

Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs San Francisco International Headquarters

Officers

President (the PREZ)
Communications Czar
Procurer of Venues
AgendaMeister
Archivist of Knowledge

Bill D_____
Geoff Noakes
Lee Tyree
Ken Monk
Dale Fehringer

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Minutes of Meeting

Castagnola's

Thursday August 30, 2007

Assembling at the Bar



A business meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS) was held August 30, 2007 at [Castagnola's Restaurant](#) on Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. The Procurer of Venues was the first one there, and he secured bar stools with a view for the group. The Archivist of Knowledge and Communications Czar were next, followed by the AgendaMeister. The PREZ came dragging in late, mumbling a flimsy excuse about having to water plants in his office.

About Castagnola's



Thomaso Castagnola was credited with creating the first crab cocktail during San Francisco's 1915 World's Fair, and he opened the first crab stand on Fisherman's Wharf in 1916, selling fresh crab to passersby. Now Castagnola's is completely remodeled, with floor to ceiling windows that reveal exquisite views of the San Francisco Bay, Fisherman's Wharf, the Historic "F" line, Fishing Boats, Coit Tower and the downtown skyline.

Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay



It had been one of those rare, hot San Francisco summer days and members of the DHSOS had toiled arduously. An ice cold gin-and-tonic sounded good, so we ordered up and sipped our drinks while settling in at the bar.

Castagnola's is a legendary establishment that has served good food and strong drinks to local fishermen, businessmen, and tourists for nearly a century. It sits smack in the middle of the action – surrounded by fishermen and tour boats, plying their trades, and a constant flow of tourists up and down Fisherman's Wharf.

Once inside, Castagnola's offers a respite from the frenetic pace outside. The restaurant is well-removed from the street, and offers panoramic views of the harbor. Tour boats nearly collide with the restaurant as they navigate in and out of their berths.

Prime Real Estate



Being a man of persuasive nature and many talents, the Procurer of Venues had secured prime real estate for the DHSOS. We were seated for dinner at the only round table in the place, in the northeast corner of the room. Pelicans flew overhead in V-shaped clusters, coming home after their day's hunt. The DHSOS was gathered, too, after a hard day's hunt, and we were famished.

FROM "TIDES OF CHANGE: FISHERMAN'S WHARF 1870-1930"

by John Muir



From the 1930s until now, still further changes have affected our Fisherman's Wharf. Many of the names involved in the fisheries then, such as Castagnola, Tarantino and Alioto are still present, having traded in the tenuous fortunes of the fisherman's life for the steadier, more lucrative fish distribution and restaurant businesses. New waves of immigration have brought Southeast Asian fishermen to our wharves, fishing to supply the live fish markets of Chinatown and the Tenderloin. Sport fishing boats and tour boats now vie for space with the local commercial fishing fleets, while these in turn shift and jostle to make room pierside for visiting vessels of the transient herring and salmon fleets of the Pacific Coast.

Call to Order

The PREZ called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. All Society officers were present, but Da Burd* was not. What a shame, as our table included a place setting for him and he would have had a fantastic view. When questioned, the PREZ said Da Burd was safely "ensconced" in his home, and he had not brought it to dinner (as previously agreed) because that would have been "a lot of work." After some derisive comments, he was given permission to leave the box and other trappings behind, but was requested to bring Da Burd to all future meetings.

So, where is Da Burd? The PREZ said he studied every conceivable roosting place in his home, and hired four feng shui experts to study possible placement to achieve harmony with the environment – and he has concluded that the ideal position for Da Burd is slightly to the left of center on his fireplace mantle.

Lee reminded the PREZ (and everyone else) that if the PREZ ever tires of Da Burd, Lee's wife, Misty, "loves" it and she would welcome it into their house and place it among her collection of crystal. The PREZ laughed at this suggestion.

Proposed DHSOS Outings

The DHSOS discussed two future gatherings, and assigned responsibility for organizing them to the two members who do not get paid for their work:

- Lee is to study the possibilities of a half-day deep sea fishing trip
- Dale is to plan a group outing to Vacaville, to see Allan McCrary's classic cars, chug beers, watch planes take off and land, and have dinner.

* Da Burd is an authentic replica of the Maltese Falcon, which was first seen in the movie with the same name. It is now an honorary, non-voting member of the DHSOS, and until now, has attended our meetings.

Beck Report

The PREZ gave a summary of the comings-and-goings of his son, Beck, who is also an honorary DHSOS apprentice.

The PREZ and Beck recently met at [Shaw's Crab House](#) in Chicago where they discussed this year's trip to Drakesbad and looked at Bills' photos.

There was a beam of pride in the presidential eyes as Bill described Beck's exciting job and wild times.



Beck's job as a photo journalist for the [Naperville \(Illinois\) Sun Times](#) has taken him to some interesting situations, like parades, airports, and fires. And he may get to "shoot" some Bears games this fall! One of the DHSOS's favorite Beck photos shows the joy on the face of a boy at a ballet bar. This is what Beck would have looked like if his mother had forced him to take ballet lessons with his sister.

The DHSOS drank a toast to Beck and wished him well in his endeavors.

'Stina Employment Update

The PREZ proudly announced that his daughter, Christina, the adopted perfect child of the DHSOS, has begun working at the [San Francisco Ballet](#), as assistant to the Executive Director. Her side benefits include access to see dress rehearsals and as many performances as she wants.

The DHSOS drank a toast to Christina, who gets her pleasant manner from her mother, but her business acumen from the DHSOS.

Katharine's Back at It

The very day after getting home from Drakesbad Katharine was back at [school](#), slaving away, working toward another set of straight A's. We've heard tales of all-nighters and suspect that she now views weekends as two more homework days until Monday.

"Miss K" is back playing volleyball, too, and she made the high school varsity team! While she has a shoulder injury that limits her to the back row, she is playing though it, which is a source of pride for her dad and the DHSOS.

Our favorite blond bombshell is quickly growing up, and is now driving -- in the company of her somewhat nervous parents. She's growing up in other ways, too, and her father divulged that he noticed looks from the males at Drakesbad when Miss K emerged from the pool in her Parisian bikini.

Drakesbad De-briefing



The DHSOS agreed this was a very good year at [Drakesbad](#). The weather was perfect, the food was good, and the whole "change of rules" thing seems to be working out the way we wanted it to. Much of the credit goes to the DHSOS.

There were several notable Drakesbad highlights this year, including:

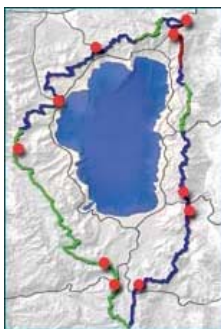
- JoEllyn, who joined in (and fit in) in every way -- and her nursing skills came in handy, too.

- Another year of waterwheels, even if this year's entry was short-lived and not totally organic.
- Ed's birthday party, replete with t-shirts, toasts, and mint tulips.
- Billee's return for a second night of cocktails, as she apparently couldn't get enough of our illustrious group.
- Lynne and Sam; Mark, Carol, and Emma; the Bahme family; and a good group of pint-sized baseball players.
- Sam "the Man" and his round trip to Willow Lake by lunch time – to recover the PREZ's swim trunks.

Sam "the Man"

Sam "the Man" McClure was a hit again this year at Drakesbad, and he represents a younger version of the qualities the DHSOS stands for. Despite being in those somewhat awkward years between boyhood and manhood, Sam has figured out how to do it gracefully, and he is fun to be with and comfortable around people of all ages. He is also quite a stud, as evidenced by his athletic abilities (see "Drakesbad De-briefing").

Now, Sam has contacted the DHSOS about another manly adventure -- he intends to hike the [Tahoe Rim Trail](#) and asked the DHSOS to sponsor him on his quest. Naturally, the DHSOS responded with open minds and open wallets.



From Sam's Website:

"I will expect everyone to be able to keep up with me. 10 mile days, high elevation, 30+ pounds. I don't want to be kept back."

Here's Lee's note to Sam:

Sam,

Sorry I am so slow reporting on the meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS) held last Thursday evening. We did indeed discuss your big adventure and after considerable discussion, we voted unanimously to contribute \$100 to your venture. The \$100 was raised with each member (Bill, Dale, Geoff, Ken and myself) putting \$20 into the pot.

So I stand ready to send you a check for 100 smackers as soon as you give me your current mailing address. We are also planning on forwarding to you an item of DHSOS clothing that we would like you to wear while out on the trail. You will know that we are serious about this if and when you should ever receive something in the mail. If you never receive anything, then you will know that we never quite got that part of the plan under control.

There was also considerable boasting by various members about joining you on a leg or two of this great adventure, but this is not to be taken seriously by you at this time because it is unlikely that those doing the boasting (they were consuming libations at the time) will actually follow through with any real action.

Please be mindful that this \$100 contribution by the DHSOS is the first donation ever made by the Studs for any reason. Believe me when I say that we have been propositioned many times and have never given a cent to anyone for any reason. This will be duly noted in the official minutes of our meeting.

So, congratulations my friend. We will be checking your website from time to time to see how preparations are coming along.

And good luck for the new school year.....Lee Tyree

Online Banking

Ken surveyed the DHSOS on their use of online bill payment. It seems a mixture of methods is used by members, as some have merchants debit their accounts, while others go online and originate the payments. The PREZ uses the latter method, because it gives him control as to when the payment is made, and because he's cheap.

Heart Tests

A discussion of heart tests indicated that most DHSOS officers have had at least one, but most were not aware of the various types of tests. Here's a summary, from:

http://www.hrspatients.org/patients/heart_tests/default.asp

Heart Scan

The heart scan is a painless test that takes about 10 minutes. The process is similar to taking an x-ray of your body. An individual lies on the scanner table and multiple images of the heart are taken. A qualified physician then interprets these images to determine the amount of calcified plaque in the arteries.

Electrocardiogram (ECG/EKG)

A special recording machine is attached to legs, arms and chest via 10 electrodes and takes a snapshot of the electric signals creating heart rhythms.

Echocardiogram

A special imaging machine with a microphone-like attachment creates a videotaped image of heart structures that shows the heart's four chambers, valves and movements.

Holter Monitoring

To detect irregular heart rhythms, patients wear a Walkman-size recording box attached to their chest by five adhesive electrode patches for 24-48 hours.

Event Recorder

Patients carry a pager-sized event recording box so they can make a one- to two-minute recording of their heart rhythm when they actually experience symptoms. This is useful for patients with relatively infrequent and brief symptoms.

Tilt Table Test

This test evaluates the potential reasons for fainting, or syncope. Heart rhythm and blood pressure are carefully monitored while a patient rests on a special table. The table tilts the patient upright at a 70-80 degree angle for 30-45 minutes. If the patient faints, it usually means that he or she has a condition called vasovagal or neurocardiogenic fainting, which is not life threatening.

Electrophysiology Study (EPS)

Under sterile conditions, thin tubes called electrode catheters are inserted into veins in the groin or neck area and threaded into the heart.

RoboForm



Frequent readers know the DHSOS often discusses technology. It isn't so much that we *like* to talk about it, because our competency levels vary greatly, but we feel we *need* to. At this meeting we talked about RoboForm, which is software that helps keep track of and safeguard passwords and ID's used for online banking, Internet accounts, etc.

Geoff has purchased RoboForm (for about \$30) and he recommended it to the rest of the DHSOS. His advice fell on deaf ears, as is often the case.

Lee's Ready to Switch Cards

Lee has about had it with his credit card company. It seems his account has been taken over by one of those colossal international banks, and the payment terms have been changed. What should he do?

Suggestions were thrown out: "I love my XXX card"... "Call so-and-so bank," etc. A hush fell over the table when Dale suggested Lee contact American Express. What happened to his loyalty to Visa???? That ended, he explained, when Visa showed him the door after 22 years, and he recounted how he was stopped on his way

out on his last day by a security guard who was concerned not with the material he was taking out – but with the four cardboard boxes he packed it in.

We finally agreed that Lee should contact several issuers and check out their terms. I don't think we actually agreed which issuers, but we figured that would keep him busy for awhile.

Wine Etiquette

As frequent readers know, the DHSOS is committed to good manners and proper etiquette, and in our ongoing quest to make sure we always do the right thing Ken raised a question about the proper way to treat “gift wine,” which are the bottles brought to your party by guests.

The question was: If you have a dinner party and a guest brings a bottle of wine, should you open it and pour it, or can you add it to your private stash?

After a spirited discussion, the DHSOS decided the answer depends on: (a) whether you asked the guest to bring wine, and (b) what the guest says when presenting the wine.

- ☒ If you asked the guest to bring wine, then be sure to serve it.
- ☒ If you didn't ask the guest to bring wine and they brought a bottle, consider it a gift, thank them, and set it aside for later use.
- ☒ If the guest brings a bottle of wine and instructs you to serve it, tell the arrogant ass you have already picked a wine to serve for the evening and set his aside.

The Number 756

The [number 756](#) has taken on a special significance to baseball fans, residents of the SF Bay Area, and to the DHSOS, as it was the record-breaking number of Barry Bonds home runs, and the new all-time career home run record.

Barry's home run chase has been played to the hilt by the Giants and the media, and the DHSOS agreed we are glad we were able to witness it, and glad it is over. It's been the only bright spot on an otherwise dismal season of Bay Area baseball, and DHSOS thoughts are turning to football.

College Football

Considering the various DHSOS loyalties, there was a surprisingly short discussion of the upcoming college football season. Geoff thinks [USC](#) will take the national championship, but Lee is convinced the [University of Missouri](#) will dethrone them. Ken and Dale were quietly confident about Cal and [Nebraska](#), and the PREZ was surprising mute about [Michigan](#).

AP Top 10		
Rank	Team	Points
1	USC (40)	1594
2	LSU (25)	1582
3	Oklahoma	1418
4	West Virginia	1408
5	Florida	1370
6	Texas	1290
7	Wisconsin	1171
8	California	1126
9	Louisville	1097
10	Ohio State	962

Ken's “Question of the Night”

The AgendaMeister's “Question of the Night” had to do with fisticuffs: “Which DHSODS members had been in a fight that John Wayne would be proud of?”

Lee recalled an incident in the Navy when he called a Marine a “Jarhead” and the Marine hit him in the nose. And Dale told about his two-week stint in golden gloves boxing, during which he got the snot beat out of him.

That was about it ...the DHSOS are lovers, not fighters.

Bill's Birthday Bash



The PREZ invited the DHSOS to his weekend birthday bash – on Saturday at Stinson Beach, and/or Sunday at [Nick's Cove](#) near Tomales Bay.

The DHSOS drank a toast to the PREZ, and wished him a happy birthday.

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The be-skirted PREZ at his cousin's wedding.

Irish Coffee at the B.V.

After dinner, the DHSOS strolled through the fog to a round table at the [Buena Vista](#) for an Irish coffee. The BV was the first establishment in the universe to concoct an Irish coffee, and all these years later they still make it the same way.

How to make the BV Irish Coffee

1. Fill glass with very hot water to pre-heat, then empty.
2. Pour hot coffee into hot glass until it is about three-quarters full. Drop in two cocktail sugar cubes.
3. Stir until the sugar is thoroughly dissolved
4. Add a full jigger of Irish Whiskey for proper taste and body.
5. Top with a collar of lightly whipped whipping cream by pouring gently over a spoon.
6. Enjoy it while piping hot.

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Next Meeting

The Procurer of Venues announced that the next meeting of the DHSOS will take place at [Joe DiMaggio's Restaurant](#), which is the former Fior 'd Italia.



Adjournment

It had been a stellar night, with the proper mix of good food, strong drink, and noble friends. So we paid the check, issued hearty handshakes all around, and walked out into the foggy night air.

That's it for now, Man.

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