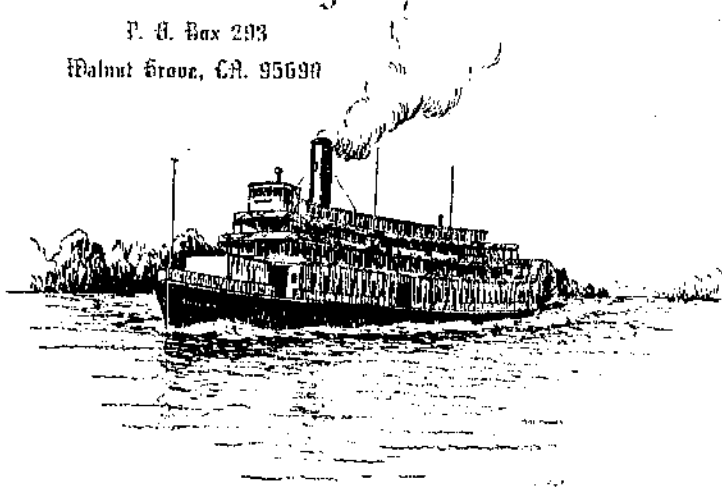


Sacramento River Delta
Historical Society

P. O. Box 293
Walnut Grove, CA. 95690



Volume IV, Issue 1

News from the SRDHS

January, 1982

New Staffing Plan For Museum

The Board of Directors would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to Emma Pratt, who with the help of her husband, Clarence, has staffed the Dai Loy Museum with volunteers each weekend for this year's season from March to November. This is, perhaps, the most demanding and continuous job in the Society.

Due to the particular difficulty in obtaining someone to replace Emma in this position, the Board has decided to try another method to staff the museum:

Enclosed you will find a self-addressed and stamped postcard. Please make three choices of days you would like staff the museum, and return the postcard by March 1st. If we do not receive a card from you, a date will be assigned to you. You will receive a list of all dates and all staffers for those dates. If you find you are unable to sit the day you are assigned, you are requested to find an adult substitute by trading with one of the members on the list or by asking a new member to fill the slot.

The Board expects that each member will be responsible for sitting only once a year. Those members living at a distance of more than 30 miles will be exempt. In ample time, all staffers will receive a postcard reminder in advance of the day they are expected at the museum.

Without the sustained interest and help of all members, the Society will not be able to open the museum regularly each weekend. The museum is an important supporting feature of the society, as well as a unique contribution to the historical variety of California's cultural past. It is hoped that we will all do our part; otherwise, the museum may be closed to all but booked parties, which are now handled separately as an addition to the independent visitor. During the 1981 season the Dai Loy Museum was host to 11,443 guests. A surprising number were from other countries throughout the world, and most states were represented judging by those who signed the visitor's register. On Labor Day weekend 300 people toured the museum on Saturday, and another 250 came on Sunday.

Do fill out your card today, and state your willingness to back this important project.

Annual Meeting

The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society cordially invites all members and friends to the six annual meeting and the third gala dinner to be held on Monday evening, January 18, 1982. Invitations will soon be in the mail listing details of the potluck meal which Chairman Maridell Salisbury and her principle committeemen, Chris Stefani, Margaret Salisbury, and Katy Moser, are organizing. The dinner will be held at St. Anthony's Parish Hall in Walnut Grove. Each family is asked to provide a main dish, salad, or dessert and to indicate their selection when responding to the announcement. Wine, bread, coffee, and beverage will be furnished.

The evening's festivities will begin at 6:30 p.m. with light-hearted musical entertainment by an instrumental combo featuring the current music intern from the Walnut Grove Elementary School. A slide show program of vintage photos, similar to those which have proved very popular in previous years, will test the mettle of any local history buff's recall.

A short business meeting will include nominations and election of officers for the 1982 year and reports on the museum and other continuing programs.

All members are urged to attend, and guests are most welcome. Early responses will be helpful in arranging seating and making serving preparations.

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Letters

MiSc.

FROM
Conference of California Historical Societies

Dear Members,

I am so very happy to serve as your Regional Vice President this coming year. I would like to know what you are doing and when your meetings are held. I will try to visit you this year.

We are very busy in the Yolo County Historical Society with our project, the Woodland Opera House, after ten years it is getting thru the final stages--the last decorating job is fun--but we are raising another \$400,000 to finish. Whata job!!!

I am President of the Yolo County Museum Association, a new group that is restoring a farm mansion which, when completed, will be Yolo County's first museum. Lots of work.....

With best wishes to you. Sincerely,

Mrs. Jane Reiff
Woodland, California

The California State Department of Parks and Recreation Interpretation Unit visited the museum this summer. With the group was the designer for the Angel Island Immigration Station museum display. They had come, in their words, "to study the excellent displays."

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In July, Kathie Graham gave a talk on the history of the Sacramento Delta to visiting members of the California Grape and Tree Fruit League.

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1982 BOARD

The nominating committee of the Society has named the following slate of officers to be presented at the January meeting for election:

- President-Kathie Graham
- Vice Presidents-Linda and Ed Dutra
- Treasurer-John Salisbury
- Board Members-Arthur Brown (Walnut Grove)
- Tom McDonald (Clarksburg)
- Lyman Wright (Walnut Grove)

Those Board Members who are serving the second year of their terms are

- Clarence Pratt
- Yvonne Pylman
- Neil Hamilton
- Frank Wilcox
- Robert James.

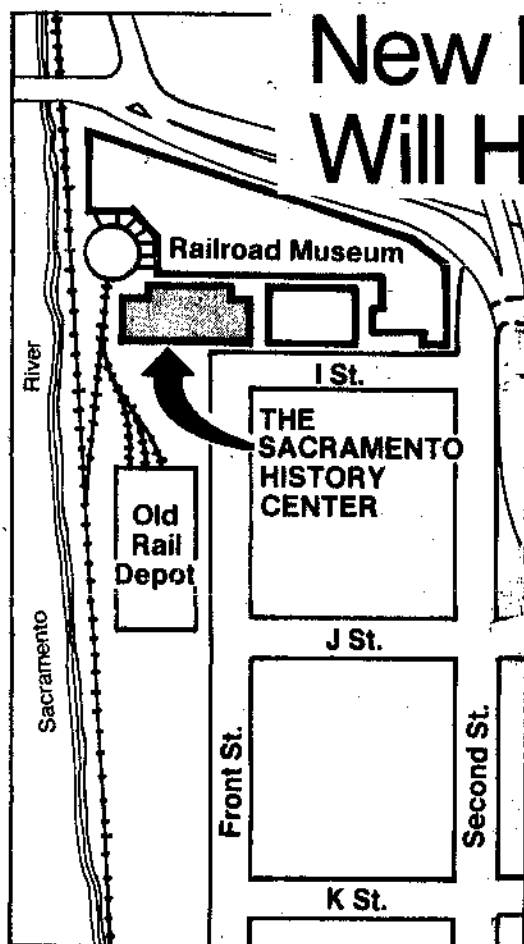
Immediate Past President Judy Merwin is also appointed to the board.

FROM
Jeanette E. Fletcher
75 Fountainhead Court
Martinez, California
94553

Jeanette Fletcher is the great-great-granddaughter of James Sims, one of the founding fathers of Courtland. He was the town's first postmaster. She is seeking a photograph of the first post office in Courtland. Please contact her at the above address.

FROM
Clarisse Jonson
Courtland, California

Clarisse Jonson is gathering material on the town of Courtland in preparation for writing a book on its history. Clarisse would be interested in hearing from any of the SRDHS members with information, whatever it might be, with respect to Courtland.



New History Center Will Have Old Face

The Sacramento History Center, which was the topic of the SRDHS March 17, 1980 meeting with Project Archivist, Lawrence Hibpsham, was also featured in the Sacramento Bee of December 18, 1981. Architectural plans reveal that the museum, which will contain the latest in 20th century exhibition technology, will be a replica of a 50 by 127 foot, two-story structure built in 1854 to house Sacramento's City Hall. The center will be located adjacent to the state Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento at Front and I Streets.

The Sacramento History Center project has been designed "to establish a regional history museum, archive, and visitors center to present the social, cultural, and material history of the Sacramento Valley and to be a repository of artifacts, documents, and film which have been collected and preserved for use by present and future generations."

The project is funded by a combination of public and private support. Consideration is now being given to selling an estimated 1 million bricks from the presently buried foundation of the original structure to help finance the project.

Gifts

The Dai Loy Museum has received a number of gifts for display this past year. All of the exhibits in Locke have been donated by those wishing to share items of the past with visitors.

Brother Dennis of St. Mary's College, Moraga, made a gift of an old straw hat, straw war shield, wooden spear and a wooden flute, which will be added to the displays.

Marie Camozzi, former operator of the Tules Restuarant, donated a framed photograph, and several account books were received from Tim Wilson. Russ Orr presented the Society with boxes of miscellaneous Chinese language documents from Locke. Asian Imports donated several original lottery sheets and an account book. The museum also received a one-hand Ma-jong set.

A special thanks to all these good members for their generosity. These gifts enrich the Historical Society, making its projects more meaningful to all.

The Society has received a gift
in memory of

MRS. CLARA BELL LORD SALISBURY.

The SRDHS welcomes memorials and other contributions at all times. They may be sent in care of the Society to P.O. Box 293, Walnut Grove, 95690. An appropriate note will inform family members of the memorial.

vital importance to the museum, has also been received. Linda and Ed Dutra have donated and installed two fire extinguishers (with pressure up to date and standard) for the protection of the building. Many thanks to the Dutras for their thoughtfulness.

The following listing, taken from the December 17, 1981, Sacramento Bee, may be of interest to those engaged in genealogical studies:

Where To Go To Find Yqur Roots

- Genealogical Record, the National Archives. Free pamphlet available from National Archives, Washington, D.C. 20408; 523-8218
- For a recorded message about resources within the archives: 202-523-3204.
- The National Institute on Genealogical Research, courses for beginning and advanced family historians. Call, 202-633-6983
- Genealogical Computing, a newsletter on computer applications for genealogy, published by Data Transfer Associates, 5102 Pommeroy Dr., Fairfax, VA. 22032.
- The Board for Certification of Genealogists, listing of family-history researchers (about \$7.50 to \$25 an hour) available for \$2 and a self-addressed business envelope, stamped with 2 oz. postage: PO Box 19165, Washington D.C.

News and Review

At the November Board of Directors meeting many new and continuing projects were reviewed and discussed. The following report outlines some of the important decisions and programs planned for the coming year.

In that the SRDHS was founded, as the By-laws, Section 1, state, for educational reasons: "The purposes of the organization shall be to preserve the historical heritage of the Sacramento River Delta, to promote a greater public awareness of Sacramento River Delta history, and to educate the public with regard to the importance of the Sacramento River Delta's history," the Board of Directors discussed constructing a small room or building to preserve for research and, perhaps, future display, historical materials which have been presented to the Society. A central, easy to reach location would be desirable, and considerations of safety and weather-proofing must also be taken into account. Anyone with suggestions is asked to contact Frank Wilcox at 775-1371

* * *

In 1981, the SRDHS joined The National Trust for Historic Preservation and The American Association of State and Local History. The Board felt that memberships in these groups, along with those in the California Historical Society and The Conference of California Historical Societies would be beneficial and broaden the outlook of the local organization.

* * *

The Oral History Program, which would record the voices and thoughts of Delta citizens with knowledge of the area's earlier days, is progressing well. Several new tapes have been made and work is proceeding with interviews, transcribing, editing, and indexing. Anyone interested in helping with any phase of the project should contact Kathie Graham at 775-1041.

* * *

A booklet featuring historic homes of the Delta is now in the planning stages. Old photos or drawings of homes which have been razed or otherwise destroyed, and which were outstanding in any way--whether by ownership, location, architecture, or circumstance--are sought by Frank Wilcox, who is directing the assembly of the publication.

* * *

Frank Wilcox (phone 775-1371 or contact at any of the society's meetings) is also in charge of collecting information for historical interest maps of the Delta. A set of these maps will show modern topography along with the location of sites: buildings, businesses, events, transportation, homes, etc. from the past. Recollections of places and things are solicited from all members and friends.

* * *

The Board adopted a new plan for staffing the Dai Loy Museum during its seasonal opening. Details are featured on the front sheet of this newsletter, and members are urged to respond by mailing the enclosed postcard.

CHS's 100 Year Club

The California Historical Society has begun to focus on the "important contributions of businesses to the state's growth and development" in connection with its new Historic Register Program. Those eligible are "all business enterprises that have conducted the same or related business activity for at least the last 100 years, regardless of change in location, ownership, or name, are eligible for placement on the Register of Historic California Businesses. Farms and ranches that have been owned by the same family for the last 100 years qualify. Verification of the founding year of the business is required; acceptable documentation includes copies of incorporation papers, dated letter-heads, or listings in an early city directory or trade journal or another piece of material with a documenting data." When the current survey is completed, CHS will publish (and periodically update) a Register or directory of California's centennial businesses. In addition, by enlarging the CHS Library's business archives, the Register will encourage research and publication in the field of business history. The CHS is eager to hear from anyone interested in this project. Contact Paula Huntley, "The Register of Historic California Businesses", California Historical Society, 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco, California, 94109.

Correction

In the last issue of the SRDHS Newsletter, the article on the Alex Brown Family contained an inaccuracy. Many apologies are offered, and the complete story with correction is reprinted below:

Vignettes of Alex Brown and Family

A fascinating saga of Alex Brown and his family was shared with the SRDHS membership at the May 18th meeting in Walnut Grove. Francis Brown brought interesting vignettes of the early days of the Brown family in the United States and highlights of the early beginnings of Alex Brown's many eventual enterprises and achievements.

Alex was born in 1849 to parents, John and Agnes Brown, who had emigrated from Scotland to Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1839. Mr. Brown, a weaver by trade, soon moved his family to Lawrence, Mass. When Alex was nine, his father died, leaving a widow and 6 children - 4 of which died in youth. Mrs. Brown and the children made two trips to California - eventually settling in San Francisco. Alex had left school at the age of 12 and while in the east had worked as a clerk in a grocery store four years. Then, in San Francisco, he went into the pork packing business, then to butchering on his own, and then into the fruit and produce business for 5-6 years. In 1871 Alex married Kate Stanford from Blacer county- Kate was 17 and Alex was 22.

In 1879, Alex, Kate and their two sons, John and Arthur, moved to Walnut Grove with his mother. Mrs. Brown purchased the old Walnut Grove hotel from Mrs. John Sharpe and proceeded to run the hotel with Alex's help. Alex went into the fruit business and then opened a general mercantile store. He also began to do extensive farming in the Pierson District and at one period, he was the largest fresh asparagus shipper in the United States.

His oldest son, John, working in the express office in the store was eventually able to accumulate enough money to start a small bank. Although Alex objected to this idea, he finally agreed and helped John to establish a bank - and it was named in honor of his father- The Bank of Alex Brown.

The speaker, Mrs. Hubert Brown, provided a "family tree" chart showing all the relationships - through the generation of Alex Brown's grandchildren. She also read parts of current letters from the three remaining grandchildren - which underscored the feeling of Alex being a "home body".

The history of the Alex Brown family, early pioneers of the Delta, was particularly interesting as it was brought by a member of the Society and focused on the foundations of the local community.

DAI LOY BACKGROUND LOCATION FOR

BBC Broadcast

The British Broadcasting Company filmed at the museum in Locke during August. The footage will be shown on the BBC2 program "Writers and Places" in Great Britain in February of 1982.

The writer who is to be featured in the piece is Maxine Hong Kingston, whose father once managed a gambling house in Stockton. She has authored the best selling books, China Men and Woman Warrior. Each book contains incidents from her personal experiences and reflects upon the bonds which tie the Chinese immigrants to their homeland.

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