

WELLS FARGO HISTORY MUSEUM TOUR, EXHIBIT RECALL 1906 EARTHQUAKE

By Julie Ann Winkelstein

"An Information Professional ('IP') strategically uses information in his/her job to advance the mission of the organization"

—from "About Information Professionals"

on the Special Libraries Association Web site (<http://www.sla.org>)

On May 11, 2006, 35 people—including many library school students—attended "Gold Nuggets, a Stagecoach and an Anniversary," a tour of the Wells Fargo History Museum and its special 1906 earthquake exhibit. This event combined the efforts of Anne Hall, the curator of the museum, and the SF Bay Region Chapter of SLA. It included great refreshments, provided at Business Wire by SLA-SF Tours Committee Chair Sandy Malloy, a 15-minute overview of 150 years of history by Anne, a pleasant walk four blocks away to the museum, and a chance to see a gold nugget, sit in a stagecoach replica, and be immersed in the feelings and scenes of that major disaster.

As a public librarian, I am always fascinated by these special collections. I am particularly entranced by the real thing—that is, real newspapers, real memorabilia, and real accounts of real events. So the opportunity to see objects, such as a pitcher, a watch, a plate, and a gun, all remnants from the lives of those early 20th century San Franciscans, was wonderful. One newspaper, "The Daily News," dated April 18, 2006, gave a list of the injured and the dead. These included "J.H. Rossa, legs broken," "wife and baby killed beside husband, whose head is crushed," and "two unknown men, brought in autos." These simple words invoked vivid images of this overwhelming time.

There were also huge photographs of street scenes, a detailed map of San Francisco, and a video showing a trip down Market Street in 1905. True to its name, this is truly a history museum—a place where local residents can find out what was happening in the Bay Area

a hundred years ago. As Anne mentioned in her talk, the museum became "the default historical center," and she is proud of being part of that legacy. She shares this information with curious visitors, as well as thousands of fourth graders who pass through every year.

It is personal and informative events like these that demonstrate the wisdom of the choices of core values for SLA—in particular, collaboration and partnering: "Providing opportunities to meet, communicate, collaborate, and partner within the information industry and the business community." This kind of collaboration can only benefit all involved and I am glad to have had the chance to experience it.

For more information about the Wells Fargo History Museum, visit [http:// www.wellsfargohistory.com](http://www.wellsfargohistory.com).

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