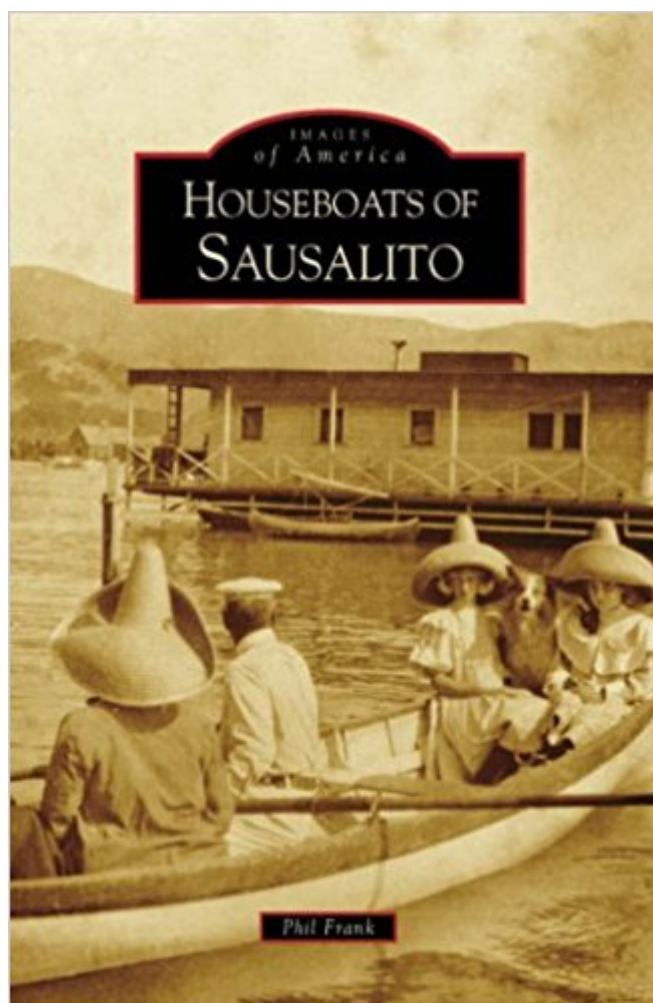


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# Houseboats Of Sausalito (Images Of America: California)



## Synopsis

The unique and colorful houseboat community has long been the centerpiece of life in Sausalito, and while these floating homes are well known, relatively few people know just how far back their history goes. Not a recent phenomenon, as so many assume, the houseboat community has a history stretching back to the 1880s and earlier. While houseboats once existed in nearly a dozen ports in and around San Francisco Bay—and indeed throughout the West Coast—the focus of this buoyant lifestyle is now the waters of Marin County, along the shoreline of Richardson's Bay. Over the years, a variety of forces—including the 1906 earthquake and fire, the building of bridges and the resulting decline of the ferryboat fleet, World War II, and legal pressures on waterfront property owners—helped to shape life on the water, Sausalito's houseboat community, and this fascinating tale.

## Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: Arcadia Publishing (October 27, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0738555525

ISBN-13: 978-0738555522

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 0.3 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #824,136 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #71 in Books > Arts & Photography > Vehicle Pictorials > Ships #527 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > History > Ships #1066 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > Ships

## Customer Reviews

Title: Phil Frank's book details Marin's houseboat history Author: Mark Prado Publication: Marin Independent Journal Date: 11/29/2008 Phil Frank, the late Sausalito cartoonist and historian, had a deep interest in houseboats that parlayed itself into research and the beginnings of a book on the subject. Frank died in September 2007 before the book could be finished. But his wife, Susan, took up the cause and helped complete Houseboats of Sausalito a 128-page book published by Arcadia Publishing with dozens of black-and-white photos illustrating the history of floating homes in the county. He was fascinated by the history of living on the water, it really whetted his historical

appetite Susan Frank said. He looked in all corners of Marin and came up with these amazing photographs and stories. He was passionate about the history. For 13 years, Frank and his wife lived on a funky but elegant 1890-vintage houseboat with their two children. In 1986, they moved off the houseboat, but Frank kept a studio in the pilot house of an 1880s ferry boat in the houseboat community on the Sausalito waterfront. Phil had incredible roots in the houseboats, said Larry Clinton, president of the Sausalito Historical Society. He would come out and give talks during the floating homes tour every year. His expertise on houseboats was unparalleled. The book uses simple captions and photos to tell the story of houseboats in Marin. The houseboat community in the county can be traced to the 1800s, when arks began to anchor in Belvedere Cove and along Corte Madera Creek; the first third of the Franks' book documents those areas. In Sausalito, the state began selling underwater lots to be filled for development as a way to raise money in the early part of the 20th century. In Sausalito, it ended up in private hands and marinas were developed. After World War II, decommissioned boats including landing craft, lifeboats and tugboats, were turned into floating homes for people who found it an inexpensive way to live. Artists and beatniks moved into houseboats and the community was born. In the 1960s and early 1970s, young families abounded and the community had a distinctive counterculture feel. What I tried to capture was the creative spirit that was in the houseboat community, said Bruce Forrester, whose photos are featured in the book. People there would see anything as a cause for celebration. But toward the latter part of the 1970s, Marina development threatened that way of life and Forrester's eye caught images of houseboaters trying to block pile-driving work during the Houseboat Wars period, which led to concessions by builders. This was low-cost housing and people felt their lifestyle was under siege he said. They made a real stand. --Marin Independent Journal

Local author Phil Frank began researching houseboats in 1973, when he and his wife, Susan, acquired a 1900 ark, restored it, and lived there for 13 years. Now, using vintage images from the Sausalito Historical Society and various private collections, Frank illustrates this distinctive houseboat community from the 1890s to present day.

Having lived in Marin County for many years, I love reading the history and the photos of the colorful houseboat communities written by the author of *Travels With Farley*, and *Elderberries*

Phil Frank, with characteristic compassion, expertly illuminates a floating world of arks and houseboats, spanning a century of Marin history.

This is a great photo history, with interesting text, about the houseboats of Sausalito. Since I live in Sausalito and love the waterfront I found it fascinating. So, somewhat a special interest book, but great if you have that interest.

This is a great selection of historical photos by local cartoonist Phil Frank of "Farley" fame in San Francisco..a great historical experience..

THIS is a nice book with interesting photos but I was hoping to have a little more discussion/text to go along with the images to help me understand the history a bit better.

Phil Frank's HOUSEBOATS OF SAUSALITO is a fine survey of the colorful houseboat community in Sausalito. The local author's been researching houseboats since his first acquisition in 1973: his book packs in history and black and white vintage images. California lending libraries will find it a popular 'must' and individuals who relish the book may find a vintage postcard set (sold separately) also of interest.

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