

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS)
San Francisco International Headquarters**

Officers

President (DUH PREZ)	Bill Diefenbach
Communications Czar (da Czar)	Geoff Noakes
AgendaMeister (ListMan)	Ken Monk
Archivist of Knowledge (Notes)	Dale Fehringer

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Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, May 1, 2025

Harrington's Bar and Grill and Tadich Grill

Call to Assemble

It was time to meet. Notes, serving as temporary PoV, summoned us together:

Gents:

Now that Easter is behind us, we can look forward to our next DHSOS meeting which this year will fall on May 1 (which is May Day in much of the world). For this event, we will re-visit our goal of meeting at places that were around when Dashiell Hammett was alive.

Be therefore advised that the DHSOS will assemble for cocktails at 6:00 PM at Harrington's Bar and Grill, 245 Front Street in San Francisco. This establishment has been operating since 1935 and has the mysterious slogan that "You're a stranger here but once." We'll see ...

After a libation or two we will saunter a couple of blocks to Tadich Grill, at 240 California Street, for dinner at 7:30 PM. Tadich has been open since 1849 and claims to be the "oldest continuously run restaurant in California, and third oldest in the United States". (The most recent visit of the DHSOS to Tadich Grill I can find on Geoff's spread sheet is January 2011). Their slogan is "While you dine on white linen, the atmosphere is meant to be FUN – not stuffy". Again ... We'll see.

Country Music and Line Dancing



San Francisco is trying a variety of things to bring its downtown back to life including blocking off streets for live music and dancing. Such was the case in front of Harringtons when we arrived.

The whole block in front of Harrington's was closed for a country western festival, and there was a country band playing on Front Street and a mechanical bull offering rides to anyone who dared. Security was tight and wristbands required. The waitress with an Irish accent told me she couldn't run a tab because of the festival, and she wasn't sure how it was going to turn out. She took my credit card and brought an order of sea salt and vinegar tatter tots. Drinks from the bar only, and again, no tabs.

Notes tapped his toes to a country song and waited for the rest of the gang to show. The bar was filled with millennials who had just gotten off work.

Once everyone was in and seated, DUH PREZ and Da Czar took turns buying rounds of drinks in plastic cups. We saluted our togetherness by clicking them together. There was a good deal of upheaval in the bar from young, hot women dressed like cowgirls, with one wearing leather chaps with short-shorts underneath. She ignored us.



There was a distracted discussion of rental chairs (folding versus non-folding) and their use in funeral homes and at cemeteries. DUH PREZ announced that his Crazy Uncle Dave has a spot free for burial in Michigan. As I said, we were distracted.

Other distracted subjects included which pro-sports championship playoff we would watch if our favorite team was involved and if it wasn't, whether the new professional baseball rules have been good or bad for the game, and how the term "de-bugging" software came about (according to Da Czar and confirmed by AI, it can be traced back to Admiral Grace Hopper, who worked at Harvard University in the 1940s. When one of her colleagues found a moth impeding the operation of one of the university's computers -- she told them they were debugging the system.)

Tadich Grill



At the appointed time, officers of the DHSOS rose and strolled down Front

Street to Tadich Grill on California Street. Though tempting, none of us elected to take a turn on the mechanical bull. We entered Tadich, and we were respectfully greeted by "Steve", who escorted us to a quiet booth. Our nameless waiter brought bread and lots of butter.

Da Burd



Da Burd entered Tadich and emerged from its nest to familiar and comfortable surroundings. It had been here before, and its presence was appreciated. It sat ensconced and quiet in the middle of our table, waiting for its moment.

Call to Order

DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at 7:28 by banging his fork on his water glass. We were in business. Someone said we'd been meeting for 25 years. Is that possible? Here, from the big book of DHSOS minutes is what Notes wrote:

At this point, none of us is sure exactly when we started, but a reasonable guess is around mid-year 1998. We met through our wives, who connected through clubs and organizations, and we had spent many holidays together. Our wives got together regularly to celebrate birthdays, and they talked about their outings for weeks afterwards. We were feeling left out and someone suggested we get together ourselves, which we did. We've been meeting regularly since 1998.



Health Talk

DUH PREZ announced that he had an “all clear” report from his most recent medical test, (one of the seven “up the Wazoo” incidents he has experienced), and his report drew a round of congratulations from the rest of us. That provoked a discussion of officer fitness, which appears to be good at this point. We raised our glasses in a toast to keeping it that way.

Drakesbad

DUH PREZ surveyed the group to determine if anyone wished to join he and his family for a couple of days at Drakesbad either before or after our August trip to Gray Eagle. They are open for business, he declared, and at this point rooms are available. There will be no pool, though, and no horses.

SF Giants



The subject of the Giants came up. They are off to a surprisingly strong start, and ListMan wondered if we thought it would continue.

We re-visited the guesses we made at the last meeting as to the Giant's end-of-season record, and we all stuck with those guesses. We'll see ...

ListMan	80-82
Da Czar	80-82
Notes	86-76
DUH PREZ	86-76

The Big Trip



Dinner was served, and we dug into our manly plates of seafood, red potatoes, and broccoli. It was well-prepared, well-served (with plenty of sourdough bread and butter), and joined by an adequate amount of wine. It was good to be back at Tadich's!

While we ate, we discussed next year's “big trip” we're planning with the funds left to us by our dear friend, Misty. The destination has been chosen, the approximate dates are being decided, and we have signed up for the tour and trip insurance. The trip will involve flights to Johannesburg, lodging at upscale camps and safaris in South Africa and Botswana, time at Victoria Falls, a luxury train trip across South Africa, and time exploring Cape Town while staying at a swank hotel.

Details were reviewed and the itinerary discussed. Everyone seemed to agree this will be a fabulous trip – a journey of a lifetime! We talked about the different segments of the trip – the flights, safaris, train trip, stay in Cape Town, and we discussed the remaining items to be completed (departure and return dates and airfare). There was a quiet amount of excitement in the air.

We also reviewed options for a second trip, and when that would take place. We discussed possibly renting a villa in Europe, or a lodge in a North American National Park, or several other possibilities. We agreed that we should plan and take whatever trip we agree to, regardless of the amount of remaining funds.

It's a luxury, we concluded, to be able to plan two rather exotic trips without having to consider the cost.

Restaurant Review

As Notes said, it had been many years since we had dined at Tadich, and it did not disappoint. The seafood was excellent, and the service was professional and traditional (our waiter looked like he had been doing this for at least 30 years. We were pleased with our cozy booth, respectful neighbors, and a waiter who knew when to bring more bread and butter and when to disappear. All-in-all, the restaurant merits two DHSOS thumbs-up.



Next Meeting

Da Czar will be the temporary PoV for the next gathering of the DHSOS.

Into the Night

We were at the end of our agenda and our wine and coffee had been consumed. It was time to make our way home. DUH PREZ collected money, counted it, passed it to our grateful waiter, and we stood up to leave. The group of studs in the next booth asked about Da Burd. "What is it?" one asked.

"What do you think it is?" we pushed them.

"Is it the Maltese Falcon?" the blond guy asked, tentatively.

"That's right!" we exclaimed. It had been a long spell since anyone had correctly identified it. We launched into a lengthy explanation of da Burd and our group. After a few minutes, our new friends started easing their way out of the booth and down the hall. Apparently, it's more interesting to us than to strangers ...



We made our way outside and stood in the frigid San Francisco night air. The Nor'wester wind was blowing mist from the icy bay waters through the downtown streets, which chilled a person to their bones. It had been a good night with good friends. We shared a group fist bump and wished each other a fond good night.

That's it for now, man.

