

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM  
1333 Butte House Road  
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# SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWS BULLETIN

Vol VI No.3

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA (95991)

October 1967



SUTTER COUNTY Library around (1967)

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

by  
Bernice Gibson

Vol. VI No. 3

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SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER MEETING, JANUARY 16, 1968 7:30 P.M.

SUTTER COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING, SECOND ST., YUBA CITY

Program: At this writing the speaker is pending but we guarantee a speaker on an interesting historical subject.

The program will be followed by a business meeting presided over by acting president, Mr. Howard Harter. We hope to have some facts to present to the society regarding the Sutter County Museum.

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are due the first of January for the calendar year of 1968. If you have not paid your '67 dues why not catch up and be on the roster of membership. Two dollars per calendar years is all the dues are. Or if you wish to identify with Sutter County Historical Society for a "Life" membership send Mrs. Lola Case twenty-five dollars and she will send you a Life Membership card.

TREASURER, MRS. LOLA CASE,  
YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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FIFTY YEARS OF COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICE IN SUTTER COUNTY  
Compiled and Reported by Mrs. Irminna Rudge, County Librarian

Sutter County was sixty years of age before people had time to begin to think of the cultural things of life and take time outside of the home to develop a life for the community. Many of our early settlers brought small libraries with them across the plains and read much during the small amount of leisure time they had.

Marysville Daily Democrat, April 2, 1890 gives the following record of how the people were beginning to feel the need of reading material.

A Library Association, A Much Needed Want has been Supplied  
in Yuba City.

The Yuba City Library and Reading Room Association was organized Monday evening. The following officers were elected:

President: G. B. Lyman    Treasurer: A. B. Van Arsdale

Vice-President: William Phipps

Secretary: Howard Clark      Librarian: Parker Fulton

Ladies and gentlemen will at all times have free access to the room but only members of the association will be allowed to take books from the room to road. The association will supply something that was badly needed in Yuba City.

Marysville Daily Democrat, April 22, 1890 --

Yuba City Library

A very interesting musical and literary program was rendered at the opening of the Yuba City Library and Reading Room Monday evening. Eloquent speeches were made by District Attorney, Mahon, Rev. H. C. Tallman, H. C. Clark, W. T. Phipps, and the Rev. E. R. Willis. At the conclusion of the speaking the guests were invited to partake of ice cream, cake, coffee and other refreshments which were served by the ladies. The Sutter Cornet Band played some choice selections in front of the hall. The reading room will be a great acquisition to our sister city, the residents of which, will be able to spend their leisure hours reading useful literature on which they can feast their brains.

Marysville Daily Democrat, July 11, 1890 --

An ice-cream social will be held at the Reading-Room in Yuba City on Saturday July 12th. Proceeds will go to defray expenses of the reading room.

Many years went by before people began to think again of public reading facilities. In fact, it was twenty-five years later before people began to discuss a public library system for Sutter County. Prior to the establishment of the County library system, there were no library facilities in Sutter County. The Yuba City Grammar School had a very small collection of children's books which were inadequate and inaccessible to the public. Your editor remembers small collections of books in the country schools which ranged in interest from doctor books, cook books, a few of the old classics and any books the housewives wanted to clear out of homes during house cleaning orgies. A few adults were privileged to go to Marysville and after depositing five dollars, could borrow from the Packard Library, the resources of which were very meager.

Very little can be learned of the very first efforts toward a county library system but according to the newspaper articles, the matter had been under consideration for a period of six years before it at last arrived before the supervisors.

During that time, library enthusiasts, among them the editor of the Sutter County Farmer, Mr. L. H. Woodworth and the County Superintendent of School, Miss Lizzie Vagades, were doing good work in advancing the cause of the library. Miss Ida Reagan was sent down from Oroville to speak on the subject before the Bogue Women's Club. L. P. Farris, principal of the Sutter

Union High School, had sent out inquiries to schools in the State who were receiving service from county libraries and had a good report prepared to present to the Board of Supervisors at the hearing in 1917. There were numerous articles in the Farmer and in the April 27, 1917 issue, appeared and editorial copied from the Colusa Herald showing the benefits derived by the schools from the county library system in that county. May 4, 1917 issue of the Sutter County Farmer reported that petitions were coming in, together with endorsements from clubs and resolutions from teachers. It reported that half the schools in the county were willing at this time to cooperate. Advantages of the system were quoted from Plumas and Yolo Counties. The issue of March 30, 1917 had an article saying "prospects are excellent for the establishment of a county library, which is to be considered next week. It has the support of various clubs."

On April 3, 1917, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution stating that they contemplated the establishment of the county library for Sutter County under the provisions of Chapter 68, Sec. 2, Statutes of 1911 and that a meeting was to be held Monday the 7th day of May 1917, at 2 o'clock P. M. in the supervisors room of the County Court House, and they propose to take up the matter of such establishment. The notice was to be printed weekly for two successive weeks as required by law. The issue of the Farmer for April 13, 20 and 27th carried this resolution of intention.

On May 7, 1917, there was a hearing before the Supervisors, the minutes read; "This matter came on regularly for hearing on this day at 2 p.m. having heretofore been set for hearing at this time, due to proof having been made to the satisfaction of this Board that notice of the time and place of said hearing had been given in all respects as required by law."

"Petitions favoring the establishment of the library were filed from the following communities viz; Tudor, Barry, O'Banion Corners, Live Oak, Bogue, Franklin Corners, and Tierra Buena. A general discussion participated in by interested persons for and against the establishment of the library consumed the afternoon session after which the matter of deciding was submitted to the Board. The Board deferred the matter of deciding for or against the establishment of said library until tomorrow's session."

The minutes of the following day read; "It is hereby ordered that the matter of deciding for or against the establishment of a county free library for Sutter County be and the same is hereby continued until tomorrow."

The minutes of May 9, 1917; "Resolution providing for the establishment and maintenance of a county library in Sutter County: Whereas, the Board of Supervisors of Sutter County has taken the necessary steps prescribed by Chapter 68, Sec. 2, Statutes of 1911, preliminary to the establishment of a county free library: therefore be it resolved, that the Board of Supervisors of Sutter County, State of California, does hereby establish



a county free library for the county of Sutter, State of California." The foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by three "yes" votes and two "no" votes. Those voting for the library were Supervisors Trevathan, Schellenger, and Graves.

The Sutter County Farmer gives an account of the meeting in the May 11th issue and the following sidelights were brought out: Petitions with 600 signers were presented, followed by statements in favor of establishment made by Miss Lizzie Vagedes, County Superintendent of Schools, who reported that fifteen schools were ready to join, L. D. Baun of Barry, Mrs. Clark of Encinal, Mrs. Charles Moore of Sutter, Mrs. W. E. Tucker of Yuba City, W. H. Stafford of Live Oak, Mrs. J. T. Hodges of Barry and L. P. Farris reported on his questionnaire which set forth the advantages of the library in the schools, Miss Harriet Eddy told of the efforts in getting the system started. Seven prominent Sutter County citizens spoke against it, not particularly against the library idea, but against the expense. There was another matter which was of great concern at that time and that was the Nicolaus Bridge. This had been promised to the people in the lower part of the county for several years and they felt that it should come before a library. One of the Supervisors said the library would be a burden financially and he didn't believe the people wanted it. He wanted the matter tabled for two years as there were more important things to consider, such as the By-pass, Nicolaus Bridge, war taxes, etc.



The first county library in SUTTER COUNTY was located in MISSION HALL around (1917).

Supervisor Frank Graves moved the adoption of the resolution.

Miss Margaret Hatch was the first county librarian. She began her duties October 8, 1917. In a letter from Miss Hatch, she tells about the early days of the library: "The very first start of the library was made on one half of a very large desk used by the Superintendent of Schools, Miss Lizzie Vagades. There was not even a pencil in the way of supplies." She claimed she also had to use Miss Vagades pencils.

After a month or two, one room was fitted up in Mission Hall where a few pieces of furniture and the books were placed; thus the library began serving the people. There never was a formal opening.

The first assistant allowed the librarian was Miss Edna Hewitt. She was appointed and her salary was not to exceed 475.00 per month. She was given \$50.00 September 7, 1920. Miss Hutch resigned to go as librarian for the Standard Oil Company in San Francisco. Miss Hewitt was chosen as librarian. Miss Hewitt remained on the job until she was forced to give up active work because of her health. Not long after she left the library she passed away.

Miss Frances Burket was appointed in Miss Hewitt's place and served as Sutter County Librarian for a number of years. She resigned in 1944 and Mrs. Irminna Rudge, who had been serving as school librarian, was appointed in place of Miss Burket.

Headquarters of the library was located in Mission Hall across the street from the Court House and Hall of Records. Mission Hall had been built by a local woman's club many years ago but were obliged to deed it to the county when they were unable to meet the payments which were due. A room was partitioned off for the library in 1917 and by 1922, two more large rooms were furnished for the library, one for the school department and the other for the branch collections. In 1923 the headquarters reading room was fitted with library bureau furniture and a good lighting system was installed. Late that year a private office for the librarian was partitioned off in the middle of the room.

At one time the library had sixteen small branch libraries; at present there are six, namely, W. Bradbury Barber in Live Oak, Meridian, Nicolaus, Pleasant Grove, Robbins and Sutter. All of the elementary schools were served by the county library until June 30, 1964. At that time they were turned over to the Superintendent of Schools to be run as part of the Instructional Materials Center.

In a clipping from the Sutter County Farmer, February 8, 1918 the library was declared being well patronized after people learned they did not have to pay for the service. During January 1918, the Yuba City library circulated 744 volumes, Live Oak 43 volumes and Sutter 59 volumes. Last January (1967) Yuba City circulated 11,997 books, Live Oak 1,629 and Sutter 1,198 volumes.

The growth of the county library system proved too much for the small space allotted to it in Mission Hall, so the lower floor of the Odd Fellows Building was rented by the county to house the library. It was moved there during the week of November 23, 1933 and opened its doors to the public, December 4, 1933. The main library remained on the corner of Second and Fairman Streets for twenty-two years.

In February 1955 the library moved from the Odd Fellows Building to the newly completed Sutter County Office Building. It was moved into the space which had been built for the County Recorder's office.

The library, today, services six branches throughout the county. The branches are W. Bradbury Barber Branch in Live Oak, Meridian, Nicolaus, Pleasant Grove, Robbins and Sutter. The city of Yuba City and the surrounding area is served by the headquarters library. Any other resident of Sutter County may borrow from the headquarters branch or any other branch in the county.

In the annual report filed June 30, 1967, the headquarters branch had circulated 131,939 books for the year, July 1, 1966 -- June 30, 1967. During the same period the outlying branches had circulated 40,471.

Probably the most outstanding event that has taken place during the last 23 years, since Mrs. Rudge has been librarian, was the gift of Mrs. Barber and the late W. Bradbury Barber of Live Oak. They presented the building, in which the Barber Branch is located, to Sutter County for the branch library in Live Oak.



HEADQUARTERS  
YUBA CITY BRANCH

SUTTER COUNTY Library around (1944)

CHRISTMAS IN MARYSVILLE--LONG AGO  
By Clyde Greely

PROLOGUE

Californiana has been my hobby since childhood. It was my father's too. I only wish I had time to tell you of the fine Theatricals of this Era. The beautiful Adah Menken, famous in Mazeppa. She wore tights and according to Donnell's Grandfather Bost, was held only by a surcingle as the horse rushed up the "mountain". (Platforms had been built on the stage.) She also wrote a small book of poems: "Infelicia" dedicated to Charles Dickens whom she admired greatly. This little book is one of the few treasured books I saved in the flood of 1955.

Lola Montez and her husband, Pat Hull, were in Marysville for a short time before she went to Grass Valley. He was a newspaper man, an editor, I believe. He came back to Marysville and died there. He was buried in the old Catholic cemetery but I was never able to find his grave.

The Booths... Junius Brutus Booth and his youngest son Edwin. How the miners enjoyed their Shakespearian plays. Edwin, who in time, became the greatest Hamlet of them all. No one has even been able to equal him, I believe. My father saw him, of course, and also heard General Lew Wallace--author of "Ben Hur"--lecture from the balcony of the old Western Hotel



Christmas in Marysville--Long; Ago

Prologue--cont.

when he, my father, was a boy. I could go on, but that would be a complete manuscript alone.

The following sketch is based on material from Earl Ramey's book "The Beginnings of Marysville" and the book "My Seventy-Two Years in the Romantic County of Yuba, California" by J. T. Ellis. Also many of Clyda Greely's personal family recollections are included.

## CHRISTMAS IN MARYSVILLE—LONG AGO

By Mrs. Donnell Greely

The traditions of Christmas were carried on by the early settlers of Marysville according to their ancestry. The French influence was strong. Charles Covillaud, born in Cognac, France in 1816 followed the cooper's trade and came to New Mecklenburg (later Marysville) in 1846 to make pork barrels for Cordua, who with Nye, were the senior pioneers as well as Charles W. .Flugge. It was Cordua's rancho, however, leased from Captain Sutter.

By October 1848 Cordua, despairing of being able to operate his rancho alone, took Covillaud in as a partner, not only because the latter had worked for him but chiefly to secure an interest in the latter's mining claim, which was not valued particularly for its gold but rather as a place to slaughter and sell beef. Covillaud became owner of half of New Mecklenburg giving in exchange a half interest in his claim and \$12,000 in gold dust. In addition to mining, he had organized a profitable trade with Indians who were mining; and by trading merchandise for gold. This trade also became the property of the partnership. Cordua transferred his interests to two other immigrants for twenty thousand dollars and went down the river in February 1849 with three hundred pounds of Yuba's finest gold but with tears in his eyes.

Marysville was generally called Nye's Landing. Nye, Foster, Patterson, Theodore Sicard were all important figures in those days.

Covillaud had married Mary Murphy, a sister of Mrs. Nye and of Mrs. Foster and like them a survivor of the Donner party. Marysville was named for Mary Murphy Covillaud.

A French surveyor named Auguste LePlongeon was employed to lay out a town on the site of Cordua's headquarters, including his gardens, corrals and some of his wheat fields. It is quite probable this surveyor, about whom we know very little (from Earl Ramey's book "The Beginnings of Marysville) excepting that after he left Marysville he engaged in archaeology work in Yucatan, was responsible for giving Marysville a plan which is to be found in few American cities founded before 1850.

At the water's edge a space was conveniently located beside the group of three abode houses which were used as the trading post and the residence of the proprietors. This unloading space was reserved as a plaza and officially designated as such. The surveyor, evidently with Paris or some other similar French city in mind, ran a broad street north from this plaza twenty blocks in length to the city limits. At the tenth block on this "Champs Elysees" but which is designated as "E" Street, he established a "Place de la Concorde" of octagonal shape which occupied half of four square blocks. This was called Washington Square. The greatest tragedy for the city was the necessary destruction of the original plaza for the construction of a levee which was run along the waterfront in later years.

The men who came to Marysville liked good food and entertainment as well. Balls or cotillions as they were called were held in the

dining rooms of the three or four large hotels. A Captain Powers entertained by invitation at the Foster House. On December 27th, 1850 the Masonic Fraternity held a ball at the United States Hotel at which appeared "the beauty and grace of the gentler sex." Tickets were on sale at the hotel bar for eight dollars. Also a ball was held at the St. Charles a little earlier. The room was decorated with "evergreens woven into most elegant devices" and a supper "which the gods might have envied" was served.

Quail and ducks were favorite evening refreshments in restaurants. The "Arbor" specialized in oyster stew and ice-cream.

The sophisticated rendezvous for those residents who appreciated continental culture was the Hotel de France operated by three Frenchmen; Richard, Minguet and Videau. Stephen J. Field, lawyer from Connecticut who rose from Alcalde in Marysville to Mayor and then later Associate Justice of the United States entertained a delegation from Sacramento at the "Hotel de France--acting as one of the hosts--where they enjoyed a "genuine French meal" including "Poisson en variete, boef roti, and omelette sucre."

Other hotels had cuisine for their particular type of patrons. Many hosts announced their origin, feeling that patrons would be attracted to the rouse of a compatriot. The Southern and Western owned by A. Maurice of Missouri was one, while of the same fine quality were the Tremont House owned by Thomas Richardson and James Cushing, also the Eagle Hotel owned by Harris Hawkins and

Hopkins. Other smaller hotels were the Yuba House, the National House and the Covillaud Hotel.

In private homes at Christmas in the early days the food, the customs, were what the owners of the homes were accustomed to having at their Yuletide. I cannot say what the menu was at the Ramirez home on 5th Street and Elm (across from the present day Yuba County Courthouse, this home is now owned by Miss Enid Ellis).

Ramirez, I have heard, had been a Chilean Naval Officer before he came to Marysville. He built his home as they built in Chile where there are earthquakes. He built well. The outside and inside partition walls are strong indeed, the walls are of brick and thirty inches thick; the floors on the second story consist of two layers of brick on a sand foundation which is layed on top of heavy timbered floors requiring very heavy walls to sustain the great weight. The lumber in the house also came from Chile. The building is of Spanish architecture and was beautifully kept. It was known in early days as "the Castle." The grounds were well kept and had an iron fence around them. Also a fountain in the yard and "tessalated" walks according to the old books.

The Ramirez' no doubt had French servants and served French food as well as their native Chilean dishes. Perhaps they had Spanish servants. But I rather think they were French for after Mr. Ramirez died the family moved to Paris, France. That was their home after that.

The house was owned later by Dr. McDaniel and others but Mr. T. Ellis bought the house from his sister, Mrs. A. C. Bingham in 1919. She, Mrs. Bingham, was the mother of Nadine Sherwood Boyd (I used to play with Nadine when, as a child, I would come to visit my grandmother who lived next door to the Bingham).

To return to the Ramirez house, my grandmother Anne Peffer used to tell how people arriving in Marysville in the early days would stop and look in wonder at this beautiful place. It was the last thing they expected to see in the "wild and woolly west."

There was a large basement under the main floor divided into two rooms one of which was a billiard room. The floors being of octagon shaped marble slabs. The other being the kitchen equipped with a dumb waiter which took the meals to the dining room above. My mother, Elizabeth Peffer, used to play in the basement with the children of Dr. McDaniel (the father of Judge McDaniel) who owned the house after the Ramirez family left.

The Ellis family home was where St. John's Church now stands. An impressive home of brick with verandas and, too, a fountain in the yard. Iron (wrought iron) fences. The designs of the fences in Marysville were interesting. The gates too and there were always the raised block of marble or stone where the ladies would "alight" from their carriages.

The beautiful home of John C. Fall is located on 7th and G. Streets. It is now owned by Mrs. Leah Murphy Cheim but previous to her ownership the McDonalds and then the Richard

Belchers owned it for many years. John C. Fall was a close rival of Packard for the distinction of being the most successful merchant in Marysville. (Packard gave the library, which is now the Marysville Library, to the city). Mr. W. T. Ellis father was Fall's head clerk and later acquired the business as the floods of 1862 nearly ruined Fall. That and too much credit. Mr. Fall went to Nevada to begin again but he left a monument, a beautiful brick mansion which he built in the fifties. He was born in Virginia but came to Marysville from Lancaster, Ohio. Entertaining at Christmas was part of the life of the Fall family.

The German residents of Marysville celebrated Christmas in much the style as the Swiss residents. Good food and dancing at their parties at home and at their meeting places. Captain Sutter would drive to Marysville in his carriage with his Indian coach-man. Sutter's home was at Hock Farm on the Feather River.

My paternal grand-father Baltasser Schott, from Switzerland, came to California in January 1850 arriving in the same party as Captain Sutter's family. They came by sailing ship. There is mention of my grand-father's arrival in San Francisco in Heinrich Lienhard's book: "A Pioneer at Sutter's Fort." My grand-father lived at Sutter's Fort for six months and then came to Hock Farm to live. From there he went into the dairy business in Linda, Yuba County. He bought a ranch there for he saw so much gold he thought that it would have no value, in time. He took prizes at the 5th State Fair which was held in Marysville 1858 in the Pavillion in Cortez Square where the present Yuba County Court House now stands. In fact, he got all the prizes for cheese...

My father was born in 1858 at Yuba Dam (he used to say) and according to Mr. Ellis' book it was about two miles south-east of the present Hammonton Road. My father's people died when he was fourteen years old but he was always proud of being the son of early Californians. His mother was born in Bern, Switzerland but lived in Philadelphia before coming to California. I think my Grandfather Schott was born in Bern also. When my father returned to Marysville as a young man he called on Virgil Walton's grand-father Mr. Newkon who had been a great friend of his father's in Switzerland. I think they were boys together in the Alps however, there had been a fine friendship.

Justus Greely, my husband Donnell's grand-father came to Marysville from Maine in 1850 and his first "job" was setting up pins in a bowling alley. Then on to the mines and then into business in Marysville and on to fortune.

The description of Christmas in the homes of residents who came to Marysville from the East Coast; Maine, Vermont, New York, and Massachusetts was given to me by Donnell's mother Lettie Bost Greely. She was born in Marysville in 1858. She used to tell of Massachusetts for her mother was a descendant of Gov. Bradford. Her father, Jacob Bost was of Dutch lineage. The mother's name had been White. They had plum puddings of course at Christmas and all the old time ways of cooking Christmas dinners. The Southerners in Marysville built homes with pillars and fountains in the yards. Even the New Englanders with their Captains' walks on the houses and the New Yorkers with cupolas on top, even they had a fountain



in almost every yard. Some of the New Yorkers had porches for it did get "warm" in the summer.

The Southerners came with favorite slaves and even after the War Between the States many of the former slaves stayed with the families. The gleam of old silver, the feel of the fine linen-monogramed, the sparkle of wine in crystal decanters graced their tables.

The Chinese cooks played a great part in early Marysville for the Ellis cook, Yuen Yeck Bow, "Jack" Allis, people used to call him, was with the family for forty-nine years. (I can see him now as I used to visit Nadine's grand-father's house when we were young.)

The Justus Greely's Chinese cook, Sing, always had cookies for Donnell and his friends. He was with the Greelys for many years. I remember the Swains' Chinese cook, too. They would gather, I believe, in Chinatown, which was a large Chinatown, and try to out-do one another in tales of what "their" families had for Christmas dinners.

And so the traditions of those who came to Marysville in the "Early Days" were carried on at Christmas time.