

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

Greetings to you all! I hope everyone has had an enjoyable holiday season. This time of year seems to fly by, and here we are almost in the New Year!

The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society thrives thanks to all of you and your interest in the history of the Sacramento River Delta. Membership is 230, a very fine number!

Much of the history of the Delta and its communities and residents has been preserved in the archives of the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Resource Center. You are welcome to come in, email, or write any inquiries you have about your family history, Delta communities, historic buildings, etc. These records have been (and continue to be) catalogued by Board Members Esther Koopman and Bobbie Collier, with much help from volunteer Connie Salzwedel. The Resource Center is usually open on Tuesdays, 10-noon. Are there any of you with some extra time on Tuesdays who would like to volunteer at the Resource Center, even for a day or two a month? This would be very appreciated. There is much to do to keep all the records, clippings, maps, etc. in order and to digitize them for easy retrieval. Esther would be delighted to get you started on a project that would be sure to be interesting. Let us know if you can help; we would love to see you!

The 2016 Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Pear Label Calendars are once again available for purchase for yourselves and for gifts. This year's calendar is again outstanding, with beautiful new images chosen from Jim Dahlberg's remarkable collection. Many thanks

to those who have already bought calendars and also to the corporate and individual sponsors who so generously contributed. We sold our calendars at last July's Pear Fair, which just seems to get better every year! We actively participate in the Courtland Pear Fair historic display. Our table there, along with the amazing historical Delta photos collected and displayed by the Friends of the Clarksburg Library, and the display of historical pear packing equipment, all helped to introduce the Delta's history to the many visitors coming from beyond the Delta. It is my hope that this brings increased awareness of the Delta's past and interest in its future well-being.

Tom Herzog, Program Coordinator, lined up some terrific programs this fall, which I hope many of you were able to attend. "Gold Rush Medicine" was presented in September by Dr. Bob LaPerriere, curator of the Museum of Medical History in Sacramento, with 20+ years involvement in Sacramento area history. He recounted the medical treatment rendered by doctors (many not actually medically trained) at the time of the Gold Rush. Devastating diseases at that time killed thousands, including many doctors themselves, and many of the treatments they had were ineffective and sometimes downright dangerous. Reading from diaries and literature of the time, Dr. Bob LaPerriere, dressed in the black top hat and coat of a doctor of the time, gave us a detailed recounting of what people endured. This presentation was so entertaining and an eye-opener, for sure!

(continued on page 6)

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING & ANNUAL POTLUCK

Tuesday, January 19, 2016 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 Hot Dish H—R Salad S—Z Dessert

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

A Milestone- Walnut Grove Bridge Centennial By Katherine Graham Hutchinson

Murmie Graham Lawson now of Tucson, Arizona donated five photos showing the opening of the old (first) Walnut Grove Bridge July 17, 1916. It was the first counterweight bascule bridge built west of the Mississippi. It united the east and west sides of the only town bisected by the Sacramento River. The bridge was designed by Strauss Engineering of Chicago which also designed the Golden Gate Bridge. Governor Hiram Johnson in his motor yacht cruised down to the opening ceremony where he cut the ribbon.

The photos, here reproduced, show a windy day, a huge crowd,

GOVERNOR'S YACHT



Another photo shows the governor's yacht and someone of significance in the car, perhaps John Stanford Brown, president of the Bank of Alex Brown.

HUGE CROWD WATCHING CEREMONY



the new bridge and the ferry slip.

NEW BRIDGE AND OLD FERRY SLIP



WHO'S IN THE CAR?



Murmie also donated a disk with these photos.

Heretofore the only bridge in the Delta to span the river was the Grand Island pivot bridge on upper Grand Island near Steamboat Slough. The new span at Walnut Grove allowed river traffic to use the center of the river to pass the bridge instead of either side where the channel could be shallower.

Prior to the bridge the east and west portions of Walnut Grove were serviced by a ferry.

Many bets were placed prior to the opening as to whether the two cantilever spans would meet when lowered for the first time.

LOWERING OF THE SPAN



The deck was wooden and became heavy when sodden with rainwater. To counterbalance this weight, extra concrete blocks were seasonably added to the huge concrete counterweights. A sidewalk on the downstream side was added after several vehicle-pedestrian accidents occurred on the bridge. Funds to add the walkway were raised by the Delta Progress Club and the Walnut Grove Boy Scouts.

Let's rededicate the bridge after 100 years with a picnic in the park.

More Milestones

Our member Nancy Mosher celebrated her 100th birthday in late July. Congratulations Nancy and we wish you as many more as you can get.

The Isleton Library also turned 100 in 2015. The first library operated out the W. M. Hutton house on second Street. Many changes took place in the ensuing years up to the present expansion.

We lost Alice Hanako (Kato) Murakami who died September 24, 2015. Alice, a talented artist lived most of her life in Walnut Grove. See the article in this newsletter dated Vol 32, No 1, June 2012 which celebrated her 100th birthday.

Also, Wayne Osaki, not a member, but who grew up in Clarksburg and who wrote about his Delta upbringing. See the following obituary from the San Francisco Chronicle.

Wayne Yoshito Osaki



Wayne Yoshito Osaki passed away peacefully on April 13, 2015 surrounded by his loving wife and family, one day after his 57th wedding anniversary.

Wayne was born in 1923 in Clarksburg, along the Delta near Sacramento, California. He spent his childhood and teen

years fishing, swimming and playing sports around the Delta community. In his early school years he was forced to attend segregated schools, until high school where he attended Clarksburg High an integrated school. There he enjoyed playing baseball, basketball and joined the football team.

His father, Isao Osaki immigrated to America in 1903 from Shimane Prefecture in Japan and his mother Tomi (Matsuura) came in 1909 from Wakayama Prefecture. He was proud of his Osaki family ancestry, which dates back to 1177 A.D., his great grandfather was the Chief Advisor to the Lord of Tsuwano Castle.

His parents taught at the Holland Union Japanese School in Clarksburg, until his family was uprooted and forced into Concentration Camps along with 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. He and his family were interned in Tule Lake Concentration Camp near the Oregon/California border. He was released in early 1946 and reunited with his family who were living in San Francisco.

Upon his return he attended City College of San Francisco while also serving in the [U.S. Marine Corps](#). Reserves. In 1948, he enrolled in the School of Architecture at UC Berkeley, while working as a farm laborer in the summers to pay for his tuition. There he became a lifelong CAL Bears fan, in the past few years, he wore his CAL cap and slippers everyday, even during his many hospital stays.

When Wayne left Tule Lake, he was inspired to

become an architect that could help people and to rebuild the Japanese community. In 1951, he began his career as an architect in San Francisco. He designed many stores, apartments and schools, but his true love was designing churches. Throughout his career he designed 69 churches, including the Allen Temple Baptist Church, the prominent African American church located in Oakland, as well as Jerusalem Baptist Church and Aldersgate Methodist Church in Palo Alto. His designs also included the Japanese Cultural and Community Center in Northern California and the Japanese Community Youth Council located in San Francisco's Japantown.

In the 1950's - 70's, he challenged the Redevelopment Agency (RDA), which forced out many of the businesses and residences out of Japantown and the Western Addition. He was a founding member and program chairperson of the Western Addition Community Organization (WACO) in 1966, a committee of Japanese and African American activists who opposed the RDA. In an effort to help rebuild Japantown he designed many of the businesses and apartments along Sutter Street and the Buchanan Mall. His architectural office was based in Japantown, where he could often be seen eating ice cream at Benkyodo manju shop during his afternoon breaks. He especially loved eating orange creamsicle's at home everyday after work.

Wayne attended Christ United Presbyterian Church located in Japantown and designed the new church in 1975. The church was one of the most important aspects of his life for over 50 years, having served in various leadership positions.

He loved going on cruises, family vacations at Donner Lake, traveling to Japan, going fishing and researching family history. In his retirement he wrote many short stories about his life growing up in Clarksburg and during his internment years at Tule Lake. He also wrote the critically acclaimed children's book, "My Dog Teny", which was based upon the story of having to leave his childhood dog named "Teny" behind as he was evacuated to Tule Lake. Later in his retirement years he adopted a dog and named it Teny.

He was known for his gentle smile, kindness and how nice and courteous he was to everyone he met. His proudest legacy is the continuing involvement of his sons in the Japanese community in San Francisco.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years Sally, his four sons: Glenn, Paul, Dean (Diane), and Jon (Julie) and three grandchildren, Shannon, Mika, Lee and many

nieces and nephews. He was preceded by his mother (Tomi), father (Isao), brother (Tetsuo), and sister (Ayako Nakao).

The family would like to thank his personal caregiver Ken Villanueva, Vintage Coventry and Sutter Home Hospice.

A "Celebration of Life" service will be held at 1 pm on Sunday, May 3 at the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California, 1840 Sutter Street in San Francisco. For further information please call (415) 567-5505.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California, Japanese Community Youth Council and Christ United Presbyterian Church.

Published in San Francisco Chronicle from Apr. 19 to Apr. 21, 2015

-More Memories-

Nellygrace Christie Stoll of Bossier City, Louisiana wrote us an interesting letter after she and relatives visited the Resource Center in Walnut Grove.

Kathleen,

So enjoy your articles on the River, I'm especially impressed by all the research you did for your June article on Locke, may I tell some remembrances from my perspective of Locke and the Chinese in the 30's.

During those years my Dad, Fay Christie, at that time, an officer in Lambert Marketing Co., managed their operation in the Delta which included the shipping from the Southern Pacific wharf in Locke. My mother, Gladys Eastman Christie, worked with him in the office. Therefore my brother, Carter Christie and I spent a lot of time down at the "Shed". Our ranch was and is a mile north of Locke just north of the Libby, McNeill and Libby Cannery, first the Elges ranch and then the Eastman ranch.

During pear season, my Dad could always

communicate with the Chinese "Mommies" who worked grading the pears by talking a kind of pigeon English and they all got along well. The pear packers and other workers were white. Peas, asparagus and tomatoes were shipped out of the "Shed" also, I'm not sure if there were other crops. We would watch the crates being put in the refrigerated box cars for shipment to the east.

We shopped at Yuen Chong's, of course and got gas at Jack Ross', I remember "Al, the Wops" and Wah Lee's and the Post Office on the levee. Carter and I would get ice cream down in town and watch people mark the lottery tickets. When anyone won, fireworks were set off. When our family went out for dinner in Locke, we had wonderful Chinese food. We could watch them cook it in big woks in the back. It might have been the Moon Café.

In my years on the river and now reading about him, I don't remember hearing of Lee Bing.

One time when my Dad had out of town visitors, he took them to the gambling house to show it off and I went too. The thing that impressed me the most was the way they kept score, there were wires running overhead and poles that they would use to count by pushing the beads. (Abacus?)

It was very common during the day to see old chinamen [sic] with long wispy beards, sitting on the benches (between the poles holding up the balconies) smoking the long pipes curved at the bottom which we always thought were opium pipes.

One time when we were across the street by the "Shed" sitting in the car, a (official) vehicle backed up at one of the houses facing the road and ushered out a bunch of women and took them away. They were all white women.

I remember that the Chinese kids had to attend Chinese school after they got home. The elementary schools in Walnut Grove and Courtland were segregated but of course we didn't know that word.

We went to Bates Joint Union Grammar school in Courtland and the "Oriental School" was on the back of the campus and our school in the front by the high school.

By high school we all went to school together, there was never any friction. In home room, as we were seated alphabetically, I sat between Joe Chan and Joe Chun, both very bright and really nice boys. They and as far as I know, all the Chinese went on to do great things in life and did not return to Locke.

When I started Courtland High, the school was approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ Japanese, $\frac{1}{4}$ Chinese and $\frac{1}{4}$ White. The Japanese were sent to internment camp and the enrollment was obviously much smaller. My grandmother kept the household goods of our Japanese tenants in the granary while they were gone.

Not to do with Locke either, but of interest, over the years, we had at different times Chinese or Japanese tenants on the ranch and Carter and I played with whatever children were there at the time. I will always remember that a Chinese family one time, had a grandmother, I supposed it was, come from China. The kids took me up the stairs to see the lady who had bound feet and had to be totally waited on. I've often thought what a cruel custom that was.

Also, on the Chinese story, I had always loved Chinese food and got myself invited to dinner at the tenant camp. Dinner consisted of fish, greens and rice. There were a lot of men, (their crews I guess) seated around the tables holding the rice bowls, picking up the other items with their chopsticks and eating them with their rice. It wasn't "my kind of Chinese food" and I ate nothing. I may have hurt their feelings, but no one seemed to notice me. I was definitely out of my comfort zone, I don't know why I was surprised at the menu as we'd see the Chinese "Momma" going down to the river to catch catfish and also picking greens in the orchard.

Nellygrace Christie Stoll

(President's Notes continued from page 1)

The November program was a presentation by Bill Wells, "50 Years of the Yachtsman Magazine." Bill Wells is a Delta advocate and a fount of knowledge about the Delta waterways and its history. Through many photographs and his very interesting comments, he brought us from the inception of the Yachtsman Magazine 50 years ago through to present times. This magazine has articles about local restaurants, bridges, farming, boating, fishing, and hunting, and continues to provide its subscribers with great entertainment and information.

In January we will have our Annual Potluck Dinner and General Meeting. Please come and visit with friends and enjoy a delicious dinner! You will get a postcard soon with all the information you need. All are welcome! The program scheduled for this January meeting will be Phil Pezzaglia's presentation highlighting his recently published book, "True Tales of the Sacramento Delta." Murder, robberies, vigilante justice, crime and punishment, movie moguls and the movies they made, bootlegging, steamboat races, explosions, mayhem, and more! What a presentation; it has it all! You won't want to miss it!

Once again, thank you for your interest in the history of the beautiful, incomparable Delta. We are still learning more about it all the time. And many thanks to all the Board Members for their many hours of service!

Wishing everyone a very good 2016!
Barbara Damion, President

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Robert Benedetti from Sacramento, CA
- David Elliot & Sons from Courtland, CA
- Douglas Hsia from Walnut Grove, CA
- Mark Miller from Sacramento, CA
- Connie Salzwedel from Walnut Grove, CA

RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

Thank you for your historical donations to our resource center! We are recording each donated collection in our data base – many collections are done, but many still need to be entered. **Would you like to help?** We work almost every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and need people to enter data (it's already handwritten and just needs to be entered into the computer.) Please call Esther at 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

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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

SRDHS 2016 SCHEDULE

January 19.....	General Meeting/Annual Potluck
February 16.....	Board Meeting
March 15.....	General Meeting
April 19.....	Board Meeting
May 17.....	General Meeting
June 21.....	Board Meeting
June Newsletter	
July/August.....	Summer Break
September 20.....	General Meeting
October 18.....	Board Meeting
November 15.....	General Meeting
December.....	Board Meeting
December Newsletter	

CONTENTS

President's Notes.....	1
January Potluck Notice.....	1
"Walnut Grove Bridge Centennial- 1916".....	2
"More Milestones".....	3-4
Communication from Member.....	4-5
Resource Center News & Notices.....	6
SRDHS Schedule.....	6
2016 Calendar preview and order form.....	7

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

Then make sure you pay your 2015 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):
 - 2016 2017 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

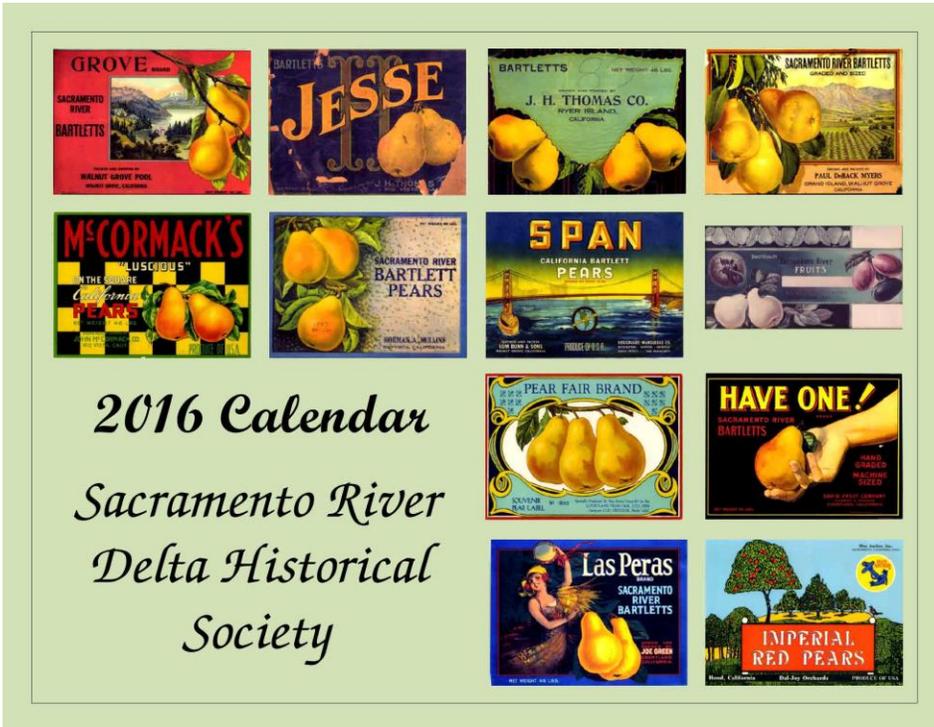
NEWSLETTER STAFF

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

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

NEW "2016" PEAR LABEL CALENDAR SACRAMENTO RIVER DELTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This is the cover of the delightful 2016 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 2016 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 2016 calendar is \$15.00 plus postage
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 calendar price is \$10 each plus postage

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

- 1 Calendar \$2.10 postage
- 2 Calendars \$3.20 postage
- 3 - 6 calendars \$5.75 for priority mail (2 to 3 day delivery)

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Calendar Order Form

Please send _____ 2016 calendars @ \$15 per calendar

__2012 __2013 __2014 __2015calendars @ \$10 per calendar

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____