



WN NEWSLETTER II, VOL I

WINDWARD NEWSLETTER #2 #1



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My new book *The Street Fighter Conspiracy* has been released to favorable reviews and is now available online.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

Scheduled Radio Interviews:

- **June 8:** *The Hill and Dale Show*, a weekly internet radio show (L.A.)
- **June 14:** WCOM-FM in Carrboro, NC (Durham/Chapel Hill area)

Upcoming Interviews:

- **KQED-FM, San Francisco, CA**
- *Inland Port Magazine*
- **KMPB-FM, Dillon, CO (Between Denver and Vail)**

Guest Commentary Articles requested by the media (now in progress):

- *C4ISR Journal* (Gannett), two articles.
- *Homeland Security Today Magazine*

Reviews pending:

- *The Los Angeles Times*
- *The Naval War College Review* (**This should prove provocative!**)

- *Columbia County Magazine* (Augusta, GA)
- *Florida Times Union* (Jacksonville, FL)
- *Soundings Magazine*
- **Others to be determined in New York, Michigan, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine and Memphis, TN.**

It's going to be a busy Summer!

The following is an excerpt from a story to be published shortly in *The San Francisco Chronicle*:



My San Francisco Bay, A Sailor's Sketch:

Drake missed it, Vizcaino thought he found it, Dana visited it when it was nothing but a primeval wilderness. Gold seekers, deposited there by clipper ships, passed through it when it was a shabby boom town, and the ones who stayed made it into a city.

San Francisco owes everything to its perch on one of the most extraordinary sheltered bays in the world. There is nothing anywhere else like this body of water: a glorious expanse of navigable and protected aquatic splendor which can only be entered from seaward through a very small portal just over one mile wide. Two trillion gallons of salt water covering four hundred square miles, this is the greatest natural harbor in North America.

Good weather was obviously not a factor in San Francisco's rise to urban glory. During the summer months the air is cold and the brisk westerly breezes are literally sucked through that narrow portal bringing with them great lumps of thick, chilling fog. Twain's words, "The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco." are so very true. In Fletcher's journal from the fabulous Drake world circumnavigation, he wrote of a bleak countryside, the "nipping cold", and the "thicke mists and most stynkinge fogges." This fog monster kept Sir Francis Drake from this portal as he sailed north passing this mouse hole so densely enshrouded. Instead, Drake found a sheltered inlet just a few miles to the north, now called Drake's Estero on the Point Reyes peninsula in what is Marin County, today. The irony and contrariness of San Francisco Bay's history is so typified by Drake: the greatest of ocean navigators unable to discover it. A Shangri-La whose tiny portal is so obscure that it took centuries for civilization to find it. Like Hugh Conway searching desperately for that blizzard concealed Himalayan portal in Hilton's *Lost Horizon*. Contrary landscape and bad weather played their roles in San Francisco's ironic tale and, irony of ironies, the great bay was finally discovered by land expeditions venturing up the coast from Monterey. "Christopher Columbus. He used rhythm as a compass." Fats Waller's words could well be the story of the hapless sea farers who crossed the 38th parallel as if it was just another way point on the rocky and uninhabitable west coast of North America.

Sailors know all too well that the ironies of existence are nowhere more apparent than on the seas and certainly not lost on San Francisco Bay, the little inland sea. Sterling Hayden, the Hollywood actor/sailor set sail from a North San Francisco Bay town called Sausalito in his *Wanderer*. Bound for Tahiti, Hayden was stealing away with his children to escape the ironies of child custody laws. Spike Africa, the very “President of the Pacific

Ocean” was his First Mate. Jack London, himself, had been both an East Bay oyster bed pirate and a fish and game warden chasing the poor Chinese fishermen around the bay. Irony is the history and destiny of this bay.

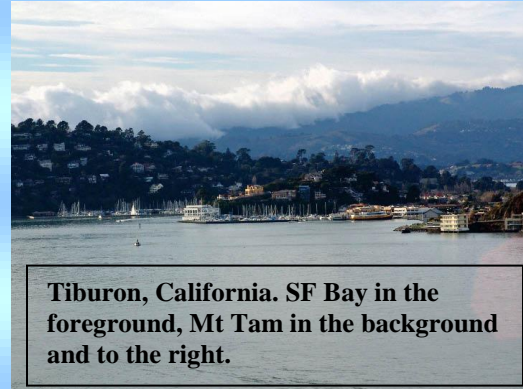
Richard Henry Dana sailed into San Francisco bay on December 4, 1834 on board the Brig *Pilgrim*. His commute from the halls of Harvard was no catamaran ferry ride to the financial district of the mature twentieth century urban jewel. He found a landscape as desolate as Fletcher and Drake had discovered to the immediate north. And not so romantic a destination as it was later to become. *Pilgrim* was there to buy hides and tallow from Indians and the few rough white settlers. Dana wrote a little more enthusiastically about what he saw:

“This large bay, which lies in latitude 37 degrees, 58 minutes, was discovered by Sir Francis Drake, and by him represented to be (and indeed it is) a magnificent bay, containing several good harbors, great depth of water, and surrounded by a fertile and finely wooded country.”

Drake was already famous as being the guy who discovered Drake’s Estero the world then was only too happy to call San Francisco Bay. Ah, history, by Wells or any other arm-chair wise academic. We

sailors tend not to pay too much attention to those who make their way upon the land. They know little of wind, water and weather.

The Gold Rush of 1849 soon transformed the bay from that empty harbor Dana saw to a crowded anchorage of sailing ships, a forest of masts, many of them the famous Clipper Ships. Designed and built in New England, these greyhounds of the seas raced to deliver the greedy and the seekers of the fast life to far off California from the ports of Boston and New York. The Clippers were faster than any pre Transcontinental Railroad land borne transport then in service, even with having to round the tip of South America. These new fabulously streamlined ships were the cutting edge of sailing ship technology, of transportation technology, itself. Gone were the bluff bows of the slow sailing ships of the past. Clipper ship waterlines were clean, shallow and gently fair and their sail plans



were so stacked in such multitudes of canvas that many a clipper boasted speeds into the twenties of miles per hour in ideal conditions and usually in following seas. Modern ocean racing sailors know the same exhilaration surfing down wave faces, feeling the helm suddenly go light and goosy in hand and then the rush of a silent *kick-ass* acceleration under foot. Such ships with names like Flying Cloud, Westward Ho, Winged Racer and Golden West were becoming household names and flowed easily from the lips of school boys. Their destination was a far off place with an exotic name, too, San Francisco, a name that rang out in rhyme with the sound of fast ships, easy money and new adventures; A Shangri-La or a Brigadoon where life would always be exciting and beautiful. This is the stuff that still brings folks to Baghdad by the Bay. Irony reigns supreme!

We're continuing to have a "great notion" or two, as Ken Kesey put it, making a name for ourselves here on "a magnificent bay, containing several good harbors, great depth of water, and surrounded by a fertile and finely wooded country." That's what we do best. After all, we are the inheritors of the mentality of the watermen who wandered that rocky, seemingly uninhabitable coast searching for that elusive doorway lying at that magical 38th parallel. And like Hugh Conway, these watermen never gave up until they threaded through that narrow, fog bound portal in their crude little sailing ships. Into that dreamland they came, the one we have all longed for and have assigned many colorful fictitious names to in our frantic search for Utopia, Shangri-La, Brigadoon, The Emerald City. San Francisco by any other name is not all that the ironic conspiracy of our extravagant and impossible dreams have always demanded, but maybe it's the best of all possible ironic, iconic worlds just the same.



In the next WN Newsletter (#3), I will talk about Carol and Kay, the two most important women in Trav's life. Put off til next time. My appologies.

In subsequent newsletters, I'll talk about St. Augustine and why it is special place to me and for my characters. I'll be updating my Summer publicity campaign, as well.



Thank you, my dear readers.



**Robert Banks Hull
June 3, 2011**

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