

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
SAN FRANCISCO

GEORGE CHRISTOPHER

August 29, 1956

Mr. S. V. Armanino, President
San Francisco Growers Association
Mr. Sam Sakai, President
California Flower Market
San Francisco Flower Terminal
Sixth and Brannan Streets
San Francisco 3, California

Dear Sirs:

The City of San Francisco acknowledges with great pride the completion of the San Francisco Flower Terminal.

I know that this terminal represents an achievement of many years of intelligent cooperation on the part of members of each of your flower growers associations and wholesale florists.

The San Francisco Flower Terminal represents another achievement the city can point to with pride in building to meet the challenge of serving the expansion and growth of all the Bay Region counties.

We are indebted to the unselfish leaders in the flower industry for the vision and planning necessary to bring about the successful completion of this terminal which so adequately meets the needs of your members and enhances the beauty of our city.

Yours very sincerely,

George Christopher
George Christopher
Mayor



MAGAZINE OF THE
CALIFORNIA STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION

ARTHUR R. BELL, President CSFA

Address all communications relative to the magazine to:
John Beall, 777 San Antonio Rd., Palo Alto, Calif.
or

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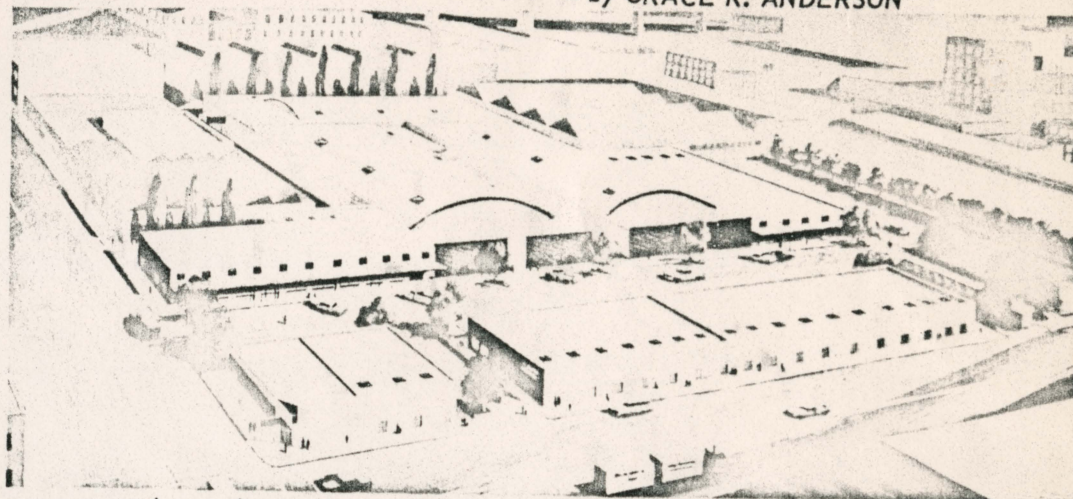
SEPTEMBER 1956

VOLUME VI NO. 2

NEW SAN FRANCISCO
FLOWER TERMINAL

marks important step in floral industry

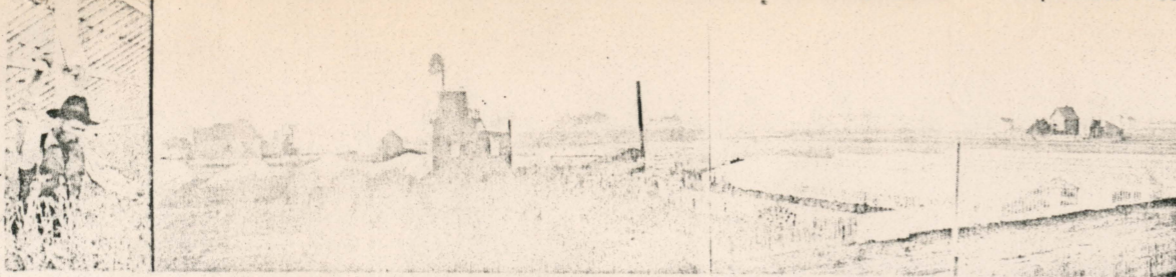
- by GRACE K. ANDERSON



There are more than a thousand persons who are directly concerned and personally delighted that the new San Francisco Flower Terminal is open for business. Once again flower buyers will be able to carry on their business in one, centrally located area, and now, instead of "Fifth Street" it will be "Sixth and Brannan" where wholesalers and retail buyers will meet in a modern and convenient setting.

The new million dollar terminal is a far cry from the early beginnings of the floral industry in the San Francisco Bay Area. Lotta's Fountain on Market at Kearny Street was the first marketing place where growers and retailers met more than half a century ago. Many growers came up from the Peninsula by train, carrying their blooms in baskets as they trudged up Kearny street from the station. Some growers made the trip to the City by wagon. All started early in order to be at the market at 6 o'clock.

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When Berkeley was still rural, Frederick Aebi in 1899 was a prominent grower. The street on the foreground is California Street. Now, Francis, his son, and grandson junior, grow the finest roses in California in modern greenhouses located at San Pablo.

The business grew and growers moved to Lick Place at Bush Street. Some growers sold their flowers at the rear of a flower store there while others sold their products on the street.

In 1924 they moved to Fifth and Howard Streets where the markets were opened and wholesalers occupied stores facing on Fifth and on Howard Streets. The San Francisco Flower Growers Association was incorporated on November 3, 1923 and Hans Plath was elected the first president. The California Flower Market had been incorporated on June 10, 1912 and M. Domoto was chosen the first president.

Sam Sakai is now president of the California Flower Market and S.V. Armanino, presi-

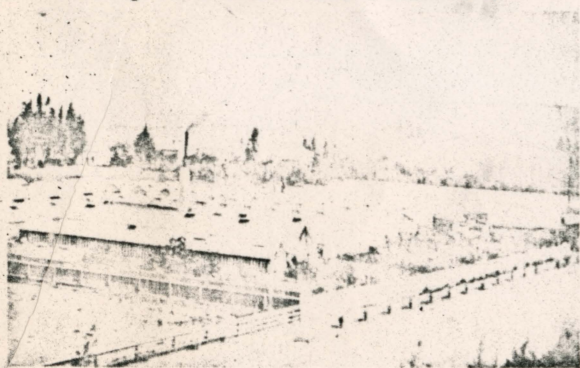
dent of the San Francisco Flower Growers Association.

Plans for the new San Francisco Flower Terminal were begun as long ago as 1941. About half a city block was secured in order to furnish adequate space for the two markets and for the stores which will be occupied adjacent to the market.

Since the work started in 1955, florists have watched with interest as pile drivers laid the foundations and the reinforced concrete buildings began to take shape with their trussed roofs. Each market has a 20 by 30-foot walk-in refrigerator, the buildings are mechanically ventilated and a sprinkler system has been installed.

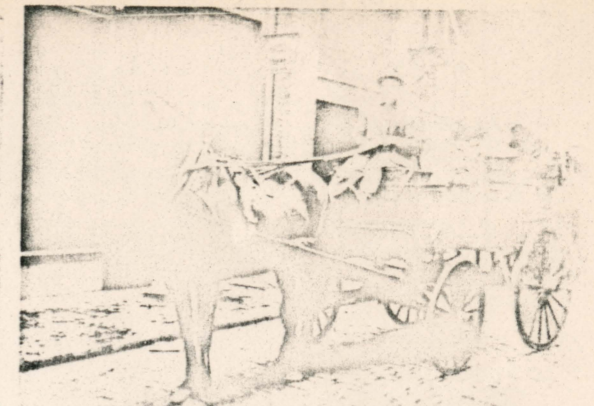
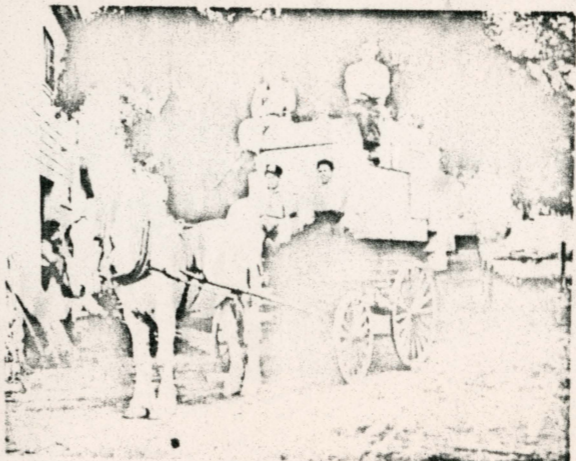
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Many "old timers" will recall Motonoshi Domoto. He is pictured here in a palm-house, circa 1904. Both of the famous Domoto brothers died during World War II. Toichi Domoto now carries on the family traditions in Hayward.



On the extreme right is Giobatto Podesta, father of present day John Podesta of Podesta-Boschetto of San Leandro. Giobatto Podesta is pictured here in 1901, teaching the boys how to pick coreopsis. He is the elder brother of Giovanni and Fortunato, owners of large ranges of greenhouses in Colma and East Palo Alto respectively. On the extreme left is Manuel Rolleri, now the operator of the California Evergreen Co. Louis Crescio received his first 'know-how' in the flower business from Giobatto Podesta. We don't recognize the others, but Giobatto was known as the 'father' of many of the growers of Italian descent in the early days.

When Wells Fargo still depended on horses, Sadakusu Enomoto shipped the first carload of chrysanthemum from California to the "East" in 1913. Pictured here is Mr. Enomoto (seated at lower right) at his packing shed in Redwood City with part of a big load destined for New Orleans' All Saints' Day observance.



Louis Crescio in 1913 when he was 19 years old and was working for Giobatto Podesta.

The San Francisco Flower Growers Association area consists of 52,500 square feet, which includes market, 14 stores for wholesalers and in addition a 3500 square foot restaurant and cocktail lounge. The California Flower Market area includes the market and eight stores. Each store, occupied by a wholesaler dealing in flowers, has its own refrigeration.

The market for the Peninsula Gardens, still under construction, faces Morris street and will have access to the two markets.

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Andrew Podesta on the left and Gus Pedemonte on the right. They looked like this 36 years ago.





1914 Stockholders of the California Flower Market. Eight of the original members are still alive and active shareholders in 1956.



HANS PLATH - First President of the S.F. Flower Growers Association, 1923

MEN IN THE BUSINESS

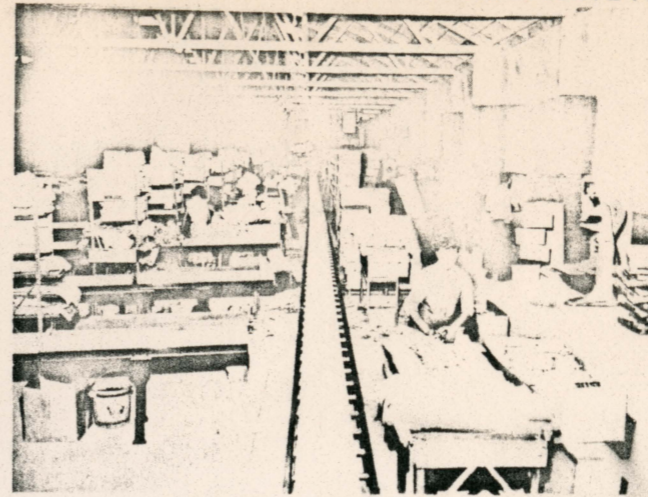


SAM SAKAI - President of the California Flower Market



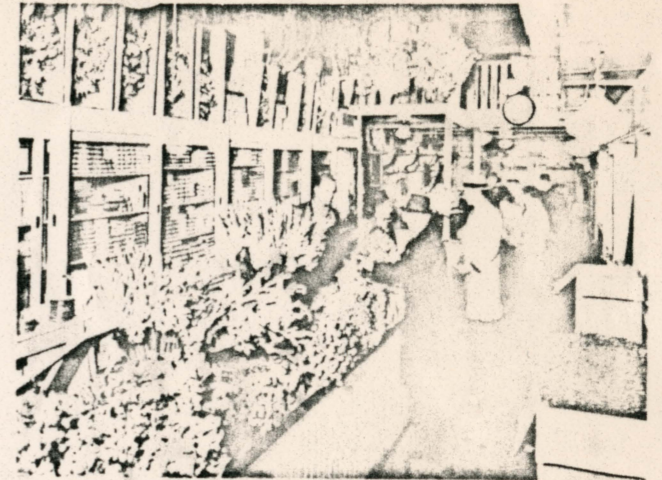
S.V. ARMANINO - Present President of the S.F. Flower Growers Association

Old "E.W." McLellan has often been called the "Henry FORD" of the Industry. His sons and grandson now carry on the family business.

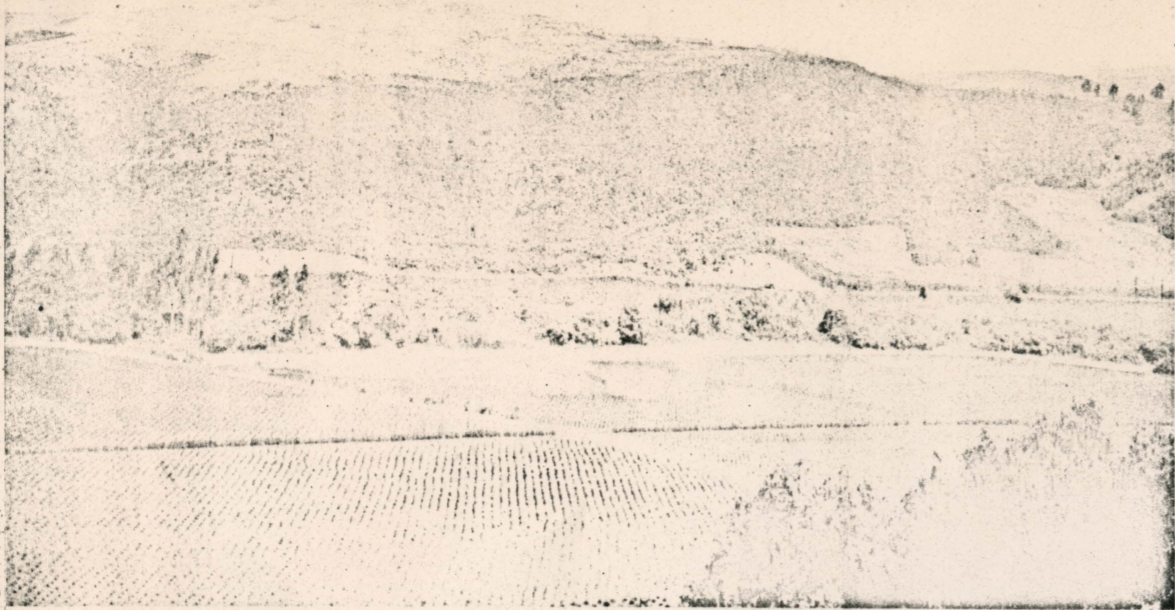


At Mt. Eden Mums, chrysanthemums are packed for shipping in an assembly line, pre-cooled in a giant vacuum tank, and sent on their way eastward by airplanes.

This must be old - Johnny Podesta, now of Podesta-Boschetto still had hairs on his head. Bill Zappettini, Jr. was still a boy.

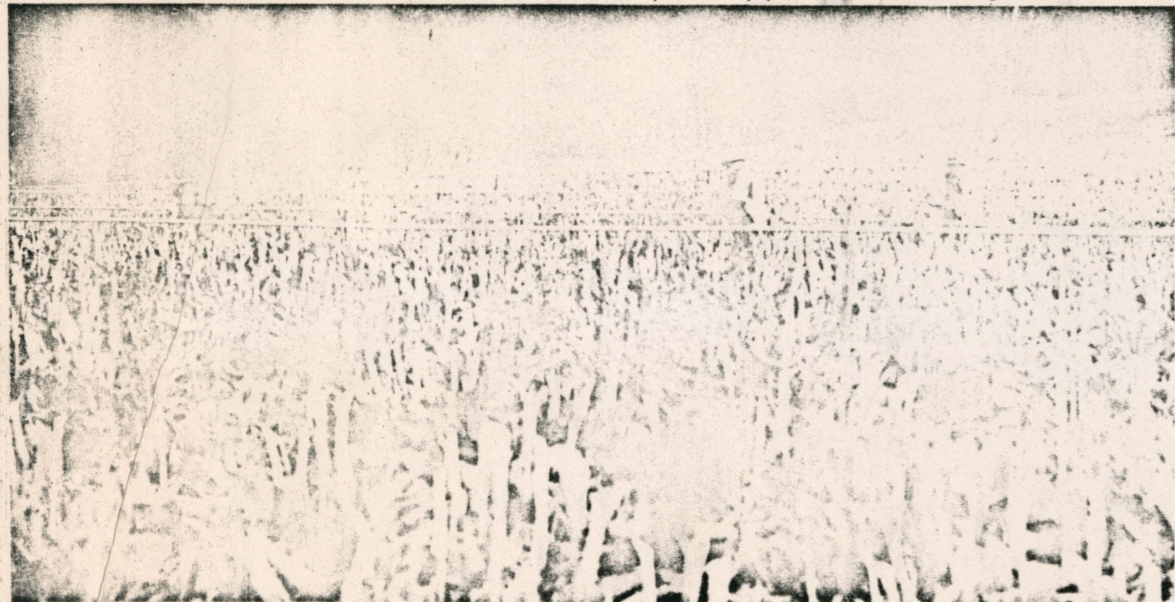


William Zappettini came up the 'hard way' and used to work harder than he does now. The shed pictured here was the former Newsom building in Belmont.



In this field of heathers, the one sprinkler is capable of covering two acres at one time. The weather along the oceanside near San Francisco is perfect for many flower crops, and when these lands disappear forever whenever a house, school or highway is built over them, the flower industry will be placed in a difficult position to replace the climate, rather than the soil.

World's largest Calla lily field is at the base of San Bruno Mountain just south of San Francisco. Golden Gate Wholesale Florist has over 25 miles of sprinkler pipes installed to irrigate this field.



A feature of the terminal is the parking mall, off the busy city streets, where florists may drive in to load their trucks.

Avansino-Mortensen and Company has a direct entrance into the terminal from their shipping department on Morris street. On the other side, Wm. Zappettini Company will erect a building to house their shipping department and offices. Geneva and Sunnysdale Nurseries are erecting a building which will adjoin the terminal on Sixth street. Kearns Wholesale Florists operate their shipping department just around the corner from the terminal, on Bryant street.

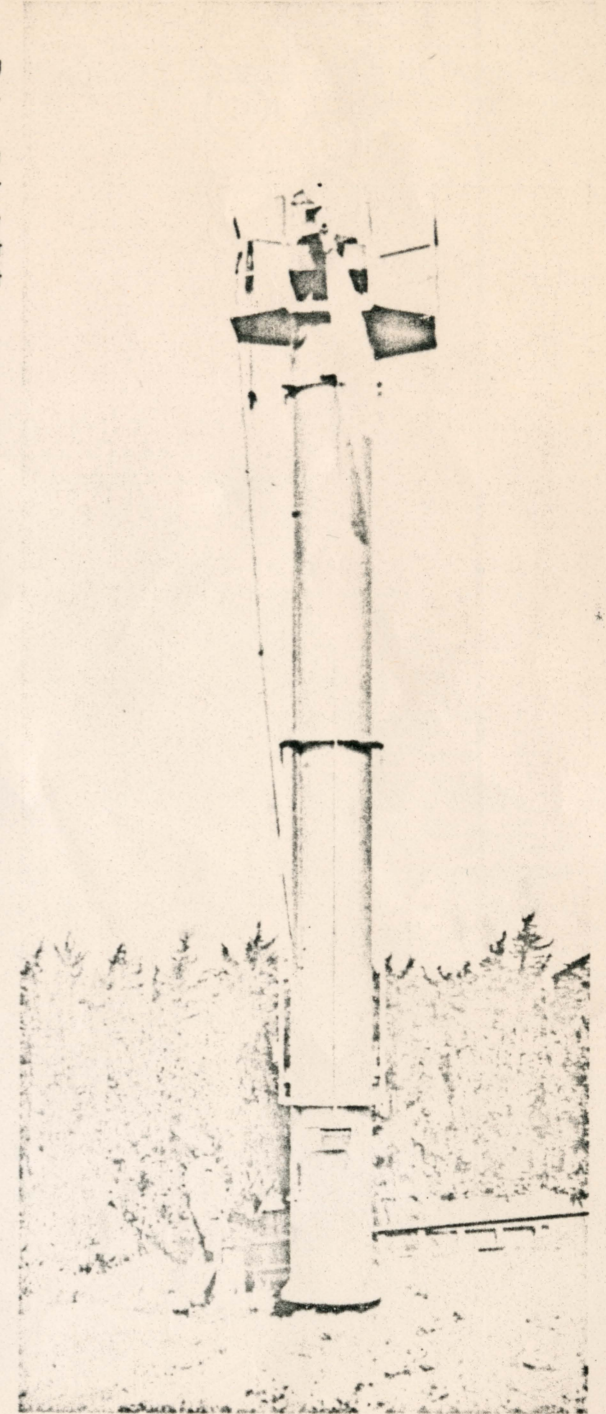
Shipping has been one of the reasons for the tremendous growth of the San Francisco floral industry. With a climate suitable for year 'round growth of flowers, there was an immediate demand for California flowers as soon as it was apparent flowers could be shipped from the Pacific Coast anywhere in the United States.

Shipping of flowers followed an experiment in shipping vegetables. The American Railway Express in 1915 placed a refrigerated express car into service between San Francisco and the East and invited local artichoke growers to use the service. They stood the trip so well that within a few months they were going by fast freight to the east, instead of the most expensive express.

It was then that W.A. Lewis of the Express Company was assigned the task of finding a substitute product for the artichokes. He was walking on St. Anne street, just off Bush, when he saw growers chopping off the heads of the chrysanthemums which remained unsold. As an experiment, several boxes of chrysanthemums were consigned to the express company's eastern agents in an iced car. The flowers arrived in such excellent condition that the experiment gave the start to the large scale shipping of chrysanthemums.

By 1925 the chrysanthemum industry had grown to set a new high record for one shipment. Ten carloads of chrysanthemums left

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Gus Pedemonte believes in changing the weather in his flower field when nature fails.

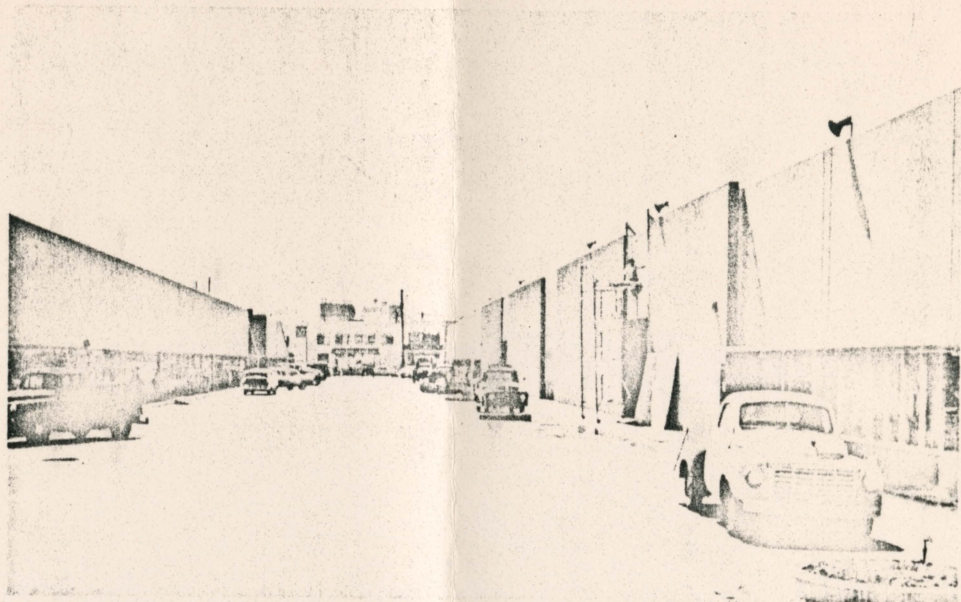
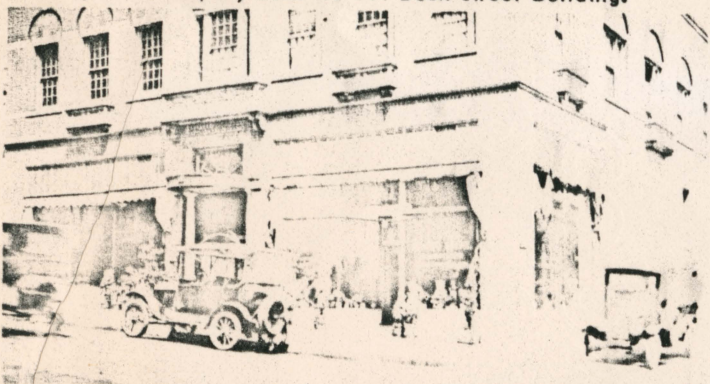


B
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66 years in the Bloomin' Business

Lick Place: The growers of Japanese descent rented space at 31 Lick Place for a market. In the beginning, the Domoto brothers, whose store occupied the corner, subsidized the rent for the growers when the going was rough. The market members incorporated in 1912 and it became the present California Flower Market, Inc. From 1912 to 1922, it occupied the Bush street premises and from 1922 to 1955, together with the San Francisco Flower Growers Association, operated the Fifth St. Market.

In 1914 to 1924, the California Flower Market occupied the basement of this building. The Domoto Bros., wholesale house was on the corner, and around in the St. Anne Street alley, S. Enomoto and others had their stores. The Italian Market, the Chinese Market, Avansino's, McLellan's and Axell's had stores in this same area until the Pacific Telephone Company built its 444 Bush Street Building.

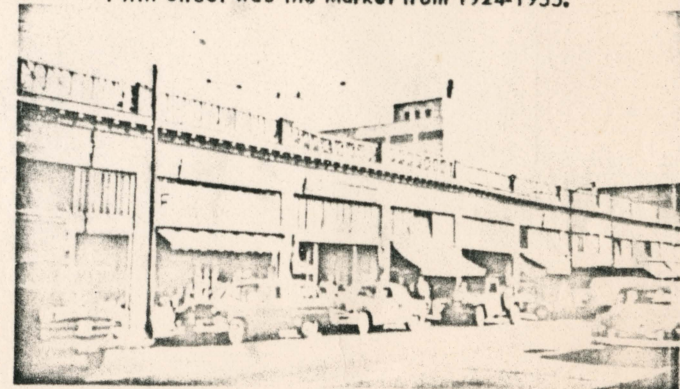


The most modern flower center in the United States was being groomed for the September 12th opening this month. The wholesale stores and markets face a private street. No parking tickets here!



Before the 1906 earthquake, this wagon was the market place for many flower growers in the Bay Area. The wagon hauled the Domoto Bros.' flowers to San Francisco from Oakland. When it reached Podesta-Baldocchi on Grant Avenue, the one-basket growers of the region congregated on the curb to sell their flowers to the florists of San Francisco who also came to this area to shop. Thus, the seed for the later "curb market" at Lick Place was sown.

Fifth Street was the Market from 1924-1955.





This is a scene in a modern shipping plant in Mt. View on the San Francisco peninsula. This and many other modern firms ship to out-of-state destinations more than two-thirds of the flowers grown in California.

(NEW FLOWER TERMINAL - Cont.)

from San Francisco for use in New Orleans on November first, All Saints' Day. That year the express company transported eighty-two full refrigerator cars to points as far as the Atlantic Coast. In 1929 the industry shipped out 670 carloads. By present standards, even

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In 1956 many wholesalers are experimenting with pre-packaging. Here, Jim Bonaccorsi is trying out super-market bouquets.



(NEW FLOWER TERMINAL - Cont.)

this would be considered small although air has taken the place of rail.

Shipping of chrysanthemums has steadily increased until last year it was estimated that 191 acres were devoted to the outdoor cultivation of chrysanthemums and 155,750 sq. ft. under glass in San Mateo County alone. In Santa Clara County, the agricultural commissioner reported 134 acres were devoted to the growing of chrysanthemums. Additional acreage in Alameda County was also reported.

In the early days, when it was found that chrysanthemums shipped so well, "Bill" Lewis sent a box of violets to an express agent in Maine. The agent, it is reported, arrived with the box at the town's florist and asked him to try them out. The florist was busy and the agent was requested to put the box in the refrigerator. There it remained for a week until the agent returned to check on the success the florist had had with the violets. On opening the box then for the first time, the violets were found to be in splendid condition. Violets continue to be one of the winter blooms which are regularly shipped east.

It was also in the '20s that the shipping of acacia was tried and found to be successful. Another winter bloom which became popular is heather.

In the '30s came the advent of faster transportation with airplane service to the east. The first plane-load of gardenias went to New York in 1934. These gardenias were shipped by express to Los Angeles and then were loaded on a New York-bound plane. Since the pilot had no license to carry merchandise, he bought the flowers outright and was most successful in his venture. But, on a second load, he struck a poor market and lost money which ended his 'flier' in flowers.

Wholesalers have, since then, built up their markets so that there is now a year 'round demand for California flowers, using express, plane and trucks for transportation.

Demand for chrysanthemums has grown, with the largest volume being supplied during

late summer and fall months, but mums are also being grown under glass for the entire year. Asters are an important flower in early summer until the chrysanthemums are available in large volume.

Since World War II the shipping of roses and carnations has grown immensely. Other flowers grown for the shippers include column stock, daisies, bulb flowers, strawflowers and evergreens. With the advent of plane service it is now possible to ship corsage flowers overnight into any wholesale center in the country. Thus orchids, gardenias, violets and other corsage flowers arrive fresh for the florist.

A conservative estimate of the value of flowers shipped from the San Francisco Bay Area is given at \$35,000,000 by plane, express and truck. Nor does this take into consideration the not less than \$15,000,000 which is spent locally for flowers.

The floral industry in the San Francisco Bay Area has made great strides in the relatively short time it has been operating. Credit, however, must be given to those who pioneered the commercial growing of flowers. To E.W. McLellan who first sold flowers to his San Francisco customers on his milk route and who borrowed money to build the first greenhouses. He started many Japanese in the business through employment and also rented land to them to grow flowers on their own; to the Domoto brothers who built a range of glass in 1895 and also encouraged the growers in a central marketing place; to Sadakusu Enomoto who sent the first carload of flowers to New Orleans for All Saints' Day in 1914; to Sun Lee who worked on the Stanford estate and then grew chrysanthemums, starting a business for his sons Harry and William to carry on. In addition there were the retail florists who supported the young industry - the late Angelo Rossi of Pelicano-Rossi and Co.; Victor Podesta, one of the early owners of what is now Podesta-Baldocchi; Albert O. Stein; and Ed McMahon, to mention a few of San Francisco's early florists.