



SAN RAMON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

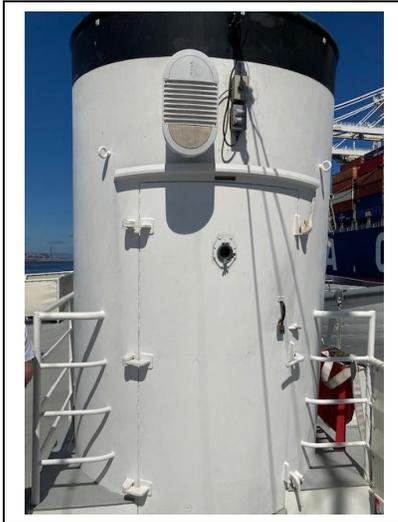
November 2022



USS Potomac: President Franklin Roosevelt's Floating White House

Since the Civil War the most influential American president to impact California was most likely Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He successfully led the country through the great depression and the horrors of WWII. There are only several presidential sites or major artifacts in California and the only Northern California one is the USS Potomac berthed at Jack London Square in Oakland. At our November 17th dinner meeting, we will focus on this unique ship. USS Potomac docent Joe Winkel will show a short video detailing the history of the Potomac and then take us on a virtual tour of the interior of the ship. He has a thorough knowledge of the ship and has learned a great deal about FDR in the process. He is a skilled communicator who can answer most of your questions. Step back with us 80 years in time and enjoy his stories and photos.

Special changes were made to the ship to accommodate FDR's limits due to polio. A one-person elevator was installed in a false smokestack to permit him to move between decks. When you visualize a yacht do you think of the Britannica or Aristotle Onassis's ship? If so, check out the Potomac story to see if your mental image corresponds to the Potomac.



FDR's Elevator



Joe Winkel

FDR left the stress of his office behind sailing on Chesapeake Bay on the Potomac. Often his aides and friends were invited aboard too. In 1939 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were the very first English sovereigns to ever visit the United States and Roosevelt entertained them on his yacht. On this occasion Eleanor joined him but she usually avoided sailing. The president enjoyed mixing and serving martinis to his guests out on the fantail of the ship.



The Potomac served FDR until his death in 1945. President Truman whose feet were firmly planted in American soil decommissioned the ship and sold it off. A succession of owners including Elvis Presley and Danny Thomas possessed it. By 1980 rusting in faded glory, it ended up at Treasure Island where it sank into the Bay until raised from the bottom and restored by the Potomac Association. In 1995 it opened to the enjoyment of the public.

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Congratulations to Kim Holmes who is one of our board members. Recently she was selected to join the Clayton Valley Charter School Board of Directors. Kim is also a member of the schools' faculty. Their gain is our loss because her new board meets at the same time and day the historical society meets. Effective the end of December Kim Has submitted her resignation from our board just one year before her current term expires

Therefore, anyone interested in serving on our board or who can recommend someone else to join the board please do so. The election will be held at our January 19, 2023 membership dinner meeting.

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Board of Directors:	President:	Jerry Warren	Members:	Bill Clarkson
	Vice President:	Lou Plummer		Kim Holmes
	Secretary:	Lee Halverson		Jean Mello
	Treasurer:	Frances Lloyd		Karen Stepper

Member's Memorial Gifts:

Honor someone with a memorial gift! The name of the person you honor along with the donor will be added to our Book of Memory housed ion the Museum of the San Ramon Valley.

Contribution \$ _____ remembers ___ honors ___ expresses appreciation _other ___
 Name _____
 Donor name(s) _____
 Please notify (name) _____
 Address _____

Make your contribution to the San Ramon Valley Historical Society, Box 521, Danville, Ca 94526

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Dinner Reservations:

\$25.00 per person at 7:00 pm November 17, 2022
Make checks payable to San Ramon Valley Historical Society
 Your name _____

Black Bear Diner
807 Camino Ramon
Danville, CA 94526

Good Doctor Blemer

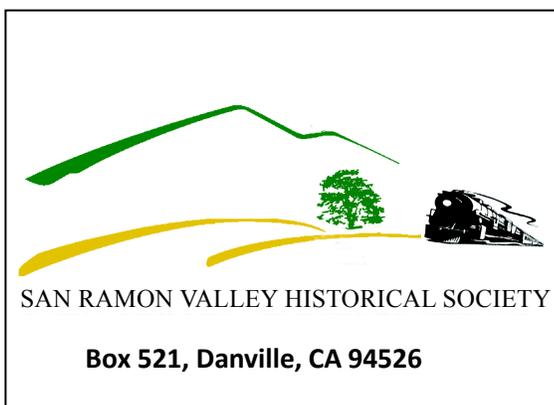
In 1934 John Blemer started his practice in the San Ramon Valley in association with another doctor. By 1935 he was the only active physician in the entire Valley. He treated the sick, delivered countless babies, served as team doctor to San Ramon Valley Union High School teams, made house calls, and in era without paramedics and scant ambulance service even transported the sick in his personal car for admission to Martinez, at the only local hospital. He was also an avid golfer at Diablo Country Club.

At our January 19, 2023, membership dinner meeting many folks will fondly remember Dr. John Blemer who retired in 1985 at the age of 84 years. Some 37 years later it is still cool to recall the good Doctor Blemer.

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**Join the San Ramon Valley Historical Society: Dues – Individual \$20;
Family - \$30; Organization - \$30; Student- \$10.**

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Next Meeting:

November 17, 2022

“USS Potomac”