

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs
San Francisco International Headquarters**

Officers

President (DUH 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

Bourbon & Branch/John's Grill

Wednesday July 29, 2009

Drinks in a Speakeasy



The San Francisco chapter of the DHSOS met for a business meeting and dinner on July 29, 2009. As is customary, we met first for libations – this evening at a speakeasy called Bourbon & Branch.

The Bourbon & Branch (B&B) is Dashiell's kind of place. A password is necessary to get in and it is not listed in the phone book; the only marking on the building is a misleading sign that says "Anti-Saloon League."

It's a four block walk into the Tenderloin from the Powell Street underground rail station -- four blocks that include a plethora of homeless and undesirable citizenry. We found it best to walk fast and keep our heads down. Near the entrance, Lee was approached by a homeless man who offered to "watch" his car for \$10 (he declined).

Bourbon & Branch offers a glimpse back to the 1920's and the era of Prohibition when the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverage was outlawed. It features the ambiance of that time in an actual speakeasy that operated illegally at this location from 1921 to 1933.

From 1921-1923 their address was listed in the San Francisco Telephone Directory as "The Ipswitch - A Beverage Parlor." In 1923, an industrious young man by the name of John J. Russell purchased the business as a "going

concern" with a solid base of customers. With his connections to bootleggers, he operated his bar under the guise of "JJ Russell's Cigar Shop." He didn't sell many cigars. The speakeasy managed to avoid the attention of the governments Prohibition Agents for the remainder of Prohibition.

The name comes from branch water, a term first used in the 1800s referring to pure, clean water from a tiny stream called a "branch." An order for "bourbon and branch" is a nostalgic request for bourbon and water.

The Branch & Bourbon has a set of house rules that everyone is expected to follow to maintain the "Speakeasy."

House Rules

Please speak-easy

No cell phone use

No standing at the bar

Don't even think of asking for a "Cosmo"

Smokers, use back door

No photography

Please be patient, our drinks are labor intensive

Please exit Bourbon & Branch quietly

Banter at the Bar

This was one of the most interesting drinking establishments the DHSOS has

enjoyed – historic, comfortable, and with good drinks and competent waitresses. DUH PREZ had a flight of three single malt scotches, Ken had a Manhattan and a Black Manhattan, Geoff had a Macallan Single Highland Malt Scotch Whisky, and Lee had a Sazerac Cocktail and a Black Manhattan. We sipped our libations, enjoyed each others' company, and pretended we could make out the menu.

John's Grill



Dinner was at John's Grill, where it all started. This is the "home" of the DHSOS, and Duh Burd¹ proudly roosted among us. John's still refuses to put in a round table for us, so we suffered

along with a rectangular table for dinner.

While dining, we reviewed photos around the restaurant of some of the famous people who have dined at John's Grill; including Alfred Hitchcock, Johnny Depp, Judge Lance Ito, Cheech Marin, and Tommy Lee. Someday, our photos will be among them.

Call to Order

DUH PREZ called the DHSOS to order at 8:32 pm with a clang of a knife on his martini glass. All officers were present, including Duh Burd who presided over the meeting.

Courses and Mortar and Wides, Oh My!

Geoff produced evidence of a check for \$76,000 he had received as settlement for the damage inflicted on his house by the developers next door, and he proudly announced the house has been sold and a new foundation is being poured beneath his house. He showed a photo of his current (brick) foundation and received a lesson in terminology from DUH PREZ. His south foundation is now 4 courses by 3 wides.

¹ Da Burd is an original replica of the Maltese Falcon, which is the mascot of the DHSOS.

That's Not Our Granite!

Lee announced that his kitchen remodel is approximately 60% finished, and it has thus far included only a few minor "disagreements." He recounted an incident in which he and Misty shopped for granite countertops, found the "right" stone, and marked it. Then, when they later went back to mark templates on it, Misty exclaimed, "That's not our granite!" She was steadfast in her denial, too, until she noticed her name (in her handwriting) on the piece.

Note: Since the meeting, Lee reports that Murphy's Law took effect again at the Tyree Kitchen Remodel. The granite counter tops arrived and the biggest piece (which you would see as you come up the stairs to the kitchen) was dropped and shattered right in front of our house. Misty did not cry, but Lee did.

Pre-Drakesbad Briefing



Studs and honorary stud at Drakesbad; photo by Beck Diefenbach

Since this meeting was held just two days before our annual sojourn to Drakesbad, the DHSOS reviewed a list of items to take and the anticipated itinerary.

- Ball glove
- Man bag
- Scree protectors
- Gorp
- Trunk bag
- Head lamp

Saluting a Studly Achievement

The DHSOS saluted Lee for his recent sporting achievement – organizing, running, and placing first at the Poppy Hills golf tournament. During that tournament, Lee shot a net 65, the lowest net score of the tournament, and he also finished third in the putting contest.

“The Garry” Poppy Hills Results

6/19/09

Low Net Score	Lee Tyree
Low Gross Score	Dan Earl – 81
Long Drive – women	Tracy Basinger
Long Drive – Men	Mike Chai
Closest to Pin #2	Russ Morris
Closest to Pin #6	Todd Holcombe
Closest to Pin #11	Tim Sherry
Closest to Pin #15	Tom DuPont
Closest to Pin #17	Joe Joseph
Putting Contest – First	Dan Earl – 29
Putting Contest – Second	Ron Palsa – 29
Putting Contest – Third	Lee Tyree – 30

Birthday Blues and Birthday News

Several DHSOS officers are approaching major birthdays, and plans are being laid for celebrations.



First up is our president, who plans to celebrate his milestone aboard the *Seaward*, an 82 foot Schooner berthed in Sausalito. It is big, has lots of room, and is very steady for anyone concerned with motion. DHSOS' mascot. It is an authentic replica of the Maltese

DUH PREZ has reserved her for the only afternoon that it works for him, Sunday, August 23, from 2-5pm ... (maybe 6pm if the weather is good). The *Seaward* can take 40 of us, plus the crew. Refreshments and food will be onboard.

Ken is on deck and Lee is in the hole.

Prepping for School

Miss K, the perfect daughter of the DHSOS, is prepping for her senior year of high school. She will be a member of the student government, captain of the volleyball team, apply to colleges (see Trip Report below), and advise her father on dress and deportment. This promises to be a busy and exciting year for her and for her father.

Trip Report

Geoff gave a spirited trip report from his recent excursion to look at colleges, the National Baseball Hall of Fame (Cooperstown, NY), and his dinner with John Whitson in New Orleans.

Geoff and Katharine traveled to Boston, upstate New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts to visit seven colleges; Syracuse University, Hamilton College, Colgate University, Holy Cross, Trinity College, Tufts University, and Boston College. While in Boston, they stayed at the same hotel and at the same time as the “Craig’s List Killer.”

Boston medical student, Philip Markoff, 22, a second-year medical student at Boston University, was accused of targeting women who advertised exotic services on Craig list. Markoff was ordered held without bail Tuesday on charges that he sought to rob a masseuse, but bashed her in the head and shot her through the heart when she fought back.

While on a business trip to New Orleans, Geoff had dinner with John Whitson, who is Lee’s father-in-law. At age 90, John drove down from Baton Rouge, met Geoff, and took him to dinner. The Studs were impressed with John’s vitality, independence, and vigor. We saluted John and vowed to be as virile at his age.

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A Team of Brothers

Ken shared this story (originally written by Marlene Koenig and published in the *Daily Times Herald* (Carroll, Iowa) about Vick's dad and his brothers:

In the 1920s, '30s and '40s, most small Iowa towns boasted a hometown baseball team. Large families provided players and civic pride needed a recreational outlet. And baseball was played or watched with pleasure by most of the town's population. The Keonigs, of Halbur, Iowa produced a unique baseball family: the Koenig Brothers.

Joseph and Frances Koenig, besides two daughters, had seven sons. In 1937, the oldest, King (Leo) was 32, Herb 27, Roscoe (Eugene) 24, Vince 22, Si 19, Jerry 16, and Joe was the youngest at 15. Playing through most of the 1930s and 1940s, all were playing baseball in 1937. Some played more than one position, but generally the brothers took these spots: King played second base; Herb played shortstop; Roscoe always played first base; Vince played second base or centerfield; Si played third; Joe played leftfield; and Jerry was catcher.



Theirs was not a minor preoccupation with baseball. Most of the seven played on more than one team, and some of them played more than one position. King was a regular for years on the town team, the Halbur Merchants. Herb, probably the most ambitious member, played for the Halbur Merchants, the Breda Eagles, and the Templeton Country Clubs. In addition, he both played for and managed the Storz Triumphs, a Carroll County league team, and then played for and managed the Koenig Brothers' team. Had he not torn leg ligaments

twice in one season, Herb might have gone much further in the game.

Roscoe played for three teams: the Halbur Merchants, the Templeton Country Clubs, and the Storz Triumphs, and was considered an outstanding first baseman. The brothers agreed that Vince was the best athlete among them. His excellence at sports extended beyond baseball to basketball and football. If he had a favorite game, it must have been baseball, demonstrated by the fact that he was playing on five teams in 1937. Si played for the Storz Triumphs and a second Breda team.

The two youngest brothers were just coming into the game in 1937. Jerry and Joe had been playing junior baseball for two years. Joe played before he enlisted in the service in 1942. More tellingly, he played for the Halbur Merchants in 1945 during the brief time he was home on furlough. Jerry played for the Halbur merchants.

Most of the teams' games were local, but not all. Even today, over 70 years later, Herb remembers games played in Stanton, Iowa, and at Broadway Park in Council Bluffs. Players sometimes rode to the games with hometown fans who had cars or with other local players whose teams did not have a game the same night.

The Koenig Brothers baseball team came about casually, as Joe tells it today. "More was made about the team on paper than actually happened on the field." Asked how it got started, Joe says simply, "We all decided it might not be a bad idea." The Koenig Brothers' games were played against local players, from pick-up teams around Halbur. In a time when any entertainment was scarce and travel often was limited, the team was a novelty and a source of pride. To the hometown people, especially, it was a big deal. The box scores were carried in The Carroll herald. In October 1937, a photographer from the paper lined up the seven brothers

according to height and took the photo that remains a treasure in our family.

The two remaining players for the Koenig Brothers' team were Matt Wagner, their first cousin, who played outfield, and Vern Tiefenthaler, the pitcher, a close friend of the family. A tight-knit group, by any standard.

Eventually the brothers would go on to more serious work in garages, a bank, a creamery, the seminary, with Goodyear Tire, and Pepsi Cola. When baseball began to take a back seat, stories and attachments to baseball remained. One story was of Jerry, on home from St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, who went with a team Herb had organized to play the prison team at Sioux Falls, S.D. According to the warden, Jerry's home run over the prison wall was the first homer hit over the prison centerfield wall, and was recalled one final time in Jerry's eulogy.

After Roscoe stopped playing baseball, he went on with his brother Herb and friend Vern to coach the boys' town team on which each of their sons played. Roscoe also used his pickup to drag the ball diamond before home games.

A favorite memory is of joining a number of other kids sitting on the drag while Roscoe drove around and around the diamond preparing it for the coming game. He practiced with the players using his well-worn, threadbare first baseman's glove, which his son Bob still displays in his home today.

Some of the brother ended active involvement with the game but continued to follow their favorite local and professional teams on radio and then television. Vince gathered a small library of books on baseball history and its significant players. When he died just months ago, his books were disbursed throughout the family. He had also held onto a uniform from his baseball-playing days, eventually giving it to a family member who shared his interest in the game and its past.

Joe's interest eventually went from baseball to boxing, winning the Golden Gloves

welterweight championship in Sioux City and two rounds of the national Golden Glove competition in Chicago. Still, he never forgot the brothers' team, and in the 72 years since The Carroll Times Herald published the Koenig team's picture, Joe kept the original newspaper photo until turning it over to me.

Of all the Koenig brothers, Herb maintained the longest involvement in the game. While working full time, he also traveled as a baseball scout for several teams: the old St. Louis Browns for two years; the Baltimore Orioles, nine year; the Kansas City Athletics (now the Royals), two years; the Minnesota Twins, 19 years; and the Los Angeles Angels for five years – scouting for almost 40 years. At close to 99 years of age, he remembers the men he signed and still talks about them.

The only real loss the Koenig Brothers team suffered was that their dad, Joe, Sr., who died at age 46, never had the chance to see his seven boys play baseball together. Other than that, the Koenig Brothers Baseball Team brought to the local community a unique family entertainment, provided a sense of pride to their town, offered support and camaraderie to one another, and created a lasting memory in that one brief, shining moment that was the summer of 1937.

The Future of News

The DHSOS is concerned with the diminishing role newspapers are playing in creating and supplying true journalism in the U.S., and we discussed what is happening and what lies ahead. All agreed the trend is concerning, but we disagreed what lies ahead. Some are content to get their news from a variety of online sources, while others are pining for a resurgence of newspapers. Bill hopes there will continue to be a need for news photographers, thus creating income for the "Beneficiary of the Perfect Presidential Genes" (aka, his son).

There have been countless articles and speeches on the subject of the future of news. Most see a dim future for printed newspapers, but most also see a possibility of continuing journalistic excellence. An example is the following excerpt from an op-ed piece by Paul Steiger, who runs the nonprofit [ProPublica](#), (which produces and publishes investigative reporting and distributes it free of charge to news outlets).

Sooner or later online news will replace up to 95 percent of printed news. The mere fact that printed news cannot compete with either production speed or reproduction cost of digital media is in itself a killing economical argument.

The only thing websites cannot and will not be able to compete with in the near future is the physical presence and the magic of printed text. If newspapers adapt and change their processes soon, the online edition can (re)establish itself as a reliable data filter in its democratic function as a center of political debate.

The print edition of a newspaper can become a premium product that incites users to contribute to it online. In order to establish itself as the info extravaganza, it needs to learn contemporary information design principles and significantly improve its interface. Newspapers that manage to "join" online and print will soon have a significant advantage over the competition.

Reading paper is an extraordinary experience. Discussing news online is highly addictive. If news organizations manage to leverage and connect both powers they will have a chance to escape oblivion and re-occupy one of the many future centers of public attention.

Sam's Plaque

Lee prepared and the DHSOS presented a plaque to Sam McClure, an honorary stud, to commemorate his becoming the youngest solo thru hiker to complete the Tahoe Rim Trail. The plaque included a trail marker taken from a tree and presented to Sam by a National Park Ranger, and the following inscription:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

SAM MCCLURE

BECAME THE YOUNGEST SOLO HIKER
TO COMPLETE THE 165-MILE
TAHOE RIM TRAIL

JULY 2008

SURVIVING AN ATTACK BY A BLACK
BEAR.

PRESENTED BY THE NEVADA DEPT.
OF WILDLIFE

AND

THE DHSOS (SAN FRANCISCO
CHAPTER)

Sam, who proudly received the plaque, was assured that wherever his life may take him, this plaque will be a guaranteed "chick magnet." The DHSOS resolved to follow this.

DHSOS-Separated at Birth?

Geoff was kind enough to find and forward these DHSOS alter egos from Facebook



Lee Tyree, Minneapolis



Bill D_____, Southeastern Florida



Dale Fehringer, Lancaster, NY



Kenneth Monk, Dallas/Ft. Worth



Geoff Noakes, Brokeback Mountain

Wrapping It Up

It had been a remarkable evening filled with nostalgia, excellent libations, good food, and noble friends. We paid the check, issued hearty handshakes all around, and walked out into a foggy San Francisco night.

That's it for now, Man.

