS, LARGE & SMALL.
- FINE SELECTION OF LARGE BRONZES & MARBLE BUSTS & STATUES INCLUDING WESTERN, ART-DECO, EUROPEAN & CLASSIC SUBJECTS.
- ANTIQUE ART-DECO/NOUVEAU & OTHER SIGNED ART-GLASS CHANDELIERS & LAMPS.
- UNUSUAL ANTIQUE TIBETIAN RITUAL URN.
- 2 + CT. SOLITAIRE DIAMOND RING; PAVE DIAMOND NECKLACE; 4 CT. DIAM. BRACELET; PLUS MUCH MORE DIA. & COLORED PRECIOUS STONE JEWELRY & GOLD CHAINS.
- BRILLIANT CUT CRYSTAL VASES, STEMWARE, BOWLS & MISC ITEMS INCLUDING "DAUM" BACCARAT, QUEEN LACE "HAWKES" ETC.

PUBLIC AUCTION

SILVER HOLLOWWARE & FLATWARE + MANY COLLECTIBLE PIECES OF FINE STERLING. 3' TALL "PRISONER OF PIRATES" BRONZE. UNIQUE ART-DECO 3 PC. BEDROOM SET. ROOM-SIZE ORIENTAL CARPETS + MANY COLLECTIBLE TURKISH, PERSIAN & CHINESE RUGS. FINE OILS, PRINTS, WATERCOLORS & ENGRAVINGS INCL. 2 RARE BOUND SETS OF ILLUSTRATIONS BY GIBSON. OLD COLLECTORS BOOKS & MAGAZINES. SEVERAL ART-DECO DINING TABLES + MANY OTHER SETS & SEPARATE TABLES, CHAIRS, CHINA & DISPLAY CABINETS, BOOKCASES, ARMCHAIRES, SIDEBOARDS & MISC. FURNITURE. LOTS OF ORIENTAL ITEMS. FINE IVORY CARVINGS, CLOISSONE, JADE, NETSUKES, PORCELAINS, SCREENS, PEDESTALS, ETC. CARVED WOOD & GILT WOOD MIRRORS. FIREPLACE SURROUNDS INCL. MASSIVE ITALIAN TERRA-COTTA W/CARVED CLASSIC FIGURES. ANTIQUE CHINA SETS & INDIVIDUAL PIECES BY LIMOGES, DOULTON, MEISSEN, COALPORT, NIPPON, CAPODIMONTE & OTHER FINE PORCELAIN FIGURINES & FLOWERS. NUMEROUS BOX LOTS OF SMALLER ITEMS. OLD NEON BEER SIGNS. MUCH MUCH MORE!!!

SALES:

SAT., MAR. 22 at 8:00 p.m.
SUN. MAR. 23 at 2:00 p.m.
MON. MAR. 24 at 7:30 p.m.

PREVIEWS:

SAT. MAR. 22—2:00 to 8:00 p.m.
SUN. MAR. 23—12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
MON. MAR. 24—2:00 to 7:30 p.m.

TERMS: Cash, Personal Check w/proper I.D.—Extended Credit on Major Purchase

Peninsula Fine Arts Gallery

60 Fifth Ave., Redwood City/Atherton 415-363-0443
(Corner El Camino Real & Fifth Ave.—1 Mile South of Woodside Rd.)
CSL#838