

# Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

## NEWSLETTER

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

— *Walt Whitman*

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 13, No. 1

JUNE 1993

### SOCIETY NOTES

#### ANNUAL DINNER

The year got off to a strong start with the Annual Potluck dinner. Everyone had a good time in spite of inclement weather and a date change. The food, including roast beef, maintained the usual excellent standards of Historical Society cooks. Fabulous desserts and an extraordinary coffee finished the meal. The speaker was Author Stan Cohen who spoke on World War II. His book V for Victory: America's Home Front During WWII is considered the definitive review of the United States during the war. History for some; nostalgia for others: an air raid warden's arm band and "Miss Liberty's" crown added color to the evening. The atmosphere was enhanced by tapes of the popular music of the time. Cathy Hemly organized the evening and JoAnn Wiseman managed the dinner, assisted by Lillian and Leonard Souza, Jan Quesenberry, Mary Fulster, and Doris and Gerry Waterworth. Arrangements, decorations and programs are challenging jobs. —OUR GENUINE AND HEARTFELT THANKS!

The officers for the 1993 year are: President Leonard Souza, Vice-President Cathy Hemly, Recording Secretary Terry Alchorn, Corresponding Secretary Carol Watson, Treasurer Clarice Jonson, and Past President James Dahlberg. The Directors are Robert James, Don Quesenberry, Jerald Waterworth, Becky Wheeler, Tom Herzog, Marshall Pylman, Jim Tracy and Gene Wiseman. Mary Fulster is Membership Chairperson and Kathy Hutchinson Newsletter Editor.

#### MARCH MEETING

The March meeting held at Bates School on Monday, March 15, drew a large crowd. Robert Arceo, Becky Elliott and Chris Burr spoke entertainingly on the restoration of three nineteenth century Delta homes (see article, page 5). Cathy Hemly arranged for the speakers and photographed the homes while Don Quesenberry arranged for the facilities and Jan Quesenberry, Doris Waterworth and Cathy Hemly served refreshments. The evening was delightful—a great big thank you to those who participated.

#### RESOURCE CENTER

AT LAST! We can announce the opening of the HISTORY RESOURCE CENTER. Located in the Jean Harvie Center, the Center will be open the first Tuesday of each month from 10 am until noon. It will also be open by appointment. We have been able to protect our present collections and have some space for additions. We continue to work on sorting and labeling current file holdings. We found the collection policy which will be published at a later date. Immediately available are copies of the Courtland High School yearbook, La Perita, from 1917 to 1967. We thought we had all the class

pictures that were in the halls but some of the people who borrowed them for "reunions" have not returned them because they thought no one cared. NOW THEY DO! We have several boxes of items about Walnut Grove, Courtland, Hood, Ryde, Locke, Isleton, Rio Vista and the Delta in general. People have already visited the center to trace ancestors or to find a family picture. A grand exhibit is planned in the relatively near future. Meanwhile, if you have borrowed any of the artifacts, now would be a good time to return them. Our collection includes photographs, newspaper clippings, books, oral histories, maps, slides and videotapes. It is a great place to browse.

We are particularly interested in pictures of the Delta. People, houses, ferries, schools, farm equipment, boats—anything that was in the Delta area from 1830 to the present. If you do not want to donate pictures, we can arranged to have them copied so that we can both enjoy them. If you have something to share, call Robert James (776-1892) or James Dahlberg (776-1923).

#### MAY MEETING

Our May meeting was a great success. We visited the Rio Vista Museum. It is a wonderful, well-organized and beautifully maintained "attic" in which it is great fun to poke around. Our thanks to the docents for the evening: Mary Bell O'Connell (President of the Rio Vista Museum Society), Florence Lauzon, Milly Tudhope, Bill Brann and Irwin Anderson. It is the kind of place you can visit again and again and something new will catch your eye. There are many newspapers with fascinating stories such as the Yosemite tragedy, 1906 San Francisco earthquake, wars and many other world and local historic events. There are lots of homey artifacts: butter making equipment, very early juicers, grates, washing machines and many cooking utensils. Transportation and farm equipment abound. There is an early Postal Delivery Coach and, to quote the Museum pamphlet, "a 'Go Devil' used to bunch hay, the 'Montezuma Chisel' used to prepared adobe soil and a grain wagon." If it is your first or tenth visit, go again. The museum at 16 N. Front Street, Rio Vista, is open Saturday and Sunday from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

#### THANKS

Great good fortune has come our way!!! The Alex Brown Branch of the First Interstate Bank has donated an elderly copier to the Society for use in the Resource Center. We often dreamed of having a copier available but never thought it would be possible. It's hard to know how to thank First Interstate and Mr. Patrick Ryan, manager, in particular.

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## A PETITE HISTORY OF SACRAMENTO

By William Holden

(The State Historical Society Magazine)

Indians were once the landlords of the Central Valley, having arrived at least 10,000 years before any other comers. On the floodplain where Sacramento stands, thousand of Nisenan, a southern branch of the Maidu, dwelled in dome-shaped houses built of willow saplings.

Their long and in some ways idyllic tenure came to a shattering finale in the 1800's. Persecution drove the Indians off their lands turning them into homeless refugees. Furthermore, war and diseases carried by trappers, prospectors and other settled decimated the Indians. One of the early settlers was John Sutter, who left Switzerland as a fugitive, when creditors put a warrant out for his arrest. He had no inkling he was launching himself on a five-year, 200,000-mile odyssey to the grass shacks of Honolulu, to the frozen Mountains of New Archangel in Russian Alaska, and to the pueblo of Yerba Buena on San Francisco Bay.

And finally, his catch-as-catch-can expedition sailed and rowed up the Rio de Sacramento, into the heart of the California wilderness, and landed on the bank of the American River. The date was August 12, 1839, and Sacramento was born.

Sutter fled Switzerland in darkness, and then built an empire in the sun, half a world away. But a tidal wave called the Gold Rush took it away from him.

Sacramento exploded from a tent city to a boomtown. Fortune seekers, perhaps disenchanted with prospecting in the hills, prospected in the pockets of miners, by filling the need for supplies, food and entertainment. Entertainment was offered by gambling halls, raffish saloons, bawdy houses and theaters.

The Pony Express galloped in and out of Sacramento, to and from St. Joseph, Mo., between April 1860 and October 1861, carrying the mail cross country in only 10 days. The telegraph soon replaced the Pony Express but not before it demonstrated that a trail over the Sierra Nevada was passable in winter—amazing to all who remembered the Donner Party in 1846.

In 1863, construction of the western half of the transcontinental railroad began in Sacramento. Thousands of Chinese were imported to work bridging ravines, tunneling through granite mountains, grading roadbed and laying track. Their most notable achievement was to lay 10 miles of track in one day, a record never broken.

Completion of the Central Pacific Railroad brought immense riches to a few men who invested in the venture, notably the Big Four. Edwin Crocker, brother of Charles Crocker, also amassed a fortune, as the railroad's legal counsel. He built the Crocker Art Museum, the first west of the Mississippi, and toured Europe, purchasing art to display in it.

On his death, in 1875, his magnanimous widow, Margaret, donated the building and its contents to the City of Sacramento. Margaret herself built a beautiful glass arboretum for the city at W, X, Y, 7th and 8th Streets. Similar in design to the arboretum, the Bell Conservatory, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, was razed at the turn of the century.

Completion of the railroad in 1869 ushered trainloads of freight passengers into Sacramento. Passengers bound for San Francisco stepped across the levee to sternwheelers, the "floating palaces" waiting to steam them on the final leg of the journey.

Meanwhile, fires, floods, financial panics, bloody shootouts and cholera wrote lurid chapters in the Sacramento story. The worst fire leveled most of the city's business district in 1852 and floods, costly in lives and property, bashed the city time and time again. But Sacramento wouldn't be kept down.

(For the rest of this story,  
read "Subterranean Labyrinth," page 4)

## ORAL HISTORY

Josiah Buckman Greene came from the state of New Hampshire to San Francisco in 1849. Noting the price of produce, he decided to invest in farm land. He bought a large parcel of land in the Sacramento River Delta. Part of the land was on Merritt Island in Yolo County and another portion in Sacramento County on the river just above Randall Island. Mr. Greene was the great grandfather of Lenore Greene Hemly Allen who chats knowledgeably of the Delta and its history in an interview with Jan Quesenberry.

Three houses were built. One, located on Merritt Island, was pre-cut and shipped from Boston around the Horn. It had to be torn down in the very early 1960's. Nearby, Josiah's brother, Sylvester, built a house. He did not stay long due to intermittent malaria. George Buckman Greene, Josiah's son, lived in Sylvester's house after his marriage until a house on the Sacramento County side at the head of Randall Island was completed. George's son, Arthur, took over Sylvester's house.

Three schools are mentioned. One (Jefferson) on Merritt Island above the Greene home. This school joined the Bates School in Courtland. A second school (Richland) was located below Hood where the Roberts now live, and a third (Courtland) at the oak tree where Joe Greene Jr. lives.

Discussion of high water and levee building is most interesting—including Grandmother taking bread from the oven just before it flooded. The pontoon bridges used in the winter when the current was too swift for ferries are also described.

If you want to spend a pleasant morning wandering through the history of the Sacramento River Delta, borrow a transcript from the Resource Center in Walnut Grove.

## MERRITT ISLAND

Merritt Island was named for Ezekiel Merritt who was rumored to have lived on the foot of the island along Sutter Slough, with his native American wife and two children. While living on Merritt, John Charles Fremont recruited him to participate in the Bear Flag Revolt in Sonoma County.

The first American settlers on the island were Josiah Buckman Greene and his brother, Sylvester Greene. In 1848 they arrived in California from Virginia. Josiah went to the mines and two years later bought 500 acres on Merritt Island. There were terrible floods in January 1850 and all Josiah and his brother, Sylvester, could see, when they finally located their property, was one small hillock. Nonetheless, Josiah returned to Virginia for his wife and son and erected a house, prefabricated in the East, on the hillock. By 1852 he began a tidal levee. His descendants still farm the area today.

When one of the Greene descendants who had an only son felt there was too much land for one family, he carefully chose the Pylman and Herzog families to purchase some of his land because he felt that they would be good farmers and good neighbors. The Pylmans emigrated from the Netherlands and the Herzogs from Austria.

Nelson Bump settled at the foot of Merritt Island. In 1872 he and his wife built their house on an artificial mound above the river berm. Their daughter, Lydia Bump Thomas, inherited the property and lived in the house. In 1906, after her husband died, the Thomas company was formed to farm the property. The Thomas Ranch was sold in the early 1990's.

Another early Merritt resident, John Smith, "Uncle Johnny," in 1881 with his bride, Sara Morse, moved into a houseboat moored to his property. Later when high levees were built the boat was moved onto land and a second story added to make the house where they raised their 12 children. Some of the children married into the old Merritt families of Pylman and Heringer, knitting the island more closely.

Jeremiah S. Colby settled on Merritt Island after the Civil War. He was a stone mason and had built bridges throughout the southeastern United States. When the Civil War commenced and the competing armies began to demolish many of his bridges, he went to New Orleans, took ship, crossed the Isthmus of Panama and in 1869 arrived in Sacramento where he became Chief Mason on the State Capitol. As the Chief Mason he convinced the architect/engineer to change from soft Loomis granite to harder Folsom granite. Colby's granddaughter, Georgia Williams, suggests that the change in granites may account for the fact that in 1976 when the Capitol was restored the foundation was found to be very strong and in excellent condition. The Capitol's foundation is the original! Colby later went to the mines for a brief time and then purchased the Jones Ranch on the back of Merritt Island. His son married the girl next door, Ann Berkenkamp. Georgia Williams lives today in her grandfather Jeremiah's house. The house was moved back when the levee was built and turned to face south instead of facing Elk Horn Slough.

Verne and Frances Bogle moved from the back of Grand Island to the back of Merritt Island. A generation of hard work and good farming and their children, Warren Bogle and Muriel Bogle Cook, had established ranches along Elk Slough. Some of the grandchildren operated wineries in the area and today grandson Chris Bogle farms land stretching the breadth of the island.

In 1849 James Waterbury settled in what is now the Holland Land area. During the Civil War he went east to serve as a scout for the North. He met

and married Mary Glaville. They came west over the Isthmus of Panama route during which Mary caught malaria. They raised their family in a house on stilts on the land along Netherlands Road, eventually occupied by Gus Olson. The Waterburys had six children: Ernest, Flora, Frank, Lilly, Burt, and the youngest daughter, Laura Adele. Burt Waterbury ran the Hood Ferry until one year during high water he fell overboard and drowned. Another brother, Ernie Waterbury, lived with his wife Grace on Road 141 on Merritt Land. They had two daughters, Ralpa and Leona, who was a medicinal herbist. Laura Adele Waterbury was born in 1881. She was an outdoors person—she took hunters out in rowboats to find ducks. She drove a team of horses and rode her "machine" (bicycle) to Sacramento to take piano lessons. She also herded cattle, from horseback, in the summers. When Laura was 12 her mother took a train trip home. During the year her mother was gone Laura became very ill and grew six inches—to a height of six feet. Laura married Edward Everett Hudson and moved to a small house behind the Cornish house on Merritt Island. Edward was a dairyman. Later while he ran the steam pumps for the reclamation district they lived in the district house. Laura and Edward eventually bought the Hinsdale ranch located on Merritt Island. They had two children, George and Edith. Edward Hudson moved houses as well as farming. Most of the houses along the front of Merritt Island had to be moved when the levees were improved. It would be interesting to know exactly how this was done. Laura Adele remained on the ranch until her death in the 1950's. Her son, George, continued to live on the ranch where he and his wife, Polly, raised three children, Helen Adele, James and Merrie. Polly remains on the ranch today.

Graham Connor, a descendent of early Merritt pioneers and a collateral of Josiah Greene, spoke at the November 1992 meeting and shared some Merritt reminiscences. Among them the following:

When a youth Darrell Connor, the Johnston boys and probably some Pylman sons tied a rowboat to a willow tree which was hidden underwater. When the owner, who had rowed across the river to visit his girl, returned after the dark, the fellow rowed across the river many times over before he realized the rowboat was tied to the willow tree.

Uncle Johnny Smith was a market hunter, trapper and fisherman. He had a dog trained to take off your hat if you did not.

In the middle of the island alfalfa was planted by boat on the lake bottom. Later in the year as the lake dried the alfalfa sprouted. When the tule ground was plowed the end of the furrow had to be staked or the whole furrow would fall back into place. It is said that whole tractors disappeared in the mud while reclaiming the Holland Land.

North of the Connor house a large sycamore proved difficult to remove. Three sticks of dynamite failed to dislodge it—the whole box of dynamite propelled part of the tree completely over the three-story Connor house. (Graham never did reveal where the prohibition till was located.)

There are many other early and traditional families on Merritt Island, such as the Krulls and Webers, which we have saved to write about another time. Ninety percent of Merritt Island is related at least by "shirt tail." There once was a complaint that "the next four line officers in Rainbow are from Merritt Island." There were smiles from other Deltans when during a local Merritt uproar someone was accused of nepotism. Merritt Island has always had a spirit of identity of its own.

### SUBTERRANEAN LABYRINTHS

(Taken from "City with a Soggy Past," an article written by Roger Lathe, which appeared in the Neighbors section of the Sacramento Bee.)

Subterranean labyrinths? Shadowy caverns? Dusty relics of long abandoned opium dens? This is the stuff of comic books and bad B movies. It's also part of the folklore of Sacramento, and not entirely fictional.

One of the most improbable parts of our built environment, and a local curiosity, is essentially just a mound of dirt under the sidewalks of Sacramento's central business district.

It's hard for newcomers to believe, but this "hill" under downtown was handmade. In the 1860s and '70s, the street level of several dozen city blocks was raised as much as 18 feet above the natural grade to avoid seasonal flooding.

This was after hundreds of buildings were already in place in the young but booming city. To accommodate the drastic change, many existing brick structures were remodeled with new ground-level entrances into what had been the original second story; the old ground floor became the basement.

Other buildings, including some very large ones, were lifted up to the new level with jack screws. The History Museum has a wonderful old photo of the city's original courthouse (where the new jail now stands at Seventh & I Streets) showing scores of men standing in niches cut into the walls. On command, handles were turned in unison to raise the huge brick pile inch by inch.

This astonishing regrading project was part of a desperate effort that included levee building and relocating the American River, all of which literally saved the city from recurring and devastating floods. Had it not worked, we might all be living in Lodi.

If local development had been sensible from the beginning, actually, we might be living in or commuting to Sutterville, an area of higher and drier ground on the riverfront south of the present William Land Park.

Sutterville was the area where Captain Sutter wanted '49er settlers to build. But his son, John Jr., and partner, Sam Brannan, were as slick a pair of real estate peddlers as ever marketed an underwater lot.

By offering more generous terms and other enticements than Captain Sutter, young Sutter and Brannan persuaded the few early merchants to stay in the area which they were subdividing in what is now "Old Sacramento." The object was profit and only incidentally did it lock in permanently all of the city's future development patterns.

It wasn't a good idea. It took only a couple of rainy winters to provide dramatic illustrations of the drawbacks of building a city exactly where two seasonally flood-prone streams join. "River City" was not only on the river, it was frequently in it.

People drowned and there were heavy property losses. Many advocated abandoning the site and starting again elsewhere. The State Legislature, soggy and disgusted, actually did leave for a period. It took some notable political tap-dancing and arm-twisting to get them back.

There were years of wrangling about what should be done. The merchants, developers, and ordinary citizens who had made considerable investment in the existing area during the 1850's eventually did prevail. In 1864, work began on regrading to get the streets above flood stage.

Starting from the waterfront levee, individual property owners were required to build massive brick retaining walls at curb lines. The streets between were filled with countless wagon loads of dredged sand and gravel packed, tamped, and then smoothed with ox-drawn scrapers. Final grade was made level with the known safe high ground above 10th and I Streets. The toil seemed never ending, but most felt as Mark Twain who remarked: "The patience, money and energy required to prosecute the work to a successful completion are fearful to contemplate, but I think the citizens are equal to the emergency." Grading wasn't always well coordinated, and there are newspaper accounts of pedestrians and even wagon teams falling off the edge where levels changed. Disruptions, hazards and inconvenience continued until 1873, with completion of the area stretching about a dozen blocks between L and I Streets. Over 200 buildings were raised and the streets repaved with cobbles quarried in the Folsom area east of the City. There are still a few street fronts along J Street where spaces remain between the curbside retaining walls and old storefronts of surviving pioneer buildings. Roofed with sidewalks above brick vaulting, some of these chambers have long been used for storage. Some interconnect, forming passageways that were playgrounds for generations of intrepid downtown kids. It's even possible that, as local legends have it, some old under-sidewalk caverns and forgotten sub-basements remain sealed, abandoned with utensils on the floor and calendars on the wall.

There are very few places where you can actually see exposed original bulkheads and buttresses holding up the streets. The most comfortable would be while dining in the sunken patio at Fulton's Prime Rib, at Second and L Streets, where you can see the formidable thickness of the wall retaining the alley grade.

Many local history buffs hope some portion of this work can be displayed as part of some upcoming redevelopment project. The city missed one excellent chance, in planning the new central library, to have a place for the curious to inspect this simple, still functioning masonry. These walls, monuments to victorious battles, should be seen.

THESE OLD HOUSES

The March meeting focused on the restoration of three local landmark houses. Often seen from the outside we now were given the "inside" story.

Robert Arceo told a fascinating tale about the restructuring of the James Collins house located at the back of Grand Island on Steamboat Slough. The house was built in the 1870's and is pictured in "Thompson and West Sacramento County 1880." Robert undertook the work for owner Chiles Wilson. Work began with the removal of a modern addition at the side of the house and the roosting chickens were routed from the kitchen. The foundation was repoured and the house was leveled—even so some of the beams remain at a slight angle from settling over the years on the original fill on which the house was built. The house was then brought back to its original three stories. Windows were restored to their original positions and the front door was updated. The crew took out all the plywood wall covering and did their own cabinet work. Most of the house was tongue and groove redwood. The hardwood floors which had been painted were refurbished. Wall paper was replaced. There was no plumbing in the original house. One room on the upper floor was converted to a bathroom and a closet bathroom was created on the lower floor. The original mahogany staircase was renovated and reinstalled. There were three bedrooms, a living room, dining room, and kitchen. The house has a beautiful view. The one-month project extended over three months and was over budget. Nevertheless, the project is deemed a great success with only a little plaster detailing to complete.

Becky Elliott spoke about the "Dean" house, located on Randall Island. Built by Thomas Webster Dean in 1892 for \$2,000, it remained in the Dean family (occupied by Amy Dean Bishop and later by her son Clyde Bishop) until 1968 when the Elliott family bought the ranch (and house). Richard Elliott moved in in 1982 and brought Becky to the house as a bride in 1985. During the next three years, while raising a young family, they lived shoulder to shoulder with Tom Kornelly who "bit by bit" renovated and restored the house. The house is an Eastlake Stick Style Victorian. The interior had been remodeled in the 1950's. The modern paneling was removed and original lighting fixtures and mantels were restored. Wallpapers were restored or replaced. The fourteen-foot ceilings and the "faux" painted redwood woodwork were restored. (Faux painted wood was widely used in the antebellum homes of the Old South where cedar was usually painted to look like oak. In this case, redwood was painted to look

like oak. This technique was also used to make wood look like marble.) Roman blinds, wainscotting from other areas, a restrained redwood staircase and the original glass front door have been restored. There remains some original wallpaper on ceilings. The house was refigured as four bedrooms and two and one-half baths. Kornelly is a man of all trades. Much reproduction was needed to return the house to its original. The house's restoration is not yet complete.

Current owner Chris Burr entertainingly discussed the ongoing reconstruction and restoration of the Nelson Bump house on Merritt Island. The house was built in 1872 and occupied by the builder until his death in 1904. His daughter, Lydia Thomas, inherited the house. She moved in as a widow sometime after 1910. (Her sister was Mrs. Thomas Webster Dean). Lydia lived in the house until her death in 1924, and her son, Fred Thomas, resided in the house until his death in 1942. (His daughter, Edna Thomas Bishop, who had been taking care of him moved with her husband to the Dean house at that time.) There was a Bump family reunion in 1900 and current efforts are to make the outside of the house look like it did then. The chimney has been taken down and rebuilt for the living room. The dining room-kitchen flue has been removed. Balustrades have been replaced with some from a nearby house. Foundations have been added as well as interior beams. The Dutrass have been in charge. In 1920, a living room was formed by uniting two small parlors. The present fireplace is from the Spreckles house in Oakland. The bathtub located in the master bedroom caused the kitchen ceiling to sag and plastering was necessary in both the kitchen and bedroom. The Burrs were without a kitchen for a year and a half. The redwood and pine siding in the rooms was painted in the 1920's. There were three layers of wallpaper in the family room—one signed in 1929. All woodwork was stripped and refinished. The cabinets were remodeled and the staircase which was always painted stained. And lastly, Burr noted, while working in the house, the tombstone of Sarah T., Nelson's first wife, was found. It is not clear if it was at the burial site or if levee improvement caused relocation.

Work on the houses spawned an interesting, though not historical, debate among Historical Society members about whether it is better to remodel, replicate, renovate or restore a room at a time, a floor at a time, or the whole house at once.

ASK A FRIEND TO JOIN

Do you know someone, family or friend, who would enjoy hearing about and supporting the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society? It's fun to be part of preserving and sharing our local history.

- Regular ..... \$6.00
- Family ..... \$12.00
- Sustaining ..... \$20.00
- Patron ..... \$50.00
- Life ..... \$150.00

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

**BOOKS OF INTEREST**

\* Typical American by Gish Jen. A touching tale of a Chinese immigrant.

\* Chinatown by Gwen Kinkead. An unsparingly honest and sympathetic portrait of the most secretive of American ethnic communities. Reads like a detective story.

Japanese-American Ethnicity: The Persistence of Community by Stephen S. Fugita and David J. O'Brien.

The Japanese-American Experience by David J. O'Brien and Stephen S. Fugita.

Founding the Far West 1840-1890 by David Alan Johnson.

The Great Thirst, Californians and Water 1770's-1990's by Norris Hondly, Jr.

The Anti-Chinese Movement in California by Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer.

In the Floating Army. F.C. Mills Itinerant Life in California 1914. Disguised as a hobo, he moved among the immigrants to collect the information on the river of itinerant workers for the California Commission on Immigration and Housing.

Tahoe Heritage, The Bliss Family of Glenbrook, Nevada by Sessions S. Wheeler with Williams W. Bliss.

\* Available in the Sacramento City-County Library System

**NEIGHBORS**

The San Joaquin Historical Society Newsletter contains a book review of "Stockton Area Pioneers, 1850-1900" by Glenn A. Kennedy. Among many interesting items are biographical paragraphs like the following: "William Biven 1824-1875. Born in New York. In 1854 he started the Stockton Evening Post which later merged with the Stockton Daily Argus. His newspaper was suppressed by the United States Government in 1862 for using treasonable language. After the Civil War, he started the Stockton Evening Herald in 1865 which eventually became the Stockton Record." Sounds like interesting reading.

\* \* \* \* \*

From the Folsom Newsletter we get two items about local roads. "Prairie City Road: built in 1853, abandoned by 1865. Prairie City was once home to 2000 people, had 100 buildings, including 15 stores and a school. Folsom-Auburn Road: once an old stage route was the scene of operations of many outlaw gangs. Gold worth \$10,000 taken in one robbery is reputed still buried there."

\* \* \* \* \*

Yolo County reports a meeting held at "Mary's Chapel." The chapel is located in a cemetery at Yolo County Roads 15 and 98. The earliest burial was believed to be in 1857. The chapel was believed to be named for Mary Pockman whose husband Joseph and son donated the land for the cemetery and chapel. The chapel was burned in 1898 and rebuilt in 1902.

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The Elk Grove Society is working on the restoration of the 1850 Elk Grove Hotel and Stage stop.

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