

Sutter County Historical Society

News Bulletin

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DANIEL and CLARA (Webb) KIMERER

Sutter County Historical Society

News Bulletin

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The **News Bulletin** is published quarterly by the Society in Yuba City, California. The annual membership dues includes receiving the **News Bulletin** and the Museum's **Muse News**. At the April 1987 Annual Dinner Meeting it was voted to change the By-laws to combine the memberships of the Society and the Museum.

The 1992 dues are payable as of January 1, 1992.

Student (under 18)/Senior Citizen/Library	\$10.00
Individual	\$15.00
Organizations/Clubs	\$25.00
Family	\$30.00
Business/Sponsor	\$100.00
Corporate/Benefactor	\$1,000.00

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

! ! ! HAPPY NEW YEAR ! ! !

We now have 1992 behind us and 1993 holds promise for a great year for the Historical Society.

The single most impressive accomplishment was a new format for the quarterly newsletter. Outside response to the new articles that have been appearing has been very favorable and encouraging.

Let the editors know your thoughts on **YOUR** newsletter, if you haven't done so! If you have any information that could be used in the newsletter contact the editors.

The Sutter County Historical Society Board's goal is to actively promote membership through public awareness of our rich history. We need to expand our base of individuals willing to help preserve the historical legacy of Sutter County for future generations to enjoy.

Brock A. Bowen
President



PUT OUT FIRE AT QUINCY WITH LARGE SNOWBALLS

Quincy, January 3 -- The residence of J. G. Maxwell in the southeastern part of the city was burned last evening. The hydrants had frozen and it was impossible to get a stream of water on the fire, but the flames were prevented from spreading by the neighbors, who gathered and pelted the adjoining buildings with snowballs. The snow adhered to the buildings until melted by the heat and kept the buildings wet.

Oroville Mercury
January 3, 1912

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Snow was 10 inches deep in this valley twenty-two years ago today.

Sutter County Farmer
December 3, 1895

MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Jackie Lowe

The current exhibit at the Museum is "Seeds of Change: 500 Years of Encounter and Exchange", an exploration of the changes brought about by the voyages of Christopher Columbus.

"Seeds of Change" is a traveling version of a current Smithsonian Institution exhibition. The exhibit, with text labels in both English and Spanish, looks at five "seeds": corn, potatoes, diseases, horses and sugar. Some, like disease, were brought by Columbus from the Old World to the New, while others, like corn and potatoes, were taken back to the Old World by Columbus and his fellow explorers when they returned from their journeys.

Corn and potatoes originated in the Americas more than 5,000 years ago and were long the staple foods of pre-Columbian peoples. These "seeds" made their way to the Old World with returning travelers and are now grown in more nations than wheat or rice, revolutionizing the way in which the world eats today.

Diseases were present in the New World before the advent of Columbus, but none were as deadly as smallpox, which was carried by Columbus and other Europeans into the New World. By 1900, lethal epidemics of various communicable diseases were responsible for wiping out close to 90% of the native populations in the Americas. Native American groups suffered irreparable damage as their numbers declined drastically, taking with them their knowledge and precious cultural heritage.

Horses evolved in the Americas, but became extinct 10,000 years before Columbus reintroduced them to the New World in 1492. They became the most important possession of the native peoples of the grasslands of North and South America and a vital part of many North American tribal cultures.

Sugar has what the Smithsonian refers to as a "bittersweet legacy for the Americas. Columbus brought sugarcane to the American tropics on his second voyage and it soon became a thriving crop, albeit harmful to both man and the environment. With sugarcane came the plantation system, resulting in the enslavement of the natives as well as the importation of Africans into the American slave system. Additionally, to accommodate the crop, vast amounts of Caribbean rain forest was cleared to make way for some of the largest sugar plantations in the world.

"Seeds of Change" opened on January 9, 1993 with a reception and program presented by harpist Andrea Ickes-Dunbar which reflected on yet another "seed" of change and exchange: music. Additional programming, to further explore the "Seeds of Change" brought about by Columbus' voyages, is being planned in cooperation with the Sutter County Library. Details will be available soon. "Seeds of Change" is made available to the Museum as a member of the California Exhibition Resources Alliance (CERA), sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

We hope all of you had a happy holiday season and that the new year has started off well.

We are still hoping to receive information about "firsts" in Sutter County. If you run across some information or remember a story about an incident or an item, please let us know.

The cover story for the April Bulletin will be Freda Ehmann. This was a unique lady and I'm sure you will find her story interesting. We would like other agriculture-related items to go in this issue. Can you help?

The four "top" (believe me, they're all great!) essays in the Judith Barr Fairbanks Memorial Essay Contest will be printed in the July Bulletin. The July Bulletin will definitely have a "school" theme. There are two schools in the county celebrating special birthdays -- Brown School will be 130 years old this year and Sutter High School will be 100 years old. There will be articles on both schools. Does anyone out there have a story about either school to share?

In the last issue we ran a piece about Honorary Memberships in the Museum and Historical Society. While we didn't think the phone would ring off the hook, we did think we'd get more than one call. In checking memberships to get the names of Honorary or Lifetime members, we learned a few things. In the beginning of the Society, you could become a "Lifetime

Member" by paying a fee of \$25.00. What a bargain (although \$25.00 to join something in the 1950s was very expensive). It's not that easy today. In checking the names of the Honorary-Lifetime members, we have come up with only one who is currently a member as a result of being born in Sutter County at least ninety years ago. That special lady is Winnie (Summy) Weis who celebrated her 100th birthday at a family gathering in Sutter in September of 1992. Are there more of you out there who we overlooked? Let us know. Also let us know of anyone who would be eligible to become a Honorary/Lifetime member as a result of being born in Sutter County in or before 1903.

We really do need your input to make this Bulletin interesting. Sure, we could do Bulletin after Bulletin about our family, but that's not what we want to do. Give us ideas. Give us stories, information, family histories, newspaper items from the past. Give us the names of people who have stories to tell and experiences and memories to share - we'll contact them. You can write us in care of the Historical Society, you can call us (Linda - 673-2721 or Sharyl - 674-7741) or you can drop off those bulky articles and clippings at the Museum.

Linda Leone
Sharyl Simmons



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BUILDING AND TRUST FUND

In memory of Cassius Epperson

Tom & Jeanne Pederson
M/M Francis Sherman
Shirley Matson
Edwin & Catherine
Addington
Anson & Jane Dobson
Tom & Marnee Crowhurst
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In memory of Beulah Whitten

Connie Cary

In honor of Burwell Ullrey's

80th birthday
Joyce & Frank Carleton

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY DOINGS


JANUARY MEETING

The January meeting of the Sutter County Historical Society will be held on Tuesday, January 19th, at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Memorial Museum. The program will be presented by Otis Croy and John Miller. They will discuss how various Native American tools, utensils and weapons were made and used. This meeting is open to the public.



BUTTES HIKES

The Society is planning two hikes into the Sutter Buttes again this year. The hikes, led by Pete and Margit Sands, will be held on March 13 and March 20 (tentative dates). There is a charge of \$15.00 per person. The group will meet at the Community Memorial Museum and car pool to the hiking location. For further information, please call Linda Leone (673-2721). The number of persons per hike needs to be limited, so make your reservations early. Reservations may be sent to the Historical Society (P. O. Box 1004, Yuba City, CA 95992) or can be dropped off at the Museum (1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City). If the hikes need to be cancelled due to bad weather, they will be rescheduled or your money will be refunded.



BUTTES BUS TRIP

Once again the Society is scheduling a bus trip around the Buttes. This will take place on April 17th. Randy Schnabel will be our "tour guide". The cost will be \$7.00 per person. We will need to have thirty-six pre-paid reservations prior to April 3 in order to guarantee the trip. If there is not enough interest in this event, we will have to cancel. Please contact Linda Leone (673-2721) if you have questions. Reservations can be made through Linda, the Historical Society at the previously listed post office box number or through the Museum

MARTIN KIMERER

by Betty Kimerer Pursell

The subject of the following brief biography, Martin Kimerer, came to California in 1851. He was an early settler in Sutter County and my great-grandfather.

Martin's first child, Daniel Snyder Kimerer, was born in November of 1864 at Cranmore, Sutter County. He was my grandfather. Daniel married Clara Webb of Iowa in 1899 and settled in Meridian. They had four children: Alva, Charles, Bernice and Frank. Daniel worked as the village smithy in Meridian for some twenty-five years and later farmed with his three sons in Sutter and Yolo Counties. He and Clara retired to Yuba City and lived there until they died.

Alva Webb Kimerer, the first child of Daniel and Clara, was born in Meridian on the Fourth of July in 1900. He was my father. Alva married Eula Engrahm of Colusa County in 1923 and they had two children: Barbara and Betty. He farmed with his father and brothers in Sutter and Yolo Counties and in the early 1940s was Sutter County Sheriff.

The article that follows is a brief sketch of the life of Martin Kimerer, the patriarch of the Sutter County Kimerers.

Martin Kimerer, the first of four children born to John and Naomi (Martin) Kimerer, was born January 19, 1830 in Wayne County, Ohio on the farm of his grandfather, Jacob Kimerer. He lived there with a huge extended family which included parents, grandparents, many uncles and aunts, and his own siblings until his father died at the age of 33. At the time of John Kimerer's death, Martin was 8, his brother Jesse was 7, his brother John was 5, and his sister Catherine was 2.

John's widow, Naomi, took the children and returned to the home of her childhood, the farm of Edward and Catherine Martin. It was here a year later that Naomi died. Not

long after Naomi's death, the children's grandparents died also. The orphaned children then moved into the home of relatives.

When Martin was around 17, he bound himself out to serve as an apprentice to a tailor for a period of five years. After completing his apprenticeship he located in Loudonville, Ohio where he worked at his trade for only two months.

Whether struck by gold fever or inspired by Horace Greeley ("to West, young man, and grow up with the country"), in the spring of 1851 Martin set out for California. He was 21. At that time, the population of the United States was 23



Wedding Picture of Martin and Caroline Kimerer

million and California had been admitted to the Union only the year before.

With a company of forty under the direction of Joseph Smith, a Methodist minister, he purchased one-eighth interest in a team of horses and drove them to Cincinnati.

From Cincinnati he took passage on a packet that carried the company as far as St. Joseph, Missouri. From there he started across the plains driving an ox-team. Among his few possessions was a 12-gauge muzzle loading shotgun that he prized and

carried for many years.

It was on the Platte River that an Indian appeared and indicated an interest in a red wool blanket that belonged to Martin. He followed the company and the next night tried to steal the blanket. Failing in this, he offered in exchange a buffalo robe. In order to preserve peace the exchange was made, but the company had an uncomfortable feeling for the rest of the journey. Upon reaching the desert in the northern part of Nevada, the company took advantage of the mistakes made by former companies and decided to cross after sundown. It took all night to cross this dismal stretch, but the road was made plain by the burning of deserted prairie schooners; for here it was that the parties who tried to cross in the daytime came to grief. Their oxen, urged along in the sweltering rays of the sun, gave out and it then remained for the emigrants to leave their teams in yoke, take what provisions they could carry, and press on.

On reaching Mud Lake, Nevada they found the water so thick that it was impossible to drink without first boiling and flavoring it with coffee. Continuing into the Modoc Indian country in northern California, the company took extra precautions in arranging their camp. As usual, the wagons were drawn up in a circle and extra sentinels were put on guard.

While on the way down the Pitt River, they reached a good camping place in the vicinity of what is now known

as Deer Creek. A lone Indian soon put in an appearance carrying a large salmon, which by the signs he made gave them to understand he wanted to trade for flour. None of the emigrants took much interest, as each was busily engaged with his own particular chore prior to the evening meal. Supper being announced, all sat down to eat. The Indian again renewed his sign; still no immediate attention was given him. To make himself noticed, he stuck his foot into the circle, placing his big toe in one of the men's plate. The emigrant jumped up and with an oath proceeded to kick the Indian out of camp.

The evening meal being completed, the sentries were selected and assigned to their posts, while the rest soon forgot their trials in sleep. All went well until after midnight when the zip, zip, zip of arrows announced the fact that the Indians had made an attack. A general alarm was sounded and in a few minutes the entire company was shooting in all directions into the darkness. After two or three rounds of ammunition had been fired, the Indians retreated. It was later learned that they had not yet become accustomed to the flash of black powder. When the roll was called, each man responded and announced that he was uninjured. Needless to say, there was very little sleep for the men the rest of the night. Daylight revealed that three horses had been killed.

That same morning, after traveling three or four hours, they gained the top of a ridge

and looked down upon the last camping place. The men watched the Indians engaged in skinning and cutting up the horses. The rest of the journey continued without incident as they traveled down into the Sacramento Valley.

The company disbanded and Martin went to Lake County with the old Captain. He then went to Marysville and from there to Park's Bar on the Yuba River near Grass Valley, traveling the distance on foot. Arriving there he took up a gold claim and proceeded to work it, but soon came down with malaria and was ill for some time. When he was well enough he began prospecting once more, a business he followed for five years, sometimes taking out as much as \$100 a day.

It was in 1855 when the notorious gun fighter and terror of Timbuctoo, Jim Webster, while working for Martin, learned that three men had jumped his (Webster's) claim. Upon arising the morning of the homicide, Webster remarked to Martin and his companions that he was going to "get a man before breakfast." He added that it would undoubtedly be too warm for him for a while and therefore wished to draw his wages. He was paid and quickly.

Martin Kimerer's experience in making his own way made him very liberal with aid to others struggling along the same path and he gave away considerable money helping or staking others.

During the latter part of 1856 he turned his attention to hauling freight from

Sacramento to the gold fields of Alleghany, Nevada County, via Camp Far West.

Next he went to Black's Station in Yolo County where he took up government land and began farming on a large scale. Unfortunately, the price of wheat seed was high and two seasons' crops failed during the drought of 1857 and 1858. This cost him heavy financial losses and, discouraged, he left that locality and settled on his permanent ranch at Cranmore in western Sutter County on the Sacramento River.

Amazed at the millions of ducks and geese in the swampland, now the Sutter Basin, he built a small one-room shack under a willow tree and shot ducks and geese for market. He sold these to the river trading boats, the market price at the time being 5 cents for ducks and 6 cents for geese. He then cleared his land and built a large house, the living room of which was later used as Cranmore's first post office. Martin was the first post master. He continued to shoot birds for the market, sometimes killing 100 birds in one day. (Another account of this story said 100 birds with one shot.) He also raised hogs and let them roam in the swamps to forage for food.

In 1863, the year Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation and delivered the Gettysburg Address, Martin returned by way of Panama to his old home in Ohio. Martin's brothers, Jesse and John, were both in the Union Army and John was taken prisoner at the battle of

Chickasaw Bluffs, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

On February 16, 1864, Martin and Caroline Snyder of Holmes County, Ohio, were married. She was the daughter of David and Milla Snyder, early settlers on Martin's Creek and neighbors of Martin's maternal grandparents.

Leaving for their western home, Martin and Caroline went to New York and took passage on the vessel "The Ocean Queen." This ship left New York City in April, 1864, for Aspinwall, where they crossed the Isthmus. Arriving in San Francisco in May, they spent 24 days on their journey. The cost was \$350.

Back in Cranmore, they took up the duties of the farm and two children were born, Daniel and Wilson. In December of 1867, after being married less than four years, Caroline died, cause unknown, leaving Martin with two small boys ages 3 and 1.

In 1870, Martin returned to Ohio, leaving the boys in the care of neighboring farmers, the James B. Tisdale family. While in Ohio he married Susanna Snyder, first cousin of his late wife. They returned to California and had five children: Lincoln, Carl, Alburtus, Dora and Lily.

Susanna died in 1896. In later years one of Martin's legs was amputated, the result of a horse falling on him. He was otherwise a healthy man until around the middle of December in 1907 when a slight cold turned to pneumonia. After a serious illness of only four days and surrounded by his children, he passed

away on December 23, 1907. He was 77 and the last remaining man of the original forty who made up the wagon train to California back in 1851. He was buried on Christmas Day in the Meridian cemetery between Caroline and Susanna.

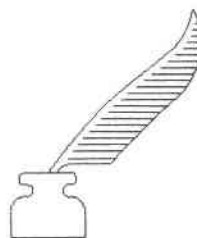
Sources:

Kimerer Genealogy, Vols. 1 and 2, compiled by Glenn and Edith Kimerer, Live Oak

History of the State of California and Biographical Record of the Sacramento Valley, California, by Professor J. M. Guinn, 1906.

Native Sons Magazine, "The Grizzly Bear," 1908.

Special thanks to Betty Kimerer Pursell for her contribution to the bulletin. If anyone else has a family history/story pertaining to Sutter County, please share it with us.



FIRSTS

As promised a few months back, we are presenting some of the "firsts" of Sutter County. We would like to thank those of you who helped out with this article and hope that any of you who have additional "firsts" continue to send them in. This article could well be the "first" of several on this topic if it is well received and if you help out with any "firsts" you'd like to see in print.

First Sutter County Marriage -- The first marriage in Sutter County took place in Auburn (Placer County was created by the legislature in 1851). Herman Webster of Illinois Town, Yuba County and Betsey Belinda Fowler of Illinois Town, Yuba County were married on December 1, 1850. Justice of the Peace Philip W. Thomas performed the ceremony which was witnessed by Alfred M. Mervier, R. S. Messick and Washington O'Connor of Auburn.

First Recorded Birth -- The first recorded birth was a son (no name given) born to Thomas and Viola (Root) Chivers on January 5, 1873.

First Recorded Death -- Sadly, the first recorded death in Sutter County was Viola Chivers, 26 years old, born in Iowa and a resident of California for about thirty days. She died at South Butte on January 14, 1873. The cause of death was listed as puerile fever.

First Probate Filed -- The first probate filed was the estate of William F. Trego in 1880.

First Civil Suit Filed -- The first civil suit was filed by John Nash, et. al. against James and John Madden.

First Homestead -- The first homestead was recorded by J. F. and L. E. Morse on August 24, 1860.

First Recorded Land Patent -- This patent was issued on November 10, 1862 and received by Hugh Lynch for 320 acres. The patent was signed by Leland Stanford, Governor of California. The District Judge was S. M. Bliss. The District Clerk was S. J. Stabler, who was also the county recorder.

First Swampland Survey -- The first recorded swampland survey was for Joseph DeBolt who, on December 10, 1855, paid \$16.00 interest on \$160.00 owed to the State of California. The surveyor was Phil Drescher.

First County Seat -- The first county seat was in Oro which was located on the Bear River near Nicolaus. State Senator Thomas Jefferson Green bought land from John Sutter and persuaded the

State Legislature to declare Oro the county seat when Sutter County was formed in 1850. A small zinc structure was built there where the first, and only, meeting in Oro was held on a hot May day. [Just for your information, the county seat was moved to Nicolaus later in 1850, then to Auburn. On April 25, 1851 it was moved to the town of Vernon and from there back to Nicolaus on May 3, 1852. After quite a power struggle between Yuba City and Nicolaus, the question of the location was finally settled in an election that saw Yuba City acquire the honor on June 10, 1856.]

First Courthouse -- The first courthouse was built in 1858 in Yuba City and burned down in 1871. On the same site the second courthouse was completed in 1873 and burned down in 1899. The third courthouse was built on the same location in 1899.

First Magistrate -- In the town of Vernon in August of 1849, Gilbert A. Grant was elected the first "alcalde". The office of "alcalde" was replaced by that of "judge" in June of 1850.

First Elected Judge -- Gordon N. Mott was the first elected judge and the Chief Justice of the Court of Sessions in April of 1850. He opened the first county court on June 3, 1850.

First State Senator -- E. O. Crosby was the first state senator. He was elected in 1851 and served both Yuba and Sutter Counties. Philip W. Keyser was the first state senator who served Sutter County alone and was elected in 1852.

First Assemblyman -- The first assemblyman was J. W. McCorkle, elected in 1851.

First Settler in Meridian -- The first settler in Meridian was Lewis O'Neil who settled near the river in 1852.

First Cultivated Crops -- The first crop was a small field of wheat put in by Theodore Cordua in 1845 between Marysville and Yuba City. That same year Theodore Sicard also put in a wheat field on his ranch on the south bank of Bear River. The first threshing machine, however, did not arrive until 1852.

First Sutter County Newspaper -- The first newspaper actually published in Sutter County was the "Weekly Sutter Banner" published in Yuba City in 1867. Prior to that, our local news all came out of Marysville papers...hmmm, maybe things haven't changed as much as we might sometimes think.

First Long Distance Driver -- The first man to drive an auto from Yuba City to San Francisco was Edward von Geldern in 1912.

First Automobile/Movie House/Garage -- William Burt Grow had the distinction of being the first to own and drive a motor-equipped vehicle in Marysville. He used to drive Dr. Barr to Meridian to see his patients. When they reached Long Bridge, the children at Slough School could hear them coming and the teacher would let them out to watch the "marvelous new thing." Mr. Grow opened the first movie house in Marysville and also owned the first garage. Besides being the Oldsmobile agency in the area, the garage, located on Third Street, also handled "Gasoline, oil and tires, bicycles and sundries, phonographs, typewriters and sewing machines repaired, light lathe work, electrical repairs and repairing of all kinds."

-information submitted by Margerey Edmonds

First Airplane Ride -- Eva Marden rode in the first airplane in Sutter County. - information from Celia Ettl

Some other area firsts include . . .

First Native Son -- William E. Moutrey claimed this title as the first child to be born to American parents in California. His father, Riley S. Moutrey, headed the Donner rescue party in the winter of 1846-47.

First Ice Cream Soda -- Mrs. E. A. Warren of Chico created the ice cream soda as determined by the "Confectioner's Journal." "The first glass of soda water ever made was put up in Warren's store in the year 1885. In those days cream soda was a popular drink. It consisted of the plain soda water flavored with a syrup and having in addition a tablespoon of pure, fresh cream. Mrs. Warren, who assisted her husband in the store, had trouble in keeping the cream from souring. When it happened that there was no fresh cream on hand she substituted ice cream. Patrons of the establishment seemed to like the drink and began to call for it regularly, at the same time demanding that a larger amount of ice cream be used, and thus it was that (the) ice cream soda was born." - Oroville Mercury July 28, 1911

First Long Distance Phone Call -- The first long distance phone call occurred in Nevada County near Bridgeport/French Corral.

World Speed Record -- On June 28, 1976, Captain Eldon W. Joersz attained a world speed record of 2,193.1 m.p.h. in a Lockheed SR71-A near Beale Air Force Base, California.

First State Park -- Congress established the first state park in the United States at Yosemite Valley on June 30, 1864. On September 25, 1890 it became a national park.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

Broke Through the Bridge

A few days since while George Summy was hauling a heavy load of beans across long bridge, some of the heavy timbers of the structure gave way and the wagon dropped through until it caught on the iron rods underneath the bridge floor. It was some time before the team and wagon could be got out of the tangle. Supervisor Weis at once had the bridge repaired.
Sutter County Farmer -- November 1, 1895

C. P. Clement is Hurt in Auto Accident

Marysville, Nov 14, 1922 -- C. P. Clement employe of the editorial department of The Democrat, suffered a dislocation of his right shoulder early this morning as the result of an automobile collision at Fifth and J streets. He was taken to the Rideout hospital and the injury was treated by Dr. J. A. Barr and Dr. G. W. Stratton. He will be laid up for a few days.

Clement was on his way from his home in Yuba City, riding with Hobert Inman, employe of Robinson & Brooks in Inman's Ford automobile. Inman attempted to turn from Fifth into J street when he bumped the rear end of a truck bound for Yuba City. The Ford was overturned. Inman fell clear but Clement was caught in the wreckage. Harold Magruder, co-worker with Clement, arrived in his car and assisted in extricating Clement, taking him to the hospital.

Inman stated that mist on his windshield, due to the cold morning, made it difficult for him to see, and he holds this responsible for the accident. The front end of his car was badly damaged.

Oroville Mercury -- November 14, 1922

Three Narrowly Escape Death

Yuba City, Nov 27, 1922 -- Automobiles driven by V. W. Cooley and C. G. Wyllie were in collision early last evening at the L. A. Walton place near Bogue. No one was injured but the car driven by Wyllie was badly damaged and three persons had narrow escapes. It is understood that Cooley has agreed to restore or replace the machine. Sheriff B. B. Manford was called to the scene as usual in such cases, and helped to straighten out things to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Wyllie, who was accompanied by his sister, Mrs. John H. Carroll, and was turning into a side road when the Cooley machine crashed into his car. Wyllie and Mrs. Carroll reside in Marysville while Cooley is a prominent Sutter orchardist.

Oroville Mercury -- November 27, 1922

BOK KAI CELEBRATION

By Linda Leone

The celebration of the birthday of Bok Eye (the water god who controls floods and irrigation waters), the honoring of the deities in the Bok Kai Temple and the celebration of spring are held on the Saturday closest to the second day of the second month of the Chinese calendar. This year's Bok Kai celebration in Marysville will be held on February 27 and 28.

The Bok Kai Mui (Bok Kai Temple) in Marysville was dedicated in 1854. The original temple was built on the location of the present Levee Commission of Marysville building. The second temple was built at the foot of "D" Street, facing the Yuba River.

Chinese came from the Sierra Nevada goldfields, Sacramento, and San Francisco to celebrate the early Bomb Day Festivals. A loud bomb being set off starts the parade. The climax of the celebration is Sunday night when bombs are set off, shooting good luck rings into the air for the gods to bless. One hundred bombs are made, each with a good luck ring. Each good luck ring has a number. If you are lucky enough to get a ring, you can purchase the ring with the same number the following year prior to the bombs being set off. (Of course, if you have bad luck during the year, you wouldn't want a ring with the same number the next year.) The bombs were imported from

China until 1957 when the Chinese Communist Government forbid it. Since that time, the bombs for the festival have been made in Marysville. Tom Lim learned the craft in his native China and made the bombs for the celebration until his death. Jimmy Pon has been making the bombs since then. They are made from discarded magazine paper, bamboo stalks, resin, dirt, gun powder, twine, and gold leaf paper. The good luck rings are made from fine wire. As a safety precaution, the fuses are not inserted until just before firing.

The dragon has long been a part of the Bok Kai Parade. Moo Lung (Dance Dragon) was the first parade dragon brought to the United States from China. He performed not only in the Marysville parade, but also was in parades across the United States including New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle, and San Francisco. He was exhibited at the World's Fair held in New York City. He is 150-feet long and was moved along by one hundred dancers. He was in the Marysville parade from the 1890s through 1930. From 1969 to 1984, Marysville's second dragon, Kim Lung, participated in the parade. He came from San Francisco and is 120-feet long and weighs 100 pounds. Kim Lung II came to Marysville from Kowloon, China. The current parade dragon is Lung Hwang (Dragon King) who is a dispenser of

rain. This year a baby dragon from Marin County carried by three-year-old to nine-year-old dancers will join the parade. Later this month, both Moo Lung and Kim Lung will be on display at the Arts Council office at 7th and "E" Streets in Marysville.

Some changes are planned for this year's parade. There will be more bands, additional lion dancers, a 5-K walk ("Rooster Ramble" in honor of the Year of the Rooster), a vendor's market and a postal cachet.

This year's postal stamp is the first stamp in the United States to honor the Chinese. It is a rooster stamp, honoring the Year of the Rooster. The stamp went on sale on December 31st and sold out at the Marysville Post Office the first day. On the first day of sale in San Francisco, 200,000 stamps were sold. The stamp will be available at the festival for postal cancellation.

There will be a children's activity area with a stage set up for entertainment as well as traditional dancers. Lily Cai, a well-known traditional dancer, will perform. Yin Cheng-Zong, a classical pianist who travels all over the world, will once again perform. There will also be Hmong entertainment. The Japanese Taiko from Sacramento, a very old synchronized drumming group performing traditional music, will also appear. This music has experienced a resurgence in the last ten years. There will be Lion Dancing on both Saturday and Sunday.

As Janice Nall stated, "Learning history and culture shouldn't hurt; it should be entertaining and fun."

Sources:

Third City, by the Yuba Sutter Arts Council, 1991. (Available at the Mary Aaron Museum Gift Shop)
Janice Nall, interviewed by Linda Leone

PHILATELIC FACTS

- 3 Mar 1847 -- Congress approves the use of adhesive postage stamps
- 1 May 1873 -- U.S. Postal Service issues first penny postcard
- 1 Oct 1896 -- U. S. Post Office establishes rural free delivery
- 16 Apr 1900 -- First stamp book issued by U. S. Post Office
- 13 May 1918 -- First air mail stamp issued by U. S. Post Office

A Look Back at Childhood

Last year, the Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County offered a calendar for sale which contained historic photographs of Sutter County children. Included in the calendar were two articles concerning childhood. Because many of our readers may have missed the opportunity to purchase the 1992 calendar (the 1993 calendar which focuses on recreation in Sutter County is still available at the museum), we are reprinting these articles. The first article is a brief overview of the history of childhood in the United States and was written by Jackie Lowe. The second article is a look at the history of childhood in Sutter County and was written by Julie Stark. We wish to thank Jackie and Julie for their permission to use these articles. --Eds.

A History of Childhood

By Jackie Lowe

Perceptions of childhood have varied wildly throughout history. In the past 200 years, scientific, religious and social theories of childhood have passed through several changes. Children have gone from being seen as little better than unreasoning animals in need of saving, to lumps of clay in need of molding, to paragons of innocent virtue in need of protecting. Much of the thought behind these various theories has to do with how society saw itself at the time.

Prior to 1800, colonial Americans regarded babies as not quite human. Since babies were born unable to reason, speak, stand upright or walk, they were perceived as lacking the characteristics that defined human beings as separate from and superior to the animal world. Babies were not even allowed to crawl, that form of movement being too suggestive of animal life. An investigation of artifacts designed for children prior to

1770 shows that they were all made to make a child upright. Swaddling clothes tightly bound a baby's arms and legs to give the appearance of straight limbs. As babies grew from swaddling clothes to clothing, they were put into tiny replicas of adult clothing. Little girls' clothing echoed that of their mothers, down to the stays that constricted movement through the abdomen and rib cage.

Theories about babies and children changed with increased medical knowledge and various religious and social progress movements. By 1827, "The Youth Companion", a new publication just for young people, appeared. The magazine was established by minister and editor Nathaniel Willis in recognition of an increasing need for "select and appropriate reading" for young people. The first edition of the magazine also stated a popular new belief that children were born for higher destinies than their

fathers which could only be reached if their hearts and minds were shaped early on. This was in complete opposition to earlier Puritan beliefs of original sin, predestination, and a child being fated from birth. Instead, early nineteenth century thought had come to the premise that a child was a blank canvas upon which adults could have a great influence.

As early as 1830, social critics were blaming urban conditions--crowding, crime, vice--for the weakening of the family structure and diminishing traditional mores. For many, the answer to all the nation's problems lay in the children. This led to a great number of child-rearing manuals for mothers and a greater emphasis on mothers as the ones responsible for the shaping of the nation's future.

Prior to 1830, play was not considered essential or natural to a child's life. By the 1830s, play was considered natural and desirable, but responsible parents were expected to channel it into paths of virtue and useful skills. Books for children, as well as public education, were not yet considered important to a child's mental growth.

By 1860, the theory of childhood moved into yet another avenue. Children were not prized for what they were perceived to be by adults, but rather what they might be in the future. Children came to represent human mortality in its most primitive and unspoiled state. Children were considered "artless"

without artificiality, culminating by 1870, in the widely held belief of childhood innocence. Happiness was a natural state that should be supplied by parents along with material and educational stability. Children were no longer blank minds and hearts waiting to be molded. Instead, they had special needs to be discovered and catered to by parents.

Recreation and leisure became a very important part of childhood. Advances in technology made brightly colored, cheaply-produced toys, games and books available to the middle class. The field of children's literature grew with the introduction of Kate Greenaway books and Palmer Cox's Brownie stories. The construction of Central Park in New York City in 1857 with its open meadows, shaded walks, and bridged ponds set the style for parks all over the United States. This trend and the very modern development of suburbs, with tree lined streets and broad sidewalks, encouraged families to stroll and enjoy recreational pursuits together. Baby carriages became very popular, elaborate devices to accommodate this outdoor social phenomenon. Carriages came equipped with silk parasols, plush upholstery, Brussels carpet, and plated wheels. Carriages were designed so that the child faced out for all to see and admire. It was not until World War I that carriages would turn the child around to face the mother, giving a new priority to mother-child bonding over presentation.

By the late 1800s, a kind of cult of childhood had developed in the middle class. Children were now segregated to the nursery and a nanny or governess put in charge. This change created a greater separation between parents and children. It also shifted the learning of job skills away from the home, where a child used to learn the family business as a part of family life and household and social tasks through helping around the house. New emphasis and responsibility was given to schools for teaching such skills. Family recreation began to break down as well, dividing into adult recreation (such as hunting and social functions like teas and balls) and children's recreation (toys and games and social functions that mimicked, but did not intrude into adult functions).

As the world of commerce and industry became recognized as real and deemed of greater value and importance by society, motherhood and childhood became idealized and separate from that harsh outside world. Domesticity became feminine and women and children decorative. Stylized childhood images like the "Gerber Baby" became popular. To add to this idealized image of home, birth rates dropped in the 19th century placing greater pressure on the middle-class woman and her duty to reproduce and subsequently safeguard the health of her child. Child study groups formed to chart children's stages of growth.

By the 1920s, child labor had been greatly reduced,

although child labor laws were not passed until the 1940s. Child labor did not fit with the image of children as angelic innocents to be catered to and nurtured. More practically, advances in technology eliminated many jobs and compulsory education, in place in most states by 1897, put a crimp in many work schedules.

In the eighteenth century, children improved as they grew older. They were born evil and tainted by original sin, lacking in the essential characteristics of reason, speech, and upright bearing. The act of transforming these potential adults into society had to be performed by the adults of that society. By 1900, that view of childhood had vanished. The price of maturity was the loss of childhood innocence. Children came into the world with God-given purity that was all too vulnerable to vice and contamination from the outside world. Parents were no longer molders of potential adults, but protectors of childhood goodness, safeguarding it from worldly influences.

Many exaggerations of the nature of childhood can be seen in all of these views, yet remnants of the many theories of childhood can still be found today with the wide variety of child rearing philosophies that abound. Regardless of these various theories of child rearing, one thing seems clear: childhood is still a mysterious, curious time for both parents and child.

Childhood in Sutter County by Julie Stark

A century ago, most children in Sutter County lived in rural areas on farms and ranches, reflecting the agrarian nature of the population as a whole. Children were highly valued, perhaps partly because many children did not survive the diseases of infancy and childhood, but also because they joined the family work force at an early age, assuming chores around the farm as soon as they were able. (In those days, it cost about \$10 for a baby to be delivered at home by a doctor.)

Children worked at a variety of chores. Girls gathered eggs, picked produce from the garden, gathered wild fruits and berries, and helped their mothers with other household and garden tasks. Boys worked with their fathers in the barn and fields. George Washington Keys, born in 1878 in Pleasant Grove, worked for a neighbor at age 10 driving horses and loading hay wagons. He remembered, "I was taken out of school at age twelve to work on the farm...my Pa started up a blacksmith shop on the farm which enabled me to learn to be a wheelwright by trade, thus dividing my time working in the shop during busy times and out in the harvest other times."

Ollie Muck Brown of Wheatland remembered, "To pay for our school clothes, in the summer vacation, we faced the boxes of cherries, packed boxes of pears, picked hops

and hulled almonds." She also pointed out that underpants were sewn out of flour sacks and "it took many washings to take out the print of 'Buck-Eye Mills' which spanned our sit downs."

Children really did walk miles to school in those days before school buses. George Washington Keys remembered, "After starting school, which meant walking one and one-half miles through pasture fields, my brother Frank and I improvised a way to make it easier on us to go to school by tying wire to two or three old plow shares and dragging them through the tall grass to blaze a trail for us to walk on. Miss Ella Jones, a neighbor's daughter who lived near the schoolhouse (Eagle School), was my first teacher. I remember well her mode of keeping discipline in the one-room schoolhouse by bringing armfuls of switches from apple tree limbs to use on the 'kids' when they became too unruly. I got my share of the switchings all right."

Schools, furnished with crude board benches, often contained only rudimentary tools of learning. Ollie Muck Brown remembered the great joy brought into her young life by the first books bought by the school board.

Oba Algeo, growing up in Nicolaus, walked two and one-half miles to the Illinois District School. Sometimes nature prevented school attendance. She recollected, "When it rained, we were high and dry in the ranch home with

water all around us. We children had fun rowing a boat and then sailing back home by putting up an umbrella to catch the winds. The floods never stayed more than three days as a rule."

Children were generally raised strictly. Ollie Muck Brown recalled that her grandmother always saw to it that the children never wasted a speck of food because she remembered her own near-starvation and terrible hardships in crossing the plains to California. Her grandmother also insisted that Ollie read three chapters in the Bible every day before she could go out to play. When the minister was coming to dinner, "...we were drilled loud and long and were told that we would get a spanking with a rose bush switch if we as much as moved while he said grace, and a second spanking was our lot if we told him about the wine in the buggy shed."

However, there were plenty of childhood pleasures. Picnics, especially the big Fourth of July celebration, were special occasions. Homemade ice cream was a treat perhaps a few times in the summer, worth it even if it was eight miles to town to get the ice. Ollie Muck Brown remembered swimming in old dresses that were heavy enough to sink her and her sister Aurora, while their mother watched carefully from the bank, unable to swim a stroke. The Muck sisters were fortunate enough to have piano lessons, the 25 cents a lesson paid out of their mother's only income, her "egg money."

The sisters often delivered their mother's butter and eggs to customers on the way to school.

Toys were not as plentiful as they are today, but much imagination went into play. George Washington Keys recalled that, "During my young childhood, my toys were few and far between, forcing me many times to play with my sister Nellie's china dolls, by tying strings around their necks and dragging them along the stream of water which the windmills would pump for the irrigation of the trees--pretending that the dolls were swimming and racing.

"I was the proud owner of two toys, though, a high-wheeled two-wheeler (had one large wheel and one small wheel), and a toy called a 'dingle cart' -- a two-wheeler with a rod in the middle that made a tinkling noise when I went along with it. These were about the only toys I had until I got old enough to make my own, and this I started doing at the young age of two years."

Ruth Smith Grant, who moved into Yuba City as a small child from a ranch near Harkey's Corners (at Oswald and Township Roads) in 1892, when her father was elected sheriff, noted the different pastimes that children in town enjoyed. On the ranch, her only playmates, aside from a younger brother, had been numerous pets. Several favorites, a goat that pulled a cart, a raccoon full of tricks, and two dogs, made the move to town with them. Ruth was most impressed by the children who gathered around

the old courthouse to play on the only cement sidewalks in town, and by the oranges that hung from trees in almost every yard. In winter, when the ground around their home (where the county offices are now located on Second Street) was all covered with seepage water, she and her brother sailed bread pan boats, drawn by strings. "Of course, this necessitated making a hole in the side of the pan for which we were strongly reprimanded. But it was really worth the chance."

Ruth liked to buy candy from "Uncle John" at Duncan's Grocery Store on Second Street because he gave them more for their five cents than anyone else. She discovered that the single most thrilling experience of her childhood

was riding across the covered bridge that spanned the Feather River.

Ruth described one of their new "citified" pastimes "...was placing objects upon the (mule-drawn street car) tracks just to see them flatten out where the car passed over them. Occasionally Mr. Peirano (the driver) would have to apply the brakes, get out and remove the obstacles, not forgetting to kindly admonish us for such pranks."

Childhood a century ago was one very dependent on environment and family. Whether a child lived in town or in the county had a great influence on the forms that play took and the chores and tasks that a child was expected to perform.

SUTTER EXPECTS TO HAVE LARGEST CHERRY ORCHARD

Yuba City, September 16 -- The purchase by R. W. Skinner and his son-in-law, Carl Schnabel and associates of 100 acres of the Berg Brothers' ranch from Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Sullivan, will one day mean that Sutter county can claim the largest cherry orchard in the world. This is according to the buyers, who say they will plant the tract entirely to cherries. The site is located five miles north of Yuba City on the line of the state highway.

One hundred and twenty-five acres of the same ranch were bought by the Kirkman Nurseries of Fresno to be utilized for the cultivation of nursery stock.

Oroville Mercury

September 16, 1922

Gertrude

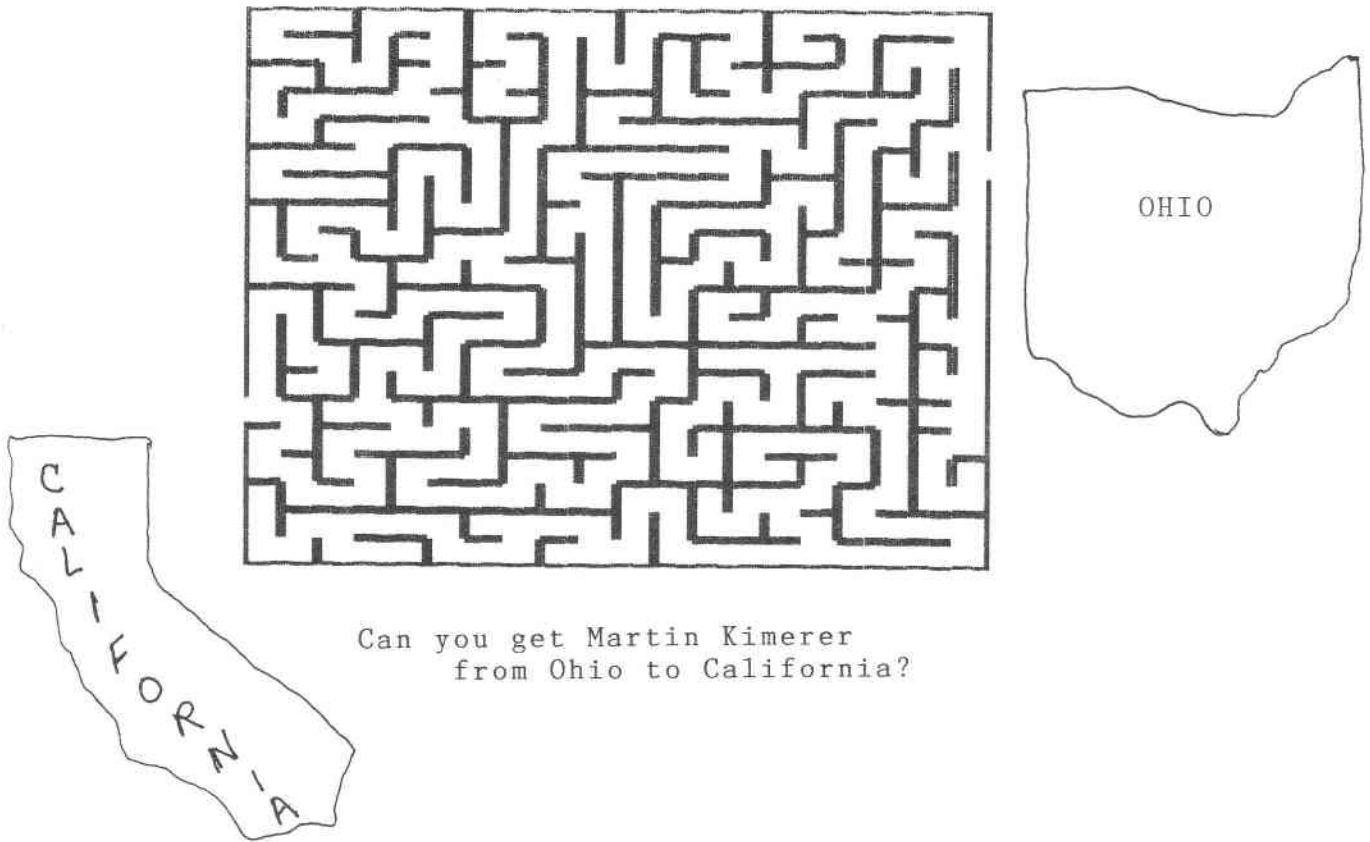
This past December a special "person" at the Museum celebrated a special birthday. Gertrude, a china doll which once belonged to Oba Algeo, turned 110 years old. As part of a special birthday celebration, the Museum is offering a special paperdoll version of Gertrude. Created by Julie Stark, the paper Gertrude comes with five complete outfits based on the original Gertrude's one and only dress as well as four additional outfits based on dresses worn by Oba and her family in family photographs. Accompanying the paperdoll and her trousseau is a brief biography of Oba and her family as well as the photographs that inspired Julie to create Gertrude's wardrobe. The entire packet currently is on sale at the Museum gift shop. Proceeds from its sale will benefit museum programs.

Oba (short for Obedience) Algeo was born on July 24, 1873 about twenty minutes before her twin brother, Thomas. Eventually there would be ten Algeo children growing up in Nicolaus under the guidance of Judge John Mahon Algeo and Amy Vestal Algeo. Oba's grandfather, James L. Algeo, came to California with his two sons on the same wagon train that brought George Brittan, an early settler in Sutter. During a trip to the Yuba County mines, after working the mines for several years in El Dorado County, John Algeo decided the real profit might be in harvesting wild oats to sell to the miners. After several months in the Yuba mines, the Algeos returned to the Nicolaus area where they bought 320 acres and began to haul hay to the Yuba mines. The trip took two days: 15 miles to Wheatland, where they spent the night, and 15 miles further to the mines. In 1852, while staying in the home of the Thomas family, recent emigrants from Missouri, John met Amy Vestal. They married in 1854 and together increased the population of Nicolaus by ten.

Oba began school in the Illinois School district. Her older sister, Amy, wanted to become a school teacher and in order to help her attain her dream, Oba quit school to stay home to help their mother. In return, Amy helped Oba return to school and eventually become a teacher also. Oba graduated from the Stockton Business College and Normal Institute in 1893.

Oba Algeo never married, but continued to teach throughout her life. She taught in several school districts in California including Sutter City. Upon her retirement from teaching, she began to sculpt and write poetry. She continued to be active until her death at 102 years of age in 1976. The Museum received Gertrude, Oba's beloved china doll which she received as a Christmas gift from her Aunt Rachel in 1882, as a gift from Oba's family after her death.

KID'S PAGE



Can you get Martin Kimerer
from Ohio to California?

Can you find these words?

BICYCLE	MERIDIAN
BOKKAIPARADE	NICOLAUS
BREADPAN	PAPERDOLL
CHILDHOOD	PETS
CHINADOLL	PLAY
DRAGON	SAILBOATS
EMIGRANT	SCHOOL
GERTRUDE	SCHOOLHOUSE
KIMERER	SUTTERCOUNTY
	TOYS
	WORK

C	T	O	Y	S	P	A	J	R	S	P	B	B	B	R	E	A	D	P	A	N
B	K	O	T	D	D	W	E	U	L	S	C	H	O	O	L	H	O	U	S	E
Y	I	E	M	I	G	R	A	N	T	O	S	H	K	T	B	K	B	P	T	P
C	P	C	I	W	E	L	A	A	I	Y	Z	X	K	R	V	I	Y	F	C	V
J	K	C	Y	M	O	E	O	G	C	H	I	N	A	D	O	L	L	S	F	D
P	K	H	I	C	K	B	Q	Y	O	N	I	X	I	S	A	N	O	F	F	S
J	P	K	I	H	L	W	U	Z	F	N	Y	S	P	Y	G	D	Q	L	I	C
B	A	N	W	I	F	E	A	Q	S	N	K	E	A	P	E	F	L	Z	F	L
M	L	P	A	L	R	M	U	Q	Z	U	D	Q	R	F	C	O	O	B	J	H
W	C	S	M	D	R	B	Q	J	S	U	T	S	A	F	D	Q	G	F	V	S
X	B	G	D	H	W	P	I	R	R	S	U	T	D	R	P	E	O	L	F	R
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W	E	N	U	D	M	E	R	I	D	I	A	N	P	S	C	H	O	O	L	S
D	O	H	Z	L	G	D	G	I	T	P	K	I	Z	B	S	O	U	R	Z	E
L	F	B	I	J	N	O	F	L	B	Y	L	H	C	T	X	G	U	X	Q	X
R	M	Q	S	L	U	N	L	C	H	J	A	A	D	N	X	J	W	N	U	T
V	P	A	R	B	Q	Y	A	E	O	P	S	S	Y	L	F	F	L	N	T	G
Z	Q	Z	R	K	G	P	F	Y	R	Q	M	O	Q	S	I	I	S	W	Y	Y

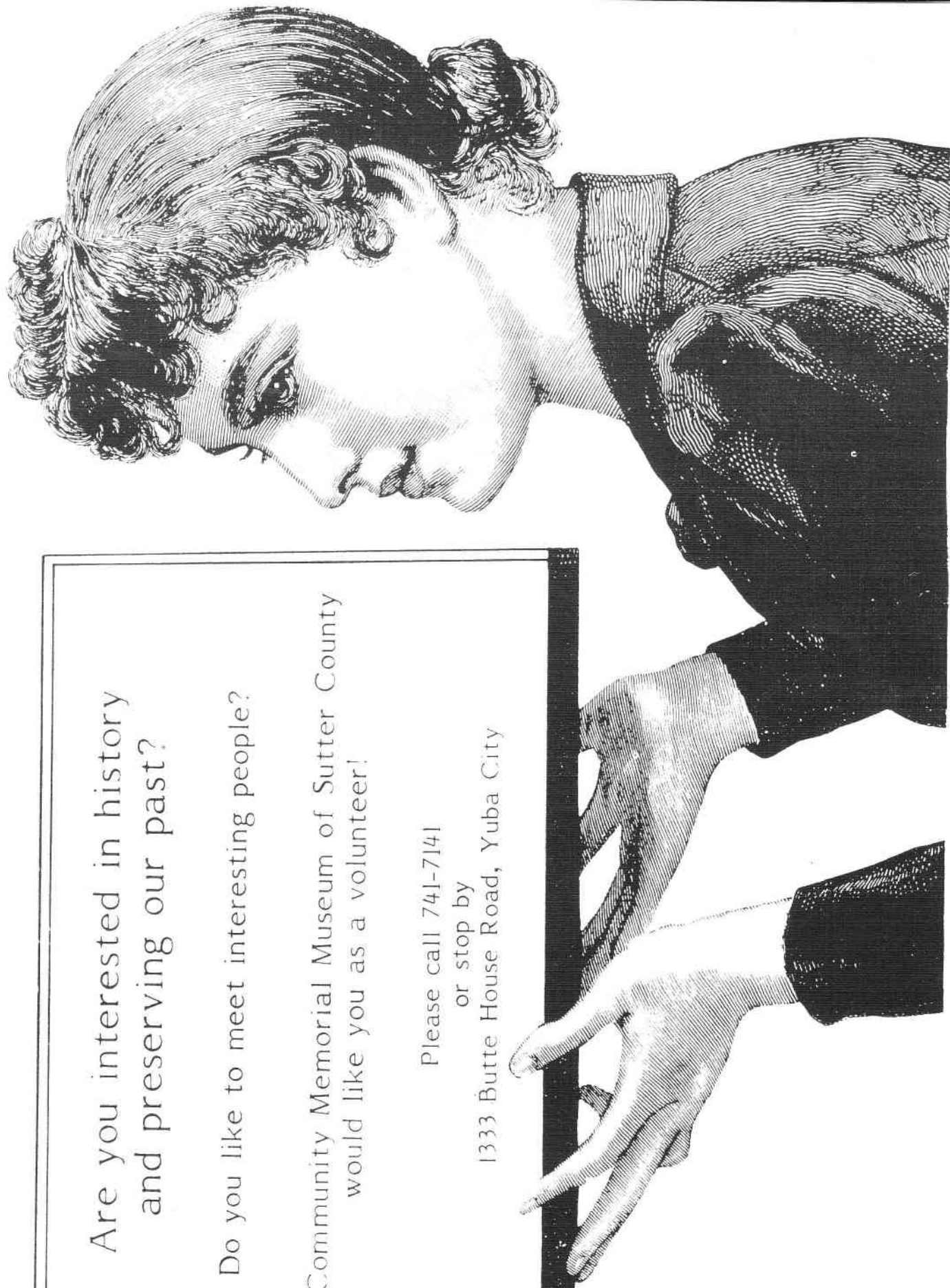
Are you interested in history
and preserving our past?

Do you like to meet interesting people?

The Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County
would like you as a volunteer!

Please call 741-7141
or stop by

1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City



COMING EVENTS

January

- 9 - "Seeds of Change" exhibit opens at Museum
- 18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 19 - Historical Society Meeting - 7:30 p.m. at the Museum
Speakers: Otis Croy
John Miller
Topic: Native American Artifacts

February

- 2 - Mary Aaron Memorial Museum Opens
Museum Hours: Tuesday through Saturday
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
- 14 - Valentine's Day
- 15 - President's Day
- 27-28 - Bok Kai Celebration
To Be Announced -- Series of Reading and Discussion Groups
Re: "Seeds of Change"

March

- 13 - Historical Society Sutter Buttes Hike
(Date Tentative)
- 20 - Historical Society Sutter Buttes Hike
(Date Tentative)

April

- 4 - "Seeds of Change" exhibit closes
- To Be Announced -- Spring Break Children's Program at Museum
- 17 - Historical Society Buttes Bus Trip (Date Tentative)
- 20 - Historical Society Annual Dinner
Judith Barr Fairbanks Memorial Essay Contest Awards
Program -- To Be Announced
- 24-25 - Wear and Remembrance: A Vintage Apparel Show

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