

Tour #8: The Castro, Noe Valley, and Dubose Triangle



The tour includes a lot of walking uphill for two and three blocks at a stretch. Because of this, you have the option of a “Reader’s Digest” (i.e., abbreviated) version of the tour or the complete, unabridged (i.e., hills included) option for this tour.

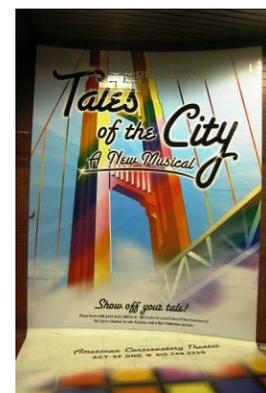
The tour of the Castro, Noe Valley, and Dubose Triangle starts at the intersection of Market, 17th, and Castro streets. To reach the intersection, take any of following MUNI Metro trains: K Ingleside, L Taraval, or M Ocean View – all of which stop at the Castro Street Muni Station. You can also take the historic streetcar line, F Market & Wharfs, from Downtown to the same intersection. The #24 Divisadero bus line travels north-south along Castro Street.

Link for the Google Map of this Tour: [Tour #8: The Castro, Noe Valley, and Dubose Triangle](#).

Brief comment about “The Castro”: In the 1970s, when the Castro saw the flowering of the nascent gay community in San Francisco, this neighborhood was still known as Eureka Valley. You will occasionally see that name used by businesses and other entities in the area. Visit the “Links” page of the *Tours of the Tales* website for addition links to information about the Castro.

Castro MUNI Metro Station

During the 2011 Pride Festival, the American Conservatory Theater and the City of San Francisco painted this mural at the inbound platform at the Castro MUNI Metro Station. Visitors were invited to take their photos standing at this mural and post it to Facebook for prizes. The mural is now gone.



After exiting the Castro Station’s fare gates, turn left to exit

the station. You are now at...

Harvey Milk Plaza (southwest corner of Market, Castro, and 17th Streets)



The Plaza is named for San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk, the first openly gay person elected to office in the United States. In 1978, he was murdered along with San Francisco Mayor George Moscone in City Hall by Dan White.

At this time, the Plaza is essentially the sunken entry to the Castro MUNI station. There is a plaque with information about Harvey in the Plaza near the entrance to the MUNI station. Above the Plaza flies a massive rainbow flag.



There are plans to expand the Plaza to encompass the entire intersection of Castro and Market.



The Plaza and adjacent areas were used for several scenes in the movie *Milk*.

Early in *Babycakes*, Michael was a volunteer at the AIDS switchboard down the street on Castro. He spent the evening rush hour in a window seat across the street at the Twin Peaks. He watched residents emerge from the MUNI station and stop long enough to raise and open their umbrellas in the rain.

Walk up the steps to Castro, turn left, and cross over Market toward 17th Street. When you arrive at the narrow traffic island on the left side of the cross walk, turn left onto the traffic island. Follow 17th Street past the MUNI bus stop and through the tiny Pink Triangle Park and Memorial until you are standing in front of Zephyr Realty.

Zephyr Real Estate, 2500 Market

This is where the City Athletic Club was located in the early 1980s where Michael and Ned came to work out. While Mary Ann and DeDe were flying to Alaska to search for DeDe's missing twins, Michael and Ned were soaking in the Club's Jacuzzi and talking about love, romance, and sex.



“If I’m in shape, I’m not in love. If I’m in love, I’m not in shape.”

Ned laughed and squeezed the back of [Michael's] neck. "Who's the lucky guy?"

(Further Tales of the City/28 Barbary Lane, p. 664)

Backtrack to the intersections of 17th, Castro, and Market. At the end of the traffic island, cross 17th to the northwest corner of the intersection (at the RC gas station). Turn right and cross Castro. On the other side of Castro, turn right and cross Market until you are at 17th Street again (in front of the Chevron gas station). At 17th, turn left and walk east along the north side of 17th 1 ½ blocks to the corner of Pond and 17th. You are standing in front of...

Dimensions Clinic, 3850 17th (northeast corner of 17th and Pond)



This is the former location of the San Francisco Department of Public Health – District Health Center #1.

In *Significant Others*, Brian developed night sweats and feared he might have contracted AIDS from one of his sexual liaisons. Michael drove Brian to the AIDS clinic for an HIV test. The clinic was located in this building.

According to the book, the clinic had two entrances: one

for people taking the test and the other for people getting their results.

The mission of Dimensions Clinic is to increase the physical and mental health as well as wellness of LGBTIQ young people in a culturally competent environment.

Backtrack to the intersection of 17th, Castro, and Market. Turn left and cross 17th Street. You are now in front of...

The Twin Peaks Tavern, 401 Castro (at the southeast corner of Castro and 17th Street at Market)

Twin Peaks was the setting for three events in the Tales stories.

We're first introduced to the Twin Peaks in *Tales of the City*. Here Michael met and picked up Chuck, a rather pleasant looking guy wearing red, white, and blue Tigers (running shoes) along with a pair of Levi's and a rugby shirt. Michael quickly learned that Chuck had a fetish for Bass Weejuns. When Michael asked Chuck why he wore Tigers that night rather than one of his pairs of Weejuns, Chuck replied he always wore his Tigers with his rugby shirt. He then held up his foot for Michael to better see the running shoes. "They're just



like Billy Sive's. In *The Front Runner*." (*Tales of the City/28 Barbary Lane* p. 87)
In the book, the dialogue ends here.

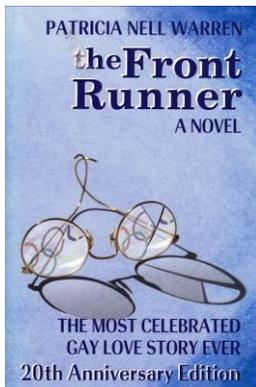
In the *Tales of the City* miniseries, the dialogue continues:

Michael: "I've read it."

Chuck: "They should make a movie of it, man."

Michael: "Right. Right. With Paul Newman."

You can watch part of this scene from "Tales of the City" on [YouTube](#).



Patricia Nell Warren, author of *The Front Runner* (and its sequels: *Harlan's Race* and *Billy's Boy*), has commented on the reference to Paul Newman. She shared the story of the first attempt to bring *The Front Runner* to the big screen. The full story is too long to retell here, but the pith of the story was that Paul Newman had at one time been directly involved in an attempt to realize the dream of many of *The Front Runner's* fans in seeing the book become a motion picture. Newman's plan was not to be a lead actor in the film but rather the film's director.

For more about Patricia Nell Warren and *The Front Runner*, visit Patricia's website: [Wildcat International](#).

The incident in the book when Michael met Chuck and its corresponding scene in the miniseries differ in two small ways: In the book, Michael and Chuck meet here at the Twin Peaks while in the miniseries, they meet at The End Up. Also in the miniseries, Chuck is not wearing a pair of Tigers but rather Adidas running shoes.

In *Further Tales of the City*, one day Michael stopped at the Twin Peaks after work (at God's Green Earth). The man standing next to him was listening to a Walkman. This was Bill Rivera, the San Francisco cop who became Mouse's sex buddy in *Further Tales of the City*.

Later, in *Babycakes*, after spending five hours at the AIDS hotline, Michael sat at a window seat at the Twin Peaks watching the young men pour out of the Castro MUNI Metro station across the street.

In the early 1970's, while the Castro was transitioning from an Irish community to the Gay neighborhood it now is, two lesbians purchased this old Irish pub and transformed it into a trend setting gay bar. The bar broke ground by rejecting the closed, secretive appearance of gay bars typical of the era by installing very large windows opening up the inside of the bar to the world outside.

Here's the [Twin Peak's website](#).

Exit Twin Peaks, turn left, and head south on Castro. In order, you will encounter the following places as you walk south on Castro:

The Castro Theater, 429 Castro

In the “Tales of the City” miniseries, Norman and Mary Ann leave the Castro theater after watching a movie. *Detective Story* is seen on the Theater’s marquee.

The shooting of this scene wrapped up the San Francisco filming of *Tales of the City* miniseries. Armistead Maupin and Terry Anderson as well as the cast and crew toasted the wrap across the street in front of 440 and 444 Castro (440 Castro and Citibank – see below in this tour). Here’s the scene on [YouTube](#) (scene starts about 6:12).

In *Tales of the City* (the book), Mary Ann and Norman watched *Detective Story* at the Gateway Cinema near Jackson Square (*not* here at the Castro Theater) and then walked up Jackson Street to Chinatown to have dinner at Sam Wo (see Eureka Theater in Tour #3: *Jackson Square*). However...



Thirty-two years later Mary Ann returned to San Francisco and stayed in Michael’s and Ben’s guest cottage on Noe Hill (*Mary Ann in Autumn*). Fogbound One, an anonymous “Friend” on Mary Ann’s Facebook account, jolted Mary Ann by reminding her of Norman Williams. In those long years, Mary Ann’s recollection of where she and Norman had gone during the few months they dated had become muddled. In her recollection, she and Norman had eaten at Sam Wo and had seen an old movie here at the Castro Theater and not at the Gateway Cinema.

On a Monday morning in 1977, Armistead Maupin submitted to the *San Francisco Chronicle* the installment of “Tales of the City” in which Michael dictated his coming out letter to his folks in response to their joining Anita Bryant’s Save Our Children (*More Tales of the City*). That previous Friday, Maupin read that well known “Letter to Mama” to Tales fans here at the Castro Theater.

Yes, everything *is* fine at 28 Barbary Lane!

The Castro Theater is a long standing landmark in San Francisco. Various film festivals are held at the theater. If possible, watch a movie here. Shows generally start with a concert by the theater’s immense Wurlitzer organ. For more information regarding the Theater, including scheduled events, visit its website: [The Castro Theater](#).

Cliff's Variety, 479 Castro



This Castro institution is truly a variety store that sells tools, and toys, and games, and gifts, and even boas.

One day in 2005, as Michael walked passed Cliff's, he made eye contact with a stranger wearing a Giant's parka. After passing each other, they both turned and looked back at the other. The man's name was Ed Lyons. He and Michael met at a party on Collinwood

Street years before. Ed hadn't seen Michael in many years and assumed that Michael had long since passed away from the complications of AIDS. During this chance meeting, Michael wore overalls which Ed found hot. (*Michael Tolliver Lives*)

In *The Night Listener*, Jess Carmody came down from Oregon to visit Gabriel Noone at the start of their relationship. At that time, Noone lived in a tiny cottage on Noe Hill (see below in this tour). While cuddling with Gabriel in bed the first night of the visit, Jess quickly learned that the cottage was infested with mice. The next day, Jess came down the hill to Cliff's to purchase several mouse traps.

Here's the [website for Cliff's](#).

Intersection of Castro and 18th streets

In *Further Tales of the City*, Michael shared with Bill Rivera (his friend who is a SFPD cop – see Twin Peaks above) a story about the Foggy City Squares (a gay square dancing group) hosting a hoedown at this intersection. During the hoedown, a small fire broke out at the Castro Muni Station. The SFFD passed through the crowd in order to reach the station. It struck Michael that the firemen – on their way to a fire – were totally nonchalant about passing through a crowd of square dancing men. (See 482 Castro, below, in this tour for a similar incident in the history of the Castro.)



The Bank of America on the southwest corner of Castro and 18th was once the Hibernia Bank during the time period covered by the first six books in the Tales series.

Three months after Jon died from AIDS (*Babycakes*), Michael drove to the Castro and ate a late breakfast at Welcome Home (see *Café Mystique*, 464 Castro below in this tour). Michael left the restaurant and started to walk through the neighborhood when his heart caught in his throat. He saw a man emerge from the Hibernia bank who reminded him of Jon.

In *Significant Others*, Michael planned to attend an after work JO party at his friend Joe's place which was located at the intersection of Noe and 21st (see below in this tour). When he arrived home at Barbary Lane to change, Anna Madrigal reminded him of the welcome home party the gay community was throwing at the intersection of 18th and Castro for the gay couple released along with 37 other American airline passengers held hostage in Beirut, Lebanon by terrorists (TWA Flight #847, June – July 1985). Michael parked his VW bug convertible on the steep part of Noe and walked down the hill to the intersection. A platform had been erected in front of the Hibernia Bank from which a gay chorale sang "America the Beautiful" and then "The Star Spangled Banner". The gay hostages addressed the cheering crowd. As the band started to play "If My Friends Could See Me Now", Michael began to sprint up Castro, over to Noe, and then up the hill to Joe's.

Armistead Maupin was a bit more involved in the above celebration than Michael. He was one of the local celebrities who welcomed the couple back to San Francisco. As soon as he was finished, he ran up the hill...to a JO party.

In *The Night Listener*, Gabriel bumped into Jess at Pasqual's (see Starbucks, 4094 18th Street, immediately below in this tour). After they walked out of the coffee house, Jess pointed to the intersection of Castro and 18th where a shrine had been erected for Matthew Shepard, who had been recently murdered by homophobes in Wyoming.

Finally, it was near this intersection that Armistead Maupin met his husband, Christopher Turner.

At the corner of Castro and 18th, turn left and walk east along the north side of 18th toward Noe.

Intersection of Castro and 18th streets



Before this coffee café was a Starbucks, it was a Pasqua's – part of a San Francisco based chain of coffee houses. The Pasqua chain was eventually acquired by Starbucks.

In *The Night Listener*, Jess Carmody occasionally met here for coffee and conversation with friends from ACT-UP and HIV support groups. One day, Gabriel Noone stopped here to pick up a turkey pesto sandwich. The place was filled with bears. He was there for ten minutes before he realized Jess – who had by this time moved out of the house – was also there. Jess was sitting with a group of leather men at a table near the windows. As Jess and Gabriel exited Pasqua's,

Jess pointed out the makeshift shrine erected to Matthew Shepard down the street at the corner of Castro and 18th.

Continue a short distance east down 18th.

The Castro Country Club, 4058 18th

This is an alcohol free reading room and juice bar. It was established as an alternative for the many gay bars found in the Castro. Occasionally after finishing a shift at the AIDS switchboard, Michael came to the CCC (*Babycakes*).



On the morning he ate his breakfast at Welcome Home and after he saw a man emerge from the Hibernia Bank who reminded him to Jon (see above in this tour), Michael came here and started to read the latest issue of *The Advocate*. The magazine contained an ad for jewelry that said “I’M SAFE” announcing that the wearer was free of AIDS, herpes, etc. The ad angered Michael.

The [Castro Country Club](#) website.

Retrace your steps to the corner of Castro and 18th. Cross to the southeast corner (in front of the Bank of America) and continue walking south on Castro (toward the hill). You will encounter the following places, in order, as you continue your walk south:

The Sausage Factory, 517 Castro

In the months following Jon’s death, Michael volunteered at the AIDS hotline across the street (located at 512 Castro) from the Sausage Factory (*Babycakes*).

After a five hour shift at the hotline followed by watching commuters exiting the MUNI Metro Station across the street from the Twin Peaks, Michael decided on pizza for dinner here at the Sausage Factory.



The Sausage Factory was so warm and cozy that he [Michael] scuttled his better judgment and ordered half a liter of house red. What began as a mild flirtation with memory had degenerated into maudlin self-pity by the time the alcohol took hold... ..When the waiter arrived with his pizza, his face was already lacquered with tears.

(Babycakes/Back to Barbary Lane, pp. 20-21)

The food is excellent here at the [Sausage Factory](#).

Best In Show/Pet Boutique, 545 Castro

In 2008 (*Mary Ann in Autumn*), Ben stopped here to pick up organic dog food for Roman.



Human Right Campaign, 575 Castro



This was the location of Harvey Milk's ("The Mayor of Castro Street") photo store and campaign headquarters. He lived above the store (573 Castro) at the time of his assassination. The store was used as the set for Milk's store/campaign headquarters in the 2008 movie *Milk*. In January 2011, this store became the new home for the Human Rights Campaign's store in San Francisco.

Continue south on Castro to 19th. Turn right and cross over Castro to the NW corner of the intersection and walk west on 19th (toward Twin Peaks – the hills, not the bar) one block to Collingwood. Cross to the other side of Collingwood (northwest corner). Turn right and walk north on Collingwood keeping the tennis courts on your left. Turn left into the first set of gates after the tennis courts. Keep to the left as you pass the play area on your right and go up the steps.

Dog Park/Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood Street

By 2008 (*Mary Ann in Autumn*), Michael had married Ben McKenna. They lived in Michael's home on Noe Hill (see below in this tour). Ben generally took Roman, their Labradoodle, to this dog park to play with his canine friends. During one of the many trips to the dog park, Ben struck up an acquaintanceship with an older man, Cliff, and his dog, Blossom.

One day while Ben and Cliff were sitting and watching the dogs romp, someone on Collingwood screamed. A woman lifted up the canvas panels of the tall cyclone fence and then let loose a string of expletives. Because the sidewalk was lower than the fence, all Ben could see of her was her beet-red face and the top of her filthy red tracksuit.



Here, Ben also met a man named Gabriel Noone, who brought his dog here to play as well. Gabriel Noone told stories on National Public Radio (*The Night Listener*). Noone once came on to Ben at the YMCA. Ben wasn't impressed.

Return to Collingwood, turn left, and walk to the corner of Collingwood and 18th.

Mollie Stone's, 4201 18th Street

This is the former location of DeLano's IGA which closed its doors in December 2010.

Michael and Ben shopped at DeLano's (*Mary Ann in Autumn*). It was convenient for Ben to stop here for groceries after taking Roman to the dog park around the corner. One day following a visit to the dog park, Ben drove to the market and parked in the basement. As he headed up the stairs to the store, his phone rang. It was Jake Greenleaf, Michael's business partner, trying to locate Michael regarding a problematic customer.



Turn right/east on 18th.

The Edge, 4149 18th (southeast corner of 18th and Collingwood)



In the mid-80's this was the location of Francine's. Shortly before Anna Madrigal left to join Mona on vacation on Lesbos, she invited Michael and Thack to her home on Barbary Lane for dinner (*Sure of You*). While they were doing the dishes after dinner, Polly Berendt, who had moved into Michael's old apartment above Anna's, dropped by to give Anna her rent check. Polly couldn't stay and chat because she was headed out to meet some friends here at Francine's.

Many years later (*Mary Ann in Autumn*), Michael and Thack were separated, Francine's had become The Edge, and Michael had married Ben. One night following dinner at the Thai Chef, Michael and Ben came here for a few beers.

The [Edge's Facebook](#) page.

Continue walking east on 18th.

Thai Chef, 4133 18th

One night, Michael and Ben ate dinner here. (They "could never remember the name of it, so they always called it 'the Thai place next to the Edge.'" – *Mary Ann in Autumn*, p. 265). Earlier that day, Ben went out on a "play date". When he returned home, he brought back a small paper bag containing some tangerines that the guy he was with that day had given him.

Although Michael and Ben had a somewhat open marriage, Michael was occasionally insecure about it. The bag of tangerines was festering in Michael's mind. He brought it up at dinner. During their talk, Ben patiently supported Michael as he struggled with his insecurity. After dinner, Ben suggested they go next door to the Edge for beer.



Meanwhile, back at their home on Noe Hill, a man entered their guest cottage and confronted Mary Ann with a gun.

Continue walking east on 18th two more doors to...

GLTB History Museum, 4127 18th Street



Drew Bourn, a San Francisco resident and historian, has been very helpful ensuring that these tours are accurate. He also volunteers for the GLBT Historical Society as a consultant for the management of the archives. He provided the following description for the Museum: *"The museum opened in January 2011, and is the most public face of the GLBT Historical Society. The museum covers a wide range of topics related to queer life in San Francisco, including a number of areas that are reflected in Maupin's books. What might be of especial interest is the display of the costume worn by Laura Linney when we first see her as Mary Ann Singleton in the opening scene of the 1993 miniseries. Linney later wore the same costume when she joined Armistead*

Maupin as one of the Grand Marshals of the 2003 Gay Pride Parade in San Francisco."

More information: [GLBT Historical Society](#) and [Museum](#).

Continue walking to the end of the block to the corner of Castro and 18th again. Cross over 18th to the northwest corner (Walgreens is on this corner) then walk north on Castro (in the direction of Market).

482 Castro – Now part of the Walgreens at the northwest corner of 18th and Castro Streets

This was the location of Toad Hall from 1971 - 1979.

Toad Hall was one of *the* hottest places in the Castro in the 1970s. It was responsible for a lot of "firsts" for gay bars in this neighborhood such as the first dance bar and later the first to hire a DJ. Toad Hall wasn't the original name



suggested for this bar; it was The Iron Nun. However the staunch Roman Catholic who owned the building was a bit uneasy about the name. So, the bar was named Toad Hall after Mr. Toad's home in the children's book, *The Wind in the Willows*.

Toad Hall was resurrected in 2008 for the filming of *Milk*. During the on location filming of the movie, 440 Castro, a gay bar located just a few steps away, was given a new façade making it resemble the original Toad Hall. You can see this façade in the photo. (See *440 Castro* below in this tour.)

Although no events took place here in any of the stories, Toad Hall was woven to the story line of *Tales of the City* where it was mentioned twice.

The day Michael moved in with Mona, they discussed his recent break-up with Robert, a closeted Marine recruiter. Trying to convince Michael that Robert really wasn't all that special, Mona suggested:

"He's down at Toad Hall right now, stomping around in his blue nylon flight jacket, with a thumb hooked in his Levi's and a bottle of Acme beer in his fist."

Tales of the City/28 Barbary Lane, p. 57

Later, Michael went cruising in the Castro hoping to connect with someone – *anyone*. He passed up Toad Hall and entered Twin Peaks (see above in this tour) where he was soon scoped out and scooped up by Chuck.

In the three years of operation (it opened on Memorial Day Weekend 1971), Toad Hall suffered three fires. On the evening of Friday, June 28, 1974, a fourth fire broke out. The bar's patrons exited the bar onto Castro street waiting and watching to see what would happen. By the time the fire department arrived, the crowd had doubled in size. The arriving firefighters were welcomed by the cheering crowd.

In February 2009, tapping into the fame of the original Toad Hill, the owner of The Badlands (another bar here in the Castro) purchased the rights to the name and opened a bar under the same name at 4146 18th Street – located at the corner of 18th and Collingwood. (You just passed the bar as you walked to this spot.)

Café Mystique, 464 Castro



This is the former location of the Welcome Home restaurant. A cross section of people came to Welcome Home for good, inexpensive, no frills meals.

The day after Mary Ann proposed that Michael and Simon exchange apartments for a month (*Babycakes*), Michael awoke late, wrote a letter to his mother, and then drove to the Castro for breakfast at Welcome Home. After leaving Welcome Home, he saw a man who resembled Jon emerge from the Hibernia Bank (now the Bank of America) at the southeast corner of Castro and 18th (see above in this tour).

[The website for Café Mystique.](#)



Citibank, 444 Castro and 440 Castro, 440 Castro



The cast and crew were positioned in front of these businesses when they wrapped the on location filming of the “Tales of the City” miniseries. The final scene shot on location in San Francisco was of Mary Ann and Norman walking away from the Castro Theater after watching a movie (see the *Castro Theater* above in this tour).

440 Castro was called Daddy’s at the time of the on location shooting for “Tales of the City”. During the filming of the 2008 movie *Milk*, 440 Castro was given a new façade making it resemble the original Toad Hall located just steps away (see immediately above). [440 Castro’s website.](#)

You are at a decision making point in this tour. Taking the full tour will require walking uphill for two and three blocks at a stretch. If you’re not interested in that amount of effort, you can opt for an abbreviated version of the tour. If you choose the abbreviated version, consider reading the full version of the tour to learn more about the locales you will by-pass.

To take the abbreviated tour: Continue walking north on Castro toward Market. Board the southbound #24-Divisadero bus. The bus stop is on the west side of Castro in front of the Castro MUNI Metro Station at Harvey Milk Plaza. Exit the bus at 24th Street (Noe Valley). Walk one block east on 24th to the northwest corner of 24th and Noe to rejoin the tour.

If you opt for the full tour: turn around and walk back south on Castro to the intersection with 19th. Cross over to the southeast corner of the intersection and walk two blocks east on 19th to the southwest corner of 19th and Noe.

Noe Hill Market, 4001 19th (at Noe)

Following the argument that erupted when Mary Ann informed Brian she was moving to New York – *without* him (*Sure of You*), Brian took off and went to Michael’s and Thack’s place on Noe Hill. He asked if he could crash with them until Mary Ann left for New York. While the three of them worked out the arrangement, the doorbell rang. Thack looked and saw Trick or Treaters at the door. Realizing it was Halloween and there was no candy in the house, Michael took a jaunt down the hill to the Noe Hill Market to pick up candy.



Note: The awning of Noe Hill Market is no longer yellow.

Cross over to the southeast corner of the intersection and start walking south – that’s uphill.

A Steep Section of Noe Street

It was along this steep part of Noe that Michael parked his VW convertible and then walked back down hill to the corner of Castro and 18th streets to witness the welcome home party the gay community threw for the gay couple released from captivity in Beirut (see Intersection of Castro and 18th streets above in this tour).

Cumberland Steps



In *Sure of You*, Michael and Thack went for an outing at the Rawhide II. After their return home, Michael took their dog Harry (aka, K-Y) for a walk. They climbed these steps to the top and walked along Cumberland Street to Sanchez. At Sanchez, they turned right, and walked one block to 20th. They turned right on 20th and climbed *those* steps to the top of the hill and then down another set of steps back to Noe. They turned left on Noe and walked the short distance downhill to home.

If you have the time and energy, take this walk. Although it’s strenuous, there are nice views of the city and pleasantly landscaped yards. Follow the directions all the way to 556 ½ Noe to rejoin the tour.

One night (*Mary Ann in Autumn*), Michael and Ben went out for dinner at a Thai restaurant (Thai Chef, above in this tour). Mary Ann declined to join them for dinner opting instead to spend time in the guest cottage with her laptop and Facebook. Jake, not knowing that Michael and Ben were out to dinner, rode his bicycle up Noe Hill from his place in the Duboce Triangle (see below in this tour). Due to low energy combined with the steep incline of the street, Jake dismounted his bike and sat on the Cumberland steps to rest when his cell phone rang. It was Jonah calling from Snowflake, AZ. The conversation quickly became heated over Jonah's discounting the nature of his feelings for Jake. Jake hung up and started to push his bicycle uphill the rest of the way to Michael's when he heard a scream. And then, a gunshot.

Continue uphill to...

655 ½ Noe

In 1981, Armistead Maupin moved into a cottage that is still located *behind* the cottage seen in this photo.

This is where he located Michael's home starting with his relationship to Thack (*Sure of You*) through and including his marriage to Ben (*Mary Ann in Autumn*).

This is also where Maupin placed Gabriel Noone's cottage at the time he met and started his relationship with Jess Carmody (*The Night Listener*).



In *Sure of You*, Maupin described the deck of the Michael's and Ben's cottage as facing west into the sunset. Their cottage looked like three tiny houses nailed together. It turned out the three tiny houses were earthquake refugee shacks from the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire. This description is repeated in *Mary Anne in Autumn*.

Armistead Maupin once remarked that although he lived in the cottage behind the home seen in the photo, he'd never stepped foot in that front unit.

Also, Armistead Maupin has long since moved from this home – so *don't ring the doorbell!*

Continue walking south (uphill) on Noe.

Intersection of Noe and 21st streets

In *Significant Others*, Michael attended a JO party at his friend Joe's place located at this intersection. Joe lived in a Victorian house.



Continue walking south (it's downhill from here!) to 24th Street in Noe Valley.

Noe Valley

24th Street is the heart of Noe Valley which is roughly defined as 21st Street/Noe Hill on the north (you just strolled – or possibly rolled – down Noe Hill), Delores Street on the East, Randall Street (others say 30th Street) on the south, and Grand Street (the foot of Twin Peaks – the hills, again *not* the bar) to the west.

Mary Ann volunteered at the Bay Area Crisis Switchboard which was located in a renovated Victorian house somewhere on 24th Street. Mary Ann worked with finger-chopping Vincent at the Crisis Switchboard. Mary Ann rode the J-Church MUNI Metro to 24th Street and then walked along 24th to reach the Switchboard. (See Tour #7: *Union Square*, for more about Mary Ann's travel to the Switchboard.) Later in this tour, you will ride the J-Church MUNI Metro.

The exterior of the home at 1433/1463 McAllister Street (at Alamo Square) was used in the mini-series for the Switchboard.

At 24th, turn left and head east on 24th walking along the north/left side of the road to about the middle of the block.

3920/3918 24th Street through to the corner of 24th and Sanchez.



This stretch of the north side 24th was used in a scene in the “Tales of the City” miniseries: Mona and Michael discuss their financial situation...and Michael informs Mona that he has a plan to bring some quick cash into their household. “*Won't it get a little chilly working the corner of Powell and Geary?*” quipped Mona.

The scene starts with Mona and Michael purchasing hotdogs and cokes from a street vendor located in front of 3920/3918 24th. As they start to walk toward Sanchez, they pass a juggler riding a unicycle in front of the stairs at 3914 24th Street (Noe Valley Music).

As they arrive at the northwest corner of the intersection of 24th and Sanchez, a man approaches them and hands Michael a pamphlet. Michael scans the cover, tosses the pamphlet into a nearby trashcan, and continues to tell Mona about his

plan is to make a quick \$100 in one night: he's entered the Mr. End Up dance contest.

Here is the scene from *Tales of the City* via [YouTube](#): scene starts about 04:12.

In *Tales of the City*, Michael sprung his instant cash plan on Mona as they ate cheese dogs and fries at the Noble Frankfurter on Polk. The Noble Frankfurter was located at 1900 Polk – now the Bell Tower Restaurant (see Tour #10, *Civic Center, the Other Edge of the Tenderloin, and Polk Street*).

24th and Sanchez

(Continuing with the above scene in the miniseries) Mona and Mouse finished the discussion of their financial situation as they crossed to the southwest corner of the intersection.



Later in the mini-series, Mary Ann crossed this same intersection – from the northwest to the southwest corner – and then walked west on 24th to enter Rudy's, a restaurant.

Continue to follow Mary Ann's route to...

Casa Mexicana, 3917 24th

The Mall, 3915 24th

Sally's Nail Spa/Gelous Nails, 3915 24th, Suite A

(All the above are on the south side of 24th west of the intersection of 24th and Sanchez)

This cluster of shops appeared three times in the *Tales of the City* mini-series.

After crossing 24th at Sanchez (mentioned immediately above in this tour), Mary Ann walked west on 24th to Rudy's restaurant (*Casa Mexicana* at 3917 24th). There she was told by someone at the door that the line started around the corner. She backtracked a few steps, and saw a line of folks waiting to get into the restaurant. The line snaked down the side of an alley/sidewalk (*The Mall* between *Casa Mexicana* and *Sally's Nail Spa* – Joshua Simon at the time of the filming the *Tales of the City* miniseries). In this alley, she ran into Norman and Lexy. In the book *Tales of the City*, this scene is played out at Momma's on Washington Square – see Tour #2: *North Beach*.



Here is the scene from *Tales of the City* on [You Tube](#) – scene starts about 03:00.



Several months later, Mary Ann and Michael were in Mary Ann's apartment stringing popcorn for Christmas decorations. They began to have a somewhat heated discussion regarding Mary Ann's cheerfulness about the coming Christmas vs. Mouse's jaded opinion about the holiday. They decided to purchase Christmas trees. In the next scene, they walked west on 24th past Sally's Nail Spa/Joshua Simon. They ducked into The Mall passing

Father Guido Sarducci (American comedian Don Novello) and a nun holding a collection plate. Another passerby left a dollar bill in the collection plate. Father Sarducci picked up the bill and pocketed it. Immediately afterward, Mary Ann and Michael emerged from the alley each carrying a Christmas tree. They then walked back east on 24th passing Sally's Nail Spa/Joshua Simon. Watch the scene on [YouTube](#); the scene starts about 02:30.

A day or so later, it was December 23rd and Mouse ran into Mona on the street in front of Casa Mexicana. As they started to walk east toward Sanchez, Mouse invited Mona to Mrs. Madrigal's Christmas Eve wingding. Mona begged off; she already had plans for the next evening. The old Joshua Simon awning is easily seen in this clip. She was preparing a Christmas Eve dinner and had invited D'or's parents...and hadn't yet informed D'or of the invitation. Watch the scene on [YouTube](#): it starts about 03:50.

Now turn around and walk 2 blocks east on 24th to Church. Catch the in-bound J-Church MUNI Metro. Use the passenger island near the southeast corner of the intersection to wait for the Metro car.

Take the J-Church MUNI Metro the short distance to 21st Street /Mission Dolores Park.

Mission Dolores Park, bounded by 21st, Church, 18th, and Dolores streets

This corner of Dolores Park provides an excellent view of the entire park and Downtown San Francisco beyond. Sunny days, even weekdays, find San Franciscans soaking up the sun on the slope below you...some unhampered by clothes that would block the much desired light rays. There is a lot to see and do in the park for just about everyone such as people watching (including those unhampered by clothes), tennis and basketball courts, a playground for children, picnicking, and so on.

The park has an interesting history. Prior the start of the 20th Century, this was the location of two different Jewish cemeteries before nearly all of the cemeteries in San Francisco were moved – with *most* of the bodies – to Colma south of the City. The City purchased the land in 1905 for a



public park; however, a year later, it became a refugee camp for families made homeless after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire.

Michael frequently walked Harry, his and Thack's dog (*Sure of You*) in Dolores Park. When you walked the side tour – well, *if* you walked the side tour – starting at the Cumberland Steps earlier in this tour, you came within one block of this park.

By 2008, Michael was married to Ben (*Mary Ann in Autumn*). One night while driving down 18th Street past the Park on their way to the Mission to visit friends, a drunk staggered onto the street.

Walk through the park and again catch the J-Church MUNI Metro this time at Church and 18th. Exit the J-Church MUNI Metro at Market. Cross over Church to the southwest corner of Church and Market. Then cross, Market to the northwest corner of the intersection (where 14th Street comes into the intersection).

Look across to the northeast corner of Market, Church, and 14th Streets to...

Safeway, 2020 Market

Mary Ann *tried* to pick up Robert, Michael's old boyfriend, at the Marina Safeway Market.

Michael *successfully* picked up Robert at *this* Safeway.



Now walk southwest on Market (away from the Safeway and toward the large rainbow flag flying over Harvey Milk Plaza in the distance).

Café du Nord and the Swedish American Hall, 2170 Market



One night Shawna (*Mary Ann in Autumn*) came here to listen to a performance by Iron and Wine (born: Samuel Beam). And here she also met Otto, who became her boyfriend...of sorts. She learned that Otto was unaware of her blog ("Grrrl on the Loose"). And she also learned that Otto was a clown.

[Iron and Wine's website](#)

On Thursday, May 12, 2011, as part of the ramping up toward the premier of the musical *Tales of the City* at the American Conservatory Theater (see Tour #7: *Union Square*), a special event was held here: "Thoroughly Modern Maupin: The Legacy of Armistead." This was an evening filled with readings and music.

It featured the next generation of GLTB writers who continue to further the ideals that Maupin helped pioneer.

Continue walking the short distance to Sanchez and turn right (north). You are now entering the Duboce Triangle neighborhood of San Francisco. Walk two block north on Sanchez to Duboce. Enter Duboce Park which is just a dozen yards or so off to your left and across the street.

Duboce Park, corner of Duboce and Steiner streets

By the start of *Michael Tolliver Lives*, Anna Madrigal had already sold the apartment house on Barbary Lane and moved into an apartment here in the Duboce Triangle a short distance from this park. Jake Greenleaf lived in an apartment over Mrs. Madrigal's. After Anna's stroke, Jake moved downstairs and shared Anna's apartment (*Mary Ann in Autumn*).



This is the end of this tour. To return to Downtown, catch the in-bound N-Judah MUNI Metro. The stop is at just outside the MUNI Metro tunnel located at the southwest corner of the park.

Updated: 22 July 2016