



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 3, 2016

HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE

Application No.: LBR-2015-16-029
Business Name: Henry's House of Coffee
Business Address: 1618 Noriega Street
District: District 4
Applicant: Hrag Kalebjian, President
Nomination Date: April 19, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Katy Tang
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Henry's House of Coffee is a family-owned coffee roaster and coffee shop located on Noriega Street between 23rd and 24th avenues in the Sunset District. The business represents three generations of coffee roasting tradition. Master coffee roaster, Henry Kalebjian, learned the Armenian style of coffee roasting at the age of twelve from his father in Lebanon. Upon settling in San Francisco during the early 1970s, Henry purchased House of Coffee from a fellow Armenian entrepreneur, and expanded the shop's coffee roasting functions. One of the first coffee roasters in San Francisco, Henry's House of Coffee now sells wholesale to retail groceries, neighborhood coffee shops, and fine dining restaurants. Henry's son, Hrag, has joined the operation in recent years and plans to keep the family tradition alive well into the future.

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in SF for 30 or more years, with no break in SF 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:

1846 Irving Street from 1965-1975 (10 years)
1618 Noriega Street from 1975-Present (41 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 Sunset District neighborhood's 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:

- The business is associated with the art of coffee roasting and serving.



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

- The business has contributed to the Sunset community's history and identity by serving as a neighborhood coffee shop and offering high quality roasted coffee beans for purchase.
- The property is associated with significant architecture. It was built in 1935 as part of an early residential tract designed and developed by Marian Realty Company (owned by Oliver and Arthur Rousseau) and Whitney Investment Company, and is emblematic of Storybook period revival style architecture. The property's ground floor was altered midcentury as part of a blockwide conversion from residential to mixed use. The property was identified as a Category A Building and a contributor to a California Register-eligible district in the Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Historic Resources Survey (pending approval by the Historic Preservation Commission). The property belongs to a cluster of 18 Storybook-style buildings along Noriega Street.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - Focus Magazine, 12/1980, "Shopping with Shelton: Coffee Beans in the Genes," by Jack Shelton
 - Tea & Coffee Magazine, 4/2016, "The Intentional Micro Roaster- A New Definition for a New Category"
 - Fresh Cup Magazine, 7/21/2014, "Feature: Henry's House of Coffee," by Regan Crisp
 - Daily Coffee News, 8/18/2015, "The 50-Year-Old San Francisco Family Roastery You've Probably Never Heard Of," by Nick Brown
 - SF Made website, 4/22/2015, "Welcome Home to Henry's House of Coffee," by Ferron Salniker
 - The San Franciscan Roaster, 6/8/2014, "Roaster Profile: Henry's House of Coffee," by Emily McIntyre
 - Hoodline, 2/23/2016, "Behind the Beans With Master Roaster Henry Kalebjian of Henry's House of Coffee," by Fiona Lee
 - University of San Francisco website, 4/15/2015, "USF Honors Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing with 2015 Family Business Awards"

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

Yes, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Henry's House of Coffee 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:

- Coffee roasting tradition.
- Coffee shop use.
- The San Franciscan roaster (interior).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Henry's House of Coffee currently located at 1618 Noriega Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481



Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 3, 2016

HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

<i>Application No.:</i>	LBR-2015-16-029
<i>Business Name:</i>	Henry's House of Coffee
<i>Business Address:</i>	1618 Noriega Street
<i>District:</i>	District 4
<i>Applicant:</i>	Hrag Kalebjian, President
<i>Nomination Date:</i>	April 19, 2016
<i>Nominated By:</i>	Supervisor Katy Tang
<i>Staff Contact:</i>	Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1618 NORIEGA 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, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, and the Small Business Commission finds that the business has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, the business would face 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 October 3, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Henry's House of Coffee 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 Henry's House of Coffee:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Coffee roasting tradition.
- Coffee shop use.
- The San Franciscan roaster (interior).

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on October 3, 2016.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481



Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2015-16-029
Business Name: Henry's House of Coffee
Business Address: 1618 Noriega Street
District: District 4
Applicant: Hrag Kalebjian, President
Nomination Date: April 19, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Katy Tang

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? ☒ Yes ☐ No

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

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: August 22, 2016

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Kurylo, Richard (ECN)

From: Mahajan, Menaka (ECN)
Sent: Friday, August 12, 2016 3:36 PM
To: Kurylo, Richard (ECN)
Subject: FW: Legacy Business Preservation fund - nominations
Attachments: Small Business Legacy Preservation D4 nominees.xlsx

Menaka Mahajan, Ph.D. | Senior Policy Analyst & Commission Secretary | Office of Small Business
menaka.mahajan@sfgov.org | D: [415.554.6408](tel:415.554.6408) | O: [415.554.6134](tel:415.554.6134)

From: Tang, Katy (BOS)
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 3:18 PM
To: Dick-Endrizzi, Regina (ECN) <regina.dick-endrizzi@sfgov.org>
Cc: Mahajan, Menaka (ECN) <menaka.mahajan@sfgov.org>
Subject: Legacy Business Preservation fund - nominations

Hi Regina,

I have attached here a more thorough list of District 4 nominees here with additional information.

Please let me know if there is any other information you need.

Thanks!
Katy

Katy Tang
District 4 Supervisor
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
City Hall, Room 264
Phone: (415) 554-7460

Office website:
www.sfbos.org/Tang

View our Sunset District Blueprint:
www.sfbos.org/SunsetBlueprint

Business Name	Owner First Name	Owner Last Name	Years in Business	Phone#	Type of Business	Address	Website	Notes
22nd & Irving	Tom	Karas	43 years	415.681.5212	Grocery	2010 Irving St, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://www.yelp.com/biz/22nd-and-irving-market-san-francisco	Opened in 1973
Davis Foot Comfort Center	Amie	Davis	39 years	415.661.8705	Pedorthists/custom shoe shop	3921 Judah St, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://davisshoes.com/	Opened in 1977
Frank's Florals	Sona	Phehivanian	32 years	415.664.0400	Floral shop	1821 Irving St, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://www.yelp.com/biz/frank-s-floral-shop-san-francisco	Opened in 1984
Great Wall Hardware	Albert	Chow	31 years	(415) 596-1968	Hardware supplies	1821 Taraval St, San Francisco, CA 94116	http://www.greatwallhardware.com/	
Henry's House of Coffee	Henry	Kalebjian	51 / 32		Coffee shop	1618 Noriega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://henryshouseofcoffee.com/	Been in business since 1965. Henry bought business in 1983.
Marcello's	Marcello	Baldocchi	~37 years	(415) 665-1430	Restaurant	2100 Taraval St, San Francisco, CA 94116	http://www.yelp.com/biz/ristorante-marcello-san-francisco	
Marnee Thai	Chai	Siriyam	30 years	415.665.9500	Restaurant	2225 Irving St, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://www.yelp.com/biz/marnee-thai-san-francisco	Opened in 1986
Other Avenues	Co-op	Co-op	42 years	(415) 661-7475	Grocery	3930 Judah Street, San Francisco, CA, 94122	http://www.otheravenues.coop/	Opened in 1974
Tennessee Grill	Min	Defevere	63 years	415-664-7834	Restaurant	1128 Taraval St, San Francisco, CA 94116		Opened in 1953
Whelan-Kennelly Academy of Irish Dance	Sharon	Whelan MacSweeney	57 years or 6 years depending	Sharon's cell: (415) 350-8359 or (415) 242.5177	Dance	1612 Noriega St, San Francisco, CA 94122	http://www.whelan-kennelly.com/	Whelan-Kennelly have not received response yet. The Kennelly School started in 1959 and Patricia assumed the role as director in 1975. Whelan-Kennelly school started in 2010 (so we have to check about that).

APPLICATION FOR

Legacy Business Registry

Legacy Business Registry is authorized by Section 2A.242 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. The registration process includes nomination by a member of the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor, a written application, an advisory recommendation from the Historical Preservation Commission, and approval of the Small Business Commission.

1. Current Owner / Applicant Information

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
Henry's House Of Coffee		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Henry Kalebjian Rosalie Kalebjian Hrag Kalebjian		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
1618 Noriega St San Francisco, CA 94122		(415) 678.4727
		EMAIL:
		info@henryshouseofcoffee.com
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.henryshouseofcoffee.com	facebook.com/henryshouseofcoffee	www.yelp.com/biz/house-of-coffee-san-francisco

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Hrag Kalebjian	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Owner
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
President	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
3023 Beverly St San Mateo CA 94403	(650) 678.4727
	EMAIL:
	hrag@henryshouseofcoffee.com
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	
46-3149083	
SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):	

NAME OF NOMINATOR: (Completed by OSB Staff)	DATE OF NOMINATION: (Completed by OSB Staff)

2. Business Addresses

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
Irving St	94122	1965
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?		DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes		1975
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

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
1846 Irving Street	94122	1965
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	1965-1975	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1618 Noriega Street	94122	Start: 1975
		End: Present

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

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OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION

3. Eligibility Criteria

Attach the business's written historical narrative and supplemental documents as described under section three of the application instruction.

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

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.

Hrag Kalebjian 5/25/16



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE NARRATIVE

1. The business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years.

Henry's House of Coffee has operated in San Francisco since 1965, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years.

2. The business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community.

When was business founded?

Our story started off with a small peanut roaster and a store located on Irving Street in 1965. Back then the focus was geared more towards European products such as chocolates from Holland, jams and olives from Italy and cheese from Greece. As coffee became more of a morning ritual in the Bay Area we began roasting more coffee in the mornings as a way to attract business. Our focus shifted to the coffee beans themselves, bringing in more high quality beans, and increasing our knowledge of the roasting process. After a small stint, the store was moved to its current location on Noriega in June of 1971. For years we continued the art of roasting and providing premium coffees and teas to the local neighborhood.

HENRY KALEBJIAN

My roasting roots began in Lebanon where my father owned a bakery and served coffee to the locals. Back then coffee wasn't easily sourced, so you had to roast your own coffee if you wanted to drink it. As the business grew, my father pulled me out of school at the age of 12 to help him with the store. My job was to roast the coffee.

I moved to the United States in the early 70s and worked as a draftsman until I decided to leave and purchase my own business. We bought House of Coffee in 1983 from Andy Devletian, an Armenian as well, who started the business in 1965 on Irving St. I was infatuated by the coffee business. With the Noriega store marking its territory as the only coffee roaster in the Sunset District, I began importing green coffee beans from all over the world. Pretty soon we were roasting for not only the locals but more and more businesses from all over the bay area.

In 1990 I purchased the San Franciscan, the current roaster that is used today. I continue to create amazing blends and roasts. Critics agree, awarding us "San Francisco's Finest Coffee" and earning us accolades in the SF Bay Guardian, Best of SF, and the Independent. The business continues to grow and coffee is shipped all over the United States, from Hawaii to New York!

HRAG KALEBJIAN

When I was thirteen my father would drag me out of bed on Saturdays to help him with the store. I hated it! I wanted to watch Scooby Doo. I remember scooping pounds of coffee and packing them in clear colored bags for our wholesale accounts.

I was never interested in the business which is why I ended up working in corporate finance for almost ten years. My last stint was at AAA where I was a manager of Sales Operations. I loved my job but there was something missing. I realized there is something very special about a tradition that is passed down from one generation to another so I left and made the switch in July of 2013.

When you visit us, you're not just walking into our store, you're walking into our home. You are part of our family. We have seen many people come through, including Mayor Ed Lee, SF State President Dr. Wong, President Bill Clinton, William Saroyan, and of course our local supervisors, including Katy Tang.

Dr. Wong and his wife have helped grow my SF State roots by recommending me to be a part of the U-Corp finance committee. They saw the passion and expertise I had in both retail and finance (from my prior job). As a result, they felt it would be great to use me a resource for SF State's U-Corp committee. Supervisor Katy Tang has helped me tremendously by always including us in community events, helping us network with other business like Facebook and Intuit, and being a major fan. With her help and support we have had a great awareness of our business and our brand.

We have partnered with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and were awarded funds for the Invest In Neighborhoods project. We are also a member of SF Made.

For us coffee is more than a business venture, it's part of our heritage. Experience what three generations of coffee roasting tastes like.

Is the business unique to San Francisco?

Henry's House of Coffee is one of the first coffee roasteries/coffee shops in San Francisco. Back in 1965, there were only a handful of them. Henry's House of Coffee was one of the originals.

Henry's House of Coffee has seen many people come through its doors, including William Saroyan (an American dramatist and author), Mayor Ed Lee, current Supervisor Katy Tang, and current Assessor-Recorder Carmen Chu. We were recently nominated by the University of San Francisco as the Gellert Family Business Award, and continue to support our community. Last year we supported SF Beautiful's application to Invest in Neighborhoods for streetscape improvements along Inner Noriega, and were awarded a grant. I am also on the board of SF State's U-Corp, helping my alma matter as much as I can.

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

Master Roaster is a designation that is earned over time, and becomes part of one's reputation among peers in the industry – international coffee brokers, producers and other roasters. Henry Kalebjian holds

this distinction. But it's the proprietary roasting process that lies at the heart of the Kalebjian family business. He personally roasts and blends coffee six days a week.

Customers come by regularly to watch Henry roast, take a break from their busy schedules, or relax with other customers from the neighborhood and around the Bay Area. Henry's personal touch with his customers – marked by a homemade Rolodex of his "regulars" and their taste preferences – is what sets Henry's House of Coffee apart from other coffeehouses in the Bay Area.

Coffee drinkers start their days on the way to work with a fresh pastry and a cup of Henry's finest roasts and blends. Henry's House of Coffee has a loyal following of customers that travel from throughout the Bay Area to their store in San Francisco's Sunset District. The Kalebjians have long standing relationships with businesses and coffee lovers from Hawaii to Florida. Henry's wholesale customers include retail groceries, neighborhood coffee shops and fine dining restaurants.

We are in the coffee business because coffee is a part of our heritage, not because it's a good business. The tradition of coffee roasting has been passed down from father to son to grandson. Roasting coffee is both an art and a science, but when you add 3 generations of coffee roasting, it becomes more than that. Coffee roasting can be done by a computer or by a human, and can be trained. But there is an art to roasting coffee, and in our business, there is also honor. Every single batch of coffee we roast is a tribute to our family heritage. Anytime a customer tells us they enjoy our drinks, we feel like we have succeeded.

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

We have been featured in multiple trade publications including Fresh Cup Magazine, a national coffee magazine, Daily Coffee News an online specialty coffee blog that is part of Roast Magazine, and recently we made the front page of Coffee & Tea, an international coffee magazine!

- <http://www.teaandcoffee.net/67/back-issues/april-2016/> (featured on the Front Cover!)
- <http://www.freshcup.com/henrys-house-of-coffee/>
- <http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/>
- <http://www.sfmade.org/blog/henryshouseofcoffee/>
- <http://www.coffeeper.com/blog/bid/90689/Roaster-Profile-Henry-s-House-of-Coffee>
- <http://hoodline.com/2016/02/master-roaster-henry-kalebjian-of-henrys-house-of-coffee>
- <https://www.usfca.edu/newsroom/media-relations/news-releases/2015/honors-henrys-aunt-anns>

3. The business is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms.

We are currently awaiting an approval for a permit to remodel our store. Our intent is to keep the traditions, culture, and look of what a coffee roaster should feel like. Our commitment to the community means we are going to invest over \$200,000 to cement our place along Noriega St.

The store remodel will include the storefront. We are keeping with the historic look and feel of the store by including large windows, a portico, and a clean facade. We have worked extensively with the SF Preservation Committee and Planning Department to ensure we have a beautiful design.

The beauty of have two generations working together is the merging of new school and old school. With the younger generation is the introduction of some modern elements to help with consistency and traceability. For example, all of our coffee roasts are logged into a computer. Every single coffee bean that is roasted has its own data and is easily accessible using a cloud-based tracking software that we built ourselves. The art of roasting is the same, but the statistics and data are new. It's a great relationship.

We are proud of our district, our community, and our traditions. We hope to be around for another 50 years!

Linkability

at your command

March 21, 2001

Henry Kalebjian
Henry's House of Noriega
1618 Noriega
San Francisco, CA 94122

Dear Henry,

This very moment, I'm sipping a steaming cup of your delicious La Torcaza, which, as I have witnessed many times, you personally roast one bean at a time. Following your instructions, I grind each bean by hand, and not from gnashing my teeth, in case you're wondering. I realise that people who are crazy enough to drive 30 minutes each way for your perfectly roasted, incredibly delicious, coffee, might be grinding their molars by the time they return. But, not me, because it's worth it. Aw!

This may seem unbelievable, but here in sun-swept Pacifica, California's best kept secret, and a match for the Riviera if ever there was one, I can see the fragrant steam wafting from my cup - through the fog!

I know you asked me to spill a little coffee on this "unsolicited letter" just to make it seem more authentic, but Henry, I'm not going waste a drop. You will have to pay the 25¢ you promised for this unsolicited endorsement without benefit of forensic evidence. Don't forget, because driving back and forth every few weeks to feed my Henry's habit is bruising my wallet. Maybe you could raise our deal to 50¢, what with the energy crisis and all.

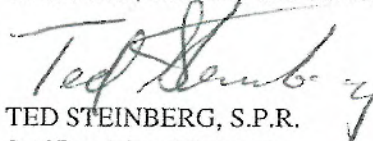
Reading from the script you provided, "I'm nuts about your beans - especially the tender way you hold each bean to give it that special flavor." There's my endorsement, which should impress your customers, what with me being so famous. After all, having been the lead actor in the San Quentin drama and dancing society is a celebrity not to be taken lightly. It's hard to forget those days when you and I were in stir. No relationship to stirring coffee is intended. *This pun needed its freedom, Now it needs pardoning!*

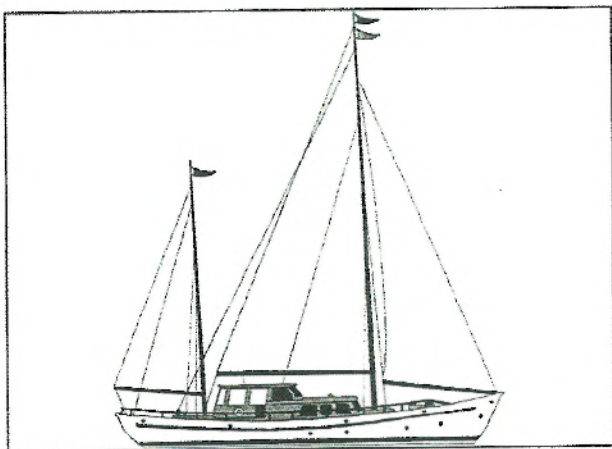
La Torcaza is my mainstay. I serve Celebes Kalosi on special occasions, like when Martha Stewart drops by to borrow one of my adult videos or when I'm trying to impress my friends, and I don't have any.

Coffee lovers, "it's worth leaving Pacifica for Henry's Coffee." It's no small task, but the lack of visability makes it difficult to leave and when the seagulls eat up the cracker crumbs, it's impossible to return.

Henry, may I have my 25¢? It really should be more, but since they didn't teach us literature at the Marin Country Club where we met, perhaps I'm expecting too much. *You can place this next to Saroyan's!*

Your friend, customer and old cell mate,


TED STEINBERG, S.P.R.
Self Proclaimed Roaster



JOHN & LENIE HAGY
43122 CORTE FRESCA
TEMECULA, CA 92592-3070
909 695-1682 — Fax 909 695-3463

December 3, 1996

*Henry
House of Coffee
1618 Noriega Street
San Francisco, California 94122-4306*

Dear Henry,

We received our coffee order from you today, thank you. As you know, we have been purchasing coffee from the House of Coffee for many years, in the early years from your Uncle, and during more recent years, from you. On occasion over the years, due to the areas in which we lived, and for convenience, we have had to purchase coffee elsewhere; but have always returned to our favorite, the House of Coffee.

We thought you might be interested to know that about two months ago a Starbuck's Coffee store opened one mile from our house. We recently ran out of our coffee that we had purchased from you, so we thought we would try Starbuck's. To carry us over to our next order from you, we bought ½ pound of Mocha Java (because we enjoy the flavor of your Mocha Java so much) and made the first pot the next morning. It was bitter tasting, so we adjusted the next pot to see if it would taste better. Again, it tasted bitter, so I contacted Starbuck's to ask if perhaps there had been a mistake and that we accidentally got a different kind of coffee. I was told that it was no mistake and that the flavor was "on purpose" and "a result of the way that Starbuck's roasts their beans". Needless to say, it didn't take us long to call and order coffee from you again.

We look forward to our House of Coffee Mocha Java tomorrow morning.

Thank you.

Lenie Hagy
Lenie Hagy

Subj: hello

Date: 7/31/2003 5:11:33 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Helder Rocha <rocha@csgadvisors.com>

To: coffeesf@aol.com

Sent from the Internet (Details)

Who would think that the best coffee in the world would be located in a tiny, clean store on Noriega Street.

I have travelled the world and have never found a coffee so delicious as yours. You have just found a new client and I can assure you that I will pass your name around to all my family, friends, co-workers and even strangers!

Thank you for a great cup of coffee

May 31, 2000

House of Coffee
1618 Noriega
San Francisco, CA 94116

Dear Henry,

I type this letter to let you know how pleased I am with the Solis cappuccino machine that I recently purchased from you. As I shared with you Henry, I questioned the sanity of purchasing another cappuccino machine after the foam making experiences I have had with the smaller machines. However, with very little practice, I mastered the ability to produce the elusive foam that was always missing from the less expensive cappuccino machine I have owned. I am able to produce foam with this machine that would make you envious Henry. My late night cappuccinos have never been better.

I am very pleased with our cappuccino machine Henry and I am glad that I paid the cost for a quality machine. Thanks Henry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Workman', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kerry Workman,
A Happy Solis Owner

February 28, 2002

House of Coffee
1618 Noriega Street
San Francisco, CA

Dear Henri,

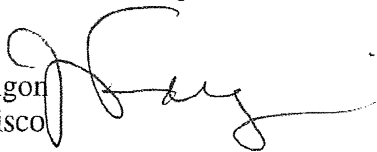
It has been over twenty years since I moved to San Francisco. Having long ago learned that some of the best coffees are grown along the "ring of fire", I developed a keen taste for Celebes Kalossi, Sumatran, and other flavorful beans from the East.

When my previous roaster lost their connection for quality "dry process" Celebes, I began searching for another quality source of my favorite coffee. I quickly learned that the big retailers had absolutely no clue! Celebes and most of the Indonesian coffee's need not be burnt, in fact, as you have proven repeatedly, each coffee type requires a different degree of roasting to maximize flavors without unnecessarily cooking off the caffeine. When a friend referred me to "House of Coffee" in the Sunset, I quickly recognized you as a Master, and immediately felt that I had found my new "coffee connection".

Henri, not only are you an accomplished buyer and a knowledgeable coffee master, you and your staff have continued to, in the ten years I've been drinking your coffees, to prove that there is always a place for quality above quantity. Exemplary service and premium product – why would anyone consider less?

Quality beans, roasted right, sold with a smile – House of Coffee is #1 in my book!

Joseph Feigon
San Francisco

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Feigon', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Rubin
715 Midway Avenue
Daly City, CA 94015

December 20, 2000

Dear Henry,

When my stock of your Jamaican Blue Mountain was depleted, I began purchasing Trader Joe's Jamaica Blue Mountain. Now that you have this year's supply available, I wanted to see if there were a distinguishable difference between the two.

To do this I prepared two four-cup pots of coffee using a size 4 cone filter for each pot. After brewing the coffee in an identical manner, I poured four cups of each of the coffees into separate mugs. I gave three other people a cup of each without telling them which was from House of Coffee and which was from Trader Joe's. It only took one sip for each of them to know which coffee was superior and which was clearly inferior. In every instance they chose your Jamaican Blue Mountain. While I couldn't participate in this blind taste test, I did try some of each, and the difference is substantial.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott Rubin", written in a cursive style.

Scott Rubin

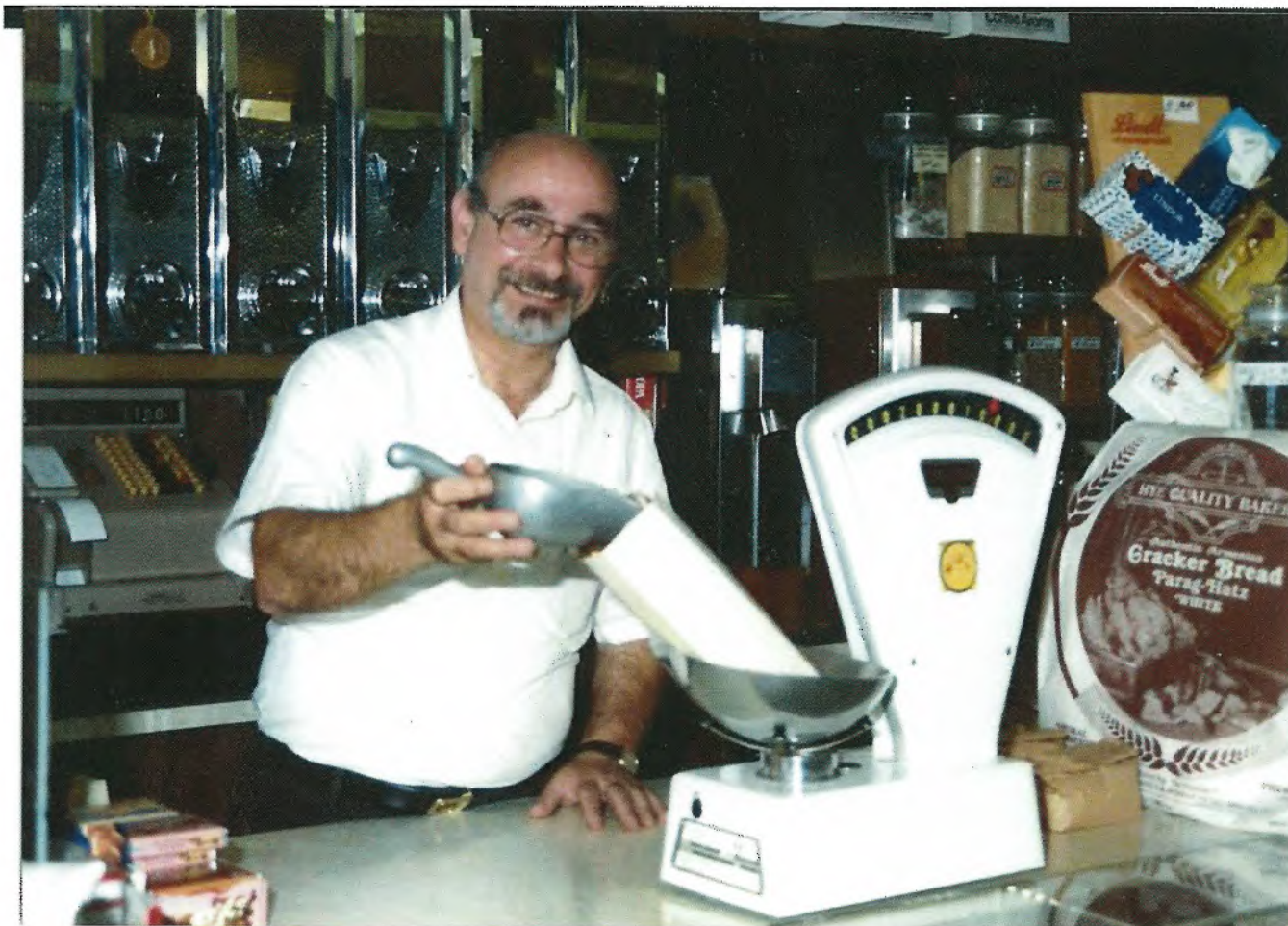


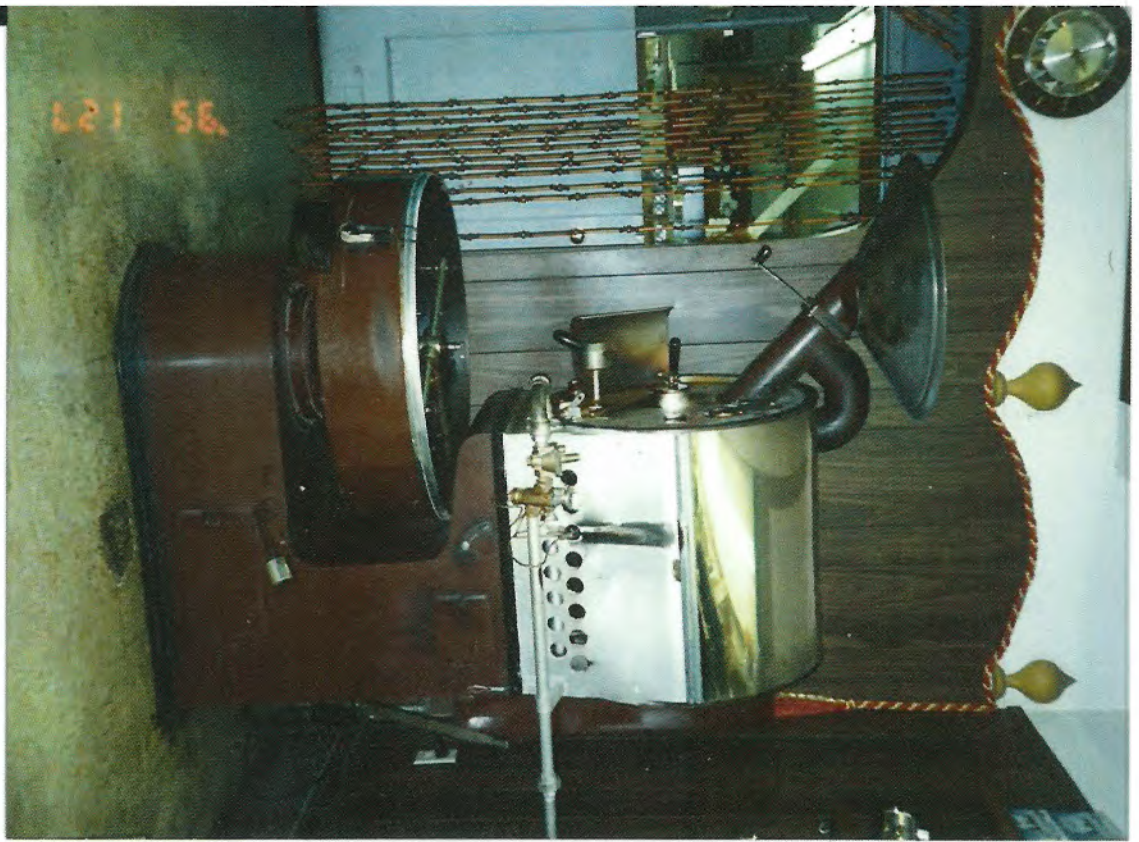
















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Phone: 661-0161

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cheese olives + other
things are good to
have good luck
William Savoyan

MINITA

SHOPPING WITH SHELTON

COFFEE BEANS IN THE GENES

By Jack Shelton

JOHN BURKS



TODAY, A SHOP SPECIALIZING IN coffee may not seem very unusual. But think back some 15 years. Aside from the venerable Freed, Teller & Freed on Polk Street and North Beach's Grafeo, coffee stores were virtually unheard of in San Francisco. And, had you considered opening one then, you probably wouldn't have selected a middle-class neighborhood like the Sunset District. But that is precisely the locale Andy and Sylvia Devletian chose to launch their extraordinary **House of Coffee**. As the Devletians got ready for business, adjacent shop owners often asked what sort of items they would carry.

"Coffee," replied Andy.

"But you can buy that in cans in any grocery!"

"Not our quality coffee, you can't."

But it took more than self-confidence to cajole Sunset shoppers into paying double the canned price and brewing coffee that would pay sufficiently delici-

ous dividends. But the Devletians succeeded for several critical reasons. First of all, San Franciscans possess an innate curiosity to try the untried. Second, the Devletians offered gratis samples of perfectly brewed coffee to anyone who entered the shop. Third, Andy is blessed with a personality that elevates selling to a fine art. And finally, the knowledge of coffee beans is in his genes.

In Rumania, where he was born of Armenian heritage, Andy Devletian's entire family was engaged in all aspects of the coffee business. And as a young man, Andy was constantly pressured by various uncles and cousins to join them in their coffee businesses. But Andy, with his natural knack for selling, did not want to be swallowed up by a relative's firm. He politely informed them all that, while he appreciated their generous employment offers, he would rather borrow a set sum from each so he could

open his own shop in Bucharest. In the event of failure, he promised to pay off each lender by working for a prescribed period of time. Reluctantly they agreed, and Andy expended every borrowed cent on refurbishing a dilapidated store near the Rumanian capital's business district. Besides loans, the family contributed one other ingredient to Andy's fledgling business: the wise counsel to treat each customer as though he or she were royalty. That was in 1939, and Andy still follows that advice to the letter.

In a few years, Andy's success enabled him to repay his family, and life was good even through the war years. Then after the war, the Iron Curtain fell with Rumania behind it. In 1954, Andy and Sylvia finally managed to obtain visas to leave. This in itself was no small accomplishment, but the conditions governing their departure were even more restrictive. They could leave the country with only the clothes on their backs and what they could cram into one small suitcase, no jewelry, no currency and just five kilograms of food. Taking as little food for their own consumption as possible, the Devletians used their remaining quota to carry two kilos of precious black pepper, which they knew was as good as currency at their first destination, Hungary. They lacked the money to buy tickets, so Andy handed the conductor on the westbound train his watch and simply announced, "Budapest." To this day he wonders what their fate would have been if the conductor had refused to strike a bargain.

By selling the pepper the Devletians were able to secure transportation to Trieste, then an international zone, where they entered a refugee camp. There the once-thriving coffee store proprietors mopped floors, cleaned windows and performed other menial jobs. But they were free.

After another long wait, sponsorship by an uncle in Virginia cleared the way for admission to their long-hoped-for goal — America. But fate had another blow in store. Forty-eight hours before their arrival in Virginia, the sponsoring uncle had died. Once again Andy and Sylvia found themselves alone in a strange country, without money and unable to speak the language. But these obstacles, like the others, simply had to be overcome. Andy found a janitorial job and quickly added English to his multilingual skills. However, what I consider an even greater accomplishment was his ability to achieve acceptance and popularity in a small, close-knit southern town.

Eventually relocating in San Francisco, Andy used his coffee savvy to land a job with Safeway's instant coffee division. Five years later he was able to afford the rent on an empty shop on Irving

Street. There the dream of his own coffee store rematerialized in the House of Coffee.

Slowly the business began to prosper. Regulars were greeted by name, and there were always free samples of superbly brewed coffee plus a few sesame candies tossed into shoppers' bags. Word spread throughout the Sunset and beyond. And the shop thrived. Then 10 years later, the bank holding the shop's lease refused to renew it. I can well recall the perpetually buoyant Andy downcast as though again a man without a country.irate customers organized a letter-writing campaign, but the bank's decision was irreversible. Again, Andy had to relocate, this time to an attractive but less trafficked location on Noriega Street near 23rd Avenue. Yet 90 percent of the Irving Street customers remained faithful, and these have since been augmented by coffee lovers from all over the Bay Area who warm to the superb coffee and to Andy's equally inviting charm.

As with any fine coffee supplier, freshness and quality are two prerequisites. Andy sees to it that each bean is impeccable and as freshly roasted as can be found anywhere. As for which particular bean or blend you might prefer, that is as individual as personal tastes in colors. I enjoy House of Coffee's Italian Roast, a strong yet unbitting brew that I drink both at breakfast and after

dinner. However, it can be a little too pungent for tamer American tastes, which seem to prefer the House Blend, a lighter roast of four different beans.

But the House of Coffee does not thrive on that beautiful beverage alone. It houses other primarily Middle Eastern and Balkan delectables, many of which are difficult to find elsewhere. For example, I am loco for locoom, a chewy Turkish delight that is lower in calories than chocolates and more satisfying than gum drops. I once read that one piece contains only nine calories, but given its richness I cannot guarantee that extremely modest figure. Maybe the calorie counter took into account the energy it takes to find these hard-to-locate candies! Other sources usually sell only sugar locoom; the House of Coffee's are sweetened with honey, which imparts a superior, richer flavor. And most important, the locoom here is always fresh. Stale locoom is worse than none!

Less rarefied but equally gratifying are the strongly flavored chocolate "coffee beans," an after-dinner favorite. At only \$5 a pound, they are priced considerably lower than in most other shops.

Also on hand are giant disks of lavosh, the Armenian cracker bread, and grape leaves from Fresno, should you possess the ambition to roll your own dolmades. Also in the Greek vein are two varieties of olives, Calamata and Salonic, both

sold in bulk. And pistachio addicts, whose Iranian connection ended with the advent of the Ayatollah, should try those grown in California, roasted in (of all places) Detroit. I defy you to tell the difference.

Then there's Hero's Raspberry Syrup, which I blend with sparkling water to concoct my own wholly natural soft drink. And . . . but the list of gastronomic exotica is endless: carob molasses, crème de marron, roasted barley malt, rose petals in syrup, pomegranate molasses, orange blossom water and a treasury of world teas and spices — everything you need to conjure up a Middle Eastern feast.

When you visit the House of Coffee, allow time for some satisfying serendipity shopping. It is a distinct multisensory pleasure. While you're examining the immaculate, well-stocked shelves, in the background lingers the omnipresent heady aroma of roasting coffee and the happy sounds of Andy — "Sorry, I do not sell coffee to drink, but I'll gladly give you a cup" — as he lights up the shop with his smiles and the sheer joy of sharing and selling.

The House of Coffee, 1618 Noriega Street near 23rd Avenue, San Francisco (685-9363).

Open Tuesday through Saturday 9:30 am to 6:30 pm. Closed Sunday and Monday.



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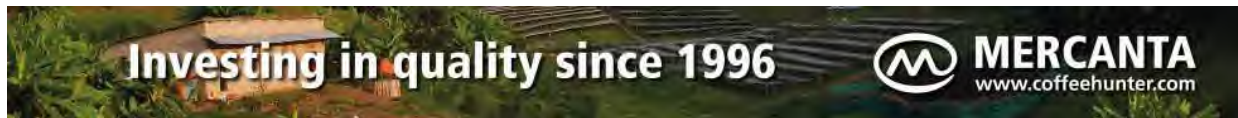












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The 50-Year-Old San Francisco Family Roastery You've Probably Never Heard Of

Nick Brown (<http://dailycoffeenews.com/author/brownderby/>) | August 18, 2015



(<http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/henrycoffee/>)

Henry Kalebjian

In an industry that is arguably somewhat ageist, 50 years of independent professional existence is a remarkable feat, especially in a city like San Francisco that is blown by constant winds of growth and re-imagination.

On the eastern end of the Outer Sunset district between 23rd and 24th Ave. on Noriega St. sits Henry's House of Coffee (<https://henryshouseofcoffee.com/>), which has quietly existed as a specialty food store and coffee roastery since 1965. Since 1983 it has been owned by native Armenian Henry Kalebjian, who came to San Francisco by way of Lebanon where he first tasted coffee at his father's bakery-café and was tasked with roasting at age 12. To this day, you can find Kalebjian at the small shop that now bears his name, roasting on a 12kg San Franciscan unit in plain view of the shop's devoted patrons.

"It was actually pretty tough for me when I was younger because I never saw my father," Henry's son Hrag recently told Daily Coffee News, adding that his father seemed to live beside the roaster.

That all changed in a big way when 37-year-old Hrag left a career in finance to join the family business, which he has been helping reshape — with some natural give-and-take from his father — over the past two years. For the first time in Henry's HoC history, the company has completed a comprehensive re-branding, and secured major grocery accounts. Plans are also underway to refresh the roastery and café, which Hrag said has been virtually unchanged since its last makeover in the 1990s.

"We got some really good feedback from that re-branding," said Hrag, who was recently certified as a Q Grader and has been helping with roasting in addition to marketing and other business operations. "But we're not a national story, we're a local story. If you didn't live around here a mile or two away, you wouldn't know who we were, even though we've been around for 50 years." With that local approach, Henry's coffees can now be found in approximately 20 retail stores within an approximate 5-mile radius, including a recent placement in Whole Foods.



[\(http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/henry-and-hrag/\)](http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/henry-and-hrag/)

Hrag and Henry Kalebjian

The forthcoming store renovation will represent the company's biggest investment in decades, a fact that has led to some understandable friction between father and son. "Working with family, you're going to have some bumps in the road, and working with him for two years, I've learned better how to do some of the give and take," Hrag said. "It's a fine balance between staying the same and also being updated with the times. That's kind of where we are."

Hrag said he hopes the renovation will bring about a slight but natural adjustment in how the shop is perceived. "We're not trying to be uber-contemporary," he said. "But I feel like people have seen us as a coffee shop that also happens to roast coffee on-site. I want to create something where we are thought of as a working roastery that also sells fresh-brewed coffee on site."

Through his own formal coffee education, Hrag has come to appreciate the immense roasting and sensory analysis skills of his father, whose own coffee education was forged through the decades as a devoted pupil in the school of hard knocks. On becoming a Q Grader, Hrag said, "My dad told me, 'Son, I need you to go get the basic training somewhere else, and then I can teach you.' What he really meant was go get a contemporary education in specialty coffee, understand the foundations of coffee, then come back here and we can tweak your new knowledge for the business. One of the things I really respect out of my dad is he doesn't have the typical cupping education, but he's been cupping for so long, he can just pick up a cup of coffee and say what's wrong with it."



[\(http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/11168030_834033329985223_2480537780937058781_n/\)](http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/11168030_834033329985223_2480537780937058781_n/)

Henry Kalebjian in 1965

A stipulation in the 1983 real estate deal was that Henry had to buy the building in which the shop has since resided. Asked whether the family considers simply cashing in on the investment, Hrag said, "It's not about the money. My father is a humble man. He was able to pay for our college educations. It's never really been about the business. It's always been about the coffee for my dad. It's been about old-school, product-centric, 'take care of my baby and my customers and everything will be alright.'"

There's something to be said about a third-generation coffee roaster in one of the coffee world's epicenters. "You can have latte art, you can have a really amazing Geisha from Colombia — but guess what, so does the person down the street," said Hrag. "But when you come to our shop, you're going to see me and my dad roasting coffee. You're walking into our house. Other places don't have that. I'm just honored that I'm part of the business. Everything I'm doing is to make my father proud."

Nick Brown (<http://dailycoffeenews.com/author/brownderby/>)

Nick Brown is the editor of Daily Coffee News by Roast Magazine. Feedback and story ideas are welcome at publisher@dailycoffeenews.com.

1 Comment

greg

August 18, 2015 5:34 pm (<http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/#comments>)

If you haven't heard of Henry K, you only have yourself to blame.

Reply (<http://dailycoffeenews.com/2015/08/18/the-50-year-old-san-francisco-family-roastery-youve-probably-never-heard-of/?replyto=110125#respond>)



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Digital Issue

CAFÉ CROSSROADS, COFFEE, IN THE CAFÉ

Henry's House of Coffee

Feature

JULY 21, 2014 | BY REGAN CRISP



On a sunny Saturday in Seattle, SCAA's 2014 Event thrummed with energy. Henry and Hrag Kalebjian of **Henry's House of Coffee** walked the gargantuan exhibitor floor side-by-side, charming fellow attendees with their genuine enthusiasm and amusing father-son banter.

The Kalebjian team flew up for the expo from their single-shop micro-roastery in San Francisco. House of Coffee is small, but with a legacy dating back to the sixties, it's one of the city's first specialty coffee companies. As they strolled through the country's largest coffee

conference, Henry and Hrag looked to the future. Passing booths serving exquisite single-origin coffees, Hrag nudged his dad to try some less familiar roasts.

"Taste some of these Yirgacheffes," he said with excitement. "They taste like blueberries." Henry, a veteran roaster with close to a lifetime in coffee, a craft he inherited from his father, obliged. The nuances of the light-roasted beans wowed and surprised him.

The following Monday morning, in San Francisco's Sunset district, Henry awoke just after dawn and quickly began roasting a recent shipment of green beans. It was somewhat early to start work on the day's coffee quota. When Hrag questioned his father's urgency, Henry responded, "I'm going to try this bean a little lighter."

"But it's seven a.m.," said Hrag, dumbfounded.

"I can't sleep," said Henry. "I want to roast. I have ideas."

To those who know him well, Henry's motivation to begin experimenting is true to form. The seventy-one-year-old owner and roaster possesses a devotion to the bean that is palpable. Customers entering House of Coffee are greeted by an increasingly rare sight in boutique roasting: Henry works a twelve kilogram San Franciscan roaster in full view of patrons, measuring mainly by sight and touch the progress of each batch, all while hailing regulars as they stop in. His roasting philosophy is characterized by a tactile prowess garnered from decades in coffee (there are no computerized helpers here) and total transparency.

"I got to the point where I was like, 'Am I going to be the guy that kills this lineage of coffee roasting?'" says Hrag.

Area roasters from newer coffee companies (San Francisco has many) stop in from time to time, covertly eyeing the grandfather business and Henry's process. But Henry calmly stays on task, because if he doesn't, a customer, a friend, might go without.

Henry's devotion to excellent coffee and customer service built House of Coffee. He has run the business—originally launched as a specialty foods store in 1965—since the early seventies, when he took over for his uncle. He was the sole



roaster of the company's signature blends until last summer, when Hrag, at thirty-eight an old newcomer to coffee, left a comfortable job at AAA to dive head first into coffee, taking a hand in the business with the intention of learning the skills necessary to someday step into his father's shoes.



Today Henry is teaching his son to roast, while Hrag uses a degree in business and a background in finance to update some of the shop's more outdated practices. It's clear when speaking to both that bringing in the new has not always been easy. The recent addition of a daily dairy order form, for example, was a simple switch to allow Henry to delegate the task that did not go over smoothly.

"At first I was confused, I thought, 'Does he not like it? Does he think it's dumb?'" says Hrag earnestly. Then it dawned on him why his father was resistant to the change. "He liked ordering milk!" Hrag laughs, adding that the last year has brought him and his father much closer.

Initially resistant to the family business, it was while at AAA that Hrag began to ponder the person-to-person connections in business. He thought back to his observations as a child of his father's interactions with customers. Remembering Henry's dedication to their happiness, and passion for his trade, a light went on.

"I got to the point where I was like, 'Am I going to be the guy that kills this lineage of coffee roasting?'" says Hrag.

The newest branch of that lineage should take comfort that it's been defined by change. Hrag's grandfather, Henry's father, was a baker and coffee roaster in Lebanon. An Armenian immigrant, Henry's father taught him to roast in a style typically old world, where tending a fire and hand-cranking a drum were integral to the process.

By the age of twelve Henry had left school to roast for his father's pastry business. When he moved to San Francisco in the early seventies, he brought that early experience to a more modern roasting process at House of Coffee. In the eighties, as fresh coffee and in particular to-go coffee became more popular, walls once occupied by barrels of grains, bread, dried fruits, olive oils, and sea salts were taken over by bags of different signature

roasts. The café moved from Irving Street to its current location on Noriega Street, and Henry worked long hours for years perfecting his roasts, steadily building a reputation for quality and consistency.

Today the roastery resides in a part of town not known for its café scene. On Noriega Street among commercial properties, medical offices, and East Asian restaurants, House of Coffee is a diamond in the rough, a hidden gem that when discovered becomes elemental to one's perception of San Francisco roasting.

Two years ago, Henry was approached by a local videographer for a film project entitled *Neighbors* that interviewed the city's creative tradesmen, from artists to belt makers. Hrag nudged his dad to do the video. In Henry's poignant portrait, viewable on the roaster's website, he sits on stacked bags of green beans, and says in his honeyed Lebanese accent, "I try to ask a lot of questions of the customer . . . that's what I follow."

03:31



[Henry's Blend for Neighbors](#) from [Agency Charlie](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Hrag says he is happy to get to know those customers, too, the people Henry has built lasting relationships with. Even if those customers might need some reassurance that despite the recent changes, they'll still love the coffee.

"He's excited to introduce me," says Hrag. "But I think he's also telling the customer, 'Don't worry, you're in good hands. This is my son.'"

—*Regan Crisp* is the associate editor of Fresh Cup.

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Behind the Beans With Master Roaster Henry Kalebjian Of Henry's House Of Coffee



Tue. February 23, 2016, 8:25am





(/ads/49/112/2)

On any given morning, you can find Henry Kalebjian roasting coffee beans in the shop that bears his name. Since 1983, the master roaster has made **Henry's House of Coffee** (<http://henryshouseofcoffee.com/>) at 1618 Noriega St. a home for coffee lovers.

When Kalebjian found himself out of a job back in 1982, he turned to coffee. Originally a mechanical designer, he knew he always wanted his own store. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Kalebjian grew up working in his own father's bakery and became steeped in the coffee culture of both Lebanon and his own Armenian heritage.

He heard about the store, then named House of Coffee, when then-owner Andy Devletian wanted to retire. The store itself has stood at the same site since 1965, and counted famed author William Saroyan, who wrote a letter of praise that hangs in the shop, as one of its customers.

"I came in, and I saw the store had a lot of cheese, olives—a lot of Armenian stuff," recalled Henry. "At the corner, I saw a small roaster, a coffee roaster. Since I'm more familiar [with coffee roasting], I was very interested."



Earlier days of Henry's House of Coffee also included Armenian food options. (Photo: Henry's House of Coffee)

In 1983, Henry decided to buy the shop. For the first few years, he left everything as it was in its House of Coffee days, as he figured out what appealed to his customers.

He had first learned the art of coffee roasting from his father back in Beirut, when his father pulled Henry out of school to learn the fine art of coffee.

“Part of Lebanese culture is having coffee,” explains son Hrag Kalebjian, who runs Henry’s House of Coffee alongside his father. “In 1945, there was no Costco. You had to buy and roast coffee yourself. My grandfather would buy and roast two pounds of coffee at a time.”

With the advent of Starbucks, the '90s saw the introduction of dark roast coffee to a mass audience. "At the time, coffees were roasted very lightly," said Kalebjian. "Starting a little bit, I switched a little bit to roasting dark coffee. Gradually, I started bringing high-quality beans."



Hrag Kalebjian displays unroasted coffee beans. (Photo: Fiona Lee/Hoodline)

Kalebjian also faced a challenge when the demographics of the Sunset changed in the late 1990s and Chinese families started moving in. Business began to drop, since tea was more popular with new residents.

He decided to introduce coffee to his new neighbors. He hired a Chinese-speaking employee, a woman who stood outside on Fridays and Saturdays, from 11am to noon, with cups of coffee. In a clever move, cream and sugar were stationed inside for customers to help themselves.

"They would come in, drink coffee with cream and sugar," says Kalebjian of those days. "After one or two days, they would come back, and say 'you gave me coffee.' Then they would buy half a pound. Then, one pound became two pounds, and so on."



Father and son in front of the coffee roaster. (Photo: Fiona Lee/Hoodline)

These days, a third generation of coffee roasters is taking on the family tradition, with Hrag Kalebjian joining the shop full-time in 2013. "I forcefully learned the business," the younger Kalebjian describes wryly. "I'm eight years old, born in the U.S. I was dragged to the shop, and all I wanted to do was watch Scooby Doo. I didn't want to have anything to do with it until I grew up."



Over the years, Henry has built a strong relationship with coffee brokers, who know of his high standards and reputation for quality. He works together with his son to select the coffee beans. “They’ll say, Henry, I have something for you,” he explains. “Can I send you a sample? If I like it, I will consult with [Hrag] and ask, what do you think about carrying this?”

Through Henry’s House of Coffee, Henry was able to put his kids through school and set them up for their future. All three of the Kalebjian kids, he says with more than a touch of pride, have master’s degrees.



Coffee is packaged up in the backroom of the coffee house. (Photo: Fiona Lee/Hoodline)

He admits that he was a workaholic in his younger years. “I feel a little bit guilty that I did not spend my time with them. But now, at the end, I’m enjoying my kids and grandkids. It gives me great pleasure.”

Although Hrag is now working full-time at the store, Henry smiles and shakes his head when the question of retirement comes up. He sees himself continuing the work he has been doing for the last 30+ years: talking to customers, selecting the perfect coffee, and of course, roasting.

“Every person that comes, I don’t treat them like they are coming to my store. I treat them like they are coming to my home. That’s what I love,” Henry says.

“We’re not in this business because of money,” adds Hrag. “We’re in this business

because of family.”

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The SanFranRoaster Blog.....

Roaster Profile: Henry's House of Coffee

Posted by [Emily McIntyre](#)

Sun, Jun, 08, 2014 @ 09:06 AM

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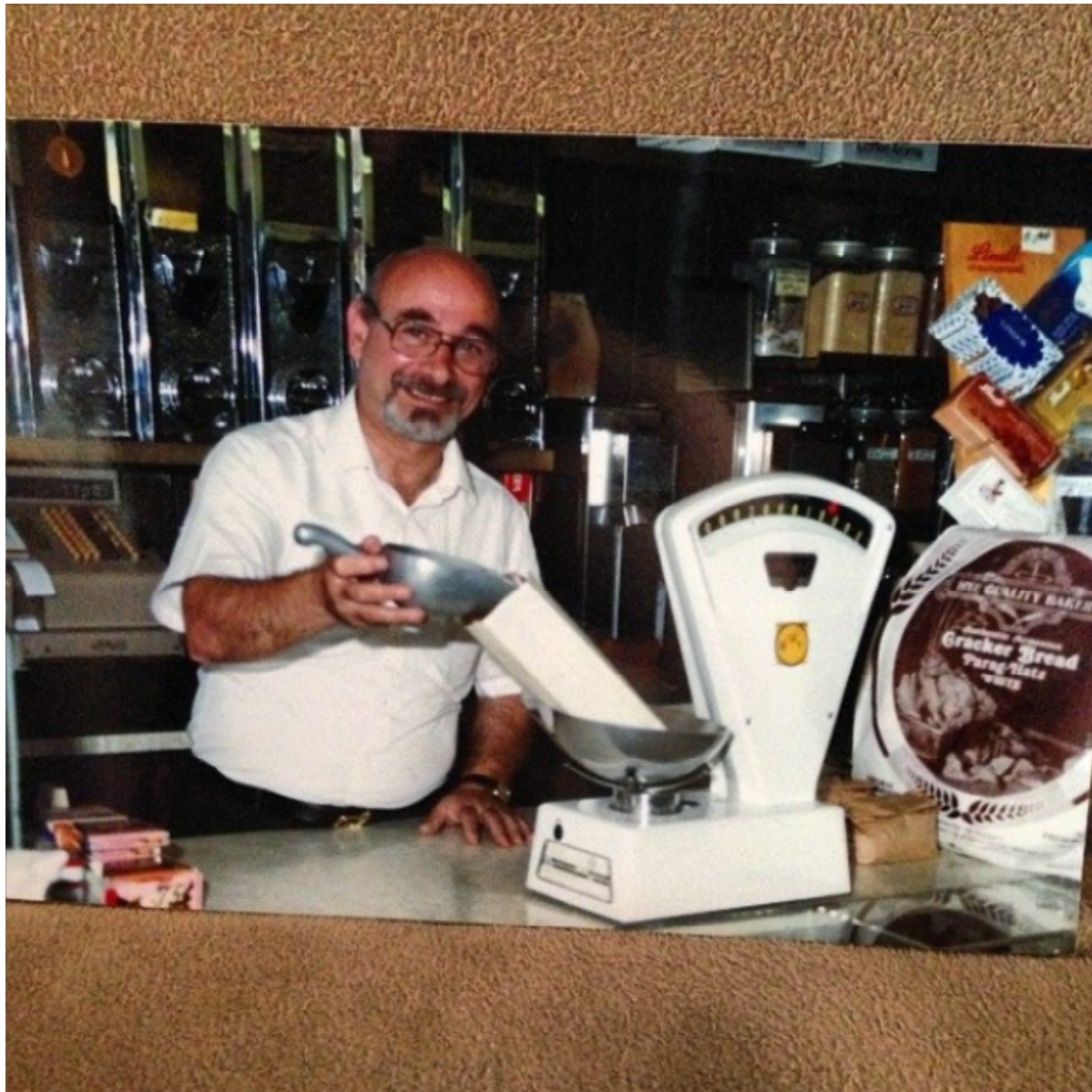
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Through the Lebanese culture runs a thick ribbon of honor and pride of legacy, father to son, mother to daughter. Hrag Kalebjian grew up dreading Saturday mornings, when his father Henry would drag him out of bed and into the specialty foods store where he roasted coffee. "I just wanted to watch cartoons," Hrag says, and eventually he left the family business altogether to work in corporate finance.



For a Kalebjian, it's not so easy. Last year Hrag left the corporate life behind him to join his father in running the San Francisco-based coffee roastery and cafe Henry's House of Coffee. "I couldn't kill the lineage," he says. This lineage began in the old country with Henry's father, who owned a bakery and started the 12-year-old Henry roasting coffee to serve with his baked goods. In 1965 Henry immigrated to San Francisco, where he worked at his uncle's specialty foods market selling meats, cheeses, olives, and... house-roasted coffee.

Henry bought the business and over the years transitioned it to its current form, which is focused on coffee. At some point--Hrag remembers being in 3rd grade when he walked with his father into the CoffeePER warehouse in Fallon, Nevada--the Kalebjians bought a green SF25, about which Hrag says, "It's the focal point of our shop. We get so many compliments--people think it's from the 1800's because of its classic steam engine look."



Henry's House of Coffee is situated in a neighborhood which has seen an influx of Taiwanese and Chinese residents, and when that demographic started to change his business took a hit. Concerned with dishonoring an unfamiliar business-owner, Asian residents were walking past. Henry, always pragmatic, hired an Asian employee to stand in front and hand out samples of coffee. Now, says Hrag, the cafe is very popular in the neighborhood.

"We're in this business because it is our lineage. We have a lot of pride and honor in our coffee because years ago my grandfather started it." Hrag says that instead of asking about penetration rate and sales numbers, they ask questions like, "What's your nationality, and how does that affect your coffee experience?"

"Business isn't about making money. We are honored to help you and coffee is a medium to express these relationships." When someone from Lebanon offers you coffee, he is offering you his heart and an offer of friendship. For 60 years now, the Kalebjian family have been doing just that in beautiful San Francisco.





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Empowering manufacturers. Creating jobs. Transforming our city.

WELCOME HOME TO HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE

by Ferron Salniker | Apr 22, 2015 | Blog, Our News |



Henry's House of Coffee is a family business. Third generation roaster and current proprietor Hrag learned the trade from his father, who learned the trade from his. There is a sense of pride in each cup of coffee that is served there, along with a profound history.

The business first began in Lebanon where Hrag's grandfather began

serving coffee in his bakery in the 1940s. In Lebanon at that time, if you wanted a cup of coffee you had to roast the beans yourself at home. Hrag's grandfather quickly realized that he could roast the beans and serve coffee for his bakery customers, and with that his coffee business was born. Years later, driven by an entrepreneurial spirit, Hrag's father decided to purchase House of Coffee in San Francisco. What began as a specialty food store quickly headed towards a focus on coffee, and by the mid '90s Hrag's father had created the coffee shop that the store is today.



Henry and Hrag roasting the coffee beans

Today Henry's House of Coffee focuses on the experience of coffee. "We want to show our customers honor similar to how my grandfather did in Lebanon. When you walk into Henry's House of Coffee you are not just walking into a coffee shop, you are being welcomed into my house," he said. Inside the store there are bulk coffee bins where you can choose how much or how little you would like to purchase. Look closely and you might find beans from Jamaica, Thailand, and the Galapagos Islands. While you are browsing you may even catch a glimpse of the beans being roasted, as the café and the beans are roasted in the same space. If you look closely at the walls you can see the marks where Hrag's father measured his height when he was growing up, and where his father now measures his grandchildren's height in the same way.

With the experience of three generations of roasters and a welcoming environment, it isn't hard to see why seventy-five percent of Hrag's customers repeatedly return to his shop. Hrag is proud to be manufacturing in San Francisco, and is extremely excited to be joining as a member of SFMade. He believes that there is a need to grown manufacturing here in San Francisco, with a focus on quality and supporting the people who make goods locally.

Next time you are in the Sunset district of San Francisco take a break and step into Henry's House of Coffee. Enjoy the experience, the passion, and the culture of a third generation



coffee shop. If you're lucky you might even run into Hrag's dad who is still there greeting customers and roasting the beans.

Henry and Hrag with the height chart at Henry's House of Coffee

For more information on SFMade, visit www.sfmade.org. To apply to become a member click [here](#).

Henry's House of Coffee is located at: 1618 Noriega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122

To find out more about Henry's House of Coffee, visit:
<http://www.HenrysHouseOfCoffee.com>

For inquiries about SFMade programs, please contact: Brittany, Community Engagement Coordinator, at brittany@sfmade.org.



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/ MEDIA RELATIONS / USF NEWS RELEASES / ARCHIVE / 2015 / **USF HONORS HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE AND AUNT ANN'S IN-HOUSE STAFFING WITH 2015 FAMILY BUSINESS AWARDS**

USF Honors Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing with 2015 Family Business Awards

SAN FRANCISCO (April 15, 2015) – The University of San Francisco (USF) School of Management is proud to announce Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing as recipients of its 2015 Gellert Family Business Awards. The annual Gellert awards recognize extraordinary business achievement and community service. The awardees will be honored during a reception on Wed., May 27 from 5:00 – 7:30 p.m. in the Handlery Dining Room on USF's Lone Mountain campus (2800 Turk Blvd., San Francisco 94117).

"Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing are exemplary small businesses that practice social responsibility by serving their community, an important core value of the university," said Elizabeth B. Davis, dean of the USF School of Management. "The lifelong relationships they build with their patrons support their thriving presence in San Francisco."

Since 1965, Henry's House of Coffee has been a fixture in San Francisco's Sunset District, serving loyal customers from around the Bay Area, and as far as Hawaii and Florida. At age 12, Henry Kalebjian learned the art of coffee roasting from his father in Lebanon. After considering the family's coffee legacy, Henry's son Hrag decided to leave the corporate world to work with his dad in 2013. Hrag's decision proved a positive one and his hardworking father inspires him daily. In addition to a thriving coffee business, the Kalebjians are working with San Francisco's Office of Economics and Workforce Development to build a sense of community in the Sunset. They are also collaborating with SF Beautiful to invest in streetscape improvements along Noriega Street.

Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing is California's oldest referral agency specializing in the staffing of baby nurses, nannies, family assistants, housekeepers, cooks, private chefs, household managers and more in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1958, Ann Collins, her son Tom and daughter in-law Sophie Collins founded Aunt Ann's Agency as a babysitting and nursing registry in San Francisco. Still thriving today, the business is owned and managed by the

third generation of Collins women, Denise and Sue, who have expanded the agency's offerings to include eldercare, private chefs, household managers, and more. Throughout the years, they have earned the trust of thousands of families—building long-term relationships with generations of clients. They work diligently to provide trusted, exceptional service at reasonable prices without the red tape of a large corporation.

“What is unique to independent, family owned businesses is that they make it a point to focus on the individual,” said USF Professor Monika Hudson, director of the Gellert Family Business Resource Center. “Henry hand roasts coffee beans in the shop and pays special attention to the quality and customers' tastes. Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing's bottom-line is not about profit or satisfying their shareholders, but rather ensuring the satisfaction of their clients and employees.”

As part of the recognition, USF School of Management faculty and students will work with Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing to facilitate a comprehensive, individualized assessment of potential business assistance USF can provide. Previous awardees have received marketing or operational aid, secession planning, or applied research and analytical strategies. The goal is to create a mutually beneficial partnership where USF faculty and students learn from local, successful family businesses and concurrently, provide these businesses with resources and targeted technical assistance to help them continue to prosper.

Since 1994, the USF Gellert Family Business Resource Center's approach is to recognize excellence, keep family businesses informed, and develop family business leadership. The Carl Gellert and Celia Berta Gellert Foundation's mission is to promote educational, charitable, scientific, literary, or religious programs in the nine counties of the greater San Francisco Bay Area. The Gellert Foundation is the primary contributor to the USF Gellert Family Business Center. For more information, please visit www.usfca.edu/management/gellert/.

Members of the media interested in covering the May 27th event, or to request interviews with this year's recipients, should contact Anne-Marie Devine Tasto, USF's senior director of media relations, at 415.422.2697 or abdevine@usfca.edu.

About the University of San Francisco

The University of San Francisco is located in the heart of one of the world's most innovative and diverse cities and is home to a vibrant academic community of students and faculty who achieve excellence in their fields. Its diverse student body enjoys direct access to faculty, small classes, and outstanding opportunities in the city itself. USF is San Francisco's first university, and its Jesuit Catholic mission helps ignite a student's passion for social justice and a desire to "Change the World from Here." For more information, please visit www.usfca.edu.

Get a Taste of What's Happening at **#USFCA**

Filing Date: August 22, 2016
Case No.: 2016-010965LBR
Business Name: Henry's House of Coffee
Business Address: 1618 Noriega Street
Zoning: NCD (Noriega Street Neighborhood Commercial District)/
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 2026/024
Applicant: Hrag Kalebjian, President
1618 Noriega Street
San Francisco, CA 94122
Nominated By: Supervisor Katy Tang, District 4
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Henry's House of Coffee is a family-owned coffee roaster and coffee shop located on Noriega Street between 23rd and 24th Avenues in the Sunset District. Housed within a two-story residential-over-commercial property built in the Storybook period revival architectural style, the business represents three generations of coffee roasting tradition. Master coffee roaster, Henry Kalebjian, learned the Armenian style of coffee roasting at the age of twelve from his father in Lebanon. Upon settling in San Francisco during the early 1970s, Henry purchased House of Coffee from a fellow Armenian entrepreneur, and expanded the shop's coffee roasting functions. One of the first coffee roasters in San Francisco, Henry's House of Coffee now sells wholesale to retail groceries, neighborhood coffee shops, and fine dining restaurants. Henry's son, Hrag, has joined the operation in recent years and plans to keep the family tradition alive well into the future.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1965

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

Yes, Henry's House of Coffee qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Henry's House of Coffee has been in operation since 1965 (the business operated under the name, "House of Coffee," from 1965-1983).
- ii. Henry's House of Coffee has contributed to the Sunset community's history and identity by serving as a neighborhood coffee shop and offering high quality roasted

coffee beans for purchase.

- iii. Henry's House of Coffee is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its art of coffee roasting and serving.

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

Yes. The business is associated with the art of coffee roasting and serving.

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

Yes. The property is associated with significant architecture. It was built in 1935 as part of an early residential tract designed and developed by Marian Realty Company (owned by Oliver and Arthur Rousseau) and Whitney Investment Company, and is emblematic of Storybook period revival style architecture. The property's ground floor was altered midcentury as part of a block-wide conversion from residential to mixed use. The property was identified as a Category A Building and a contributor to a California Register-eligible district in the Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Historic Resources Survey (pending approval by the Historic Preservation Commission). The property belongs to a cluster of 18 Storybook-style buildings along Noriega Street.

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

No. The property has, however, been identified in the Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Historic Resources Survey (pending approval by the Historic Preservation Commission) as a contributor to a California Register-eligible district.

- 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. *Focus Magazine*, 12/1980, "Shopping with Shelton: Coffee Beans in the Genes," by Jack Shelton; *Tea & Coffee Magazine*, 4/2016, "The Intentional Micro Roaster- A New Definition for a New Category"; *Fresh Cup Magazine*, 7/21/2014, "Feature: Henry's House of Coffee," by Regan Crisp; *Daily Coffee News*, 8/18/2015, "The 50-Year-Old San Francisco Family Roastery You've Probably Never Heard Of," by Nick Brown; SF Made website, 4/22/2015, "Welcome Home to Henry's House of Coffee," by Ferron Salniker; *The San Franciscan Roaster*, 6/8/2014, "Roaster Profile: Henry's House of Coffee," by Emily McIntyre; *Hoodline*, 2/23/2016, "Behind the Beans With Master Roaster Henry Kalebjian of Henry's House of Coffee," by Fiona Lee; University of San Francisco website, 4/15/2015, "USF Honors Henry's House of Coffee and Aunt Ann's In-House Staffing with 2015 Family Business Awards."

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 1618 Noriega Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Coffee roasting tradition
- Coffee shop use

Additional Recommended by Staff

- The San Franciscan roaster (interior)



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution 789

HEARING DATE SEPTEMBER 21, 2016

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Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
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Planning
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Filing Date: August 22, 2016
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San Francisco, CA 94122
Nominated By: Supervisor Katy Tang, District 4
Staff Contact: Desiree Smith - (415) 575-9093
desiree.smith@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR HENRY'S HOUSE OF COFFEE, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1618 NORIEGA STREET (BLOCK/LOT 2026/024).

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 the Sunset 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 September 21, 2016, 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 Henry's House of Coffee qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated in the same location 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 Henry's House of Coffee.

Location (if applicable)

- 1618 Noriega Street

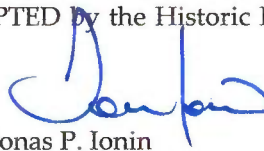
Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Coffee roasting tradition
- Coffee shop use
- The San Franciscan roaster (interior)

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 2016-010965LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was **ADOPTED** by the Historic Preservation Commission on September 21, 2016.



Jonas P. Ionin

Commission Secretary

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

NOES: None

ABSENT: Hasz

ADOPTED: September 21, 2016