

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 27, 2017

BOOKS INC.

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-047
Business Name: Books Inc.
Business Address: 1501 Vermont Street
District: District 10
Applicant: Michael Tucker, President
Nomination Date: December 15, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Mark Farrell
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Books Inc. is a local independently owned, neighborhood-centered bookstore. The bookstore has been around in San Francisco under various names and ownership since 1857, but was not incorporated as Books Inc. until 1946. Presently, Books Inc. has three locations in San Francisco: the Marina District (Chestnut Street), Downtown/Civic Center (Van Ness Avenue), and the oldest San Francisco location in Presidio Heights/Laurel Heights (California Street), and eight other locations throughout the Bay Area. The three San Francisco locations have proven to be important assets to their respective neighborhoods as a place for locals and visitors to purchase books, newspapers, magazines, or attend events such as book launch parties for local authors and in-store events for readers of all ages. Each neighborhood store reflects the needs and wants of the community and employs one or more literature specialists who host a variety of bookclubs, storytimes and events and have become great resources for patrons looking for their next read. Books Inc. business model includes an event program that puts on upwards of 1,000 events each year for patrons of all ages and has come to be taglined as "The Experience You Can't Download." The business model also consists of maintaining close relationships to local schools, conducting book fairs on school-sites as an opportunity to help school PTA's and libraries raise funds while bringing the independent bookstore experience onto their school grounds. Books Inc.'s main objective with conducting book fairs is to foster excitement about books and spread the love of reading. Community involvement is an important piece of the Books Inc. business model as the business continues to develop partnerships and close relationships to local schools, libraries, and organizations surrounding each store to promote and foster literacy. Books Inc. also gives back to a significant percentage of profit ever year to local schools and organizations in return for partnering on literary events. Books Inc. has proven itself to be a successful independently-owned bookstore in San Francisco with strong ties to the community in which each store lives and a business model that is based on maintaining these strong ties and incorporating a neighborhood-needs and wants atmosphere.

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

Montgomery Street from 1857 to 1882 (25 years)
126 Post Street from 1882 to 1906 (24 years)
336 Sutter Street from Unknown Year to 1958 (approximately 50 years)
156 Geary Street from 1956 to 1974 (18 years)
3515 California Street from 1974 to Present (43 years)
2275 Market Street from 1995 to 2016 (11 years)
2251 Chestnut Street from 1997 to Present (20 years)
601 Van Ness Avenue from 2005 to Present (12 years)
160 Folsom Street (Office & Warehouse) from 1994 to 2005 (11 years)
1501 Vermont Street (Office & Warehouse) from 2005 to Present (12 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Presidio Heights/Laurel Heights, Marina District and Civic Center neighborhoods' history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- Books Inc. is associated with the tradition of book selling and hosting book-related events.
- Books Inc. has contributed to San Francisco's history and identity by continuing to operate as an independently owned bookstore with a unique business model that promotes literacy and education in the neighborhoods that each store serves. Books Inc. has proven to effectively stay involved in the community through its close ties to local schools and through its neighborhood-based stores that offer programs and events that reach out to all ages and hire literature specialists who are able to share their knowledge through book clubs, storytimes and other events that promote reading.
- All three San Francisco locations have not been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The properties are considered "Category B Properties" that require further review per the Planning Department's CEQA review procedures for historical resources.
- The 40th anniversary of Books Inc.'s California Street (Laurel Village) location was recognized and celebrated by Senator Dianne Feinstein and Nancy Pelosi in 2014.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - American Booksellers Association, 7/13/2011, "The Oldest Bookstore in the West Turns 160," by Karen Schechner.
 - SF Weekly, 8/14/2015, "Not Dead Yet: The 10 Oldest Businesses in San Francisco," by V. Alexandra de F. Szoenyl.
 - Publishers Weekly, 4/15/2016, "BEA 2016: Books Inc is PW's Bookstore of the Year," by Anisse Gross.

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, Books Inc. is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its business model of selling books and hosting events to promote and foster literacy for all ages.





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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Books Inc. qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Business model that consists of running the independently-owned bookstore's locations on a community needs basis, by maintaining relationships with and supporting local schools and organizations, and hosting events for all ages that promote and foster literacy.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE(S) OR TRADITION(S) THAT DEFINE THE BUSINESS

Following is(are) the core physical feature(s) or tradition(s) that define the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Retail book sales.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Books Inc. currently located at 3515 California Street, 2251 Chestnut Street and 601 Van Ness Avenue in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program





Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 27, 2017

BOOKS INC.

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

<i>Application No.:</i>	LBR-2016-17-047
<i>Business Name:</i>	Books Inc.
<i>Business Address:</i>	1501 Vermont Street
<i>District:</i>	District 10
<i>Applicant:</i>	Michael Tucker, President
<i>Nomination Date:</i>	December 15, 2016
<i>Nominated By:</i>	Supervisor Mark Farrell
<i>Staff Contact:</i>	Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR BOOKS INC. CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1501 VERMONT STREET.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 27, 2017, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





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OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
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BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Books Inc.in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Books Inc.:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Business model that consists of running the independently-owned bookstore's locations on a community needs basis, by maintaining relationships with and supporting local schools and organizations, and hosting events for all ages that promote and foster literacy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Books Inc. on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Retail book sales.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 27, 2017.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

- Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2016-17-047
Business Name: Books Inc.
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Applicant: Michael Tucker, President
Nomination Date: December 15, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Mark Farrell

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? X Yes No

- Montgomery Street from 1857 to 1882 (25 years)
- 126 Post Street from 1882 to 1906 (24 years)
- 336 Sutter Street from Unknown Year to 1958 (approximately 50 years)
- 156 Geary Street from 1956 to 1974 (18 years)
- 3515 California Street from 1974 to Present (43 years)
- 2275 Market Street from 1995 to 2016 (11 years)
- 2251 Chestnut Street from 1997 to Present (20 years)
- 601 Van Ness Avenue from 2005 to Present (12 years)
- 160 Folsom Street (Office & Warehouse) from 1994 to 2005 (11 years)
- 1501 Vermont Street (Office & Warehouse) from 2005 to Present (12 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? X Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? X Yes No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: January 3, 2017

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 2



City and County of San Francisco

MARK E. FARRELL

December 15, 2016

San Francisco Office of Small Business
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110
San Francisco, CA 94102-4681

Dear Director Dick Endrizzi:

I hereby nominate the Books Inc. in the Marina to the Legacy Business Registry of San Francisco. As the West's Oldest Independent Bookseller, the Books Inc.'s history can be traced back to December, 1851 when Anton Roman, a Bavarian publisher and book dealer, opened his first bookstore in Shasta City, California where he struck gold in earlier that year.

The Books Inc. opened its Marina store in 1998. Its service to the San Franciscans can go far back to 1857 when Anton Roman established his second bookstore on Montgomery Street, San Francisco. In 1946, after being moved, bought, sold, burned, rebuilt and renamed, the small bookselling business became Books Inc., as we know it today, under the ownership of Barbara Thompson and Lew Lengfeld. Michael Tucker, the current owner, and Michael Grant took the ownership of Books Inc. after Lew Lengfeld's death in 1996. In spite of a rocky history, Michael as well as his colleagues were determined not just for the business to survive, but also to thrive.

Today, the Books Inc. as an employer of 200 people with 11 stores, has been proving in action that independent book sellers can survive and prosper. At the core of its success is the persistent focus on customer service and the education of the next generation of booksellers. For these reasons I believe Books Inc. is a valued San Francisco business and should be part of the Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark E. Farrell".

Mark E. Farrell
San Francisco Supervisor, District 2

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
Books Inc.		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Michael Tucker, President Nikolai Grant, Vice President		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
1501 Vermont Street San Francisco, CA 94107		((415))643-3400
		EMAIL:
		mtucker@booksinc.net
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.booksinc.net	various	various

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Michael Tucker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
President	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	
1501 Vermont Street San Francisco, CA 94107	
TELEPHONE:	
(415)643-3400	
EMAIL:	
mtucker@booksinc.net	

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
003530	C0201578

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
Montgomery Street		1857
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	1857 through 1882	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
126 Post Street & 336 Sutter Street		Start: Post: 1882-1906
		End: Sutter: Unknown-1958

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
156 Geary Street		Start: 1956
		End: 1974

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
3515 California Street		Start: 1974
		End: current

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2275 Market Street		Start: 1995
		End: 2016

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2251 Chestnut Street		Start: 1997
		End: current

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
601 Van Ness Avenue		Start: 2005
		End: current

160 Folsom Street - Office & Warehouse	1994
	2005
1501 Vermont Street - Office & Warehouse	2005
	current

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

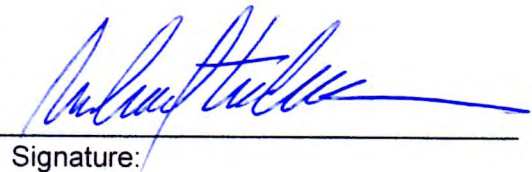
This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Michael Tucker 12/9/2016



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

BOOKS INC.

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

Books Inc. has a long lineage going back to Anton Roman who opened the first store in Shasta County 1851. He moved to San Francisco in the mid 1850s, and the first official record of a San Francisco location is 1857. He sold the business to Alex Robinson and it was in turn sold to Ted Lilienthal. Lew Lengfeld bought the business from Leon Gelber and Ted Lilienthal and incorporated it as Books Inc. in 1946.

Shortly before his death in 1995, Lew left the company to employees Michael Grant and Michael Tucker. This was a difficult time for independent books stores as large chain stores moved west decimating smaller stores in the wake. Books Inc. filed Chapter 11 and in an effort to save the company closed 13 of 15 stores. The company emerged from bankruptcy in 1997 and by 1998 had a grown to five stores. Mike Grant died of a heart attached in 2000 which was a tremendous loss. Michael Tucker took over as President and continues that role today. Mike Grant left his stock in the company to his son Nikolai Grant who continues as Vice-President. In 2016, Books Inc. was voted Bookstore of the Year by Publisher's Weekly Magazine.

Books Inc. currently operates 11 bookstores and a central office and warehouse. Nine stores are located in neighborhoods and two operate at San Francisco International Airport as Compass Books. All are general interest stores with large children's and young adults' components. The average size of our stores is 3,500-5,000 square feet. This is the ideal size for our business in the San Francisco Bay Area: large enough to accommodate a general interest bookstore and events, but small enough to keep costs manageable in this incredibly expensive local market.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

In 1906, the original bookstore located on Montgomery Street was destroyed in the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire. There are no financial records from the Montgomery Street store, but it is assumed there was a significant business interruption for some time.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

Books Inc. is not a family-owned business.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Following is a timeline of Books Inc.:

1851 - Bavarian publisher and book dealer, Anton Roman, struck gold in Shasta City, CA;
December 1851 – Anton Roman founds Shasta City bookshop

1857 – Anton Roman establishes San Francisco store

1859 – Grand opening of Anton Romans' on Montgomery Street

1860s – Alex Robertson hired as assistant

1863 – Anton Roman begins publishing

1867 – Anton Roman establishes *Overland Monthly* (edited by Bret Harte); Publishes Harte's
"Luck of the Roaring Camp"

1870 – Roman sells *Overland Monthly*

1872 – Roman first publishes Mark Twain's *Roughing It*

1879 – Anton Roman Booksellers combines with Robertson's and a variety of partners

1880 – Anton Roman republishes *Overland Monthly* but sells his shop to George Billings

1882 – Pearson and Robertson's bought Roman's stock

1891 – Robertson bought out his remaining partners

1906 – San Francisco Earthquake & Fire destroys original Montgomery St. store - We don't have the financial records of the Montgomery Street store but assume there was a significant business interruption after it was destroyed in the 1906 Earthquake and Fire

1924 – Alex Robertson dies

1925 – Harry Robertson sold store and stock to Leon Gelber and partner Ted Lilienthal (Gelber-Lilienthal, Inc., 336 Sutter St.) who establish Lantern Press

1946 – Certificate of Incorporation dated 1/8/1946 as Books Inc.

1946 – Barbara Thompson and Lew Lengfeld establish Books Inc. in the Fairmont Hotel

1948 – Leon Gelber dies; Books Inc. merges with Gelber-Lilienthal

1950 – Ted Lilienthal Leaves the business

1950 – Books Inc. begins 1st commercial TV book review program with Lew Lengfeld as host - see attached report

1955 – Begins expansion to Seattle, Southern California, New Mexico, Dallas, & Denver (Hartman's, Hunter's etc.)

1957 – Store opens in Palo Alto at Stanford Shopping Center

1963 – Books Inc. inducted into the "100 Year Club" at the California State Fair honoring businesses that had achieved 100 years of operation – See letter

1974 – Laurel Village store opens on California Street

1976 – 26 stores in the West

1995 – Lew Lengfeld dies and leaves company to employees Michael Grant and Michael Tucker; national chains colonize the West Coast; Chapter 11 bankruptcy filed in effort to restructure and save company; 13 of 15 stores closed; all Southern California stores closed

1995 – Market Street store opens; Compass Books/Bzinc open in Terminal 3 at SFO

1997 - Emerged from Chapter 11 under ownership of Michael Grant and Michael Tucker (4 stores)

1998 – Chestnut Street store opens in the Marina

2000 – Michael Grant dies suddenly

2000 – Burlingame store opens

2001 – Disney and Mountain View stores open

2004 – Alameda store opens

2006 – Opera Plaza store opens

2008 – Store in Stanford Shopping Center moves to Town & Country Village, Palo Alto after 51 years

2009 – Berkeley store opens

2011 – Compass Books opens in new Terminal 2 at SFO

2015 - Berkeley store moves to Shattuck & Vine

2016 – Books Inc. voted Bookstore of the Year by Publisher's Weekly

2016 – Books Inc. in the Castro loses its lease and closes

2016 – Books Inc. in Santa Clara opens

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

A number of documents are included in the Legacy application to document the existence of the business prior to the current ownership.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS

- Timeline
- Listing in the San Francisco Directory and Business Guide, 1862
- Publisher's Weekly Volume 49, 1896
- Bookplate from Gelber-Lilienthal, circa 1925
- Certificate of Domestic Corporation, 1946
- Cover of Selling Trade Books on Television, 1951
- Covers of Books Inc. Catalogs from the 1950s
- Letter to the California State Fair & Exposition, 1963
- Lew Lengfeld's Oral History, circa 1993
- California Historical Society Letter, 1994
- Overland Monthly – Wikipedia
- Letters from Nancy Pelosi and Dianne Feinstein
- The Oldest Bookstore in the West Turns 160 – Bookselling This Week, July 2011
- Not Dead Yet: The 10 Oldest Businesses in San Francisco – SF Weekly, August 2015
- BEA 2016: Books Inc is PW's Bookstore of the Year
- Shasta Historical Society Blog Post, September 2016

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

Not applicable.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

Generations of San Franciscans have relied on the Books Inc. as a convenient place to purchase daily newspapers, birthday and holiday presents, books for school or the latest best sellers. The business presently serves three neighborhoods in San Francisco: Laurel Heights at 3515 California Street, the Marina at 2251 Chestnut Street and Civic Center at 601 Van Ness Avenue.

Additionally, there are two stores at the San Francisco International Airport and an office and warehouse in Potrero Hill.

We strive to make all of our stores a community space in the unique neighborhoods they serve. Our mission is to foster literacy, and we offer programs for babies to adults, and everyone in between.

Our stores would not be so successful without the passion and knowledge of our many amazing booksellers. Each of our neighborhood stores has one or more literature specialists who host a variety of book clubs, storytimes and events. They are trained to do book talks at school book fairs and hand-sell books. In turn, we host Sales Rep nights for their education, collect their reader reports, which include book reviews we post on our website, and host two yearly meetings where they exchange ideas and recommendations. It is important to us to invest in our staff by sending frontline booksellers to the ABA Institutes and NCIBA Discovery Shows, where they benefit from education and meeting booksellers from other stores.

Books Inc. is proud to offer over 1,000 events each year, for our customers of ALL ages. In 2010 we taglined our events program “The Experience You Can’t Download,” and we think it has never been more relevant. Author events have allowed us to reach readers that we wouldn’t otherwise engage. From launch parties for local authors, to in-store events and storytimes with touring authors, to huge off-site events.

We pride ourselves on our close relationships with the schools in our communities. One of the ways we serve schools outside of our actual stores is through our robust book fair program. In 2015, Books Inc. did 27 book fairs throughout the year. These fairs are an opportunity for us to help school PTAs and libraries raise funds while bringing the independent bookstore experience onto their school grounds. Our main objective at these fairs is to foster excitement about books and spread the love of reading.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

The 40th anniversary of the Laurel Village location’s in 2014 was recognized by Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and Senator Dianne Feinstein, two regular customers of Books Inc.

Books Inc. has survived the onslaught of national chains and continues to thrive in the digital age. It is critical to our national character that independent bookstores survive and prosper. In an increasingly digitalized world, we must embrace the new while keeping the best of the old. Books Inc. is where I would love to browse away an afternoon. - Nancy Pelosi, U.S. Congressional Representative.

San Francisco has many amazing bookstores and this is one of the best. It is a great honor for me to congratulate you and your staff for your 40 years of devotion and hard

work. Your Laurel Heights location is consistently a welcoming and familiar place for me to purchase books. - Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

Shasta Historical Society Blog Post September 2016 noted that California's Oldest Bookstore Originated in Shasta (article attached).

In August 2015 – SF Weekly wrote an article “Not Dead Yet: The 10 Oldest Businesses in San Francisco” in which Books Inc. was highlighted (article attached).

The Oldest Bookstore in the West Turns 160 – Bookselling This Week, July 2011 (article attached).

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

The business was founded by Anton Roman, a Bavarian entrepreneur who struck it rich in the California Gold Rush. Roman came to California in 1850 and worked in the northern mines in Shasta City near present-day Redding. On December 1, 1851, he opened Anton Roman Bookseller in Shasta City. The bookstore was very successful, but Shasta City didn't fare well. In 1855, Roman headed to San Francisco to start a book business here. The store was established in 1857.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

Community involvement is one of the most important assets we have, and we continue to develop partnerships with schools, libraries, charitable organizations and other organizations surrounding each store to promote the love of art, freedom of expression and spirit of independent thinking. Every year, Books Inc. donates over \$120,000 into our surrounding communities to further these causes.

Books Inc. has always made a significant contribution to its community. We give back a significant percentage of profit every year to local schools and organizations in return for partnering on literary events.

We have supported the 826 Valencia Scholarship Program for over 10 years and Books Inc. throws the dinner for the scholars awarded scholarships every year.

Books Inc. also participates in book fairs, with 2016 being our most successful year for school programming ever. We did 27 school book fairs and sales were up across the board.

In addition to book fairs, Books Inc. does Shopping Night in which schools and organizations are invited into the store after closing for a party. They can shop throughout the entire store, and

Books Inc. donates a percentage of the sales back to the school. It's a great alternative for a book fair and even better excuse for a party in the store!

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

We are first and foremost booksellers committed to supplying our customers with books in every format. Our long history has seen us through the first changes of publishing formats from the paperback in 1939, mass market paperbacks in 1955, audio tapes, cassettes, CDs in the 1980s and 1990s and now ebook and audio downloads in the 21st century. We are able to supply customers with books in every format available today.

The business of selling books begins and ends with people who love books and love putting them into the hands of others. It is the bookseller's job, joy and pleasure to help find the perfect book for every customer. One of the greatest joys of any staff member at Books Inc. is to help a customer find the book they never knew they were looking for. Customer Service is the highest priority in every location. We are locally owned and operated. We don't employ cashiers; we employ booksellers who are engaged with what they sell- books. Staff members are readers, the recommendations are coming from them.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

Not applicable.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

A loss of bookstores in any community has become newsworthy. While the pundits heralding the advances in technology of the last two decades have tried to bring us all down, bookstores continue to rally in response to their communities. There is a need for bookstores, and San Francisco leads the way. Bookstores reflect the health of any community and any downtown or neighborhood. Where there are interested, diverse humans, there are bookstores.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

Books Inc. long ago found its voice in being a stable general interest bookstore that anyone can walk into and find a book. We don't specialize, we reflect our neighborhoods and everyone is welcome.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to

retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

Our customer service is directly linked to our philosophy of business. We do everything we can to get our customer the book they are looking for including sending them to a nearby indie if that is the best option.

We strive to greet every customer as they enter our stores and give them as much (or as little) attention as they desire. It is our firm belief that in today's retail environment, where everything is available virtually everywhere, customer service is a key element to distinguish us from the competition.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

Not applicable.

BOOKS INC.

Contribution to the Community

All 3 stores are members of SFLOMA (San Francisco Locally Owned Merchants Alliance), are active in their local merchants associations and are used by District Supervisors for neighborhood meetings sponsored by SF Chamber of Commerce. Each store presents free, weekly author events, featuring both touring authors and local, self published authors offering a calendar of diverse subjects and interests.

3515 California Street

Books Inc. in Laurel Village has been a mainstay of Laurel Village since 1974. It's a weekly (or more) stop along with Emily Lee, Bryan's or Cal Mart and the Standard 5 & 10! It's longstanding relationships with schools have grown to annual book fairs for Hamlin and Brandies Schools and regular shopping nights for Serra Preschool, San Francisco Day School, Presidio Hill School, Sherman Elementary, and SF Public Montessori. We donate back thousands of dollars every year to schools. We are regular booksellers for events at the JCCSF, the World Affairs Council and Marines Memorial. We recommend and stock books for dozens of book clubs in Pacific Heights, Laurel Heights and the Richmond districts. Our in-store book clubs and regular children's story times are well attended. The children's department and bookseller expertise is legendary in this store. Parents who shopped there in the early days of the store are coming back as grandparents and great grandparents. This store also hosts an Educator Night, where teachers and librarians from all over the city are invited to preview upcoming titles and discuss reading trends.

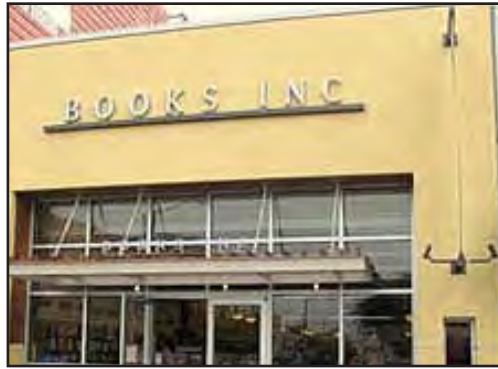
2251 Chestnut Street

Opened in 1998, **Books Inc. in The Marina** quickly became a Marina District favorite. We have the most popular in-store book club of all of the Books Inc. stores – Classics I Forgot to Read selections are avidly followed all across the city. We are regular booksellers at events at Fort Mason, The Battery and Grace Cathedral. The store truly reflects the community, from the dog treats at the front desk to the children's department designed for toddler's first reading experience, the store is filled with the people that you see on the streets of The Marina and the store has regular shopping night fundraisers for Bay School and the Cow Hollow School.

601 Van Ness Avenue

When A Clean Well Lighted Place For Books went out of business in 2005, the landlord reached out to us because he wanted to keep a bookstore in that location. It's a perfect daily stop for commuters and workers from the government offices. It is centrally located and easily reached by public transit making it our first choice for high profile events. From Presidents Clinton and Carter to You Tube Celebrities and Literary icons, this store can host the largest events of any Books Inc. **Books Inc. in Opera Plaza** is the sole bookseller for City Arts and Lectures at the Nourse Theater and home to the World Affairs Book Club. We are also regularly handling the growing number of author events at San Francisco's Google office. We also host Opera Plaza resident shopping nights, offering advanced reading copies of soon-to-be-published works and discounts to 601 Van Ness building residents. We often partner with 826 Valencia for events and have been proud sponsors of 826 Valencia's Annual Scholarship Dinner for 10 years.

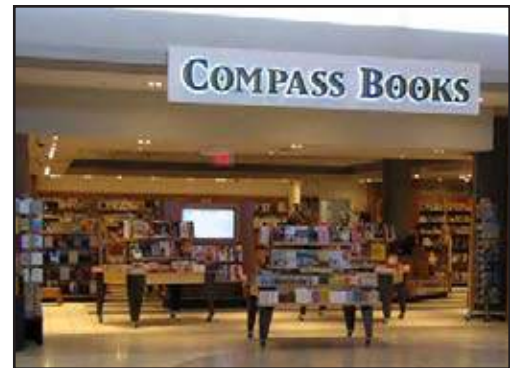
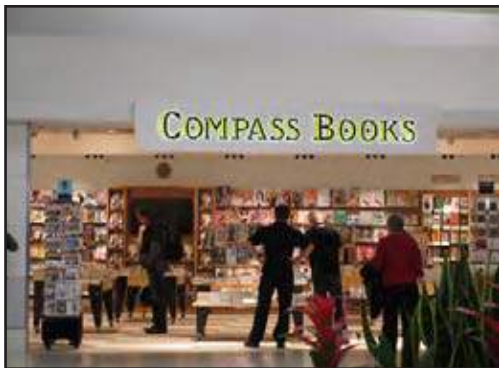
CURRENT SAN FRANCISCO LOCATIONS



3515 California Street
San Francisco
Since 1974

2251 Chestnut Street
San Francisco
Since 1997

601 Van Ness
San Francisco
Since 2005



Compass Books
Terminal 3 SFO
Since 1995

1501 Vermont Street
Warehouse & Office
San Francisco
Since 2005

Compass Books
Terminal 2 SFO
Since 2010

PREVIOUS LOCATIONS AND HISTORICAL PHOTOS



Original Shasta Location
1851



CIRCA 1925
Bookplate for Books Inc. predecessor, Gelber-Lilienthal, Inc.
Located at 336 Sutter St., San Francisco



Gelber-Lilienthal Ads/Logos



Lew Lengfeld
Circa 1950



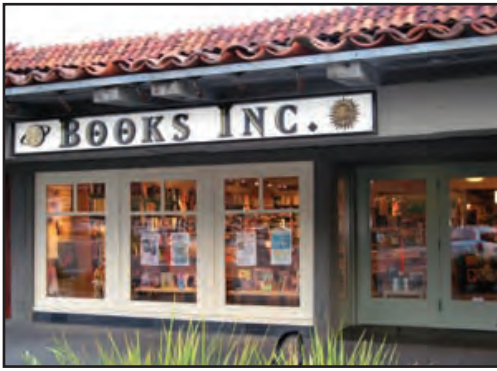
Original Store



Remodeled in 2011

2557 Market Street
San Francisco
Opened 1995 - Closed 2016

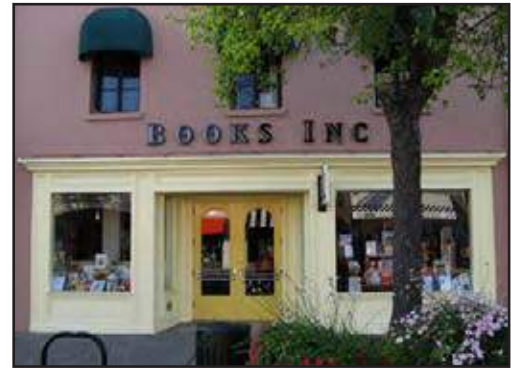
BAY AREA LOCATIONS



Palo Alto
Since 1958



Mountain View
Since 2001



Burlingame
Since 2000



Alameda
Since 2005



Berkeley
Since 2008



Santa Clara
Since 2016



A group of children in a bookstore are holding up white cups like megaphones. The children are dressed in various costumes, including a purple graduation cap and gown, a red pirate shirt, and a blue and white patterned shirt. The background shows bookshelves filled with books.

Books

Inc.

Kids



Books Inc. currently operates 11 general interest bookstores and a central office and warehouse. Nine stores are located in neighborhoods and two operate at San Francisco International Airport as Compass Books. All of the stores have large children's and YA components, which account for almost 30% of total trade sales company wide.

Mission and Values

We strive to make all of our stores a community space in the unique neighborhoods they serve. Our mission is to foster literacy, and to utilize our children's sections to create our next generation of customers. We offer programs for babies to adults, and everyone in between! In this way we hope that our customers will grow up with Books Inc., and continue to visit us when they have children of their own.

Our stores would not be so successful without the passion and knowledge of our many amazing booksellers. Each of our neighborhood stores has one or more children's literature specialists, who host a variety of



book clubs, storytimes and events. They are trained to do book talks at school book fairs, hand sell, and to present themselves as experts in children's literature. In turn, we host Sales Rep nights for their education, collect their reader reports, which include book reviews we post on our website, and host two yearly meetings where they exchange ideas and recommendations. It is important to us to



invest in our staff by sending frontline booksellers to the ABA Institutes and NCIBA Discovery Shows, where they benefit from education and meeting booksellers from other stores.



special programming

One of our favorite unique programs is our Jr. Bookseller program, which will be kicking off its fourth year this summer. From mid-June through mid-August, kids can sign up to learn the art of bookselling: write shelf talkers, shelve books, set up displays, and hand sell alongside our children's specialists.

The shifts vary, depending on the child's age, from half an hour for an eight-year-old up to two or three hours for a teen. Payment is in galleys, and the kids get to take home their Junior Bookseller badge along with a certificate.



Are you obsessed with books?
Do you read your face off,
and then read some more?
Good.

Books Inc. Wants

YOU



Sign up with your neighborhood store manager for a shift to be a **Junior Bookseller** in the month of July or August!

Help people find the books that will blow their minds, make displays, write reviews, and generally be your awesome, readerly, passionate self.



storytimes

One highlight is our PJ Party Storytime at Laurel Village. Laurel Village is a small store and it is BUSY. We've always wanted to host a regular storytime hour but there was never a time during the day that would allow it. Enter PJ Party at 6pm when the store and shopping center are winding down for the evening. Attendance is consistently high, we often have guest authors, and it's another great example of turning a challenge into an opportunity. Another highlight is Storytime with Auntie Dori in Mountain View, which often involves not just a story but themed crafts and activities, snacks, and the occasional costume character guest as well.



In addition to our full calendar of storytimes and author events, we also offer a variety of creative authorless events as well. These events are a great way to bring people in, and to let them know that Books Inc. is not just a store but a fun destination! A recent highlight was a costume character party

with Curious George at our Mountain View store. Laurel Village threw a Harry Potter party, complete with lots of wizard costumes, snacks, and activities. Guests could read their favorite sections over the store PA system, and there was even a special reading nook in the "closet under the stairs." We love these types of events because they inspire so much creativity from our booksellers, and the success of these events really comes from the enthusiasm of our staff!



bookclubs

We hold a variety of monthly book clubs at all of our stores, hosted by our children's specialists. Some examples of our kids and teen clubs include Book Busters at our Palo Alto store, Flashlight Readers at Berkeley, and Adventurous Readers Club at Laurel Village, which are all for ages 8-12. As kids age out of their middle reader book club, they can join our Young at Heart book club at Laurel Village, for ages 12 and up. Laurel Village is also host to the Wild Girls mother daughter book club, which kicked off in 2008 and is still going strong. Though many girls have aged out of Wild Girls over the years, we often see mothers coming back with a younger sibling!




Wild Girls - Laurel Village



Wild Girls - Laurel Village

BOOKS INC.
The Experience You Can't Download

Join The Flashlight Reader's Book Club for a discussion of *Replay* by Sharon Creech!

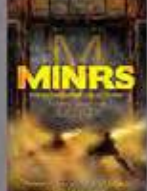


Tuesday, March 15th
at 4:00pm. (Ages 8-12)

Books Inc. - Berkeley
199 Sharon & Antonio
4950-5000
www.booksinc.net

BOOKS INC.
The Experience You Can't Download

Join the Adventurous Reader's Book Club for a discussion of *MIRRS* by Kevin Sylvester.




Sunday, March 6th
at 1:00pm. (Ages 9-12)

Books Inc. - Laurel Village
195 California Street, San Francisco
415-241-3166
www.booksinc.net

BOOKS INC.
The Experience You Can't Download

JOIN THE BOOK BUSTERS BOOK CLUB FOR A DISCUSSION OF *TEILA'S ALTIC* BY NEAL SHUSTERMAN & ERIC ELEMAN!



TUESDAY, MARCH 8th,
AT 6:00PM. (AGES 8-12)

Books Inc. - Palo Alto
825 El Camino Real
650-321-0600
www.booksinc.net



mirrors and windows

Books Inc. is also a proud supporter of the Mirrors and Windows program, an NCCBA diversity handselling initiative which grew out of a response to booksellers asking for more diverse books. In tracking our sales data for diverse titles our goal is to let publishers know that not only do we want to see more diverse books, but that we can also sell them.

store merchandising

It's important to us that each of our stores has a unique identity that fits in with its surrounding neighborhood. Sidelines are an ever increasing part of our business, so our kids sections and displays always incorporate those non-book items. We are also careful to include kids books in displays at the front of the store. We make heavy use of shelf talkers, with reviews that come from not only staff members, but children and teen customers as well.



store merchandising



We run several kids book promotions throughout the year, including a Buy 2 Get 1 Free sale on Dr. Seuss books every March, in celebration of his birthday. We also have a monthly kids book feature in our newsletter, where we invite a local author or illustrator to write, doodle or draw a short piece about their favorite book, author or series. We then display that author's books alongside their pick for the entire month in all 11 of our stores.



Celebrate Dr. Seuss's Birthday!

Buy Two
Dr. Seuss
Books
And Get
One
FREE!

From March 1st
to March 15th

Books Inc. in The Castro
2275 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94114
www.booksinc.net

author events

Books Inc. is proud to offer over 1,000 events each year, for our customers of ALL ages! In 2010 we tag-lined our events program “*The Experience You Can’t Download,*” and we think it has never been more relevant. Author events have allowed us to reach readers that we wouldn’t otherwise engage. From launch parties for local authors, to in-store events and storytimes with touring authors, to huge off-site events with the likes of Veronica Roth, we offer something for everyone!



MARTA LINDSEY • The Marina



**SHANNON HALE &
LE UYEN PHAM
BURLINGAME**



JULIE BAYLESS • Mountain View



KWAME ALEXANDER • Laurel Village

author events



DARYN REICHERTER &
CHRISTY HALE • Palo Alto



ESTHER ERLICH, APRIL CHU,
KATE SCHATZ & ELLERY KANE • Palo Alto



DARYN REICHERTER &
CHRISTY HALE • Palo Alto

not your mother's book club

For our teen audience we have Not Your Mother's Book Club (NYMBC), a Young Adult author salon that has been connecting readers and authors for the last 10 years! NYMBC has hosted many wonderful, big named authors, like Marissa Meyer, David Levithan, and Patrick Ness, but we've also been great launching pads for local debut authors. It's so rewarding to see the happiness and excitement on a new author's face when they walk into the store and see their books and posters on display, and the readers waiting to meet them and hear all about their book. NYMBC also hosts authorless events, such as our recent Valentine's day "Mix and Mingle," which connected book lovers to new stories they might not have otherwise discovered.



GAIL CARRIGER • Opera Plaza



MARISSA MEYER • Opera Plaza



NICOLA YOON & DAVID LEVITHAN • Opera Plaza



**CONSTANCE COOPER
Opera Plaza**

not your mother's book fund

Not only do we strive to connect readers to authors, but as you would expect from any bookstore, we connect readers to books! For every NYMBC event, we put aside 10% of the event sales into our NYMBC Fund. Our goal for this fund is to spread the love of reading throughout the Bay Area, and to use this event series as a way to give back to the community. We've used to the fund to donate books to local schools, as well as to fund author visits to schools that wouldn't otherwise be able to afford it.

community events



We pride ourselves on our close relationships with the schools in our communities. One of the ways we serve schools outside of our actual stores is through our robust book fair program. In 2015 Books Inc. did 27 book fairs throughout the year. These fairs are an opportunity for us to help school PTAs and libraries raise funds while bringing the independent bookstore experience onto their school grounds. Our main objective at these fairs is to foster excitement about books and spread the love of reading. One of the services we offer at our fairs

are book talks for parents, teachers, and students, where we highlight age-appropriate choices for every grade level. Last year, Books Inc. did almost \$500,000 in sales at book fairs- an amount which has been growing consistently year by year. When schools and organizations don't want to do book fairs, we invite them into the store after closing and turn it into a shopping party where we donate a portion of the sales to the school. It's a great alternative for a book fair and even better excuse for a party in the store!



One of our absolute favorite programs is our school author visit program. We work with both local and touring authors, and we often schedule these events in conjunction with a school's book fair as an extension of their fundraising efforts. School visits are an amazing way to connect children directly with authors. Their excitement about meeting a real author and hearing about their

books is palpable. Not every child has the time or the means to attend our in-store author events, so it is really special for us to be able to bring the author directly to them! In 2015 we brought authors to 55 schools, and sold more than \$20,000 in the visiting authors' books. Two years ago we implemented a contract for these visits, requiring a minimum number of book sales per school and ensuring that these events are also worthwhile for authors and publishers. But this does not exclude less advantaged schools from the author visit experience- we foster relationships with district librarians who use their Title I and other budgets to fund visits for underserved schools. In the event that a school doesn't have access to any type of funding, we use our NYMBC Fund to pay for these author visits.

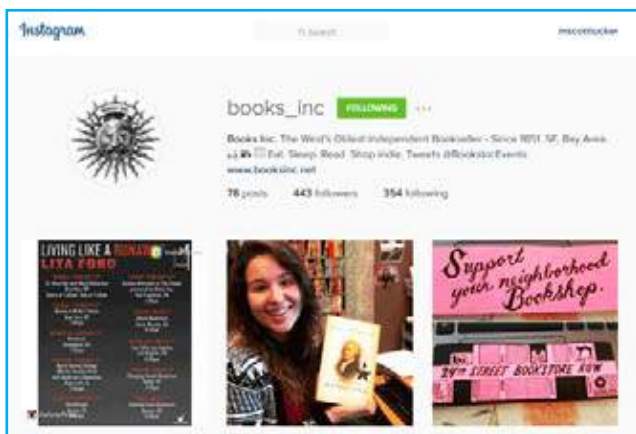


In addition to our school programming, we also partner with local libraries and other organizations in our community. We have strong ties to the public libraries surrounding our stores, and we often partner with them for events. We have a growing number of relationships with local literacy nonprofits, such as Tandem Partners in Early Learning, and 10 Books A Home. One of our most significant partnerships yet has been with Family Giving Tree, which resulted in getting 13,000 books into kids' backpacks last summer.

social media

Another contributor to our success with teens is our presence on social media. We have Tumblr, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest accounts. Tumblr and Pinterest are set up as company accounts and are run out of our central office. Our Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts, however, are specialized. For example, each of our stores has an active Facebook page where the managers, or a designated staff member, post articles, store updates, and event news that are pertinent to their store. We also have a designated NYMBC and Books Inc. Kids page to reach our family and teen audiences specifically. Our activity on these accounts include reaction gifs, author/ reader conversations, silly cat videos, art, quotes, book news, local Bay Area news, event information, and giveaways. Engagement is key. If you want a successful post, we suggest cats or Harry Potter.

follow us @BooksIncEvents



www.booksinc.net/blog/booksinckids

<http://www.booksinc.net/blog/nymbc>



I use Books Inc. staff as a go-to resource to learn more children's literature. I know I speak for other school librarians in the Bay Area when I say that Books Inc. is a treasure. They bring so much to the Potrero Hill and greater San Francisco community.

--Jenny Andrus, Librarian, Live Oak School, 1555 Mariposa Street, San Francisco 91505

Books Inc. has been an amazing partner and I couldn't serve the children of San Francisco as well as I do without them.

--Renee Otero, Librarian, San Francisco Day School, 350 Masonic Ave, San Francisco 94118

We have run our school's book fair with Books Inc for the second year & couldn't be more pleased with the service that was provided. The curated list of titles was perfect for our community and the kids' enthusiasm for the author who came to speak was palpable. All the mechanics (set up/tear down/restocks/etc...) were seamless as well. So it's no surprise that our sales jumped for a second year in a row.

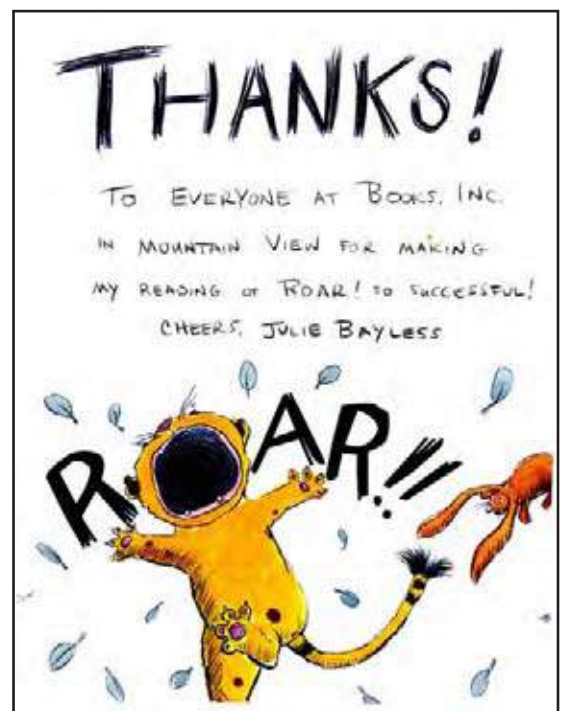
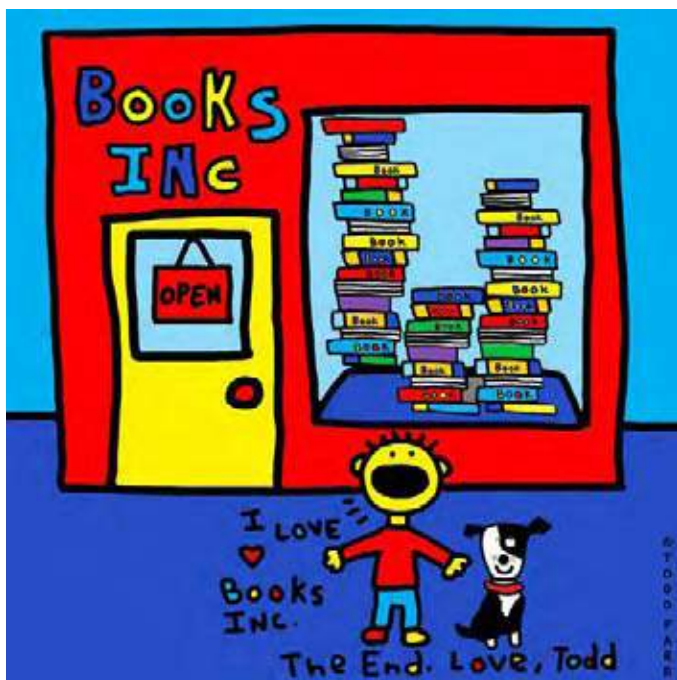
--Dandy Conway, Cornell Elementary School book fair chair

"Books Inc. not only puts books in the hands of readers in the community--it is an integral part of the community. Their outreach and advocacy for literacy for children is incredible. Their legendary Mother/Daughter Book Club is just one example of how they create lifelong readers."

--Jennifer L. Holm, NY TIMES Bestselling author of *The Fourteenth Goldfish*

"Whenever a client asks for a recommendation for a San Francisco-area bookstore, without hesitation we say Books, Inc! They curate such a wonderful selection of books, and the staff is so knowledgeable and passionate; they truly care about making that right connection between a reader and a book. When it comes to events, they are creative, inventive, fun and make any author, debut or bestselling, feel that they are well-cared for."

--Deb Shapiro, founder of Deb Shapiro & Company, a marketing and publicity firm focused on books and authors



stores & staff

Books Inc. in Alameda
Mgr: Nick Petrulakis
1344 Park St.
Alameda, Ca. 94501-4542
Children's Specialists
Elizabeth Jenkins
Michelle Baker

Books Inc. in Berkeley
Mgr: Schyler Baker
1491 Shattuck Ave
Berkeley, CA 94704
Children's Specialists
David Mansfield
Melanie Knight
Rachel Birenbaum

Books Inc. in Burlingame
Mgr: Earle Peterson
1575 Burlingame Ave.
Burlingame, Ca. 94010
Children's Specialists
Kelly Easton
Maggie Bowen

Books Inc. in Mountain View
Mgr: Glen Robbe
301 Castro Street
Mountain View, Ca. 94041
Children's Specialists
Dori Jaroslow
Chantal Boucher

Books Inc. in Palo Alto
Mgr: Nadine Orzechowski
74 Town & Country Village
855 El Camino Real
Palo Alto, Ca. 94301
Children's Specialists
Eleanor Arculus
Caitlin Small

Books Inc. in The Castro
Mgr: Tanya Landsberger
2275 Market Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94114
Children's Specialists
China Grimm-Jones



Books Inc. in Laurel Village
Mgr: Ingrid Nystrom
3515 California Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94118
Children's Specialists
Summer Laurie
Caitlin Ryan
Katherine Megna
Taylor Nam

Books Inc. in The Marina
Mgr: Brian Pettus
2251 Chestnut Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94123
Children's Specialists
Anne La Freniere
Aasima Jallie
Hillary Stratton

Books Inc. in Opera Plaza
Mgr: Don Watson
601 Van Ness Ave
San Francisco, Ca. 94102
Children's Specialists
Connie Lin
Cec Ichinose

Compass TZ
Mgr: Christine Keelean
San Francisco International Airport
Terminal 2
San Francisco, Ca. 94128
Children's Specialists
Karen Baldomero
Christopher Hsiang

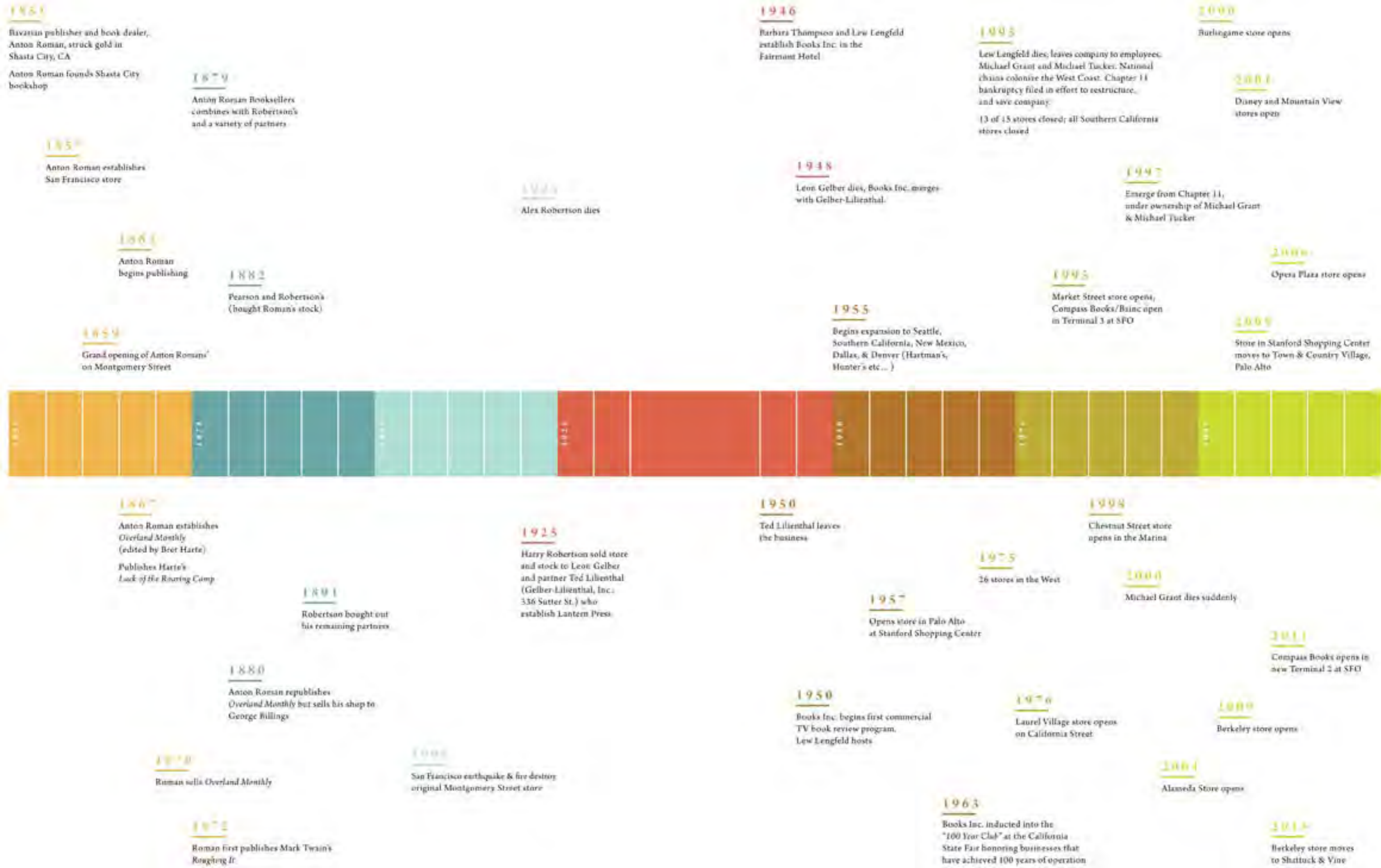
Compass Books Inc.
Mgr: Jerry Blume
San Francisco International Airport
Terminal 3
San Francisco, Ca. 94128
Children's Specialists
Carla Castillo
Christopher Hsiang



Books Inc. Office and Warehouse
1501 Vermont Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

Children's Department Head - Caitlin Ayer
Book Fairs - Kristin Rasmussen
Not Your Mother's Book Club - Hannah Walcher
Children's Buyer - Shannon Grant





THOMAS DAY, GAS FIXTURES,
 No. 732 Montgomery Street, near Jackson See page xxviii.

SAN FRANCISCO DIRECTORY
 1861] AND BUSINESS GUIDE. [1862

A. ROMAN & CO.

No. 507 Montgomery Street,
 BETWEEN SACRAMENTO AND COMMERCIAL.

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The publishers weekly

R.R. Bowker Company, Publishers' Board of Trade (U.S.), Book Trade Association of Philadelphia, ...

When the bill returned to the House and was printed there, March 30, this amendment was changed by the insertion of the words "except the appointment of clerks," after the words "Librarian of Congress," and an appropriation "for the execution of the copyright law" which had stood at \$7200 for eight clerks at \$900 was changed to \$9900 for eleven clerks.

The House refused to concur in the Senate amendments, and the bill was sent to conference. April 13 the conference committees in both Houses reported disagreement on a large number of amendments, among them No. 38, which is the copyright amendment. The bill was then sent back to the conference committee, but no further report has been made up to this time.

TO RESTRAIN A MAGIC-LANTERN LECTURE OF "BEN-HUR."

LEW WALLACE and his publishers, Harper & Brothers, have brought suit in the United States Circuit Court in New York against Herbert J. Riley Brothers, of Nos. 55 and 57 Godwin Street, Bradford, England, and No. 16 Beekman Street, New York. When "Ben-Hur" was printed by Harper & Brothers they reserved all rights to the publication and dramatization of the novel. Within a year or two they sold the dramatization rights to Clark & Coxe, a Western firm. Riley Brothers, who make stereopticons, prepared an illustrated lecture on the novel. Clark & Coxe found out last winter that this lecture, with magic-lantern accompaniment, depicting scenes in "Ben-Hur," was being given throughout Michigan and Wisconsin. They objected, and the suit is the result. They claim to have been damaged to the extent of \$10,000. The case was adjourned to May 1.

THE INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT CONFERENCE AT PARIS.

ON April 15 the International Conference for the Protection of Artistic and Literary Copyrights, held its first meeting at the Foreign Office, Paris. The delegates represented the States that entered into the Berne Convention, which Norway has since joined. M. Bourgeois received the gentlemen and made a short speech. He expressed satisfaction at Paris being chosen as the meeting-place of one of those conferences which the foresight and solidarity of modern nations lead them to multiply. These meetings, by drawing together the eminent men of the world, were a potent agency for the preservation of peace among nations. M. Lardy, Swiss delegate, returned thanks, and proposed that M. de Freycinet, of the Academy, an accomplished linguist and former Foreign Minister, be voted to the chair. This is M. de Freycinet's first appearance in public since the spring of 1893. He was chosen by acclamation. In the afternoon the members were received by President Faure. The British delegates are Mr. Howard, Secretary of the British Embassy, Sir Henry Bergne, and Mr. Alston, the last-named of whom acts as secretary. The United States, although not belonging to the Copyright Union, are represented at the conference by a delegate, whose name, however, is not mentioned in the reports.

BRET HARTE AND THE "OVERLAND."

ROUNSEVILLE WILDMAN, of San Francisco, contributes to *The Writer* the following recollections of an event, the details of which have so often been incorrectly given that it may interest our readers to have the testimony of a contemporary who was in a position to have correct information:

"When Anton Roman,* early in 1868, made up his mind to establish a monthly magazine in connection with his publishing and bookselling business, he did so with the advice of Noah Brooks, Charles Warren Stoddard, B. B. Redding, W. C. Bartlett, and others, for most of whom he had already published books. When the question of a suitable editor arose, Stoddard recommended Bret Harte, then an almost unknown writer on the *Golden Era*, at that time a popular weekly. Bret Harte accepted, with some misgivings as to financial matters, but was reassured when Roman showed him pledges of support by advertising patronage up to \$900 a month, which he had secured in advance.

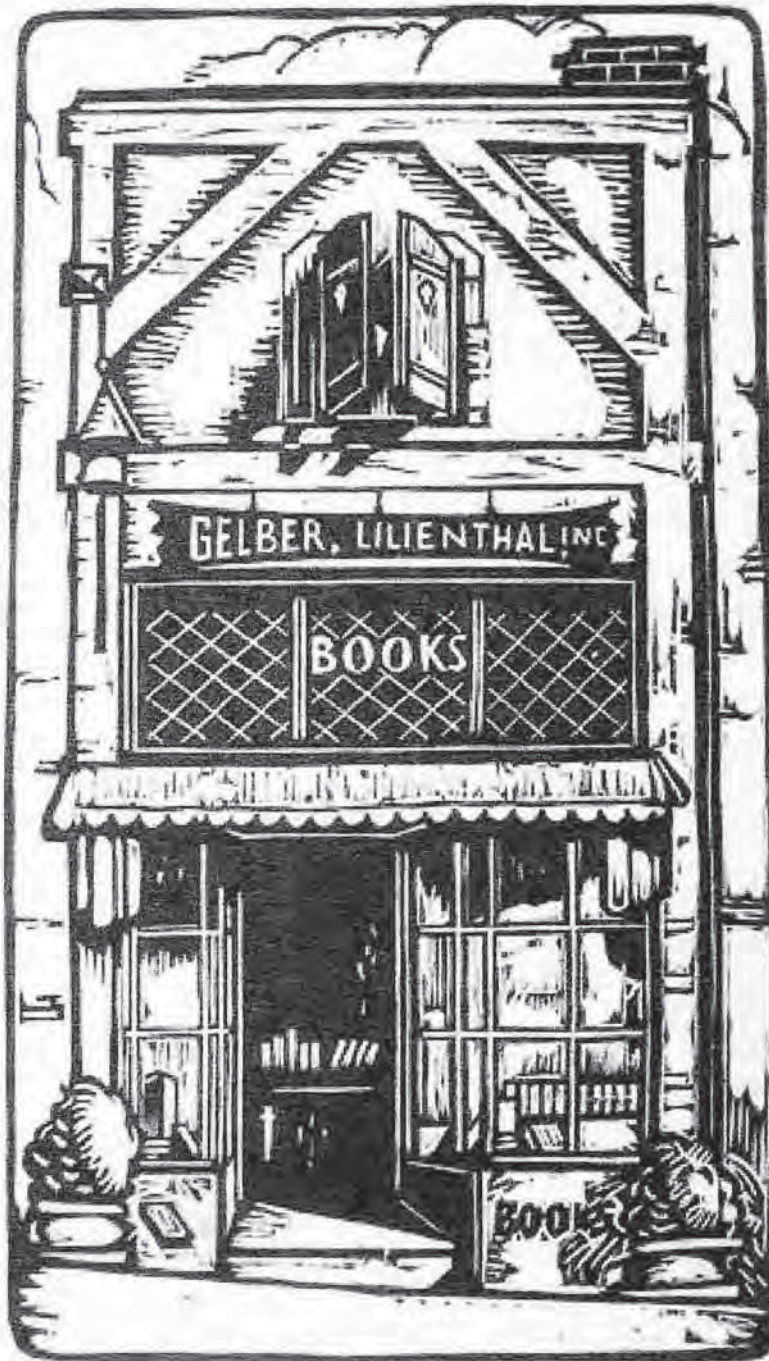
"Harte was the first editor, and, in the first number, July, 1868, printed the poem, 'San Francisco,' beginning,

"Serene, indifferent of Fate,
Thou sittest at the Western Gate."

When the number was discussed by the literary coterie that was accustomed to gather in those days, Harte lamented that there was no distinctively Western fiction in it, and promised to see that the August number should contain something of the sort. 'The Luck of Roaring Camp' was the result of that promise. Roman never made any objection to it on any ground, but was 'simply delighted' with it, as he has told me, when it was read to him by his wife from the fresh proof-sheets sent to Harte and Roman when they were both spending a Sunday at Santa Cruz. Returning to San Francisco on the following day, they found that the woman copyholder in Towne & Bacon's printing office, where the type was then set—Roman had no composing-room—had objected to the story for its immorality. This, however, had no effect on Roman, and he said in response to dire forebodings as to the effect on the magazine, 'Go ahead; it can't more than kill it.' There never was a quarrel about it between Harte and Roman, though there would have been had Roman taken any other course; for Harte was much stirred up by the criticisms.

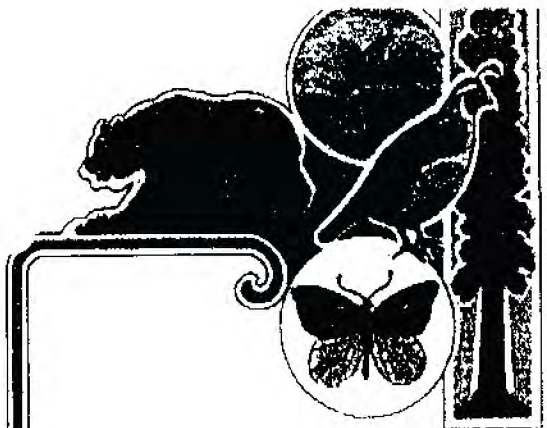
"The rest is well-known literary history—

* Mr. Roman first started in San Francisco by selling books at auction in 1859. He leased for that purpose a portion of W. B. Cooke & Co.'s store, on Montgomery Street. After remaining there about a year, he removed into the old stand of J. G. Gilchrist, afterwards occupied by the Telegraph Company. It was Mr. Roman's aim, from the commencement, to establish a first-class *exclusive book-store*. After staying in this store about a year and a half, his success was secured beyond peradventure, and so rapid was the increase of his business that he was obliged to look out for a larger store. In the beginning of the year 1862 he obtained the store on Montgomery Street, between California and Sacramento Streets, which was the largest and most elegant single room occupied for such business purposes in San Francisco; indeed, it was probably not surpassed by any of the fashionable book-stores of New York or Philadelphia. The room was 137½ feet deep by 25 feet, widening to 40 feet, and its shelves through the whole extent were filled with books in every department of literature. In the '60s the annual sales of A. Roman & Co. were reported to vary between \$175,000 and \$250,000—his stock on hand being valued at between \$100,000 and \$150,000.



CIRCA 1925

*Bookplate for Books Inc. predecessor, Gelber-Lilienthal, Inc.
Located at 336 Sutter St., San Francisco*



CERTIFICATE OF STATUS
DOMESTIC CORPORATION

I, TONY MILLER, Acting Secretary of State of the State of California, hereby certify:

That on the 8th day of January, 1946

BOOKS INC.

became incorporated under the laws of the State of California by filings its Articles of Incorporation in this office; and

That no record exists in this office of a certificate of dissolution of said corporation or of a court order declaring dissolution thereof, nor of a merger or consolidation which terminated its existence; and

That said corporation's corporate powers, rights and privileges are not suspended on the records of this office; and

That according to the records of this office, the said corporation is authorized to exercise all of its corporate powers, rights and privileges and is in good legal standing in the State of California; and

That no information is available in this office on the financial condition, business activity or practices of this corporation.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I
execute this certificate and
affix the Great Seal of the
State of California this
17th day of March, 1994

Tony Miller
Acting Secretary of State

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORT OF FIRST YEAR

of

**Selling Trade Books On Television
In San Francisco**

March 20, 1950—March 14, 1951

by

NORMAN F. FIELD

As the result of articles in *Publisher's Weekly* and other magazines we have had 80-odd requests from booksellers in other areas for information concerning our television bookselling experiment which we commenced over a year ago with Donald Friede. Since we obviously could not answer even a portion of these requests in detail, we asked Norman Field, well-known writer of business articles who applied for the position of television reviewer after Donald left for the East, to prepare a report on the first year of the television experiment for private distribution.

This is that report. We of Books Inc., do not at all agree with a number of Mr. Field's conclusions. We feel, however, and Donald Friede joins us in that feeling, that the value of the report to other areas lies in its frankness. We have consequently had it printed for limited distribution without any of the deletions and changes which we ourselves feel should be made. Because many of our own records to which Mr. Field had access in preparing the report should not be made public property, we particularly ask you to keep faith with us by preserving the confidential nature of the report.

Thank you.

BOOKS INC.
Barbara Beach Thompson,
Lewis F. Lengfeld

BARGAINS

from

BOOKS, INC.



AMERICANA—ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND ANTIQUES—FINE BINDINGS AND SETS—BOOKS ABOUT BOOKS—CALIFORNIA AND THE FAR WEST—FIRST EDITIONS—HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY—NATURE, SCIENCE, AND SPORTS—PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION—PRESS BOOKS—TRAVEL AND VOYAGES—AND MANY OTHER SUBJECTS

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In Downtown San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO 8, CALIF.

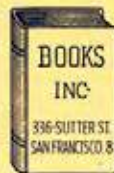
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WESTERN AMERICANA
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Open 10 A. M. to 6 P. M.

Worthwhile Books at Sensible Prices

OUR FORMER HEADQUARTERS WERE IN THE FAIRMONT HOTEL

sent direct:
7-12-63

July 10, 1963

Mr. Kenneth B. Fry, Ass't Mgr.
California State Fair & Exposition
Box 2036, Sacramento 9, Calif.

Dear Mr. Fry:

Thank you for your letter of June 20. Until Ben Follett of Gensler-Lee told us about it, we didn't know that the "100-Year Club" existed. Otherwise we would have been in touch with you 12 years ago, when we had our 100th. Anniversary.

Books Inc. is the West's oldest bookstore, having been in continuous operation since 1851. As a matter of fact, it is the oldest bookstore in the United States, being 3 years older than Gill's in Portland, Oregon, and some 10 years older than Brentano's in New York.

The store was founded by Anton Roman in Shasta City in December, 1851. Roman, a young man from Bavaria, struck it rich at Scott's Bar in that year. According to Robert Cowan in "Old Booksellers of San Francisco," Roman wandered into San Francisco's first bookstore, browsed around, and was persuaded to buy a stock of books and set himself up in business in Shasta City, where he prospered greatly from lack of competition. He did so well by 1857 that he returned to San Francisco, took a huge location at the southwest corner of the Montgomery Block, sent for a very broad stock from the East, and finally had his grand San Francisco opening in 1859. At the time his was the largest bookstore in the West.

Roman soon became interested in publishing books, especially early books on the West itself. His first best-seller was the often-revised "Resources of California" by John S. Hittell, first published in 1863. Spurred by a bohemian young clerk of his named Frank, Roman started publishing Western poets and short-story writers and soon turned to publishing the first literary magazine in the West, the "Overland Monthly". Frank, in between his bookstore duties, was its first editor. He is better known today by his middle name, (Francis) Bret Harte.

Roman sold the Monthly in 1870 because it was taking too much of his time from his bookselling. The magazine itself expired in 1875. Roman was, unfortunately for him, persuaded again to publish it in 1880. To get the money for the revival, he sold his bookstore, considerably neglected and moved meanwhile to a smaller location in The Lick House at 11 Montgomery St., to George Billings, his store manager.

Billings, however, was primarily fronting for a far more aggressive young man, Alex Robertson, the manager of C. Beach's noted bookstore at 5 Montgomery St., also in the Lick House. ^{Chilton} Beach, a semi-recluse from

Fry - 2 - 7/10
BOOKS INC. 156 Geary Street + San Francisco 8, California

New Jersey, had started a small avant-garde bookstore at the "wrong end" of Montgomery St. in 1859. As business moved toward Market St. his store grew, almost against his wishes (according to early sources). In 1873 the thrifty and astute young Scotsman, Alex Robertson, joined Beach and soon took over managing the store. By 1879 it had the "society" business of the city, much of which it retained even after Robertson's ultimate death in 1924.

Robertson, the "& Co." with Billings and an assortment of partners, combined the Roman and Beach stores in a huge store at 3&5 Montgomery St. in 1879. By 1888, when he moved the store to the ground floor of what became the Bohemian Club at 126 Post St., he owned the majority interest. In 1891 he bought out all the remaining partners and put up his sign as "A.M. Robertson, Bookseller and Stationer" (no "& Co.").

The Fire of 1906 of course destroyed the store completely. Robertson, then the city's leading bookseller, opened again within a few weeks in the heart of the temporary "downtown" shopping district, at 1539 Van Ness. As soon as the old downtown was rebuilt, Robertson moved again, this time to 222 Stockton at the southwest corner of Maiden Lane. The store there was a San Francisco institution. There he continued to publish San Francisco authors, George Sterling, Frank Norris, Gertrude Atherton, etc.

After Alex' death, his son Harry sold the store and stock in 1925 to Leon Gelber, former head of the book department of the Emporium, who by then had a small shop of his own at 336 Sutter St. Facing the necessity of more than trebling his business to take over the Robertson trade, Gelber found a partner in Ted Lilienthal, son of the famous longtime President of the Anglo Bank, P.N. Lilienthal. Leon and Ted more than quadrupled the size of Leon's store on Sutter, building the annex in back of it and adding the famous fireplace that was a bookstore landmark of the West until the building was torn down in 1958 for a municipal garage.

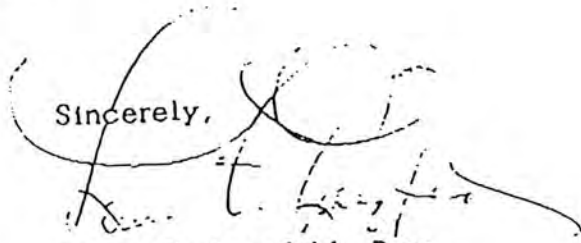
Lilienthal left the business in 1950. Gelber died in 1957. His widow sold the store to Books Inc., a combination led by two descendants of 49ers, Barbara Beach Thompson and Lewis F. Lengfeld. In 1956 Nontie Long, who had been head of the stationery department under Alex, Leon, and Lewis for far more than 50 years, retired at an age whispered at beyond 85. That same year, faced with the imminent destruction of the building for the Sutter-Stockton Garage, Books Inc. opened a second San Francisco store at 156 Geary St. (across from the City of Paris, itself one of the oldest business establishments in the city, as you know). "Geary" became the main store in 1958. With the move to Geary St. went over 35,000 charge account records, including many from San Francisco's leading families, that go back for 4 or 5 generations, and thousands of engraved copperplate stationery plates of society leaders that Robertson's had made for them after theirs had been melted down by the 1906 Fire. Some of those plates are still in use by their owners after more than 55 years.

BOOKS INC. 156 Geary Street + San Francisco 8, California

Despite its age, Books Inc. kept up with the times by starting the first commercial television book review program in the country in 1950. The program was continued for ten years. After more than a century in Northern California, Books Inc. started in 1955 to spread out over the West. Now the Books Inc. "family" of affiliated stores includes 3 Hartman's Book stores in Seattle, 3 Hunter's Book stores in Southern California (Beverly Hills, San Diego, and Sherman Oaks), 2 New Mexico Book Co. stores in Albuquerque, Hunter's Books in Dallas, and 2 Denver Book Co. stores in Denver. In addition, there are three direct branches of Books Inc. on the Peninsula, one each at Hillsdale, Stanford, and San Jose. Despite all the expansion of recent years, though, to a place as the largest bookstore chain in the West and the fourth largest independent chain in the country, each of our stores still gives the same old-fashioned personal bookstore service that the original store gave in its early years in California over 100 years ago. Actually, too, the book business is still carried on today much the same way it was carried on in those early days of Anton Roman in the 1850's. In today's world of enormous businesses, the retail book business is almost the last anachronism from the past. But we all love it so, frustrating as it sometimes is to have to buy directly from over 4000 different manufacturers a year.

Excuse the longwindedness.

Sincerely,



Lewis F. Lengfeld, Pres.

The whole business started with a young Bohemian out of Austria-Hungary in those days, book-lover who had come to California in 1850. And went up into the Northern mines, and started working in the mines in a place called Shasta City. It's not the Shasta City of today, which is behind the mountains, it's now called Shasta and it's a little town west of Redding about ten miles. Redding took its place when the railroad went through and so Shasta fell apart, but it was a busy little mining town. He found that the town was quite empty in stores and things like that, so during the winter when they couldn't do any mining, he went down to Oroville and he found a bookstore, one of the first bookstores in California, and the guy said to him "Gee, you do like books, don't you," cause he was picking out a lot and he said "Yes, I wish I could open up a bookstore in Shasta City." Well the guy said "why don't you take some up there and sell them?" and actually Roman had some money so he bought a number of books wholesale from the bookseller and took them up to Shasta city and on about December 1st 1851 he opened up Anton Roman Bookseller in Shasta City.

The store was quite successful, particularly in the wintertime because miners had to do something and books to read were the only thing you could do in those days, there were no other things. Either that or go to the bar. So he was fairly successful, but Shasta City fell down—it didn't do to well. The mines around it weren't that successful cause it was too far from the Sierras. And so by that time San Francisco had grown pretty well and so in 1855 he went down to San Francisco to see if he could possibly get started in the book business there. He found there were not more than one or two bookstores and they weren't very good.

He came down to San Francisco, found some wholesalers, book wholesalers that were there and set up a bookstore, I'm not sure, I think it was on Montgomery Street, the first one he set up in 1855. And he did very well. He finally had to hire a number of assistants, and in the early 60's, probably around 1864, he hired two very good assistants, one of them called Alex Robertson (who you will hear of later) and another one called Frank Harte. His middle name was Brett, who liked to write—poetry & stories, but he was also a very good clerk, in fact was one of the chief clerks.

Robertson really kept the books and did all the business part. In 1867 they were a very busy store, and Harte talked Roman into founding "The Overland Monthly" which was to be a monthly about California and what was going on in the mining regions and so forth. With stories—it was to be a literary monthly. So they started the "Overland Monthly" in 1867 and the first article in it was a story by Brett Harte, whose poems Roman had published the year before in 66, they were publishing books in those days. The story was called "The Luck of Roaring Camp." It was a howling success, it still is one of the most famous stories of the goldmining time. Harte was not in the goldmines, he just talked to gold miners and found out what they were doing. And then he wrote this story and number more and he kept on writing.

Well, the Overland Monthly was quite successful for about seven years. It went right along with the bookstore and they published a number of local books. The other good writer was a man named Sam Clemens, who called himself Mark Twain. He was a crotchety sort of a person but he did write very well and he was up in the mining country and he wrote about the mining country. And perhaps the most famous book which Roman published in his publishing years was called *Roughing It* which is Mark Twain's famous book on the gold rush experiences. It was published in 1872 and as you know we recently had a reprint of it. It is a very famous book. And Roman published it.

The magazine didn't do too well and in about the middle of the 70's (76, 75) they gave it up. Harte was very unhappy, and went east, and became a professional writer. He was very popular in England and many of his books were printed in England before in America,

before the American editions.

Harte had gone. But the other employees of the store wanted the Overland Monthly to go on. But Roman died. So in 1881 they started it up again, but without Harte and Roman, it was a failure. And so in 1882 it stopped completely, and the store was broke. Because without Roman to run it, it didn't do too well. So a friend of Alex Robertson whose name was Pearson put up some money for Alex to buy the store. So in 1882, Alex Robertson bought Anton Roman's and they called it Pearson & Robertson. They moved to Post St. near Grant. They were there for a long time, until the earthquake actually. They published all kinds of books by Western authors, as well as being a big bookstore. They were San Francisco's big bookstore—Pearson & Robertson.

Pearson got out probably in the early 90's and it became just Alex Robertson. And it continued until the earthquake, of course it was destroyed by fire in the earthquake. But Robertson had such a following that he wanted to renew. So he rented a space on Union Square from my great-grandfather, who owned a block between Maiden Lane and Geary St. on Stockton St. on the edge of Union Square. And had the huge Lengfeld's Pharmacy there and also a very good restaurant and unfortunately three floors of upstairs private dining rooms where the rich gentlemen of San Francisco would take their girlfriends for dinner, not their wives, but their girlfriends for dinner. It was a little speck notorious, but also very useful. And of course then Robertson's was downstairs, just up the hill, on the corner of Maiden Lane, which was where some of the girlfriends came from because Maiden Lane was called what it was because that's where the prostitutes all kept their houses. Charming. [Mike: when Maiden Lane actually had maidens on it] Well, they weren't virgins, they were maidens. So anyway, that's why the name was changed to Maiden Lane. It used to be called something else. I used to know the name, but I don't anymore.

So anyway, this after the fire of course. There was a lot of moving. Robertson enlarged the store after the fire. He died in 1924, that was 62 years in the book business. So he was very young when he started and he was very old when he died. And he was very good, he used to publish a lot of books. And also sell a lot of books. You can imagine that was a superb location. 'Cause my great-grandfather did an enormous business on the corner, not just upstairs. It was the biggest pharmacy in the West. And in the pictures of the earthquake at Union Square, the great big sign saying Lengfeld's is all you can see.

But anyhow, this is how the relationship began sort of. In 1924 when he died his kids didn't want to take on the book business, they didn't care for it, anymore than my father cared for the pharmacy business which he didn't want to take on. So they sold the business to Leon Gelber, who was the book department manager of the Emporium, which of course in those days was the big department store in San Francisco. And the man who put up the money was Ted Lillianthal, who was a member of the Lillianthal banking family in San Francisco and was quite well-to-do and loved books, never did any real work. But so it was called Gelber Lillianthal and they moved it over to 336 Sutter St. where they had a building built for them with a big front room, and a lovely back room with a fireplace.

Ted was most interested in old books, and so he sort of fussed with the old book department in the back, and Gelber did the new book department in the front. This went on for a long time. They had a lot of old style fancy trade that they didn't do too good a job of it. Of course, it went on through the depression which wasn't too healthy.

In 1948, Leon died. Ted had gotten out of the business a little bit before that, but Ted was an old friend of mine so I knew him well because his family lived in Hillsborough also, in the San Mateo part of Hillsborough. And my great-aunt's daughter worked for Gelber's quite a bit, so we were quite familiar with them, Barbara and I.

Barbara Thompson, who was one my mother's best friends and golfer. When her mother died in Palo Alto, Barbara's father had been head of Federal Telegraph (and that was a very active competitor of Western Union). But he also did other things, and one of the things was that she had a, that her father, Beach Thompson, had a major employee, an engineer named, was it Bill Farnsworth? something like that. who invented television. Invented it! But they never did anything much with it. This was back in the 30's. Might be Philo Farnsworth, I'm not sure. But anyway, he's listed as the inventor of television.

However, Barbara, when her mother died she had this huge house at 445 Lowell in Palo Alto and she didn't want to keep it. And my mother and she did a lot of golf playing together. So my mother said, "look, we've got this big house up in Hillsborough, why don't you come live up in the guest room. You'll enjoy it and we'll enjoy having you." So Barbara moved in with us. Well, Barbara and I got to be very good friends and we were both book collectors. I was going to Stanford, and then I worked for the U.S. civil service commission for a number of years as the so-called Personnel Utilization Man for the West coast. This was a little 23 year old kid who was running around telling colonels how to run their firms. But I got a lot of experience out of it. A few admirals hated me, cause I told them how at Mere Island half the people didn't do any work, but that had nothing to do with it. So, we were looking to do something once the war was over. Barbara said to me, "Lew, you know, we both love books. Why don't we open a bookstore?" And I said "why not, that'd be fun." At that time both of us had a good deal of money, the family was well-to-do, and her mother had left her a lot of money. Her mother was an old bitch. (Not to be quoted).

My mother had the offices of her American Women's Voluntary Services for the West, that she was head of, in the Fairmont Hotel and she was a great friend of Ben Swig. So she said to us "Why don't you open a little store in the Fairmont Hotel? We could have fun." So in 1946 (end of 46) we rented a room on the lobby of the Fairmont Hotel. It was a fairly good sized room on the south side. We filled it with rare books, and also had two shelves of new books that we bought every week—went down to the American News Company and bought new books every week and we only bought the good ones. We had an awful lot of rare books of our own, and we bought an enormous number of rare books (not as many as we did later) because we knew most everybody of the old families in town (my family had been here, all four sides of them, since 1850 and we knew almost all the well-to-do people) and so as result, when they wanted to get rid of a bunch of books, we'd go out and buy them, because we paid more than the rare book people downtown (Howe & McGee) and we sold them for less so we sold them fast. We got to be extremely popular, and you'll find a catalog in this stack of rare first editions that we did, published, from the Fairmont Hotel.

We were there for a year and a half and my cousin came to us and said, "you know, Lew, Leon Gelber has died and his widow doesn't know how to run that store, doesn't know what to do, and she'd love to get out. Would you be interested?" I said, "Yeah, I think we could make it work." So Barbara and I went down there and we arranged to buy Gelber Lillianthal's, at 336 Sutter. We had called ourselves Books Inc. because we didn't want to use our name, at all, even though that's the thing you usually did in the book business. We didn't want to, because we were connected to too many things. We went down there, and knew Mrs. Gelber, and she said, "oh Lew, I'd just love it if you'd buy this place, I don't know what to do with it, I don't know what to do with it." It was doing \$32,000 a year—that wasn't a lot, the rent wasn't very high but of course that was 1948. I said "I think we could do quite well with it." So we bought it, and we re-did the whole new book department, enlarged it enormously. Had a tremendous sale of their old dogs that they had around (in those days you couldn't return things as well as you can now) and had a tremendous sale of their old dogs and stirred up a lot of interest. And the first year we were there we did 180,000,

compared to 32, so it was almost six times as much. And from then on in it went.

In 1951. . . of course then we bought libraries like crazy and Barbara and I spent all afternoon sitting in a basement pricing the darn things while the clerks upstairs sold them all, of course our best deal there was the bargain basement. We had a big room in the back, which was our ten cent to a dollar room. Nobody had ever sold books for 10 cents before within 50 years. We sold them. We had a big 10 cent section and we went on up to a dollar. Three for two-and-a-half. That room was always crowded, particularly at lunchtime. Some of our best customers were people like John Steinbeck who absolutely refused to buy anything that was more than 10 cents. But he said he got a lot of good reading out of the 10 cent books. And we had a number of authors. We began to get people from all over the country. We advertised and did a lot and we got collectors from all over and it was a very successful thing.

In 1951 my mother bought a television set, which is just beginning to start. And there was one station in San Francisco, KRON. So I watched it for a couple of nights and I thought to myself "you know, I've been running around for three years now, talking to ladies clubs of people we knew, talking about good books and bad books and what they might like to buy. Wouldn't this be fun to do on television?" And Ann Allenson, from the old San Francisco family, who was working for us as a salesperson, very bright girl, and I said to her, "Ann, do you think we could do a tv show together?" She said, "Why not, Lew, we've done a couple of clubs together? We could do a fine time." I said, "We'd have to read an awful lot of books." She said, "I don't mind. I love to."

So, fortunately, KRON belonged to the DeYoung family, who were very closely related to us. Because the DeYoungs, whose name was originally spelled Dijon, they came from Dijon, had gone to New Orleans. No, they hadn't gone to New Orleans, I take it back. Michael DeYoung, the very first one, had come to Baltimore from Paris in 1813 and set up a silverware business. He was very good at doing silverware. He'd make personal silverware for people, for their homes. Each of his sons was sent to a different part of the country, to go around the country and stir up business. What DeYoung, who was also Michael, who went to New Orleans, go all the way around the south to all the plantations that he could get to in the south (and the DeYoungs don't even know this fact) and take orders then mail in to his father in Baltimore, then he and his wife would take them back to these plantations the next year and collect for them. So it was quite a successful business.

But along came the civil war, and there was no way they could handle silverware from Baltimore to New Orleans through the war lines. They were in pretty bad shape. So they decided to come to San Francisco. The one person they knew there, who had been in New Orleans for years before he came to San Francisco, was one of my great-grandfathers who had what was called a lace house in New Orleans, which was mostly laces for women, and had come to San Francisco and set up a lace house in San Francisco. Which was very successful, quite frankly, he sold mostly to whores. But then that was the women who were here in 1850. He was very successful, and he sold everybody's mistress, and all that, clothes, fancy clothes from France which he got.

Anyway, the DeYoungs came out across Nicaragua, and daddy died of Malaria coming across Nicaragua. So here was momma, who was sort of a ritzy gal but not very competent, and three kids: Mike, who was 14 and very smart, Charlie, who was 15 and also quite smart, and one gal, who married into the Elkas family, whose name I don't remember now. There were the three kids and momma, and they had tickets on the ship to San Francisco from Nicaragua, with no place to go. So they came to San Francisco and they found my great-grandfather on O'Farrell St., he had a house at 30 O'Farrell, which was a residential district in those days, it isn't now. And he said, "Sure, I've got a big house, come

on in, you can stay with us." They lived with him from 64 to about 67.

The two boys wanted something to do and they didn't know what to do and they loved the theater. So Mike invented something they called the Daily Dramatic Chronicle, there was no daily in the city at that time, or no other daily. He invented something much more important, he invented ads for the movies. Newspapers before that had never had ads. They were run by political parties for the benefit of their politics, and so he had ads and he made good money out of it. But, not enough to support the whole thing. And he wanted to turn it into a regular newspaper. So great-grandpa put up the money to become the real Chronicle, and frankly, never got it back. He didn't care. The boys did very well with the Chronicle and it's still there.

The DeYoung family, their children, were very good friends of my family, and they owned the Chronicle. So as a result, I made a deal with Phyllis Tucker to get her nephew to let me have a half-an-hour on television, on KRON, they had the only station. And so we had 8 o'clock to 8:30 on Tuesday evening, right after Jack Benny. And we did a show, Ann and I, in which we reviewed about 10 or 12 of the best books we'd read during the week. My god, we had to read every night in order to catch up to keep up with them. We also told about the worst ones—we had the Turkey of the Week and we had the Bargain of the Week. I don't like to say this publicly, but it probably was the only half hour commercial on early television. But we didn't act like it was a commercial. We did extremely well. We did extremely well. We just doubled and tripled our total business. Because we had an enormous audience, because we were fun. [Mike: It was really an infomercial] That's exactly what it was. The nice thing about it was when we first went on it only cost us \$100 a week. The terrible thing about it was that it got so expensive when television became popular that we couldn't afford to do it because we couldn't make enough money out of it. We could sell a lot of books, but you still couldn't make enough money. We went to KSFO because it was cheaper, and then we went to KGO for three or four years. That was a horror because we had to go down on Golden Gate Avenue. It was a very dangerous place. That's where I learned to wave my cigarette in the face of anybody who was walking along, tried to come near us, because they didn't want me to stick in their eye so they left us alone. By this time, Frannie Pilsbury of the Park & Clark family, old San Franciscans had. . . [end of side 1]

Ann Allenson stopped doing the show after about a year-and-a-half and I got Frannie Pilsbury, who I went to school with, and her sister too, of the Park & Clark family of Hillsborough—a delightful gal who loved to read. The two of us just read, oh I read about 14 books a week and she read about 12 books a week and we would discuss them as we read them, if we didn't like them, we wouldn't do them. Publishers didn't exactly love us, because of the Turkey of the Week, we very often ran into some trouble, because the Turkey of the Week would be something of a well-known author that was lousy, and we'd say so. And we also had the Bargain of the Week which was a sale book that was exciting. We did it, and people enjoyed it immensely, as I say, they said hello to us on the street so much that it was embarrassing. But it was very very, very good for the business. With the results of that, at the end of twelve years, when we'd moved to KSFO then KGO, at the end of twelve years we had to give it up because they'd raised the rate to \$650 a half hour, I don't know what it is now, \$30,000? But they'd raised it to \$650 and that was more than we were getting out of it by selling books. We were entertaining a lot of people. We enjoyed it.

During that time, a lot of bookstores that had been run by individuals were having troubles, we weren't. Barbara and I both still had money, a good deal of it. So we bought Hartman's in Seattle, which was the famous old bookstore of Seattle, downtown. Enlarged it, put a store in Bellview, did a lot with it, in the end had to give it up because you simply couldn't get good business people to run it and they were losing too much money. [Mike: Bellview

was called Hartmans also?] Yeah. Bellview was the fashionable [Mike: still is today] yes it is. Then we bought the New Mexico Book Company in Albuquerque, and turned it into a major business. We had a store in Los Alamos. We did very well but we had the same problem again—you run out of people who can run it as a business, we had to give it up. We built the Denver Book Company in Denver, it went very well, but again, it was so far away and I was spending all my time in between shows driving out to these stores or driving out to these stores. It wasn't worth it.

And then the other one that we bought in the early 60's was Hunter's Books in Beverly Hills. Marion Hunter had a little store and everybody loved her, but they were doing very little business, they didn't know what to do. So she wanted to sell it and we bought it and fortunately, there was somebody on the next street over, who had built a nice business building, with a big store on the ground floor, but he couldn't get anybody into the store, so he was starting to turn the store into offices. And I said, "you know, I think we could rent this store as a bookstore." They said "six thousand feet, that's a lot of room." I said, "no, that'd make a good bookstore." And Marion of course, was working with us, even though we were running the business [M: In those days that was a very large store] It was a very large store [M: pre-superstore] well, there's two very interesting things about it. One is the rent was \$600 a month for five years, and the other was that it was on the corner of Rodeo and Brighton. Which is the middle of Rodeo drive downtown. But in those days Rodeo drive just had restaurants and hair parlors and things like that and we were the first commercial operation on Rodeo Drive. Well, you know what happened to Rodeo Drive. It became so enormously fashionable [M: the lease was only for five years?] well, we renewed it for another five years and then we renewed it for still another five years at something like \$6000 a month. then the building was bought by an Iranian, or Arabian, one kind or another. and he raised the rent to \$60,000 dollars a year, we couldn't afford that, we felt. [M: a year or a month?] no, you're right, it was \$60,000 a month. We just figured it was hopeless. We moved over to Beverly Drive, but it didn't work. And we finally had to give it up. It was an enormously successful bookstore, it was one of the first million-dollar bookstores in the West. Enormously successful bookstore and we ran it extremely well. Marion Hunter got out fairly early, she was too old. We had very good people running it and so it really was a success, but again, we had to give it up. [M: it was well known, Hunter's Books in Southern California, they did a lot of films there] We had anybody of any class in there [M: many actors or actress shopped there] Groucho Marx I waited on one time. He was fine, but he said "you know, that book's too expensive." I said "look Groucho, it's 98 cents, you can afford that." He said "that's too expensive." I said "it's a sale book, it's 98 cents." "well", he said, "alright, I'll take it if you won't reduce the price." My Groucho Marx story.

As long as you going to use this in Sacramento, you'll want perhaps a little local connection or two to Sacramento. My great-grandfather Sam Foreman, who with a group of his friends from Nebraska came across the mountains to California seeking good land, which was supposedly here and quite available, in 1847 (after the conquest, but before the gold rush). They got across without any real trouble, because they didn't have covered wagons, they just rode horses, so it only took them about a month and a half to get over the mountains and get here. Obviously they didn't go over Donner Pass, they had much better sense, they went over Squaw Valley, which everybody else did. And then they went down to the first place you could go to, which was Sutter's Fort. [M: They went Squaw Valley, not the northern route?] No, I think they went Squaw Valley. They might have gone the one western Pacific. I don't think so, that was a very difficult canyon to go down. They may have gone over to Placerville, there's a way over there too, that's Carson Pass. That's what they took, was Carson Pass, I take it back. In any case, they went on up to Sacramento, which was the only real settlement close by, and stayed at Sutter's Fort with a delightful old gentleman John Augustus Sutter (or Johann Augustus Sutter). Some of them moved down to San Francisco, and others of them stayed in the mountains, got land, which

you could just take, and stayed in the mountains.

Great-grandpa, when the gold rush started, he didn't want to mine gold, and so he got a job with the Adams Express Company, as the agent in Mcoullomy Hill, which was a very busy mining town, nearly dead now. When the Adams Express Company went broke because they lent too much money to Californians in 1853, he and his friend Charlie Bowman became the two handlers, I don't know what you call it, people who handle bankruptcy for the company, and close it out. And when they got all through, there were three things they couldn't sell that granddaddy could use. There was 2 1/2 square miles of the Pocas Rancho in the (San ?) San Mateo County, between Alameda Los Pocas, which was there, and El Camino Real. [M: Liquidators, is what they were] Liquidators, whatever. There was the 2 1/2 square miles, and he liked the country, it was very beautiful. San Francisco was about to give up the lower end of San Francisco County, because the politicians who made their money out of soaking building firms for building streets, and then the politicians would get so much for it, couldn't get anything out of lower San Francisco County because there was nothing there. Nothing to speak of. But Grandpa liked the land, and so he bought it—he didn't buy it, he took it, for what they owed him, that and something that is now called the port of Redwood City (an island off Redwood City. Wasn't called Redwood City in those days, was called what, Mesersville (?)). But anyway, that, and the south fork of the McCoullomy river water rights, which he turned into the McCoullomy Canal Mining Company. Anyhow, the only point of the southern end of San Francisco County is that in 1858, San Francisco got rid of the southern end and cut itself off where it's now cut off, 8 miles by 8 miles, and it became San Mateo County.

But the only record of who owned that land, I own, and I used to threaten all my Atherton friends that I'd simply take their land cause I have the only proper deed for it, because San Francisco, when it burned, all the records of the sale to the Athertons was destroyed. Grandpa got 150 dollars a month, rental, for cow pasture, for the town of Atherton (it wasn't the town of Atherton then). The Atherton family, who made their money in Chile, came up here, loved the place, and wanted to buy it from them, they bought it from him. But there's no record of the sale.

The other thing is, as I say, he was a friend of Sutter's and he also was a friend of Fremont's, because they had been friends in Kansas, where Fremont was stationed. So he had a lot of connection with early California history. He was on the Vigilance committee of 1855, came to San Francisco a good deal, that was Sam Forman, but anyhow, that's not too important.

Lets' get back to, the other thing is that the McClatchy kids and I went to summer camp together and went to Stanford together and we've known each other for years, the McClatchy's who own the Bee [M: The Bee, the Sacramento Bee, and there's still a lot of schools up there, after reading the paper this past week, lot of things named after the McClatchy family besides the Sacramento Bee] nice kids [M: they pretty much ran the town, I think] yes, they did M: [is there any pre-Shasta history of Anton Roman?] He came from Bohemian, which is now called Czechoslovakia [M: Not to Sacramento or San Francisco and then moved up to Shasta? Do we know how he ended up in Shasta?] I don't know how he got here. But I don't think he got here before 1850. My whole family was here by 1850, all four sides. [M: the way to check that would be to look in the Sacramento Register, and see if there's anything in that he was maybe in Sacramento at the time] I doubt it quite much [M: maybe he started in Sacramento and then made his way back down, who knows] I don't think so [M: who knows where he came from] I don't think so. I think he came across probably Nicaragua, and came up. He was a ticket from Europe, he ended up very bright.. Came to San Francisco and then went up to the gold rush. that's what I think but I don't know. I don't really know much about Anton Roman, except what he did in the book business.

Back to the present day of Books Inc. The other thing that I got involved in, or we got involved in too, was Paper Editions. Which was a wholesaler of the new kind of paperback. The old kind of paperback were pretty junky and pretty cheap and turned yellow very quickly and you couldn't keep them. And at one point, publishers began to publish paperbacks on real paper. They were much nicer looking. They were more expensive than the cheapies, the cheapies were 25 cents. I and a couple friends of mine started up Paper Editions, to be a wholesaler for this kind of good paperback, which we liked. The problem was, we got out of catalog, for booksellers round the country. We actually had warehouses in New York, St. Louis and San Francisco, or rather the Peninsula. But we supplied bookstores with these much better paperbacks and in order for people to know that it wasn't the junk of the cheesy ones that turned yellow, I invented the word quality paperbacks, and it's been used a lot since. Quality paperback editions. We put that on the catalog. I don't have one of those catalogs.

Well, we did that, I mean I was involved in too many things, lets face it, and I couldn't stay on top of all of it, and it was too much traveling. It was just too much entirely. We also started opening bookstores in shopping centers when they opened up. When Stanford Shopping Center opened up, of course, (grandfather/mother??) graduated from Stanford, I graduated from Stanford, my father. so we set up a store in Stanford Shopping Center and it was very successful. 1961. Same year we opened a store at Town & Country Village in San Jose and we're still there. We're still at Stanford Shopping Center [M: both in the same year?] yeah, then we opened a store in Coddington in Santa Rosa, and we're still there. Our local stores now include more, we have mostly kept, the faraway ones are too much work to run successfully, you just can't run a bookstore successfully too far away. The chains know this, but then they don't have to worry about success because they backed by special kinds of money that don't come out of the book business. [M: delete that comment. Specially in that they don't like us putting there in the first place. they are also the owners of Doubleday] no, they were good friends of mine, the owners of Doubleday [M: but the current owners, Barnes & Noble. I would not put that in print] The other thing is that in those days I used to go East twice a year to find out what was coming up for television shows, so I knew practically every publisher personally, they'd take me to lunch, and I take them to breakfast and we were all good personal friends. Now those people are all gone, they're all conglomerates, so it's a different world. Now, you don't need to know anything about the current Books Inc., cause you know it [M: I can give you all the current. I don't think we want to put anything in bashing Barnes & Noble] No! no, no, no [M: the Bee will want something like that] no [M: well, why are you so much better than Barnes & Noble,] no [M: they've already tried to get that out of us] we've just had 143 years of experience making customers happy with books they will like and telling them the truth about books that are bad.



12 August 1994

Ms. Tamara Samsa
Books, Inc.
1020 Seventh Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Tamara:

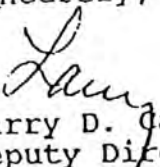
As promised, enclosed is a copy of the letter written by Books, Inc. president Lewis Lengfeld in 1963 to Ken Fry of the California State Fair. At that time, the State Fair managed the "100 Year Club" referred to in the letter (honoring businesses that had achieved 100 years of continuous operation), which had an annual dinner, part of the State Fair in September, for all existing club members and new members.

About twenty years ago the State Fair stopped doing that and the California Historical Society tried to continue the practice of honoring old businesses, but dropped the annual dinner. We received the files that pertained to the 100 Year Club, which is why we have this letter. The letter has a cover sheet which is obviously the script that was used in announcing the inclusion of Books, Inc. in the 100 Year Club. There is no date on that sheet, so I can only guess that the presentation took place at the 1963 State Fair, or possibly the following year. You may want to dig in your files around that period to see if you can find the certificate that was presented.

Also enclosed is a copy of a page from an 1864 San Francisco City Directory listing A. Roman & Co., and a copy of the back page of the 1861-62 directory which features an ad by A. Roman. Notice the change in address. There was no listing for A. Roman in the 1859-60 directory, even though Mr. Lengfeld's narrative says the store opened in 1859 (probably too late for inclusion). We do not have the 1860-61 edition.

We welcome the membership of Books, Inc. I have enclosed both our regular membership brochure and a historic business brochure. Many companies select the \$250 (Friend of CHS) level of annual membership support. For historic businesses we offer a recognition program which is described on an accompanying sheet. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you for your interest in the California Historical Society.

Sincerely,


Larry D. Campbell
Deputy Director

Executive Director
Michael McCone

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Edith L. Pines, Ph.D., Mill Valley

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Administrative Offices
and North Baker Library
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San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 567-1848
Fax (415) 567-2394

El Molino Viejo
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San Marino, CA 91109-1840
(615) 449-5450

Overland Monthly

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Overland Monthly was a monthly magazine based in California, United States, and published in the 19th and 20th centuries.

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- 2 Contributors
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History

The *Overland Monthly* was founded in 1868^[1] by Anton Roman, a Bavarian-born bookseller who moved to California during the Gold Rush. He had recently published the poems of Charles Warren Stoddard and a collection of verse by California writers called *Outcroppings*.^[2] The magazine's first issue was published in July 1868, edited by Bret Harte in San Francisco, and continued until late 1875. Roman, who hoped his magazine would "help the material development of this Coast", was originally concerned that Harte would "lean too much toward the purely literary". Harte, in turn, was skeptical at first that there would be enough quality content provided from local authors.^[3] The first issue mostly included contributions from the "Golden State Trinity": Harte, Stoddard, and Ina Coolbrith.^[4]

Despite the positive response from critics and the magazine's profitability, publisher Anton Roman sold the *Overland Monthly* in June 1869 for \$7,500 to John Carmany.^[5] Harte immediately offered the new owner a list of demands, including a rise to \$200 a month and a guarantee of his complete editorial control of each issue.^[6] Carmany agreed to his terms, and Harte was able to leave his job at the San Francisco Mint to devote his full attention to the *Overland Monthly*.^[7] The publication continued to thrive in this period; Mark Twain reported that he had "heard it handsomely praised by some of the most ponderous of America's literary chiefs."^[6]



The Overland Monthly, 1869



Bret Harte, 1868

In the September 1870 issue, Harte published what became his most well-known work, "Plain Language from Truthful James", later known as "The Heathen Chinee".^[7] That year, with his popularity soaring, Harte considered a professorship at the University of California, Berkeley or an offer to purchase the *Overland Monthly*, but declined both. Instead, he left California and traveled east to seek broader literary fame.^[8]

The original publishers, in 1880, started *The Californian*, which became *The Californian and Overland Monthly* in October 1882. In January 1883, the effort reverted to *The Overland Monthly* (starting again with Volume I, number 1). It was based in San Francisco until at least 1921.^[9] In 1923 the magazine merged with *Out West* to become *Overland Monthly and the Out West magazine*, and ended publication in July 1935.

Contributors

Noted writers, editors, and artists associated with the magazine included:

- Ambrose Bierce
- Alice Cary
- Willa Cather
- Frona Eunice Wait Colburn
- Bret Harte
- Ina Coolbrith
- Edgar Fawcett
- Henry George
- John Brayshaw Kaye
- Clarence King
- Jack London
- Josephine Clifford McCracken
- Joaquin Miller
- John Muir
- Hugo Wilhelm Arthur Nahl
- Lola Ridge
- Charles Taze Russell
- Stephen Powers
- William Saroyan
- Hermann Georg Scheffauer
- Clark Ashton Smith
- Charles Warren Stoddard
- Augustus Gabriel de Vivier Tassin
- Mark Twain
- Joseph Widney

Editors include:



SF Chronicle Mutt and Jeff advertisement in the *Overland*, 1916

- Milicent Shinn 1882-1894

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- Online Books (<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=overland>): University of Pennsylvania



External links

- Archive 1868–1900

(<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moajrnl/browse.journals/over.html>): University of Michigan

- More issues, into the 1900s (<https://archive.org/search.php?query=overland%20monthly>): Archive.org
- Guide to the Overland Monthly Records (<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf9x0nb4pr/>), at The Bancroft Library



Wikimedia Commons has media related to ***Overland Monthly***.

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| [Defunct American literary magazines](#) | [History of California](#) | [History of the American West](#)
| [Magazines established in 1868](#) | [Magazines disestablished in 1923](#)
| [Magazines published in California](#)

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Bohemianism flourished in nineteenth century America, especially in the unfettered West. Freedom, that ingredient so necessary for Bohemian existence, was at the heart of the new republic. The Constitution of 1787 and its subsequent Bill of Rights, ratified by 1791, opened the way for nineteenth century opportunities. With most of the good land in the East already taken, the West beckoned as the land of the future.

In the early 1840's, wagon trains began their transcontinental migration, following what became known as the Overland Trail. But it wasn't until the 1849 California gold discovery that the great onslaught of people descended on the West Coast. Tens of thousands came looking for their golden opportunity. San Francisco, with its wonderful bay and central location, both in proximity to the gold fields and as a coastal port, was destined to become the cultural and economic hub of the Far West.

To this city in December of 1851 came a young gold seeker named Anton Roman, fresh from his claim at the fabulously rich Scott's Bar, with over a hundred ounces of gold dust in his pack. At the bookstore of Burgess, Gilbert and Still he was persuaded to exchange some of his gold for books, which he intended to sell to the miners in their winter camps. The venture turned out to be so profitable that the lad abandoned his mining and went into the book business fulltime. By 1859 he had opened a permanent bookstore on Montgomery Street in San Francisco. From his position in the bookstore, Roman saw the need for books which



Anton Roman, first publisher of the Overland Monthly.



Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader

December 2014

Dear Friends,

I am proud to join my San Francisco friends and neighbors to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Books, Inc. in Laurel Village. Books, Inc. shines as a true neighborhood bookstore, known for its friendly customer service and for providing our community with literary events and activities for all ages.

Books, Inc. has survived the onslaught of national chains and continues to thrive in the digital age. It is critical to our national character that independent bookstores survive and prosper. In an increasingly digitalized world, we must embrace the new while keeping the best of the old.

Books, Inc. is where I would love to browse away an afternoon.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Nancy Pelosi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot above the 'i' in Pelosi.

NANCY PELOSI
Democratic Leader



Senator Dianne Feinstein
Washington, D. C.

November 27, 2014

Books, Inc.
1501 Vermont Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure for me to join Books, Inc. in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the California Street location in San Francisco.

San Francisco has many amazing bookstores, and this is one of the best. It is a great honor for me to congratulate you and your staff for your 40 years of devotion and hard work. Your Laurel Heights location is consistently a welcoming and familiar place for me to purchase books. Books make wonderful gifts and when I want to find just the right one, I come to your store. Thank you for always being so helpful each time I come in and taking the time to locate exactly what I am looking for. It is this type of personal service that makes this store a San Francisco gem.

As a United States Senator representing the people of California, I commend Books, Inc. for providing an outstanding service to the people of San Francisco. I wish you a wonderful 40th anniversary celebration, and continued success in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

The Oldest Bookstore in the West Turns 160 ^[1]

By [Karen Schechner](#) ^[2] on Wednesday, Jul 13, 2011

How do you celebrate a 160-year-old bookstore that's weathered big box stores and Amazon.com, as well as the Gold Rush, the Civil War, and nearly every San Francisco earthquake on record? With a lot of parties... California's [Books Inc](#) ^[3], is hosting 35 small celebrations at its Laurel Village location, 10 at Mountain View, five at Opera Plaza, and "other than that we just eat cake every day," said co-owners Michael Tucker and Margie Scott Tucker.

The West's oldest bookstore got its start in 1851 when Anton Roman, who struck it rich in the California Gold Rush, traded some gold for books and founded a bookshop in Shasta City. Later that decade, he opened a permanent bookstore on Montgomery Street in San Francisco.

Over the years, the store changed hands a few times, and during the 1906 earthquake it burned to the ground. The business became Books Inc. in 1946, when Barbara Thompson and Lew Lengfeld opened a store at the Fairmont Hotel. In the following years, they expanded to locations in Seattle, Southern California, New Mexico, Dallas, and Denver.

When Lengfeld passed away in 1996, he left [Books Inc](#) ^[3] to a few trusted employees, including Michael Tucker and Michael Grant. "It was good news that we were left the business, and it was bad news that we were left the business," [Tucker has said](#) ^[4]. It was after the big-box stores had cut deeply into the bookstores' margins, and, to save the company, the new owners had to close 13 of 15 stores and file for Chapter 11.



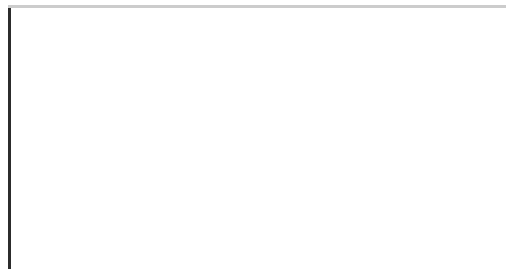
Michael Tucker and Michael Grant

By the time Books Inc. emerged from Chapter 11 in August 1997, only Grant and Tucker remained as owners. Grant was responsible for the business' administration, and Tucker oversaw operations. When Grant suffered a fatal heart attack in 2000, Tucker became president of Books Inc. and worked to carry out their plans to open three additional stores during the next 12 months.

In the succeeding years, the business, which is co-owned by Grant's son, Nikolai, and his wife, Shannon, has grown to 13 stores, including three Compass Books locations — one in the Downtown Disney District in Anaheim, and two at San

Francisco International Airport, the newest of which opened this year.

Continually adapting to the changing retail environment has been key to Books Inc.'s survival. The store hosted its first commercial TV book review program in 1950, and, more recently, developed a robust e-marketing program. Tucker noted that he and Margie Scott Tucker, who serves as the store's director of marketing and human resources, haven't had much choice about the continual reinvention of Books Inc. "It



was out of necessity. We learned when we came out of Chapter 11 ... that we needed to continually reinvent what we do and how we do it," he said.

The recent decline of the big box bookstores isn't something that Books Inc. is celebrating. But, Tucker noted, "There are tremendous opportunities to connect with new customers and reconnect with old ones. And the value of all independents has gone up because they can quickly adapt to the changing needs of the community."

In fact, many communities that don't have a Books Inc. now want one; however, there are no immediate plans for another expansion. Store management is spending the rest of 2011 renovating existent stores.

Tucker is approaching the current rise of e-books "just as everyone else is — cautiously," he said. "We are first and foremost a bookseller, and our job is to sell books in all formats to our customers. However, Google eBooks are a great addition that gives us the opportunity to serve customers who choose to read in that format."

Working closely with other booksellers both before and during his recently concluded tenure as ABA president has helped his business. "The shared knowledge amongst booksellers is probably one of the greatest advantages in the independent community," Tucker said. "The business acumen that we have picked up from the Winter Institute, BEA, and my time on the Booksellers Advisory Council and the ABA Board, has influenced our day-to-day business."

After decades with filled with ups and downs — building events series and an online presence, contending with the recession, and navigating e-books — Tucker isn't daunted. "We're still having fun," he said.

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The Press , a sculpture by Shawn HibmaCronan, in the window of Books Inc.'s newest Compass Books location at San Francisco International Airport.




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History / Only in SF Not Dead Yet: The 10 Oldest Businesses in San Francisco

Posted By V. Alexandra de F. Szoenyi on Fri, Aug 14, 2015 at 10:14 AM

San Francisco culture isn't dead (yet). That's the message of **this week's issue of SF Weekly**, which profiles eight venues that opened in the past year.

But the city's culture is changing, which has been true since the Gold Rush, when the population increased by the thousands almost overnight. Today, with rents exploding, new residents arriving, old residents leaving, and businesses shuttering, natives grasp onto anything familiar.

Standing like proud, battleworn survivors for more than a century, the following businesses represent classic San Francisco.

Tadich Grill
240 California St.
Est. 1849
tadichgrill.com



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Tadich Grill is not only San Francisco's oldest restaurant, but the oldest in California. Nikola Budrovich, Frano Kosta, and Antonio Gasparich opened the Coffee Stand on Long Wharf in 1849, serving fresh fish over charcoal to those on the pier (before California was even a state). Coffee Stand eventually became the New World Coffee Saloon, then the Cold Day Restaurant, when one of its bartenders, John Tadich, bought it in 1887. Today, Tadich Grill is still a seafood restaurant serving the freshest catches, and is still as popular as ever. It doesn't take reservations — probably because it doesn't have to. Celebs will wait for tables right along with you.

Boudin Bakery
Flagship: 160 Jefferson St.
Est. 1849
boudinbakery.com

Polls from SFWEEKLY

Would you try to get your hands on the Hamilton tickets at the SHN Orpheum Theatre?

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Yesterday's Crimes: The Disappearing Police Chief

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In 1849, sourdough met San Francisco, and neither was the same again. Isadore Boudin opened a bakery in North Beach to cater to the influx of miners, and discovered that the city's air, combined with wild yeasts, created a tangy flavor that proved irresistible. San Francisco sourdough was born. The coolest part is we all get to savor that same distinctive flavor from 1849 because Boudin uses the same starter or "mother dough" from that year (the recipe for which Louise Boudin saved from the 1906 earthquake-cum-fire).


Old Ship Saloon
 298 Pacific Ave.
 Est. 1851


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 **The Snitch**
 September 7


This week's Yesterday's Crimes is about the kidnaping and murder of Father Patrick Heslin in 1921.



SLIDESHOWS



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Tame Impala at The Greek Theatre, September 3

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 **MARTIN MORAN**
 AT THE STRAND

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A.C.T.
 AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER



In 1849, a ship named the *Arkansas* got caught in a storm and crashed onto Alcatraz. It was towed to the corner of Pacific Avenue and Battery Street, part of the infamous Barbary Coast in 1851. There, Joe Anthony tore a hole in the side of the ship, added a plank, and made it into a saloon called the Old Ship Ale House, complete with a sign reading "gud, bad, and indifrent spirits sold here." James Laflin, a cabin boy on the *Arkansas*, became the bartender, with the shadiest of side jobs. He was a Shanghaier, meaning he would get men drunk, drug them and/or knock them unconscious, and sell them as crew to departing ships (some to Shanghai).

The ship that was The Old Ship Ale House was dismantled in 1867 and replaced by a brick building, with a hotel located above the bar. It was renamed the Old Ship Saloon, then Bricks Bar & Grill in 1907, and during WWII, contained a brothel upstairs for servicemen. It has now returned to being called The Old Ship Saloon and is the oldest drinking site in San Francisco, although, if you drink there today, you're no longer in danger of waking up on the other side of the world.

Books Inc.

Headquarters: 1501 Vermont St.

Est. 1851

booksinc.net



In 1851, Anton Roman made big money off of the Gold Rush and decided to open Shasta City bookshop (inaugurating the first San Francisco locale in 1857). Roman began publishing books by literary greats such as Bret Harte and Mark Twain in 1863, but eventually sold the shop in 1880. After changing owners several times, losing its Montgomery Street location to the 1906 earthquake, and numerous name changes, the shop, now called Books Inc., reemerged in the Fairmont Hotel in 1946. Today, Books Inc. stands as the West Coast's oldest independent bookseller, with 11 California stores (four of them in San Francisco). Seeing as several of our city's bookstores have vanished over the years, that's quite the feat.

Wells Fargo

Headquarters: 420 Montgomery St.

Est. 1852

wellsfargo.com



1853, San Francisco.
Wells Fargo's first office in the West,
which opened on July 13th, 1852.



It's hard to imagine banking without the name Wells Fargo, but it wasn't until July 18, 1852, that Henry Wells and William G. Fargo (also founders of American Express) opened Wells Fargo & Company for business in San Francisco and Sacramento. The company bought gold from customers and, in exchange, gave paper bank drafts, as well as offered express freight and messaging services via the iconic stagecoach. As of July 2015, it is the world's largest bank, with offices in 36 countries. It's still headquartered in San Francisco.

Shreve & Co.
117 Post St.
Est. 1852
shreve.com



George C. and Samuel Shreve were sure of one thing — the instant millionaires of the Gold Rush were going to want to spend that money. As a result, the Shreve Jewelry Company opened in 1852 at 139 Montgomery Street, offering the nouveau riche luxurious European home goods and fine jewelry. The store moved around the city before settling into the newly constructed Shreve Building at 200 Post Street in March 1906. The following month, the 1906 earthquake struck; despite some damage, the Shreve Building survived intact.

While the interior was being remodeled, Shreve set up shop in Oakland for two years. The store closed briefly during WWI so that silversmiths could make airplane parts, but otherwise it's remained a constant in San Francisco's Union Square for close to a century. Sadly, it was announced this year that Harry Winston would move into the Shreve Building, as Shreve's lease was up and the building's owner accepted a higher bid. Refusing to fade into history, Shreve had a massive sale and moved a block away.

Levi Strauss & Co.
Headquarters: 1155 Battery St.
Est. 1853
levistrauss.com



It's hard to believe the first pair of jeans were made all the way back in 1873, right here in San Francisco, and remain arguably the most universal apparel item in the world. In 1853, Levi Strauss arrived in San Francisco to sell wholesale dry goods, met tailor Jacob Davis, and together they created durable pants reinforced with copper rivets, perfect for Gold Rush miners. (We really owe a lot to those gold diggers, don't we?) The Levi's factory on Valencia Street near 14th is no more, but Levi's jeans are one of SF's greatest inventions.

The Old Clam House
299 Bayshore Blvd.
Est. 1861
theoldclamhousesf.com



You know an establishment is old when it opened the same year Abraham Lincoln became President. The Old Clam House was called The Oakdale Bar & Clam House when it debuted in 1861, on what was then the waterfront (when Bayshore was actually a bay shore). Ambrose Zurfluh and wife Anna offered seafood to the masses enjoying San Francisco's waters. The Old Clam House still cooks up nautical delights 150 years later, and has the distinction of being the oldest SF restaurant that has remained in its original location.

The Saloon
1232 Grant Ave.
Est. 1861
sfblues.net/saloon.html



Ladies and gentleman, The Saloon is officially San Francisco's oldest bar. Opened in 1861 by Ferdinand E. Wagner, on what was then 308 DuPont Street, it has remained in the same location (now 1232 Grant Avenue) ever since. Back then, it was christened Wagner's Beer Bar. Now, fast forward to 1906 and that infamous earthquake-cum-fire that devastated the city. Firemen rushed to save the building from catching on fire — and succeeded (although word has it that the firemen really just wanted to protect their favorite brothel upstairs). Another reincarnation in the 1960's and 70's transformed The Saloon into a popular blues bar, and in 2015, you can still catch live music daily while enjoying your favorite adult beverage.

Fior d'Italia
2237 Mason St.
Est. 1886
fior.com



Fior d'Italia is another restaurant that is the oldest of its kind (Italian) in both San Francisco and California. Opened by Angelo Del Monte on May 1, 1886, it served miners stopping in San Francisco for supplies, as well as clients of a bordello in the same building. Within a week of the 1906 earthquake, Fior was serving food to the homeless, despite having lost its own building. Soon, it flourished into a grand establishment, with a band that entertained greats like Rudolph Valentino and Mary Pickford during Prohibition. Ever headstrong in the face of adversity, Fior d'Italia has survived fires, earthquakes, location changes, and a brief closure in 2012 to remain a classic San Francisco institution.

*Ghiradelli Chocolate Company, another iconic SF institution, was not included on this list. But since it was founded in 1852, it deserves a special mention here.

If you are being attacked by three people, would you use any means possible to save your life?

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- Yes, you are protected under the First Amendment.
- No, just lay there and DIE

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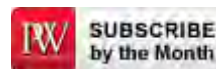
BEA 2016: Books Inc is PW's Bookstore of the Year

By Anisse Gross | Apr 15, 2016

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Considering that Books Inc.'s history goes back to 1851, when Bavarian publisher and book dealer Anton Roman struck gold in Shasta City, Calif., it seems about time the bookstore, whose tagline is "The West's Oldest Independent Bookseller," garnered *PW's* Bookstore of the Year Award. When nominating the store, Donna Paz Kaufman of the Bookstore Training & Consulting Group wrote, "In over 20 years of working with *PW* on the awards, it was clear that the book industry often assumed some booksellers had already won. I think this is especially true for California-based Books Inc."

Having weathered every challenge possible since its founding, Books Inc. demonstrates its commitment to bookselling, even in difficult circumstances. From Shasta City, Roman went on to open the first bookstore in San Francisco, in 1857, where he began publishing books and magazines until the 1906 earthquake destroyed it. Since then, the store has changed hands several times, until Lew Lengfeld purchased the business and incorporated it as Books Inc. in 1946. The company expanded to Seattle, Southern California, New Mexico, Dallas, and Denver through the 1950s, and by the 1970s there were 26 stores along the West Coast.

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When Lengfeld died in 1995, he left the company to employees Michael Grant and Michael Tucker. The timing was unfortunate; the expansion of large chains and the recession resulted in Books Inc. filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in order to restructure and save the company, which meant closing 13 of the 15 remaining stores.

By 1997, Grant and Tucker were able to turn the company around, and by 1998 the company had grown to five stores. Currently, Books Inc. has 11 outlets throughout the San Francisco Bay area, including two airport

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locations, and a central office and warehouse in San Francisco. All stores are general interest and between 3,500 and 5,000 sq. ft., with large children's sections. Tucker thinks this is a good size for the San Francisco Bay area: large enough to accommodate events, but small enough not to break the bank in the wildly expensive rental market.

Michael Grant died in 2000; Books Inc. is now co-owned by Tucker, the president and CEO; Margie Scott Tucker, director of marketing & human resources, who is married to Tucker; Nikolai Grant, senior buyer; and

Shannon Grant, senior children's buyer, and Nikolai's wife. Nikolai is Michael Grant's son and inherited his portion of the company upon Michael's death.

Though Books Inc. has multiple locations, for Tucker it's important that each location retain autonomy when making decisions, particularly about stock. There is a restock buyer in each store, which means it can select inventory that matches the needs of the neighborhood; the buyers also work directly with local schools, authors, and community groups, ensuring an authentic relationship with their customers. And for now, 11 stores is a good size for the company. Tucker says there isn't a target number in mind for total stores, and it has a lot to do with where competitors exist. "We wouldn't open in a location where there is another independent bookstore. There are more opportunities now in the Bay Area with the exodus of the large chains, and there has been an expansion of several local indies," Tucker says, adding, "I don't want to get so big that I don't know all our staff on a first-name basis."

On winning the award, Tucker says, "We didn't do this by ourselves." He adds, "This is something that's collectively shared. If it weren't for the relationships that we have with every aspect of the trade and fellow booksellers, this wouldn't happen. For me, it's really thrilling because it's gratifying for staff to get that kind of recognition."

The business has faced hard times. "Everything has been thrown at us," Tucker says, "and will continue to be." But one thing he's not concerned about is Amazon, particularly the opening of its bricks-and-mortar locations. "Those stores are going to suck," he says. "They were terrible publishers, and they're not going to be bookstore people. There's an authenticity to this trade."

Though Tucker believes shopping online works when consumers know what they want, it's "a terrible place to look for something when you don't know what you want." It's this discovery aspect that's still missing from shopping online for books, according to Tucker, who thinks that, so far, there's no replacement for hand-selling, something Books Inc. prides itself on. Though Books Inc. has an active online presence, e-books are not a large factor; selling print online does well and is most useful for customers who want to see complete inventories online, place orders, and pick up their purchases at a neighborhood location.

Margie Tucker handles a variety of things, including HR and events; the company calls events "the experience you can't download." Michael Tucker says events play an extremely important role in getting people into the store and reaching new readers. Each location has its own event coordinator, who hosts and handles scheduling. Overall, last year Books Inc. hosted 1,200 events, which included in-store and offsite book signings, book clubs, school shopping nights, book fairs, and story times.

The stores also have more than 30 book clubs that meet in the different locations each month, with some led by staff, and others run by outside organizations that bring their book clubs to the stores.

The company maintains a close involvement with the communities it serves. It continues to develop partnerships with schools, libraries, and other organizations that support literacy, including the 826 Valencia Scholarship Program. Last year, Books Inc. had its most successful school book fairs year, programming 27 fairs in 2015.

Another area that has done well recently is B2B sales. Books Inc. took advantage of the exodus of Borders to create a department to expand B2B sales and outreach, and in 2015 attendance at B2B events across all stores increased markedly over 2014.

Because young readers continue to show their love for print books, Books Inc. makes sure that all its stores have solid children's sections. At one of the company's oldest locations, Laurel Village in San Francisco, children's specialist Summer Laurie, who has been there since 2007, says, "It's not run-of-the-mill retail; you're part of something when you work here. When I started, I said I wanted to run a mother/daughter book club, and they made it happen. Ownership recognizes that the employees they hire have expertise and passion. Now, as a frontline bookseller, I can bring in whatever books I want to bring in. I don't know that that's always possible at other stores. My mother/daughter book club is still going strong."

Calvin Crosby, executive director of the NCIBA, who worked at Books Inc. for about a decade and helped open, design, and manage several stores, says, "One of the things that doesn't get talked about is Michael Tucker's generosity. I remember when he paid all the volunteers for the Books by the Bay festival. He's also very dedicated in cultivating the careers of young booksellers, including paying for them to go to regionals and workshops. His generosity goes unrecognized so often because he's so quiet about it." Crosby also cites Tucker's willingness to help other store owners. "[Tucker's] lease-negotiation skills are the best in the industry. He always has time to help someone look at the fine print and ask the questions they didn't know they needed to ask," Crosby says. "I don't know if I would've gotten to this place without the skills they gave me. I have so much gratitude."

As he looks ahead, Tucker cites occupancy and payroll costs—and how the industry will respond to that—as potential problems for indie stores. Despite the difficult retail climate in San Francisco, from payroll to lease rates, Tucker remains bullish. In 2015 Books Inc. moved its Berkeley store to a new location, completely remodeled its airport locations, and began construction on a store in Santa Clara for a tentative June 2016 opening date. Books Inc. will close its store on Market Street in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood when the lease expires at the end of June. Tucker says the store was in the red eight of the last 10 years. "We regretfully could no longer justify keeping the store open," Tucker says.

Crosby says that when thinking of Books Inc., "*Tenacity* is the word that comes to mind. The company has a long legacy of dedication to bookselling that has allowed them to face all those challenges. Anytime they get knocked down, they come back stronger and better."

As Kaufman wrote in her letter nominating Books Inc. for this award, "Today, with 11 stores in markets where rent factors are high and selecting the right location is a challenge, Books Inc. stands as not only a model for retail bookselling, its history proves the value of resilience, creativity, persistence, and teamwork."

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A version of this article appeared in the 04/18/2016 issue of *Publishers Weekly* under the headline: Books Inc.: 'PW' Bookstore of the Year

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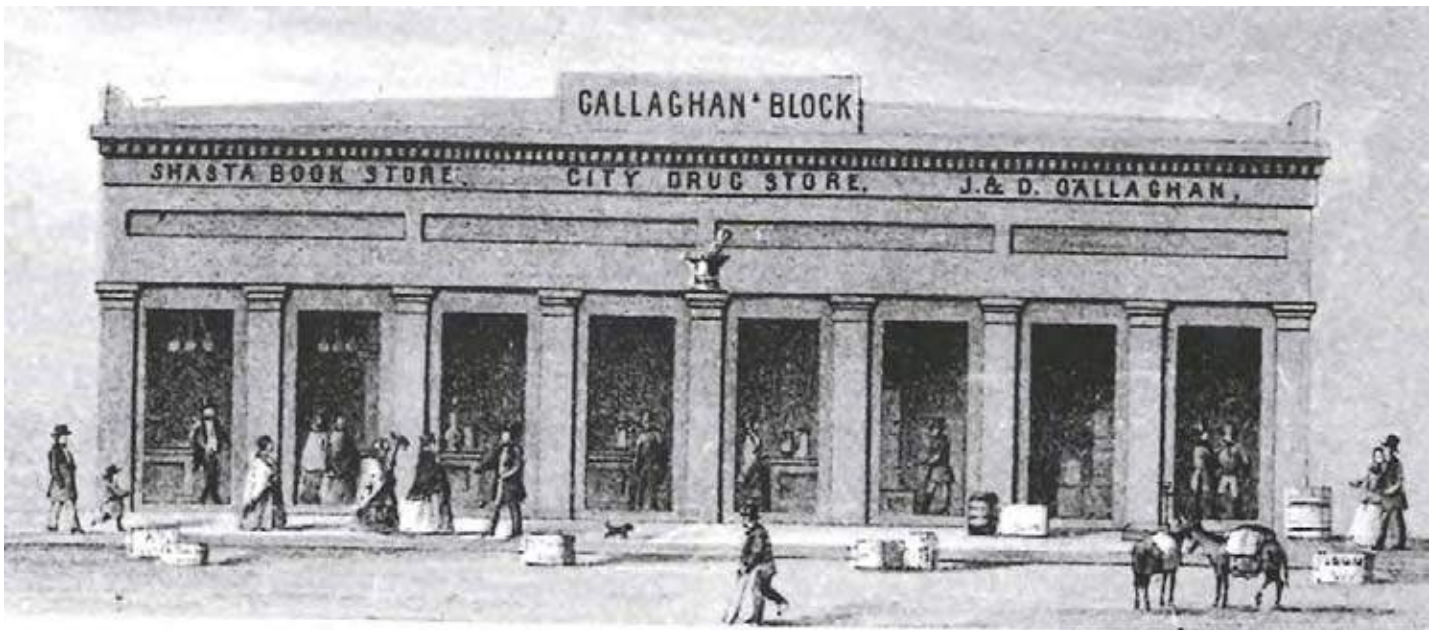
Shasta Historical Society

California's Oldest Bookseller Originated at Shasta

🕒 September 7, 2016 📁 Uncategorized 📍 Anton Roman, Callaghan's Block, City Drug Store, Cornelius Roman, Daniel Callaghan, Eliza K. (Fletcher) Roman, J. & D. Callahan, Jeremiah Callaghan, Main Street, Nettie Roman, Parker House, Publishing, Roman's Books, Shasta, Shasta Book Store 👤 shastahistorical

A man named Anton Roman, formerly of Bavaria, arrived in California in 1849 and settled at Shasta in 1850. Roman worked at the nearby placer mines earning his fortune, also mining on the Trinity, Klamath and Siskiyou Rivers. He was a well-educated person who loved to read and he dreamed of establishing a book store to share his passion for books. His dream became a reality in 1851 when he established Roman's Books in Shasta.

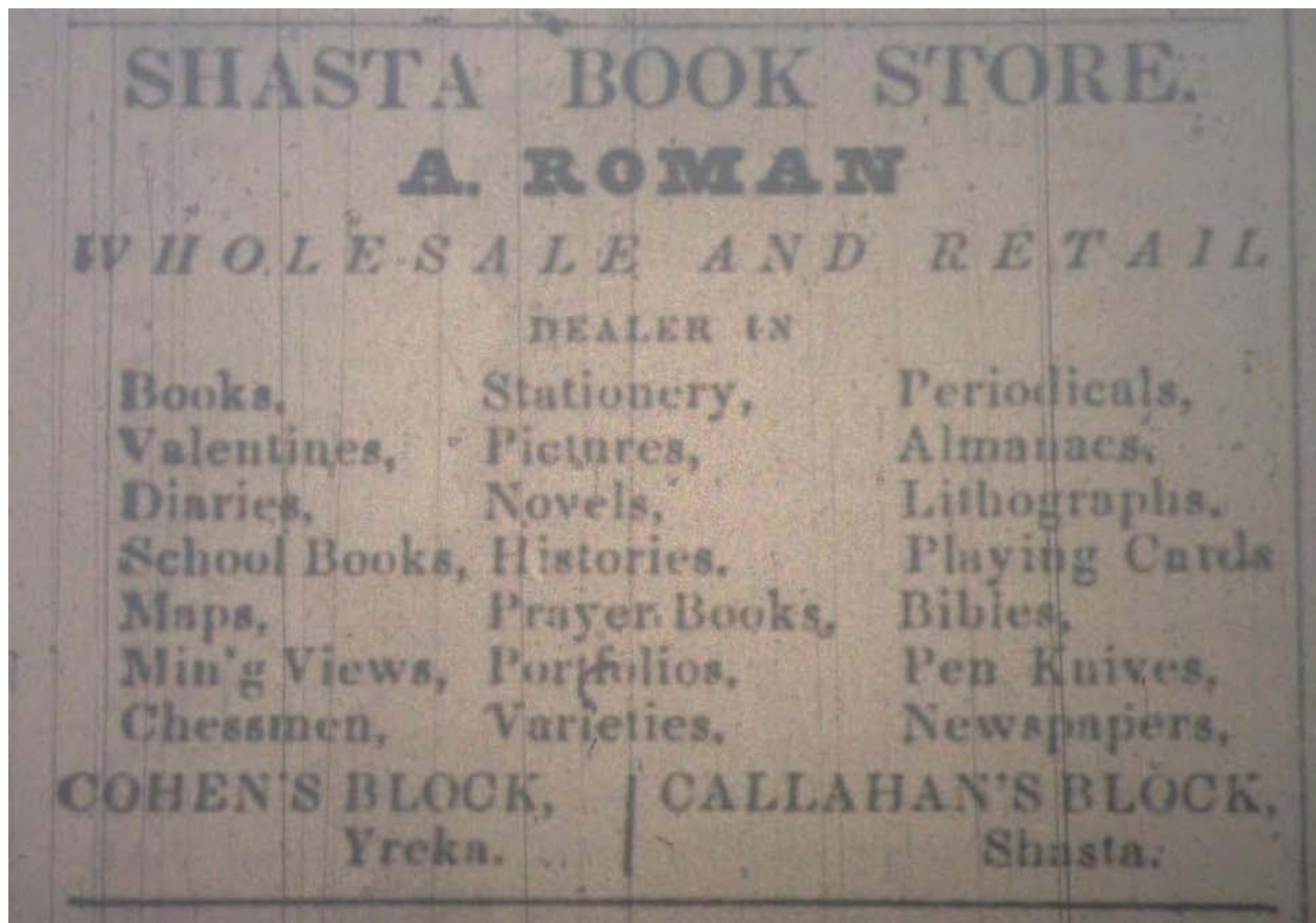
On June 14, 1853 a fire turned Shasta's business district to ashes within thirty-three minutes from the start of the fire. The fire started around 5pm in the Parker House and it was a major loss to the entire community. Roman lost a total of \$4,000 worth of inventory that night. Although the fire was devastating eventually Roman would recover.



This postcard shows the exterior of Callaghan's Block, owned by Jeremiah and Daniel Callaghan. The Shasta Book Store, proprietor Anton Roman, occupied the far left storefront. Courtesy Shasta Historical Society.

Two years later, Anton reestablished his store as the Shasta Book Store in a brand new fire-proof brick building called Callaghan's Block, and it was located on Main Street. He rented the department store from brothers Jeremiah and Daniel

Callaghan. By 1856 Roman had opened another branch of his book store in Yreka, formerly called Shasta Butte City, on Cohen's Block.



This is an advertisement for the Shasta Book Store the proprietor was Anton Roman. The advertisement was printed in the Shasta Courier newspaper on Saturday, March 1, 1856. Note: the misspelling of the surname of Callaghan. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

In 1857 Anton opened a branch of his book store in San Francisco and started publishing books in 1863. Roman was married in San Francisco on June 3, 1864 to Eliza K. Fletcher. The newlyweds returned to Shasta briefly and then they relocated back to San Francisco. To this union there were two children born: Cornelius Roman and Nettie Roman. In 1868, Anton began publishing the popular Overland Monthly, a California based magazine that was edited by his friend, famous writer and poet, Bret Harte.

Anton and his family were still living in San Francisco in 1870 and this is where his children grew up and were educated. Roman kept close ties with his friends in Shasta and he visited the area frequently, especially on business trips. The 1880 U.S. Census lists his occupation as a book publisher, and eight years later he was dabbling in real estate. The pioneer continued both jobs into the twentieth century, until he died on June 23, 1903; he was 79 years old. Anton Roman is buried in the Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland. His wife survived him and later died in San Francisco on March 21, 1925 at the age of 79. Their children continued living in the San Francisco Bay Area.



This sign marks the historic site of the Callaghan's Block in Shasta. The Shasta Book Store owned and operated by Anton Roman would have been one of three stores located on this lot inside Callaghan's Block. The sign was placed by the Shasta State Historic Park. This photograph was taken on May 26, 2016. Courtesy of Jeremy Tuggle.

Anton Roman the noted California bookseller had an amazing legacy which survived him and his book store, although the business changed owners over the years, it remains one of the oldest businesses in San Francisco according to **Books Inc.** On their website they claim the following: "Books Inc.'s origin dates back to the Gold Rush Days of 1851 when Anton Roman struck it rich in Shasta California and set himself up in business selling books. That small bookstore was moved, bought, sold, burned, rebuilt, renamed and became Books Inc., as we know it today in 1946." That's quite an achievement for California's oldest bookseller which includes a Shasta connection. There is a timeline on the web-site as well which documents each and every change the business experienced since being founded by Roman.



*Jeremy M. Tuggle,
Shasta Historical
Society*

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2016 - Books Inc. in Santa Clara Opens in July 2016

2016 - Books Inc. Wins Publisher Weekly's Bookstore of the year for 2016

2015 - Books Inc. Announces Santa Clara Location to Open in 2016

2015 - Berkeley Store moves to Shattuck & Vine

2015 - Compass Terminal 3 Lease Rewarded to Books Inc.

2011 - Compass Books opens in New Terminal 2 at SFO

2009 - Berkeley Store Opens

2008 - Store in Stanford Shopping Center moves to Town & Country Village, Palo Alto

2006 - Opera Plaza Store Opens

2004 - Alameda Store Opens

2001 - Disney and Mountain View Stores Open

2000 - Burlingame Store Opens

2000 - Michael Grant dies suddenly.

1998 - Chestnut Street Store opens in the Marina

August 1997 - emerged from Chapter 11, under ownership of Michael Grant, Michael Tucker
(4 stores)

1995 - Market Street Store Opens, Compass Books/Bzinc open in Terminal 3 at SFO

1995 - Lew Lengfeld dies, leaves company to employees, Michael Grant and Michael Tucker; National Chains colonize the West Coast. Chapter 11 bankruptcy filed in effort to restructure, and save company.

13 of 15 stores closed. All Southern California stores closed

1976 - Laurel Village Store Opens on California Street

1974 - 26 stores in the West

- 1963 – Books Inc. inducted into the “100 Year Club” at the California State Fair
honoring business that had achieved 100 years of operation
- 1957 – Opens store in Palo Alto at Stanford Shopping Center
- 1955 – Begins expansion to Seattle, Southern California, New Mexico, Dallas, & Denver
(Hartman’s, Hunter’s etc...)
- 1950 – Books Inc begins 1st commercial TV book review program. Lew Lengfeld host
- 1950 – Ted Lilienthal Leaves the business
- 1948 – Leon Gelber dies, Books Inc. merges with Gelber-Lilienthal.
- 1946 – Barbara Thompson and Lew Lengfeld establish Books Inc. in the Fairmont Hotel
- 1925 – Harry Robertson sold store and stock to Leon Gelber and partner Ted Lilienthal
(Gelber-Lilienthal, Inc., 336 Sutter St.) who establish Lantern Press
- 1924 – Alex Robertson Dies
- 1906 – San Francisco Earthquake & Fire destroy original Montgomery St. store
- 1891 – Robertson bought out his remaining partners
- 1882 – Pearson and Robertson’s (bought Roman’s stock)
- 1880 – Anton Roman republishes *Overland Monthly* but sells his shop to George Billings
- 1879 – Anton Roman Booksellers combines with Robertson’s and a variety of partners
- 1872 – Roman first publishes Mark Twain’s *Roughing It*
- 1870 – Roman sells *Overland Monthly*
- 1867 – Anton Roman establishes *Overland Monthly* (edited by Bret Harte)
Publishes Harte’s “*Luck of the Roaring Camp*”
- 1863 – Anton Roman begins publishing

1860s – Hires Alex Robertson as assistant

1859 – Grand opening of Anton Romans' on Montgomery Street

1857 – Anton Roman establishes San Francisco Store

1851 - Bavarian publisher and book dealer, Anton Roman, struck gold in Shasta City, CA
December 1851 – Anton Roman founds Shasta City bookshop

Filing Date: January 3, 2017
Case No.: 2017-000187LBR
Business Name: Books Inc.
Business Address: 3515 California Street
Zoning: NC-S (Neighborhood Commercial, Shopping Center)/
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 1035/001
Applicant: Michael Tucker, President
1501 Vermont Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
Nominated By: Supervisor Mark Farrell, District 2
Staff Contact: Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 558-6625
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Books Inc. is a local independently owned, neighborhood-centered bookstore. The bookstore has been around in San Francisco under various names and ownership since 1857, but was not incorporated as Books Inc. until 1946. Presently, Books Inc. has three locations in San Francisco: the Marina District (Chestnut Street), Downtown/Civic Center (Van Ness Avenue), and the oldest San Francisco location in Presidio Heights/Laurel Heights (California Street), and eight other locations throughout the Bay Area. The three San Francisco locations have proven to be important assets to their respective neighborhoods as a place for locals and visitors to purchase books, newspapers, magazines, or attend events such as book launch parties for local authors and in-store events for readers of all ages. Each neighborhood store reflects the needs and wants of the community and employs one or more literature specialists who host a variety of bookclubs, storytimes and events and have become great resources for patrons looking for their next read. Books Inc. business model includes an event program that puts on upwards of 1,000 events each year for patrons of all ages and has come to be taglined as “The Experience You Can’t Download.” The business model also consists of maintaining close relationships to local schools, conducting book fairs on school-sites as an opportunity to help school PTA’s and libraries raise funds while bringing the independent bookstore experience onto their school grounds. Books Inc.’s main objective with conducting book fairs is to foster excitement about books and spread the love of reading. Community involvement is an important piece of the Books Inc. business model as the business continues to develop partnerships and close relationships to local schools, libraries, and organizations surrounding each store to promote and foster literacy. Books Inc. also gives back to a significant percentage of profit ever year to local schools and organizations in return for partnering on literary events. Books Inc. has proven itself to be a successful independently-owned bookstore in San Francisco with strong ties to the community in which each store lives and a business model that is based on maintaining these strong ties and incorporating a neighborhood-needs and wants atmosphere.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1946

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, Books Inc. qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Books Inc. has operated for 71 years.
- ii. Books Inc. has contributed to San Francisco's history and identity by continuing to operate as an independently owned bookstore with a unique business model that promotes literacy and education in the neighborhoods that each store serves. Books Inc. has proven to effectively stay involved in the community through its close ties to local schools and through its neighborhood-based stores that offer programs and events that reach out to all ages and hire literature specialists who are able to share their knowledge through book clubs, storytimes and other events that promote reading. The mission of Books Inc. is to foster literacy, and this mission is carried out through the
- iii. Books Inc. is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its business model of selling books and hosting events to promote and foster literacy for all ages.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

The business is associated with the tradition of book selling and hosting book-related events.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

No. All three San Francisco locations have not been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The properties are considered "Category B Properties" that require further review per the Planning Department's CEQA review procedures for historical resources.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. American Booksellers Association, 7/13/2011, "The Oldest Bookstore in the West Turns 160," by Karen Schechner; SF Weekly, 8/14/2015, "Not Dead Yet: The 10 Oldest Businesses in San Francisco," by V. Alexandra de F. Szoenyl; Publishers Weekly, 4/15/2016, "BEA 2016: Books Inc is PW's Bookstore of the Year," by Anisse Gross.

The 40th anniversary of Books Inc.'s California Street (Laurel Village) location was recognized and celebrated by Senator Dianne Feinstein and Nancy Pelosi in 2014.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 601 Van Ness Avenue
- 3515 California Street
- 2251 Chestnut Street

Recommended by Staff

- Business model that consists of running the independently-owned bookstore's locations on a community needs basis, by maintaining relationships with and supporting local schools and organizations, and hosting events for all ages that promote and foster literacy.



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 847 HEARING DATE FEBRUARY 1, 2017

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR BOOKS INC., CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 3515 CALIFORNIA STREET (BLOCK/LOT 1035/001).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to San Francisco's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 1, 2017, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends that Books Inc. qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Books Inc.

Location (if applicable)

- *Not applicable*

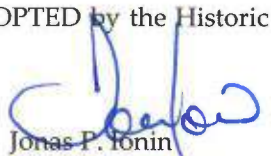
Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- *Business model that consists of running the independently-owned bookstore's locations on a community needs basis, by maintaining relationships with and supporting local schools and organizations, and hosting events for all ages that promote and foster literacy.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's** findings and **recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2017-000187LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was **ADOPTED** by the Historic Preservation Commission on February 1, 2017.


Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hyland, Johnck, Pearlman, Matsuda, Wolfram, Hasz, Johns

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: February 1, 2017