

ROARSHOCK PAGE

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Will this be a wild new season of abundance and growth? Of course it will, and as ever, ROARSHOCK PAGE wonders how that will reflect in artistic spirits and everyday events.

CALIFORNIA STREET SKETCHES CLAY & DRUMM TO GEARY & 33RD AVE

History explains why the 1 California line is designated first line of the San Francisco Municipal Railway (SF MUNI). Andrew Hallidie opened the first cable car line, Clay Street Hill Railroad, in August 1873 (Prior to that public transit up the hill was performed by horses who struggled pulling streetcars up Jackson St from Kearny to Stockton St. In 1888, it was absorbed into the Ferries and Cliff House Railway as the Sacramento-Clay line. The California Street Cable Railroad (Cal Cable), founded by Leland Stanford, began operation in 1878 and remained the last independent cable car operator until acquired by SF MUNI in 1951, along with the Hyde Street section of Cal Cable's O'Farrell, Jones & Hyde line. In the 21st century the California line, which ran from Drumm to Van Ness Avenue was the oldest cable car line still in operation. In the rebuilding following the 1906 earthquake and fire, the Clay-Sacramento line folded into SF MUNI and became an electric Trolleybus powered by overhead wires. The inbound terminus was at Clay and Drumm. From there the 1 California turned onto Sacramento and ran to Steiner Street where it moved over a block before continuing along California Street to 32nd where it turned and ran for three more blocks to the outbound terminus at Geary Blvd and 33rd Ave. The return journey followed the same route until Franklin Street where the bus turned onto Clay then back downtown to Drumm.

A.. A... was born and grew up in the East Bay. He knew San Francisco from childhood on, but had not spent enough time there to know the intricacies of its streets and transit system. In August 1987, he moved into the City with no idea he would live for many decades within a few central blocks bounded by Clay, Hyde, California and Polk streets (August 1987 was also when Toronado beer bar opened on lower Haight Street. A.. A... long took delight in that coincidence). His first SF home was a tiny studio in the Ardmere Apartments on Clay near Hyde. Out front of the building he could look up the

street and see the 27 Bryant bus go by, not sure the location of its terminus at Mission and Army Street. Across the street were two old apartment houses. One, he later learned, had been a residence of Dashiell Hammett, and the other took on a sinister tint through the odd round window above the door after A.. A... heard on the radio that a man had murdered his wife in there. Barreling up Clay was the Trolleybus: 1 California via Clay to Drumm. At first, A.. A... didn't quite know the exact location of Drumm Street: somewhere down the hill at the end of the line. After a few years, he had a deep and detailed knowledge of the transit lines that changed as the routes evolved, and he could have been an excellent cab driver, so well did he learn the City's diverse by-ways and streets, but of many different jobs, he never drove a cab for work.

Most of his old East Bay friends dropped away after the move to the City and seldom, if ever, came to visit. An exception was his younger, but larger, brother, Real Loud, who visited on a number of memorable occasions before he moved away to the Olympic Peninsula. Real Loud was too loud for Northern California, so he went to Port Townsend, as far north as he could get without leaving the country (and he couldn't afford to leave the country). Sometimes Real Loud visited with his wife, and also occasionally in the company of one of his friends, who invariably were fellows even larger and louder than he. Such was Jaxon, who was a Merchant Marine on brief leave. On his visit, A.. A... and family, Real Loud and Mrs. Loud and Jaxon went to lunch up at U-Lee Restaurant on Hyde. In addition to the famous huge pot stickers, they ordered a ridiculous number of other dishes. Jaxon noticed A.. A... setting aside the hot red chili peppers from his helping of Mongolian Beef. "You're not going to eat those?" he asked, incredulous, "Give them to me!" On one of his solo visits, Real Loud got off the BART at Embarcadero Station, then rode the 1 California to A.. A...'s Sacramento Street apartment. He took a seat up front amidst about half a dozen Chinese grandmas. These old women were notoriously taciturn, but by the time they exited the Trolleybus at Sacramento and Stockton, they were laughing and waving at Real Loud and wishing him happy "Bye! Bye!" That was the visit where Real Loud grabbed A.. A...'s guitar and went up the back steps to sit on the roof in the sun. He played and sang *Simple Man*, and declared that if he lived there he would be up on the roof all the time.

In 1992, A.. A... had to ride the 1 to the hospital on California near Cherry St., to visit FL at his death bed. A giant of the Golden Age of genre fiction, widely known as Grand Master of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror, this dear friend also turned out to be the first dead man A.. A... ever saw, first dead hand he ever touched.

A.. A...’s older daughter, BR, rode to afterschool programs at the old Jewish Community Center on California at Masonic, with her friends Eli and Abe, for lots of afternoon activities, like a play titled *It Could Always Be Worse*. Abe, as the 3rd Rabbi, had the immortal line, “Take those animals out of the hut!” A.. A... repeated it often, until one day young Abe forcefully said, “You shut up!” Somehow they survived BR’s years at Roosevelt Middle School, but they were never sure how. His wife, E, worked for years at a toy store in Laurel Village (Among her customers was the best-selling novelist Ms. S, the opposite of San Francisco literati, she lived in a Pacific Heights mansion). Their daughter Lil’ EB was born and raised in San Francisco, and started riding the 1 California when still a baby. “I want to ride a bus.” was her first complete sentence. While still a small child, both parents took full-time jobs, so Lil’ EB spent her days with Tintin, a young Irish woman who looked after a group of small children in her home out in the Richmond on 33rd Ave. Her mother rode her out there mornings on the 1. A.. A... picked her up evenings, and they took the 1 back home. It was an especially tough schedule. A.. A... was a Coffee Roaster and going to work very early in the morning. The coffee roasting plant was off Bayshore Blvd, a long bus ride, and an even longer ride in the evenings to 33rd Ave to pick up Lil’ EB, then all the way back home on the 1. She quickly learned the route, and would amuse fellow riders by calling out the major stops. “Divisadero. Fillmore. Van Ness.” One dark and stormy winter’s evening, they hurried to the bus shelter at 33rd and Clement, and sat and waited for the 1, watching the rain fall harder and harder in solid sheets over the Lincoln Park Golf Course. “Too much water, Daddy.” Lil’ EB declared. A little older, but before Kindergarten, she attended Laurel Hill Nursery School, still a good (though shorter) ride on the 1, and hung out at Laurel Hill Playground with her young friends Buddy Boy and the Queen of Sheba.

Years and decades passed. Real Loud died young up in Washington state. The kids grew up and moved away. After a visit, his first granddaughter, the Amazing J, explained, “When you go to Grandpa’s house you have to take a train, and a bus, or a cable bus.” A.. A... still rode the California Street Cable Car home from work in the afternoon, and still rode the 1 California to the new JCC gym, out to Clement for a burger at Bill’s Place, a Maß at Steins, and to the end of the line, an easy walk to Land’s End, at continent’s edge, to watch the sunset, then back on the 1 California for the ride home again.

— D. A. Wilson

MARCH ALMANAC

- 03/01 1872 Yellowstone National Park established as the world's first national park.
 03/02 1933 *King Kong* (film) opened @ New York’s Radio City Music Hall.
 03/04 1791 Vermont admitted to the United States as the fourteenth state.
 2016 Captain Budley Nelson died.
 03/05 1046 Naser Khosrow’s seven-year Middle Eastern journey began, described later in his book *Safarnama*.
 2016 Ray Tomlinson, inventor @ email, died.
 03/06 2016 Nancy Reagan died in Los Angeles.
 03/07 2016 Dudley “Doodle” Dunlap, a brave orange cat, died in San Francisco, age 16^{3/4}.
 03/08 2016 Sir George Martin died at age 90.
 2016 NEW MOON
 03/15 2016 IDES OF MARCH
 03/16 2014 Crimea voted in a referendum to secede from Ukraine and join Russia.
 03/17 1941 Paul Kantner was born in San Francisco.
 2016 SAINT PATRICK’S DAY
 03/18 1871 Declaration of the Paris Commune.
 03/19 2016 VERNAL (SPRING) EQUINOX
 NORTHERN HEMISPHERE
 03/20 1828 Poet and playwright Henrik Ibsen was born in Skien, Grenland, Norway.
 03/23 2016 FULL WORM MOON
 03/26 1904 American mythologist Joseph Campbell was born in White Plains, New York.
 03/31 1985 First *WrestleMania* spectacle was staged @ Madison Square Garden, New York.

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Calling for Contributions! ROARSHOCK PAGE invites submissions of art, photographs, poetry, and micro-prose, to be considered for inclusion in future issues.

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