

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

"For what is the present, after all, but a growth out of the past." – Walt Whitman

NEWSLETTER

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President's Notes

Hello to all members and friends of the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society. I hope that in all the "busy-ness" of this busy time of year you have a chance to slow down, take a few deep breaths, and enjoy the beauty of the Winter Delta, its crisp cold mornings with orchards and vineyards bare of leaves, when "the fog comes on little cat feet...sitting on silent haunches and then moves on," to borrow words from Carl Sandburg.

My 2-year term of president is ending soon, and I just want to say that it's been a great pleasure working with the rest of the Board members. This is a fine organization thanks to their efforts and the support of the many Sacramento River Delta Historical Society members who come to general meetings and keep discussions interesting and always informative. Our membership is now at 229.

Our Program Coordinator Tom Herzog continues to bring interesting programs to our general meetings. I hope many of you were able to come to September's meeting, at which water journalist Rita Schmidt Sudman and artist/writer Stephanie Taylor presented their newly published book "Water, More or Less," together with their views and opinions about California's water supply, water management, policy, and use. Certainly a timely topic, much in the news!

November's program was given by Ted Smith, long-time Clarksburg resident. Ted presented his book called "The Water, the Land, and its People," about Clarksburg and the many people and families who made it the unique Delta community it is. Members with deep Clarksburg roots and those who settled there more recently added to the lively discussion. The program was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

I hope you all can come to our next general meeting, the Annual Potluck and General Meeting. Tom Herzog is sure to line up an interesting speaker, and everyone will enjoy a delicious potluck dinner. Everyone is welcome! Bring friends! More information will be mailed to you in January.

We began selling our new 2017 Pear Label Calendars at the Courtland Pear Fair last July. The new calendar features a new beautiful selection of pear labels from the outstanding Jim Dahlberg collection. We are very grateful to all who have purchased our calendars and to our corporate and individual sponsors also. There are also a limited number of previous year calendars still available if anyone wants to make complete "sets" of the beautiful images.

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Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING & ANNUAL POTLUCK

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 6:00 pm

Jean Harvie community Center 14273 River Road, Walnut Grove

NOTE CHANGE IN REQUESTED DISHES BELOW

Please bring food for 10: A—G Salad H—M Dessert N—Z Hot Dish

Please call Tom Herzog 916-871-4060 if you have any questions

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Charles Talmadge, Early Deltan

By Kathleen Graham Hutchinson

In the SRDHS's book "Historic Houses of the Sacramento River Delta" published in 1984, I wrote on Charles V. Talmadge:

THE CHARLES V. TALMADGE HOUSE (TURNER HOUSE)

Charles V. Talmadge built his home shortly after arriving in California with his wife, Mary, and their four young daughters, Emma, Hattie, Mary Jane, and another, name unknown, between 1859/61, and built the house before the conclusion of the Civil War.

Talmadge, a native of New Jersey, and his wife, Mary, a Canadian of Irish descent, were married in the early 1850's and lived in Illinois until emigrating to California. Once settled in the Delta, Talmadge pursued fruit growing on his ranch. The Talmadges' other children, Josephine, Nettie, Lotta, Anna, and only son, Chris, were all born in California. The house was always full of family. Four grandchildren, offspring of one of the elder daughters born in Illinois, lived in the household in 1880. By 1900 Talmadge was a widower and his household was run by his unmarried daughter, Mary Jane, "Minnie". His daughter, Lotta Haskell, a widow, and her two children, Ernestina and Ernest Stacy, lived with the Talmadge household, but by 1910 only the Haskell grandchildren and Minnie remained.



The original house was parallel to the river. A wing was added later which formed the house into an L-shape. For years the windows were hung with workable outside louver shutters

painted green. The shutters were removed recently when the house was modernized and renovated extensively, with wrought iron bars added to the windows. Double front porches with wrought iron railings were also added. There was an outside door in the second floor L wing front, where a window was recently installed.

When Talmadge died in 1914, he left the house to his daughter, Minnie. She in turn left it to her nephew, Edgar D. Turner, Jr., in whose family it remains.

In 2015 Steven M. Avella, a professor at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (and a Sacramento County native) writes in his book "Charles K. McClatchy and the Golden Era of American Journalism:

Held in Contempt

A lurid and sensational story hit the papers and landed in the court of Judge Catlin. This involved a wealthy Courtland farmer, advanced in years, named Charles V. Talmadge. He had met a young prostitute named Marta in a Second Street bordello in Sacramento, fell in love, and set her up in more respectable quarters. The lonely Talmadge married Marta and took her to his Courtland ranch. He also moved in his daughter, Mary Jane. From the start the differences in age and temperament between the newlyweds soured their bliss. Young Marta was eager for life and frivolity while Talmadge could hardly keep up with her. Talmadge's daughter grew increasingly distrustful of Marta, whose penchant for shopping and demands for money became more insistent. Eventually the couple decided to divorce, and during the proceedings Marta accused Talmadge of being mean, suspicious, and abusive. Likewise, she asserted that the daughter treated her poorly. Talmadge suggested that Marta had not given up her whoring ways and that he had married her while in a drunken state—in fact the officer who married them in San Francisco was not even empowered to do so. The *Bee's* copious reports of the proceedings made for exciting reading, and the couple divorced; Marta was awarded \$40 per month alimony, though she had requested \$100.

Talmadge's attorneys challenged the accuracy of a *Bee* reporter who laid out Marta Talmadge's allegations against her husband. Judge Catlin himself denounced portions of the *Bee* May 28, 1896, account of the trial as "grossly false. . . a fabrication." In a stinging editorial of May 29, CK poured out his ire at the venerable Catlin, 'defending the reporter's accuracy and referring to Catlin as "a czar in the courts" and deriding him in an adjacent column, "Hail A. P. Catlin, Czar!" CK scolded the judge, who had decided the proceedings should remain secret, and suggested that withholding the official court transcript implied that Catlin was fearful the reporter would be vindicated. In one last blast at Catlin, CK noted, "The *Bee* takes pride in being fair and truthful, in apologizing when it is wrong, but in refusing to budge one inch when it is right." CK also lambasted "the peculiar judicial proceeding by Judge A.P. Catlin." Catlin struck back. Charles T. Jones, Talmadge's attorney, swore out an affidavit accusing CK of contempt of court, and the editor was arrested on the morning of June 2, 1896. CK's friends, William J. Hassett and Al Johnston, posted his bail. In a swift hearing McClatchy was found guilty. Catlin intended to return him to jail and fine him \$500 but refrained from pronouncing a jail sentence at the suggestion of some fellow jurists. The case was eventually appealed to the state Supreme Court, and both the *San Francisco Examiner* and the *San Francisco Call* backed the *Bee's* position. In the waning days of 1897, the Supreme Court overturned the contempt citation and decreed McClatchy had been denied his constitutional right to speak in his defense.

Musings from your Editor Of Christmases Past

By Kathleen Graham Hutchinson

As a grade schooler at Bates Joint Union Elementary School in Courtland I remember Christmas Assemblies where was was it? Mr. (Harold) Schilling our principal and his helpers – was our wonderful janitor Mr. Henry Span a helper? – handed out small bags of Christmas candy to each pupil. (The 8th grade filled the bags.) This was followed by a short assembly, then followed

by a movie: Abbott & Costello, Woody Woodpecker or Tom & Jerry.

How exciting it was the last day of school before vacation. It was a half day and how thrilling it was to load onto the buses (which always left in a specific order) to leave for a two week vacation!

I remember the big cedar deodora (pine) tree in front of the Walnut Grove Hotel covered in colorful Christmas lights and the chain fence draped in the same colorful lights.

The pine trees in front of Courtland High School were festooned with lights. Was the big pine tree (planted years earlier by 8th grader Bill Barry at the school's dedication) decorated with lights, too??

Those of us who were piano students of Ada Barry in Walnut Grove were treated to a students' only party (great fun) and recital (fun?) held in the public hall located in back of the then Post Office (Lufkin Building). The hall had a small proscenium stage and was reached by an outside catwalk along the alley side of the building.

And can anyone in Courtland forget druggist Bill Westerberg dressed as Santa Claus? No one could have been a better fit.

Store windows were painted with ads and winter wonderland themes and scenes. Tony's Place never took down its Christmas scene above the bar.

Can't forget the tule fog when all the Christmas lights looking blurry – if you could see them at all!

Can our readers jot down their memories of Christmases past or any other Delta memories and send them to Esther Koopman for future newsletters? We welcome them! Personal memories make history engaging.

My younger sister Marilyn "Murmie" Graham Lawson remembers and eithth grader dressed as Santa Claus.

(President's Notes continued from page 1)

I must mention our Board member Esther Koopman who keeps the Resource Center humming every Tuesday morning. As Corresponding Secretary, Esther is busy taking care of correspondence, memberships, inquiries, mailings, computer work, etc., etc. She is helped full-time by member Connie Salzwedel, and part-time by members Douglas Hsia and Robyn Brown. A huge thank you to Esther and also the volunteers who help her. If any of you have

some time to spare on Tuesday mornings and you would like to help at the Resource Center, please email Esther and let her know. She will find a project for you sure to pique your interest. The Resource Center is a treasure trove of Sacramento Delta history and it's so very interesting to explore its contents!

A big thank you is due to the talented Delta artist Dan Harris, who produces the wonderful annual Pear Fair posters. Dan has given to the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society a new rendition of our logo, which we will use on our stationery, etc. The new logo represents us so well. This is a generous gift of time and talent, and we couldn't be more delighted!

The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society is involved in outreach to the communities surrounding the Delta. This lets people know of our existence. It's surprising how many people know very little or nothing about the Sacramento River Delta and the histories of the unique communities here and their importance to California history. Board members man our table every year, as you know, in the Courtland Pear Fair, helping to set up the historical photo display provided by the Clarksburg Library and answering any questions we can about this unique area. There are many people from out of town who are delighted to attend the Pear Fair, eat the pear goodies, experience a small-town atmosphere, and learn about Delta history and our organization. We also participated in the Farm to Fork Festival on September 24 in downtown Sacramento and in the Sacramento Archives Crawl on October 8, both providing opportunities to let people learn about us.

Thank you for all your support and your interest in keeping alive the history of this beautiful, unique area of California. Hope to see you at the Annual Potluck!

Warm wishes to all of you and the very the best in 2017.

Barbara Damion, President

Advertisements Found in Old La Prieta Yearbooks

John Skinner
BARBER
Courtland California

1928

W. P. CLARKE
Telephone Courtland 163

GEO. C. DOBBINS
Telephone Courtland 1092

CLARKE & DOBBINS
FIRE INSURANCE
PROMPT AND COURTEOUS ATTENTION
OUR MOTTO
YOUR BUSINESS SOLICITED

Office N. S. G. W. Hall
Courtland California

Telephone Courtland 132

1921

HOTEL SIMONI
A. LAZZARINI, Proprietor

SPECIAL RAVIOLI AND CHICKEN DINNERS
ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Phone Courtland 1216

VORDEN, CALIF.

1921

Pacific Fruit Exchange

Main Office
San Francisco

H. A. Ross, District Representative
Courtland, California

1928

Walnut Grove Service Station
RICH-HELD, ASSOCIATED, STANDARD
GASOLINE AND OILS
E. J. RYAN

Electric Rep. Ice Cream

Cigarettes, Tobacco, Candy

1929

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Susan Bryson from Walnut Grove
- Michael Chaddick from San Rafael
- Robert Gorham from Sacramento
- Dan Harris from Courtland
- Kay Dix, Inc. from Walnut Grove
- Diane Peek from Walnut Grove
- Debra Schwab from Rio Vista
- Seymour Ranch from Brookilyn, NY
- Tisha Voeller from Huntington Beach
- Walnut Grove Rotary Club from Walnut Grove
- Bill Wells from Sacramento

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RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

We have sad news to relate to you. **Bobbie Collier** passed away in September of this year. She was the person who organized our Resource Center so we could help other people do research. She was invaluable at the Center as well as on the SRDHS Board. She is missed!

Would you like to help? We work almost every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please call Esther at 916-777-2227 to make sure we will be there and join us.

INFORMATION

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society web site is srdhs.org. Please view and enjoy the information. If you wish to email the resource center, the email address is srdhs@riverdeltawireless.com

SRDHS 2017 SCHEDULE

- January 17.....General Meeting/Annual Potluck
- February 21.....Board Meeting
- March 21.....General Meeting
- April 18.....Board Meeting
- May 16.....General Meeting
- June 20.....Board Meeting
- June Newsletter
- July/August.....Summer Break
- September 19.....General Meeting
- October 17.....Board Meeting
- November 21.....General Meeting
- December.....Board Meeting
- December Newsletter

DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THIS GREAT PUBLICATION???

Then make sure you pay your 2017 dues – Use this form or one of our handy dues envelopes

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____

- I’m paying Annual dues for the following year(s):
 - 2017 2018 Other _____
 - \$25.00 a year for Annual Membership
- I’ve enclosed \$150 to become a Lifetime Member
- I’d like to register as an Honorary Member – Free to those members 80 years and older

Please mail this form with a check payable to SRDHS to:
 SRDHS Membership
 P.O. Box 293
 Walnut Grove, CA 95690

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

We would like to thank all those who made memorial contributions to the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society.

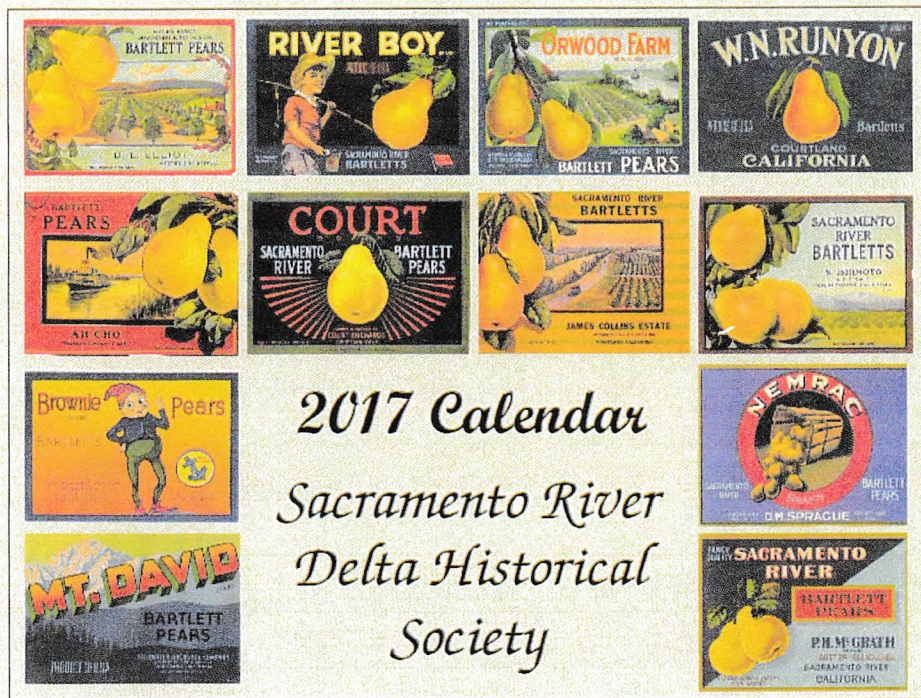
NEWSLETTER STAFF

Editor..... Kathleen Hutchinson
 Design/Layout..... Esther Koopman

*The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society publishes the Sacramento River Delta Society Newsletter twice a year.

NEW "2017" PEAR LABEL CALENDAR SACRAMENTO RIVER DELTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This is the cover of the delightful 2017 Calendar representing more Pear Labels from Jim Dahlberg's Collection Each month shows a different Pear Label and there is one page with explanations of each of the labels shown.



The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society's "Pear Label" Calendar for 2017 may be at the Resource Center and at the Society meetings. You may also order the calendar by filling out the form below and mailing it with your check to:

SRDHS
P O Box 293
Walnut Grove, CA 95695

The price for each 2017 calendar is \$15.00 plus postage
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 calendar price is \$10 each plus postage

If you wish to have the calendar(s) mailed **please add the following postage:**

- 1 Calendar \$2.00 postage
- 2 Calendars \$3.05 postage
- 3 - 6 calendars \$6.45 for priority mail (2 to 3 day delivery)

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Calendar Order Form

Please send _____ 2017 calendars @ \$15 per calendar
____2012 ____2013 ____2014 ____2015__2016 calendars @ \$10 per calendar

Enclosed is payment in the amount of \$ _____ (**include postage in total**)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____