

# Slivers of San Francisco History

Prepared by  
The Museum of the City of San Francisco  
[sfmuseum.org](http://sfmuseum.org)  
&



[bethship.org](http://bethship.org)

**On January 30, 1847, the sleepy village of Yerba Buena changed its name and San Francisco was born... just 166 short years ago.**

**Yerba Buena, San Francisco, Frisco, City of Saint Francis, City of Gold, Queen City of the Pacific, Baghdad-by-the-Bay, The City: No matter what she has been called, few have remained unseduced by her charms. However, 1890's writer Frank Norris once declaimed, "San Francisco, the city, where no one thinks." We disagree!**

**Following are 146 questions which will occupy you, entertain you and arm you with the ammunition to prove Frank Norris wrong. The answers can be seen at the web site [sfmuseum.org](http://sfmuseum.org) or [bethship.org](http://bethship.org)**

1. What was the early Spanish name for San Francisco?
2. What did the name mean?
3. What news was brought in 1850 by the steamship "Oregon"?
4. What men were known as "The Big Four"?
5. What were the early names for Telegraph Hill?
6. Who was the architect of the Palace of Fine Arts?
7. Jan. 25, 1915, the first transcontinental telephone line was opened by Dr. Alexander Graham Bell in New York speaking to what man in San Francisco?
8. Name the nine Bay Area Counties.
9. Whose Nob Hill residence mansion is now a men's club?
10. What mythical bird is shown on the city's flag?
11. What was the name of a the San Francisco ferry boat once the worlds' largest passenger ferryboat?
12. When was the first windmill built in Golden Gate Park?
13. Name the person most responsible for the windmill's reconstruction.
14. Who was our first elected mayor?
15. What is the name of the steepest street in

San Francisco?

16. What fur-bearing animals were once trapped at Seal Rocks?

17. What was the original name of the San Francisco Airport?

18. How many Committees of Vigilance were formed, and when?

19. What islands are 32 miles west of the Golden Gate?

20. Name two of San Francisco's "Sister Cities."

21. Before 1886, what was the name for Grant Avenue?

22. What is the official name for our Civic Center?

23. Which early San Francisco mayors became California governors?

24. San Francisco lies between what two earthquake faults?

25. How many men were killed during the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge?

26. How many buildings were destroyed in the earthquake and fire of 1906?

27. How long and how wide is Golden Gate Park?

28. When did the first Key System ferry cross the Bay?

29. What is the oldest building in Golden Gate Park?

30. How many ships have been named "USS San Francisco"?

31. What are the city's official colors?

32. What is the official city flower?

33. Name the official songs of San Francisco.

34. What was the "Path of Gold"?

35. When was the first law passed against harming the Seals?

36. Which California mission was the sixth to be established?

37. In what building was the United Nations charter signed?

38. Name San Francisco's highest hill.

39. What is the length of the Twin Peaks tunnel?

40. Which San Francisco mayor served the most years in office?

41. How many cemeteries are there now in the city?

42. What was the original name for Bank of America?

43. How many expositions have been held in San Francisco?

44. How were our fire companies staffed in the 1840's?

45. Why is the word "Argonauts" related to the Gold Rush?

46. What is the name of the crookedest street in the city, and how many turns does it make?

47. What Catholic school is built over a Masonic cemetery?

48. Mole Hall was a nickname for what underground facility?

49. Name the first tunnel to accommodate both cars and people.

50. How many vertical flutings (grooved in the manner of a column) decorate the outside of Coit Tower?

51. What U.S. aircraft carrier was the first to be adopted by San Francisco?

52. Which mayor had the nickname of "Fluffy"?

53. How many tons of granite were used in building City Hall?

54. Which round-the-world steamship line was based here?

55. How did Point Lobos get its name?

56. Who were the so-called "Law and Order" men?

57. How wide is Van Ness Avenue?

58. In what year did Alcatraz become a federal prison?

59. What was the face value of the first gold coins issued by the San Francisco Mint?

60. What building was designed to resemble a ship?

61. The 49-Mile Scenic Drive was dedicated in 1938 by whom?

62. Who was the first U.S. President to visit the city?

63. Name the first ship to arrive here via the Panama Canal.

64. To what does Russian Hill owe its name?

65. Who was the publisher of the first newspaper?

66. What was the name of the first newspaper?

67. After what early resident is Larkin Street named?
68. What was the cost of a barrel of flour in 1848?
69. What San Francisco street was called "The Street of Adventurers" by Robert Louis Stevenson?
70. Name the person famous for her "Spider Dance".
71. Where was Ft. Gunnybags located, and what was its purpose?
72. How is Robert Louis Stevenson honored in San Francisco?
73. Which famous violinist was born in San Francisco?
74. Where was Yerba Buena cemetery located?
75. How many square miles of water are encompassed by the San Francisco Bay, presently?
76. When was the 1906 fire declared checked?
77. How many votes were cast in the first city election?
78. When and where was the Midwinter Exposition held?
79. How much was the fare on the first San Francisco-Oakland ferry?
80. Who gave Lotta's Fountain to the city?
81. Which street marks the western limit of the 1906 fire?
82. After whom was Fort Mason named?
83. What was the Indian name for the Golden Gate?
84. What building was meant for defense of the Golden Gate?
85. Who introduced the cable car to San Francisco?
86. After whom was the Russ Building named?
87. Where did the tragic Broderick-Terry duel take place?
88. What was the reason for the Broderick-Terry duel?
89. How much did it cost per half-ounce to send a letter by Pony Express?
90. When was the first recorded earthquake in San Francisco?
91. What is the city's oldest building?
92. Were Seal Rocks ever connected to the mainland?
93. What was the name given to the Golden Gate by Fremont?
94. What park was once the home of a mayor?
95. At what field in San Francisco was the first Stanford-Cal game played, and when?
96. Which President died at the Palace Hotel?
97. When did Mexico cede California to the United States?
98. Where was the wicked, notorious Barbary Coast?
99. How many different flags have flown over California?
100. The statue of which President is near the Conservatory?
101. Where are the 50 Weeping Maidens, crying over flower urns?
102. How many racetracks have operated in the city?
103. What Japanese family was associated with the Tea Garden?
104. Which famous New England poet was born in San Francisco?
105. The first baseball field to charge admission was?
106. Name the ship depicted in the window at City Hall.
107. In what year did the Chronicle become a daily?
108. What is the name of the city's tallest building?
109. Name the gardener known affectionately as "Uncle John".
110. Which company started the first steamboat service from New York City to the West Coast?
111. When did the first Japanese vessel arrive here?
112. What is the name of the longest street in San Francisco?
113. Which political party was the first to hold its national convention in San Francisco?
114. In what year did the Graf Zeppelin airship pass over San Francisco?
115. What was the Richter scale force of the

1906 earthquake?  
116. Cone, Arch, Repose and Hermit were names given to which famous rocks by Adolph Sutro?  
117. In what year was the first Art Festival held in Civic Center?  
118. Name the famous novel set on Polk Street near California.  
119. Which building featured sculptured Alaska walrus heads?  
120. What is the motto on the city's flag and seal?  
121. What does the motto mean?  
122. When were cable cars added to our horse car transit?  
123. As Coit Tower rises, it tapers; how much smaller is the diameter at the top than at the base?  
124. Where in the city did Lotta Crabtree make her debut?  
125. Where was the first indoor swimming pool?  
126. What U.S. President said, "San Francisco knows how!"?  
127. Which hotel featured the first "Sky Room"?  
128. Who was Jimmy the Bird Man?  
129. When did the last quake refugees leave Golden Gate Park?  
130. Name one of the early amusement parks in San Francisco.  
131. On which Bay island did Richard Henry Dana gather firewood?  
132. How many natural lakes still exist in the city?  
133. When was the Bay Bridge opened for traffic?  
134. Which mayor wore cowboy boots for all occasions?  
135. Which Norwegian ship was exhibited at Ocean Beach until 1972?  
136. What Swiss captain made the first survey and plan of Yerba Buena in 1839.

137. What was the adult admission charge to all of our three fairs?  
138. Fleishhacker, once the city's largest swimming pool, contained how many gallons of water?  
139. In what year did the Board of Supervisors vote for a study to determine if the Golden Gate Bridge could be built?  
140. What year did an ordinance provide for the making and affixing of street signs?  
141. The term "San Francisco Stick" refers to what?  
142. What is the name of the small steamer which began the first ferry service on the bay in 1850?  
143. How fast does a cable car travel?  
144. What is the name of the oldest resident classical ballet company in America?  
145. In what year did the Board of Supervisors pass a bill prohibiting burials in the city?  
146. In what year was San Francisco incorporated as a city?

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